Cowley resident Gene Nunn was one of the first to take on wild horse management

BY BRAD DEVEREAUX

Things were different in the early days of managing the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range. When the range was established in 1968, it was the first of its kind in the country, the Bureau of Land Management’s first attempt at managing a public wild horse herd. Management was made official in 1971 with the passage of the Wild and Horse Burro Act, which required the protection, management and control of wild horses, feral burros and burros on public land.

According to the PMWHIL, there was a lot of experimentation to see what would work to manage the population of wild horses.

Gene Nunn, 72, of Cowley was among the first group of men to attempt wild horse management. A rancher throughout his life, Nunn answered a newspaper ad and took a job for the BLM in the early 1970s as the head of gathering operations and on-the-ground management for the Pryor herd. His job also entailed observing and collecting data about the herd, making recommendations for the herd management plan, assembling crews for horse gathers and organizing adoptions of Pryor horses in states throughout the country.

When the BLM called for a gather to bring the herd count within the appropriate management level, which was 75 to 125 horses at the time, Nunn assembled a crew of local riders. Less than a dozen men on horseback drove groups of horses from various parts of the horse range into one location, typically in a canyon, where the women and children would remove the animals.

Gather operations, many branded horses were dispersed across the range. Nunn said. If claimed, the braded horses went back to their rightful owners. If unclaimed, the horses were turned over to the Tillette, who had an agreement with the BLM. Other ‘stray horses’ of the range were given to the state, later to be sold, Nunn said.

Nunn realized the need for Annie and others for bringing the idea of management of horse herds into the public eye. He said Felix, Floyd Shoemaker ‘readily pushed the BLM’ for management of the PMWHIL.

“Maybe a few of the Pryor Mountain horses was a special horse,” he said, “and still is today through the BLM” for management of the PMWHIL.

“Can we see that the Pryor Mountain horse was a special horse,” he said, “and still is today through the BLM.”

Aside from keeping the herd stocked only with Pryor Mountain horses, he said, there were two goals from the start: a) another important function of management and removal efforts is the effect on rangeland health, Nunn said. If the herd was allowed to grow unchecked, the well-adapted Pryor horse ‘struck as a special horse’ to support the many different animals that currently live on the range.

Nunn was joined by a talented horseman a few years later in the early 1970s. Lynee Taylor, who died in March of 2008 at the age of 77, was one of Nunn’s regular range technicians and the two of them worked well together. In 1978, Taylor took over Nunn’s position in charge of gather operations.

Nunn moved to California to work at an adoption facility. He remained with the BLM for several more years, working mostly in California and at regional adoptions until his retirement.

“A lot of experience gained here was spread throughout the bureau,” he said, pointing out other employees who brought their knowledge to branches in Utah and Nevada.

Throughout his involvement with the BLM, Nunn said there were many people who didn’t want the horses managed in a particular way or were against any interference with the wild horse herd. He said he wouldn’t make the politics of the position, but added that his supervisor, Rex Cherry, took the brunt of political pressure targeted at herd management. Many times, he said, gatherings were put on hold or plans had to be redrafted because of a court order filed by protesters.

“Mixing the survival of five animals with politics just doesn’t work,” Nunn said.

In 1977, the BLM approved the use of helicopters to herd horses but they weren’t used on the Pryor range until about 2000. Nunn said the use of helicopters has made horse gathers faster, but at the cost of more trauma for the horses. The rough terrain of the PMWHIL is not ideal for helicopter use, which is more beneficial in large plains, he said.

When asked about current management, Nunn said it is going well on the Pryor range but isn’t perfect. The AML, which has fluctuated over the years, is set at 90-120 horses, which isn’t bad, he said. Nunn agrees with the concept of expanding the range into Casper National Forest areas that the horses have used in the past and present. He is for expansion not to accommodate more horses, but to give more space to the horses already living on the range, he said.

Nunn said he thinks the wild horse program in the U.S. as a whole is “shambles,” and said the bureau needs to come up with a better system for handling excess animals. Currently, thousands of one-wild horses are in long-term holding pens in places like Nebraska. The practice, which can keep horses in the facilities for their entire life of 40 years or more, is not good, Nunn said.

