



Opinion from America's Outback

NO CHEATIN'

I know what it's like to have lived with no telephones, no electrics, outhouses, a pail and dipper for drinking water that you prime the pump at the well, Aladdin lamps for light and a box of .22 shells for 16 cents a box. Tough? Naw! They weren't tough. They were good because we were always in action. The tough times are now 'cause people don't want to get out there and experience life and all the good things it offers. I've been cranking this body around for 81 years and am still enthusiastic about seein' what's over the next hill or bend in the trail. Them young pups ain't dyin' from doing. They're dyin' from thinkin' and they're afraid to face the beauty of what's created here for us. I ain't gettin' cheated out of it. They can.

RUSSELL J. FRANKO, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

"GO WEST" IS AWESOME

Your magazine is the greatest and your books are awesome.

MS. BILLYE WITHERS, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

The copy of "Go West" arrived a few days ago. Once I started reading, I could not put it down. The photography is excellent, but what impressed me most is the history was written by Rod Miller in a clear and highly concise manner. As a former high school U.S. history teacher, I have often wished for a resource such as this. Every high school library should have a copy of this book.

LEROY BLACKLEDGE, TUCSON, ARIZONA

Great book. All American. God bless.

ARTHUR WM. CULP, GLEN BURNIE, MARYLAND
See page 5 and spread the word.—Ed.

BLOOD BOILING

I thoroughly enjoy all of your articles even tho' some of them get my western Washington blood boiling! I support the ranch community and sympathize with the ranchers

who have to deal with all the challenges that face them on a daily basis. Keep up the good work...maybe some of the city folks will realize where their food and fiber come from.

WALDEN HAINES, BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON

Thanks to Dave Skinner and *RANGE* ["Buffaloed," Winter 2013] for giving me the opportunity to spread knowledge and good sense. Wish us luck with these buffalo. Sierra Stoneberg Holt and Ron Stoneberg are soon heading to Ogden, Utah, to speak to bison ranchers who are pretty upset about the wild bison untruths being spread by anti-ranching interests.

ROSE STONEBERG, HINSDALE, MONTANA

Such a fine magazine in all ways and for old people who love the "ranch way of life." I lost my rancher-husband of 63 years from cancer. He so enjoyed reading *RANGE* as it alerted a lot of us to the misrepresented things put out to property owners to draw them into false, so-called "good deals." We wouldn't know if you had not put the truth in *RANGE*.

TEIL CHAMBERLAIN, DOUGLAS, WYOMING

GO TO WALGREENS

I love your stories, Southern California coastal city slicker that I am. But I wonder why the quality of many of your photos is so very poor. These days, anyone can take prints into a CVS or Walgreens and have them "enhanced," so why must those interesting photos in your pages be so dark?

JULIA VIERA, CORONADO, CALIFORNIA
Cheap paper and my incompetence.—Ed.

I love keeping in touch with America's Outback.

RICKIE EDDLEMAN, EDMOND, OKLAHOMA

Love your magazine, especially Hank Vogler.

PAT & JOYCE CRONIN, DREWSEY, OREGON

We were a "range fire victim," July 2012. The so-called Miller Homestead Wildfire took our 55 years of work ranching, owning our small cattle ranch. With a raw deal of going through lake flood in the '80s on our meadow part of the ranch, to wildfire in 2012 on the dry part of the ranch in Harney County deserts, our private lands and public range BLM are now black ash. We continue on with God's help of work, fencing, repair and finding hay pasture. Looking toward several years of hard times and of course selling some cattle. Even so, we still count our many blessings.

RED AND MARGARET DUNBAR
KEGSPPRINGS RANCH
FRENCHGLEN, OREGON

STILL YOUNG AT 89

My dad, Don, passed away recently and he so enjoyed your magazine, as did I and my husband. I often thought he would have been a great person in your "Confessions of Red Meat Survivors" section. He was a cattle rancher his entire life, being the third generation here. At the "young" age of 89, he was still driving tractors and swathers to help with haying! He was always ready to help with any chore or share his vast knowledge to find solutions to problems. A truly good man.

