



Up Front

*Big Loop
and the relic.*

By C.J. Hadley

It was a jolt, a slap upside the head, a boot in the butt. It took me too long to realize that I could not carry *RANGE* pretty much alone any longer. There weren't enough hours in the day and too many years on my chart to do the work necessary to keep my labor of love alive.

"Silly girl," my mother would say.

"You are an unadulterated twit, CJ," my famous writer friends on the coasts would say.

"You lost, Sunshine," a leftie academic would say, probably with a grin.

"Smile, sweetie," my Brit granny would say, "you will feel better in the morning."

I have spent 34 years as an advocate for natural resource providers—especially cowboys and sheepherders. Over the years, *RANGE* has cost about \$25 million to produce and distribute and I've had lots of help from great writers and photographers, plus artists, poets, ranchers, loggers, miners and bureaucrats, an occasional politician, and from generous souls who gave more than they owed for a subscription to help keep this too-often-underwater, red-meat coal train chugging.

I can't recall ever being involved in anything for the money, but I always wanted to commit to a cause that I believed was of value. Back in 1991 there was nothing more worthy out on the western ranges than attempting to support America's cowboys and sheepherders do what they do best—produce food and fiber—and who were being spindled and mutilated by environmental activists, bureaucrats, animal rights zealots, self-serving politicians and other bored and wealthy hoi polloi.

To keep going, I offered *RANGE's* assets (small) and liabilities (large) to marketing-oriented publishers so that it could carry on and become more modern, professional and successful. But the few offers I got were uncomfortable; they lacked passion. Then I

got lucky and remembered something from the distant past, when I was writing for Gov. O'Callaghan and editing *Nevada Magazine*.

My glimpse of the past was of a little mite with a cheeky smile. She was playing in a dirt yard, chasing chickens, the daughter of a horse trader who lived on the Bench near Fallon, Nev. Joe Dahl was handsome, fit, smart, and he was good with horses. Years later I met his brother Mark, a master bit and spur maker from Deeth, Nev., and another brother, Demar, who ranches in Deeth and Fallon.

As a youth this Nevada girl—Rachel Dahl—moved cattle with her dad across the deserts of the Great Basin and the coastal hills of California, rode polo horses when life took the family to Southern California, and witnesses the people who make beautiful lives from nothing but dirt and grass, good cows, loyal dogs, and faithful horses.



PHOTO COURTESY ANDREW GALLOWAY

Rachel is a University of Nevada grad—with a BA in political science she earned on the "12-year-plan," too busy living to focus on 8 a.m. classes and droll professors, as well as "another very useful master's degree in political science after a quick eight years." She has served rural Nevada as a Fallon city councilwoman, and director of economic development in Fallon and Mesquite in southern Nevada. She also taught high school English, "and lived to tell about it." She has three children and one grandson, all scattered from California to Elko County to North Dakota.

This formidable talent is a little mite no more and she continues to muck about in a dirt yard near Fallon, Nev., still with chickens, plus Angora rabbits and Clio, a Great Dane sister of my big black dog, Othello.

Rachel is the owner/publisher of Fallon Media Co. and has started three weekly papers in rural Nevada. She is a former fed for the Department of Agriculture and was a shill for a U.S. senator responsible for his rural counties. And she is now the new publisher of *RANGE magazine*. She chose me as editor—says I can't leave.

My nickname for Rachel Dahl is "The Big Loop," because she has big ideas, gathers good people around her, and makes things happen. I am not going anywhere right now and we are lucky to have her. Our new boss is smart and gifted, a woman who cares. And she will care about you. ■