When asked about memories of his time on the Pryor range, Nunn said he enjoyed the animals, but not the politics. He has many stories about having a good time while working in beautiful counties doing what he loved the most with good friends.

“There was real good camaraderie,” Nunn said.

“There were so many little things that happened. It was enjoyable.”

A MISSING LINK

Recently, a link in Nunn and Taylor’s time as range technicians has surfaced. During remodeling of the Billings Field Office this winter, BLM employees found a shoebox containing detailed information about the horses on the range written by Taylor, according to BLM’s director Matt Dillon. The scientific notes are accompanied by photographs and include birth year, parent and a description of virtually every horse on the range from 1974 to 1990.

Taylor’s notes represent a missing link to what the center had access to prior to receiving them. Dillon said, and fill in a time period before Rev. Schwager’s family lineage notes, which existed from 1990 to 98. The BLM began their own records in 1998.

“Since he began borrowing Taylor’s notes from the BLM, Dillon said he has been spending more time digitizing than studying them. The notes fill a void of information from the 1970s that will be invaluable for those making horse management and the range what it is today.

“This shows the work these guys did in still being used for work,” Dillon said.

Dillon took notes of his own, said, though they weren’t as detailed as Taylor’s and were more “day-to-day writings.” Nunn and Dillon have plans to examine the notes together to see what additional information can be extracted from the 30-plus-year-old account.

Dillon said he heard about Taylor’s notes from people around town before they were discovered this winter.

“Lynee always carried around little notebooks, you should never go through her things,” he said.

And now that the data has become public record, it will help in making horse management and the range what it is today.

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BY BRAD DEVEREAUX

Deaver seniors who like good food and good company are likely to already know the 2009 Mustang Days Senior VIPs, who spend their time heading up the Deaver Lunch Bunch, a monthly luncheon held at the Deaver Community Center for seniors. Jim and Judy Wambeke and Jim’s mother, Marie, are being honored this year by the Big Horn Senior Center.

July, 87, said they took over the job from Loretta Schwehr about four years ago. They set up tables every week, clean up and call to remind patrons about the scheduled lunch. With a group of 40 or more seniors at the lunch, the job can be daunting. “I don’t give up on them,” she said, adding that many have to be called several times to confirm. The group seems to grow every week, she said, with strangers and neighbors meeting and having a good time.

“It’s about getting together,” Judy said. ““don’t come to eat, they come to visit. Some come so they don’t have to cook.”

The Deaver Diners enjoy food delivered from the senior center while chatting, usually with the men and the women divided on opposing sides of the room.” “The men get awfully loud,” Marie, 91, laughed.

Marie bakes a birthday cake from scratch each month for lunch bunch goers. She owned the Deaver Café from about 1955 to ’76 and still loves to bake.

She was born in Nebraska and moved to Deaver when she was 1 year old, she said. Her son Jim, 70, was born and raised in Deaver. He began working on drilling rigs to Deaver when she was 1 year old, she said. Her son Jim, 70, was born and raised in Deaver. He began working on drilling rigs, said.

Elaine Harvey said she invited Gov. Freudenthal to participate while he was in Lovell for seniors and $4.75 for non-seniors.

Seniors can invite a guest of any age to accompany them. To sign up, contact the Senior Center at 548-6566. Meals are $2.50 for seniors and $4.75 for non-seniors.

Anyone 60 and older in the Deaver-Frannie area is encouraged to sign up to be a part of the lunch bunch in either town. Seniors can invite a guest of any age to accompany them. To sign up, contact the Senior Center at 548-6566. Meals are $2.50 for seniors and $4.75 for non-seniors.

As a volunteer effort on the part of the seniors, which makes it even more special,” Anderson said. “If there’s a need, the seniors take action and generally it’s a success. It’s the absolute personification of what the Older Americans Act is about.”

The Older Americans Act, which was passed by Congress in 1965, is where the center receives much of its funding. Anderson, said, and encourages local participation.

BY BRAD DEVEREAUX

The 2009 Mustang Days Parade Marshals are Gov. Dave Freudenthal and his wife, Nancy.