KRISTINE COONROD, MONTAGUE, CALIFORNIA
Wish we had known him. "Confessions" are written by our readers. For editorial guidelines check www.rangemagazine.com/editorial.—Ed.

ONE GOOD WOMAN

I have often heard that every man deserves one good horse, one good dog, and a good woman or wife. I've had lots of good horses, lots of good dogs, and one good woman. What else can I ask for?

ANDY BORGESON, MONA, UTAH

More on wolves and cougars, please.

ANN ELZEY, INCHELIUM, WASHINGTON
Stay tuned, and check back issues at www.rangemagazine.com.—Ed.

I truly appreciate your spunk in addressing hard issues. We need more of your caliber!

JEAN DUTRO, TEHAMA, CALIFORNIA

I love this magazine!

NANCY AMOS, TRIMBLE, MISSOURI

LOVELY!

Your magazine is inspiring, enlightening, thoughtful and accurate. It's good to know we're not alone.

BEN PARK JR., CALIENTE, NEVADA

We depend on you.

DENT SMITH, WEST HILLS, CALIFORNIA

Keep up the super work. We love you all!

JIM GILLIS, LAKE RIM FEED & SEED
FAYETTEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

I don't run any cows, just raise a couple of steers to eat, but I have been around this area for over 50 years. The federal government and lawsuits by rich environmental organizations have effectively eliminated all practical management and use of our natural resources in the name of helping the environment. The reality is that the range and forests around here are an overgrown, weed-infested fire

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menace. Unfortunately, a lot of urban people support environmental foundations without knowing what a mess is being created. Fires—and the resulting scorching of wildlife, devastation of habitat, and erosion of landscapes—are natural, but this destruction is not necessary. One can only hope that eventually people will realize that eliminating management and utilization of our natural resources in the name of wilderness doesn't work any better than overlogging or overgrazing.

KEN ALEXANDER, UNITY, OREGON

Great writers, but miss Tim.

LOIS BRONSON, IRONWIDE, OREGON

Findley will always be missed by me and RANGE, but his great stories and special reports remain at www.rangemagazine.com.—Ed.

SILVER STARS

After reading the Winter edition and learning of Ann and Joyce's Silver Star Award, I must say we know personally how much they deserved it. The more we learn from each edition of *RANGE*, the more respect and admiration we have for you ladies (all three of you) who work so hard in the trenches to produce the best, important and blatantly truthful publication in our great U.S. of A.

CHUCK AND BETTY CUNDY, CORA, WYOMING

Alas, Mr. Salazar, turning out the oyster farm in Drakes Bay, Calif., to the National Park Service is huge—really taking over California now. The politicians are bad enough, but the powerful bureaucrats are exceeding reason.

VICTORIA J. ROBERTS, GARDNERVILLE, NEVADA
See "Shell Game on Drakes Estero" by Carolyn Dufurrena on page 26.—Ed.

BORDER AGONY

I have spent nearly 49 years in public safety, most of that in law enforcement with 10 of those years serving as chief of police in a city with its southern boundary less than a mile from the U.S.-Mexico border. Thus it has been with great interest that I have read several recent articles in *RANGE* dealing with border issues. "A Line in the Sand" (Winter 2013) quickly caught my eye. I've been in my share of hair-raising incidents over the years but I must say that article's author, Dexter Oliver, is a better man than I. No way would I camp out in the back of a pickup truck just yards from the border and in a known drug-smuggling area to boot.

Unfortunately the law-enforcement profession at all levels, with some exceptions, has rolled over to the liberal agenda and to politi-

cal correctness. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano is no more honest than her recently reelected boss. The border is absolutely *not* "safer than ever," and my brother ranchers who live close to the border know that for a fact. Her assertion that the border is safer because arrests of illegal aliens have declined is pure horse dung. Arrests are down because of absurd and dangerous "rules of engagement" imposed on Border Patrol agents and because adequate resources are *not* deployed to the border. They are also down because of Obama's executive orders which have implemented amnesty in direct opposition to the will of Congress and the American people.

It is a sad reflection on the state of things in this country, but, truth is, the only ones I would believe on the status of the border are border sheriffs. Unlike the feds, those sheriffs still have the best interests of the people they serve in mind. Thus, unlike the feds, they tell the truth.

