



Up Front

Missing the good ones.

By C.J. Hadley

Bones, the beautiful, 170-lb. harlequin who's blessed my life for close to a decade, is dead. He was a gift from a wealthy lady who had read about my dogs in *RANGE*. She was dying of cancer and knew



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Bones, who thought he was a lapdog, wanders with friend Bebop in early 2006. When she became the matriarch, Bebop's personality changed. No longer "the bitch-from-hell," she became a sweet virgin mother to the new puppy, Belle Starr.

my home in Washoe Valley would be as good as her own—at least for canines. She left me three highly prized Great Danes: a mean old lady, Glitter; her three-year-old daughter, Harlot; and an unrelated puppy. She called the baby boy Hamlet, or Hambone.

It was the gift that kept on giving.

Glitter died of old age after mellowing a lot. Harlot died in her prime of a twisted gut. I remember them well—and the six Danish

beauties that came before—but I miss much more that mighty, gentle hound I renamed Bones. Fortunately, Bebop (a Boston female who replaced the ladies) has a new buddy named Belle Starr (a black) so she's not alone.

Bones calmed my psyche. He owned a piece of my soul. And he's still close—buried outside my office at home, covered with dafodils, facing me and the girls.

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We recently lost some extraordinary humans, too: the brilliant and relentless Wayne Hage (Fall 2006, p.74); Congresswoman Helen Chenoweth Hage (p.11); Sheriff Pepper Withers (p.9); and Canadian student Kenton Carnegie (p.36). And too many more.

Carnegie was attacked by wolves. A sheep outfit in Idaho lost 158 yearlings to wolves in one night late last summer. Others in the West have lost cows, calves, ewes, lambs, horses, cats and dogs to the same reintroduced killers.

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The three-hundred-millionth American was born this month. Tim Findley asks:

"Who was it? The child of a generations-strong family? The first-born of a teenage working couple? A fatherless baby born with risks? Or the child of recent immigrants, perhaps illegal until this birth?"

"No matter, the milestone in the American population brings a new human being among us...and what in the next 20 years will that precious new life learn?"

"Will it be freedom? Or will it be deepening conflict? Will the child grow up with pride in America, or will this important person be raised indifferent or even distrustful of his or her own heritage? Only 25 years from now when asked truly to take a place in society, will he or she feel any obligation to liberties established before them? Will we still be a free society able to trust each other in our inevitable disagreements, or will this child learn most of division and hatred?"

"Who will be the leaders this child emulates? Will there be any? Has this child been born on an absent prairie with little thought about the future? Or in the midst of a gathering storm that may sweep aside the old ideals?"

"Imagine yourself as that new one. Would you really want to be here?" ■