Elaine Harvey said she is excited to have the Governor and First Lady attend and appreciate the seniors’ efforts to organize the Deaver-Frannie groups.

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She said the governor provided funding resources in 2005 for document searches and the development of science to support management of Big Horn lakes to benefit interests in Big Horn County. When the Cloe Canal was at risk to collapse and flood the streets of Lovell in August of 2007, the SLIB board set aside $300,000 in case of an emergency. The funds weren’t needed, but it was nice to know they were available, Harvey said.

State officials joining the Freudenthals at the parade will be Secretary of State Max Mattfield and Superintendant of Public Instruction Jim McBride, Harvey said.

Right, Gov. Freudenthal (center) poses with his Big Horn Basin Seniors

in the parade in Lovell, Wyo. E Van Pelt, ray Peterson of Cowley at an awards ceremony last month in Lovell. Freudenthal and his wife, Nancy, will be the 2009 Mustang Days Parade Marshals.

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New Horizons Care Center honors four centenarians

Four remarkable ladies were honored by the staff at the New Horizons Care Center recently. All four are centenarians – 100 years old or more.

The four posed for a photograph and are, from left to right, Lucy Cox, Marie Scheeler and Madge Leibel.

Ethel Miller was born March 9, 1909. She worked all of her life from her teen-age years to retirement. When she and her husband, Sam, retired, they spent their winters in Laus, Fla., sulky racing with their ponies. Upon arriving back in Maryland, they attended sulky races during the summer months as well.

Ethel had one son, John (Jack), who died Aug. 21, 2006. She has four grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and nine great-great-grandchildren.

She loves chocolate – lots of it.

Lucy Cox, as a teenager, leaving her family behind in Burlington, came to Lovell to graduate from high school. She married Red Aasy in 1927 and they had eight children. After Red’s death in 1951, she married Burl Cox, and they brought another daughter into the family.

Lucy taught school, moved, fourth grade, for many years. Many of her students remember her teaching saying that “they had the most important part.”

Nothing pleased Lucy more than teaching, whether at home, at school or in church, and seeing the light of understanding come into the eyes of those she taught.

Marie Scheeler was born to John Balchus and Elizabeth Fruekling Schneider on April 23, 1909, in Lincoln, Neb. Her parents were immigrants from Biedeck, Russia. Her father worked for the railroad and the family moved to Lincoln, where daughters Lea and Marie were born. In 1911, when Marie was 2, the family was transferred to Kane, east of Lovell.

Marie’s parents wanted to farm and soon found ground in the Iona area across the Shoshone River. Brothers Harry and John were born, and the children attended school in Kane and at the German School in Lovell. Kane offered two years of high school, and after attending her freshman year at Kane, Marie finished school in Lovell.

During that time, she met George Scheeler. He and his family were German from the Crimice area of Russia who had emigrated to Dickinson, N.D. and came to Cowley and then Lovell with the Great Western Sugar Co.

Marie and George eloped to Red Lodge in 1927, lived in Lovell where son George Robert (Bob) was born and then began farming at Iona.

Marie and George gradually built their farm into the largest working farm in the area, and Marie worked in the fields alongside her husband. Two more sons, Charles and Herbert, were born. Marie supplemented their farm incomes by driving the school bus and George worked sugar campaigns in Lovell and Billings.

They eventually moved to Lovell and were semi-retired, although both continued to work at the sugar factory, Marie in the tare house. She also produced a huge garden.

George died in 1988, and Marie kept up her garden and maintained her independence for several years and even continued to stay at home for a few years after her eyesight and health began to fail, thanks to neighbors and the entire family.

She entered the New Horizons Care Center in 2003 and celebrated her 100th birthday in April.

Madge Leibel was born in 1909 in Lomax City, Ala. She had two sisters and two brothers, Minnie, Maggie, Judd and John. She moved to Lovell with her family at age 8 and graduated from Lovell High School. She is a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Madge married her first husband at the age of 26 and he died some years later. She married her second husband and had one son, Terry Leibel, who lives in Boise, Idaho. Her second husband died in 1970.