JERRY BOYD, BAKER CITY, OREGON

HAGE SAGA

Keep up the good work. Was especially impressed with your reporting on Hage.

JANIE RIGGS, OZONA, TEXAS

"Eye of the Storm" by Ramona Hage Morrison (Winter 2013) and "Justice for Hage Family" by Julian Stone (Fall 2012) can be found at www.rangemagazine.com.—Ed.

I just read your remarkable article, "Justice for Hage Family." What a wonderful report. Good God, I wondered if the greenies would ever lose in our courts. I truly look forward to your next magazine to read more about this turnaround in thinking. I can only hope that this portends a reversal of the landgrabs going on for so long by the greenies. Finally an uplifting story and not more gloom and doom.

TONY LOGAN, VIA EMAIL

APOLOGY FOR ABUSE

To Ramona Hage:

I want you to know how much I appreciate your descriptive and emotionally charged article, "Eye of the Storm," in *RANGE's* Winter issue. I have felt for some time and have become more consciously aware that the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management are not good managers, conservators or custodians of our public lands. They treat users as though they own the land and the concept of multiple use never existed.

The rancher, for the past many years, has a hard enough time making a living with cattle and sheep, growing feed or producing food crops to have to deal with the intrusive bullying by the USFS and BLM. If anything, ranchers prove-up the public lands because you need them to be in good condition—it's your lifeblood, how you make a living. Why would any rancher destroy the land and vegetation when his livestock need it to live?

These federal agencies should be praising good ranching practices and helping ranchers improve the general agri-business processes rather than denigrating the rancher and trumping up false and prejudicial accusations. I want to apologize for the abusive behavior of the federal agents who continually berate and do harm to you, your family, and all the other ranchers in Nevada and the West. You deserve better treatment.

PRESS CLEWE, RENO, NEVADA

Hi Ramona:

That was an incredible article, "Eye of the Storm," in Winter 2013. I have reread it several times. It is incredible to think the government almost got away with this, had it not been for your family's tenacity. I was so thankful when I read that Judge Jones has found the BLM/USFS guilty of contempt, intimidation, extortion, conspiracy and more. I wonder what all your lives would have been like had the government not taken your property rights? When I read your first sentence, "multigenerational, 35-year Hage family saga," it makes me sick to think of the toll that it has levied upon your entire family. Everyone I know in the cattle business has been rooting for you and your family for many, many years.

I know it is not completely over but we wish you and your families the very best and send our heartfelt congratulations and prayers for a final and positive ending.

STEPHEN MARKS SR., WOODLAND, CALIF.

HELL BENT FOR LEATHER

Between broken legs, and just plain going hell bent for leather, my manners have gone missing! I just wanted to thank you for the magazines and Harry Webb book. I am amazed at the quantity and quality of what you single-handedly have chronicled about the West, its history, its people and its rape. My dream is to see that rape stopped, see families restored to their ranching operations, see irrigation water delivered without some fish being used

as an excuse to deliver water elsewhere, see the ranges restocked with livestock, see the forests brought back to health with meaningful timber harvesting, etc. Most all of this has occurred in my lifetime. We can turn it around!

RAMONA MORRISON, SPARKS, NEVADA

THE GENTLE BUTTON

Such a great magazine. You manage to get a consistently great product out that serves a real need. I have a particular and tiny love—I always look for pictures of horses and children. There's a great one with a tiny boy catching his pick of the day, with two other horses looking on. When you know horses, you can see that they have pressed their gentle button, as though saying to one another, "Be careful, one of their small fragile ones is here." Horses are just such a miracle.