Madge worked as a laundress for several years and was a wonderful seamstress, the family said, needlework, cooking and playing the piano. She collected drinking glasses and kept a large and beautiful garden. She played piano at her church and dedicated her life to her religion.

Madge is one of the New Horizons Care Center in Lovell who attends Relief Society and Sacrament.
Big Horn Canyon was a formidable place for explorers

BY DAVID PECK

The history of the American West is full of accounts of expeditions and travels by mountain men looking to move beaver pelts from the wilds of what would later become Wyoming to St. Louis. By mountain men looking to move beaver pelts from the wilds of what would later become Wyoming to St. Louis.

Nearly 200 years ago, in the summer of 1807, two members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition – the Corps of Discovery – joined up with the Manuel Lisa expedition to establish trade with the tribes in the region. The Manuel Lisa expedition to establish trade with the tribes in the region.


In his journal, Larocque wrote: “The river is broad, deep, clear, clear, clear, and the banks have a beach of white gravel. About a half mile above this camp, Larocque wrote, “The river was cold and the water was so fast and swift that I did not dare to look down (until) I could find a place beside which I could keep, and looking over it, see the foaming water without danger of falling in.”

On Drouillard’s first trip in 1807, according to the his...
stone, as well as many side streams "forming formidable canyons of their own." The "issue" of the waterfalls was a matter of interest for many years, with some proposing to dam the river at various points. The first attempts to dam the river at the confluence of Shoshone River and Yellowstone River were made around the turn of the century. The project was proposed by Dr. G.W. Barry, a doctor from Sheridan, Wyoming, who was interested in the potential for hydroelectric power. Barry's project was eventually abandoned due to the practical and financial challenges associated with damming the river.

Barry's efforts were not in vain, as the reputation of the canyon continued to grow. In 1903, J.W. Newell of Sheridan, Wyoming, was the first to attempt to navigate the Big Horn Canyon in a small boat. He was accompanied by another man, and they were successful in navigating the canyon. In 1904, another attempt was made by Woodrow Wilson, who was successful in navigating the canyon in a small boat. In 1906, the Edith Made it through the canyon under the leadership of T.E. Turner, who was successful in navigating the canyon. In 1913, the Sept. 30, 1949 edition of The Lovell Chronicle reported on a trip down the river, stating that the trip was successful, and that the boat crew was eager to capture the canyon on film.

The canyon is known for its beauty and its challenges, and it has been the subject of many writings and articles. One such article, "The Sept. 30, 1949 edition of The Lovell Chronicle," describes the beauty and the challenges of the canyon, and it includes a picture of the canyon.

The canyon is a special place to explore, and it has been the subject of many writings and articles. It is a place where nature meets history, and it is a place where the beauty of the canyon meets the challenges of the river. The canyon is a place where the history of the region meets the present, and it is a place where the future is shaped by the past.
Mary Had a Little Lamb

BY JOYCE K. GOODRICH

Remembering sheep ranching in the Big Horn Basin

Lambing

The spring lambing season is the most exciting time of the year for the rancher. The first lambs are born to ewes that are between 2 and 3 years old. The ewes are usually exercised the previous fall to help prepare them for the upcoming lambing season. The lambs are usually born in the first week of May.

Weaning

The weaning process usually begins in June. The lambs are separated from their mothers and are given a special diet to help them grow and develop. The ewes are also given a special diet to help them recover from the lambing process.

Shearing

Shearing the sheep is an important part of the ranching process. The wool is harvested to help keep the sheep warm and dry during the winter months.

Dipping

Dipping the sheep is necessary to control parasites and diseases. The sheep are dipped in a solution of copper sulfate and creosote to prevent skin diseases and ticks.

Medical care

The sheep are also given medical care to help them stay healthy. The ewes are given shots to help prevent diseases such as tetanus and lameness.

Collecting

The collected wool is processed and cleaned before being sent to market. The wool is then used to make everything from clothing to carpeting.

The sheep are a valuable part of the ranching process. They provide wool, meat, and dairy products. They also help keep the land healthy by grazing and reducing the amount of weeds.