JOAN CHEVALIER, HAVERSTRAW, NEW YORK

WOLF WORSHIP

Wyoming finally got permission to hunt wolves despite the head banging and breath holding of the wolf proponents, so far successful. One of the predators taken was a collared wolf that had migrated a number of miles from Yellowstone, that had been renamed by wolf watchers. Whoa, all h*** broke loose. To hear the enviros, it could not have been looking for food no longer easy to find in Yellowstone, presumably it was just on a sightseeing vacation. At any rate, because collared wolves have been killed in the hunts outside of the park, the Montana wildlife commission decided recently to put a ban on hunting within a buffer zone around its border with the park. The interesting thing is that in a law-making decision, an English lady was allowed to testify about her grief and how much money she spends on plane trips, motels, etc., to visit the wolves. Does anyone believe an American would be able to testify in any legal proceeding in another country? Over the years it becomes harder and harder to try to reason with wolfers, especially those who spend so much time watching and naming them that the wolves are habituated to humans and vice versa. Now that the elk herds are at historic lows, the wolves have to leave the park looking for food, so the wolfers believe they should have government protection wherever they go. Over and over they insist that wolf numbers do not need

controlling, only other animals. This mindset seems very dangerous.

MARION DICKINSON, GREYBULL, WYOMING

NOT ENOUGH!

A little over a year ago, Randall Weeks, a Denver attorney, sent me a gift sub to *RANGE*. I really enjoy the publication, but have one complaint—it does not arrive in my mailbox often enough!

Congratulations on *RANGE*'s recent recognition by the Nevada Press Association. I know the challenge of being an independent voice in the world of corporate media.

DARRYL L. FLOWERS, PUBLISHER
FAIRFIELD SUN TIMES, FAIRFIELD, MONTANA

What a marvelous magazine! Everyone needs to read it and stop the madness.

JOHN KEYES, SPRINGVILLE, CALIFORNIA

NOT COOL

Entitlements. Give people free gifts and they will vote for whomever is doing the giving. The country is going bankrupt and the fact that these gifts are unsustainable means nothing to this short-sighted and thoughtless segment of America. How short a time span it has been since WWII when G.I.s landed on the beaches of Iwo Jima and Tarawa and the European theatre, fighting for freedom for all and dying on the beach with their blood staining the sand for the cause of freedom. What's happened to our great American values—to courage and love of this country, to give it up for entitlements? It is hypocrisy to deride the wealthy, as Obama takes orders from billionaire George Soros and hobnobs with the richest movie stars and the unions run by the most corrupt people in America. They voted to let this Marxist-schooled and completely inept "Chicago street organizer" continue as Commander in Chief of our armed forces. He cares nothing for the military and wants to destroy our second amendment and take our guns away, just as Hitler did when he took over Germany.

What a thoughtless, ignorant of history, entitlement bred segment of America (and now all of us) will have to live with the destruction of our freedoms and the weakening of our constitution. Can we do it? Only time will tell. God bless this one beacon of freedom that at one time the world envied, until Socialism reared its ugly head. I hope our

great fighting men return home from the wars of the Mideast and recognize the problems and have the will to take on the great task to save America.

JACK SWANSON
CARMEL VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

HELP A VET, HELP A COUNTRY

After reading "Ranching in the War Zone" by Kathy McCraine, the comments about the border by Ed Ashurst, and "Barnyard Therapy" [Fall 2012] by Sgt. Allen Brill, and the question about how to protect the border ranches, it seems to me that Ed and other ranchers need to start hiring veterans to live on the border of their ranches, and pay them \$20,000/year, and house them every five miles along the border to stop these drug gangs. Ed's four little daughters mentioned in the article sure aren't worth losing to members of the Mexican drug cartels, who have already killed over 35,000 Mexicans and are moving their killing north. Better to sell 20 cows and give a vet a job than see more carnage on the border. That's the best solution I can come up with to Ed's question, "What can we do?" It would protect the ranchers, the U.S., and give unemployed vets decent jobs, instead of booting them out of sight, like Vietnam vets my age.

KAREN FETTY, TULSA, OKLAHOMA

HOLD TWO MILS HIGH

Regarding "Up Front" in the Winter issue, the editor was scrunched down on an improvised rest behind a modified Remington 700P 300WSM loaded with a Hornady bullet, topped off with a Leupold scope, and told to "hold two mils high." Only milliseconds after the blast, this All-American combination, cold bore mind you, slapped hell out of the steel plate at 400 yards.

ALAN HART, TROUTDALE, VIRGINIA

SCARIEST YET

I don't know how it is possible that you just keep getting better and better, but you do. The Winter 2012/2013 issue is the best—and scariest—yet.

DOROTHY STOUT, VIA EMAIL