Bibliography


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Let’s talk the answer on.

We welcome you to Mustang Days!
Wyoming Ghost Stories features many local landmarks

BY E. DENNEY NEVILLE

Theoretical nonsense is relevant and worth the exercise when it serves a purpose of higher importance. For example, if a ball dropped six feet rebounds one half that distance each time it bounces, in theory it should never stop bouncing. With some creative determination we can adapt this same theory to the standard, relevant misadventure of fishing. Nay we get to fish one Saturday every other year (follow me closely). If we divide by half the time between the two Saturdays, like the rebound distance of the bouncing ball, we can show the time for one bounce. Thus we would have created a series of wonderful Saturdays dedicated to fishing. Thus we see that applied theoretical nonsense might be made relevant to local, in-house domestic authorities and we could create an unavoidable piscatory continuum (fishing-continuous) locked in with no end. The in-house authority would have to accept it.

There is one thing wrong with the theory however: its antithesis is reality, in this case, applied gravity. Gravity will eventually override the up-down motion of the ball until it comes to rest. Not a problem, if the ball stops on Saturday. The probability is increased if you factor into the equation a more than nominal brute. This kind of nonsense will eventually override the patience of the in-house authority, and the brute will be required to help solidify the conclusion well enough to get it through. Even though this is a brilliant finding, explaining it is the wife who will have to be continued.

To further enhance the probability of success, buy her a new pickup, and she will believe you when you tell her this discovery is highly classified material entrusted to you by local shaman, Enna Pete Smith. Tell her he revealed it to you for only ten bucks, after staring for nine hours into a dark ice hole last winter, which enabled you to attain a transcendental state of monk-like meditation and capture, due to advanced, euphoric hypothermia—concluding with the holding of it a state around bass from the icy waters of Voodoo Reservoir.

Explain to her this kind of discovery is of deep, mystical significance, an atypical phenomenon based on empirical law, and you can’t even under threat of legal injunction ignore an empirical law that requires $15-an-hour language to describe the significance thereof.

Now, the dark, down-side—diligent maintenance is required if you want it to work at your convenience for an extended period of time. Continued bribes and complicated concessions will be necessary.

However, be forewarned that if it fails, your fishing gear will come up missing and be replaced with yard tools. And if your wife comes up missing, it will cost you even more than replacing just your fishing gear.

Cautions are advised, especially if any kind of fishy nonsense begins to make fishy sense—which rankle for cumbersome fishing gear and a missing wife may not be replaced with the fishing, either; and you will never get to drive her new pickup.

Wyoming Ghost Stories

A scary book from 1989 that scared up a storm. Wyoming Ghost Stories tells tales of supernatural encounters within the cowboy state was re-published in 2008. Wyoming Ghost Stories by Debra D. Munn was published in 2008 by Riverbend publishing of Helena. It contains first-hand accounts of 26 bone-chilling encounters within the cow-

enemies and the murdered, miners and cowboys and Native Americans, are all carefully researched and authentically interviewed by the people who claim to have witnessed the unknown and unexplained, according to a Riverbend press release.

The book contains stories about the ghost of the “bucky man” Ted Louries which is said to hang out at the Shoshone Bar, spied by the staff of Rocky Mountain High School in Byron and tales of a young boy who got lost and died near Trapper Creek in the Big Horn Mountains. Other stories come from Casper, Cheyenne, Chugwater, Cody, Greybull, Laramie, Meeteetse, Powell, Rivoli and Wheatland, among others. Of the 26 tales, nine take place in northwest Wyoming.

Lovell once had many service stations in town. Here, Lynn Beddes poses at Goldie Johnson’s Husky station in 1964. The station was located at Main and Nevada where the Downtown Mural Park now lies. Beddes worked for Johnson for around 30 years, off and on, according to his wife, Lois.

A tradition of progress, service, and hometown pride, we’ve been part of the Lovell community for 62 years, giving our customers personal, quality service. That’s been the trademark of the Red Apple Supermarket (and Big Horn IGA and Big Horn Market before that) throughout our 62 years in the grocery business in Lovell.