

BOOK REVIEWS

Poetry

MARLEEN BUSSMA

Saddle Up for Cowboy Poetry

Self-published
Audio CD, \$13
MarleenBussma.com

Award-winning poet Marleen Bussma has a refreshing way of describing ranch life from the point of view of a woman who has truly lived the ranching experience. On this CD, Bussma recites her latest Western poetry, including this year's Spur winner, "She Saddles Her Own Horse." The listener can vividly visualize Kate's wee-hour tromp out to the cold, dark calving barn, where in the straw, a heifer is about to deliver its first calf. It's the contentment of this lifestyle that shines through in this poem. The CD shares the spirit of women who pioneered ranching in the West and who still do so today.

— *Quackgrass Sally*

Juvenile

JEAN ABERNETHY

Fergus and the Greener Grass

Trafalgar Square Books
Hardcover, 40 pages, \$15.95
HorseAndRiderBooks.com

Fergus is a charmingly imperfect "everyman's equine" created by artist Jean Abernethy. He lives an idyllic life in a meadow surrounded by plenty of grass to eat but just can't help wondering if the grass tastes better in other meadows. In this comic adventure, Fergus catches a glimpse of what could be, and, leaving his life of comfort behind, sets off on a hilarious journey. His exploits lead him over, under and through all manner of obstacles as he strives to reach the bigger, better prize that beckons, always just a little farther away ... and on the other side. *Fergus and the Greener Grass* is a pleasure for all ages.

— *Chris Enss*

MARTY RHODES FIGLEY

The True Story of Jim the Wonder Dog

The RoadRunner Press
Hardcover, 100 pages, \$16.95
TheRoadRunnerPress.com

I think all readers, not just juvenile, will embrace and enjoy this happy, entertaining book about a truly wondrous dog. The Llewellyn Setter's start was pretty inauspicious, having arrived as a gift from a traveling salesman to Mr. Sam VanArsdale in Depression-era Missouri. At first, Mr. Sam had his doubts about training Jim as a hunting dog, but the

pup soon exhibits traits that many believe are either sheer genius or spookily clairvoyant. After all, Jim, with those expressive human-like eyes, predicts seven Kentucky Derby winners and the winners of the 1936 World Series and presidential race. He also seems to understand orders in Italian, French, German and Spanish, recognizes colors and identifies musical instruments. What in the world could produce a dog like Jim? They didn't know it in the 1930s, and the question has never been answered since, but Missouri still lays claim to "The Smartest Dog in the World."

— *Rachelle "Rocky" Gibbons*

DORIS FISHER (author) and **SARAH COTTON**

(illustrator)

Jackson Sundown: Native American Bronco Buster

Pelican Publishing Company
Hardcover, 32 pages, \$16.99
PelicanPub.com

Straightforward but well-told and nicely illustrated biography of Jackson Sundown, the trick-riding Nez Perce Indian who rode with Chief Joseph but is best known as a rodeo rider. And a good one. Jackson didn't start competing in rodeos until 1912 when he was 49. When he won the Pendleton

UNDENIABLY NORTHWEST READS

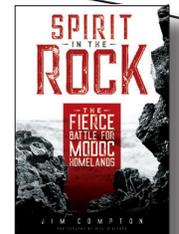
Spirit in the Rock

The Fierce Battle for Modoc Homelands

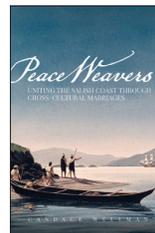
Jim Compton

Photography by Bill Stafford

Fought amid lava beds, the 1873 Modoc War was fierce, bloody, and unjust. This riveting narrative captures the conflict's dramatic battles, betrayals, and devastating end. It also explores underlying causes and secret schemes to seize Modoc ancestral territory.



Paperback • \$27.95
978-0-87422-350-7



Paperback • \$27.95
978-0-87422-346-0

Peace Weavers

Uniting the Salish Coast through Cross-Cultural Marriages

Candace Wellman

Throughout the mid-1800s, Coast and Interior Salish families arranged strategic cross-cultural marriages—peace-weaving alliances that played a crucial role in regional settlement. Like others, the four intermarried women profiled left a lasting legacy in their Puget Sound communities.

Available at bookstores,
at wsupress.wsu.edu, or by
phone at 800-354-7360



WSU PRESS
WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

Round-Up bronc-riding championship in 1916 at age 53, he became the first American Indian to win a U.S. rodeo title and the oldest champion.

CATHERINE RADEMACHER GIBSON (author/illustrator); recounted by **MARY GIBSON SPRAGUE**
Glorious Fourth of July and Other Stories from the Plains

South Dakota Historical Society Press
Hardcover, 71 pages, \$19.95
SDHSPress.com

From 1986 to 1988, Catherine Rademacher Gibson created her whimsical watercolor “memory paintings” and accompanying stories to record her childhood spent in South Dakota and Montana, and to also cheer up her husband in his final years. Her daughter, a second-generation working artist, has lovingly recounted these tales of life on the plains, and what a terrific family legacy has been left behind. Gibson’s stories are told with such humor and wit, i.e. “It seemed like everything was possible, and I wanted to do it all. Even so, I began to think that painting might be fun, but I was in no hurry to

decide. I might be a brain surgeon.” Or, on surviving a cyclone: “Oh, yes, and there was a dead cow in our front yard. Cleanup took a long time.” This book is enchanting to both the eye and the mind.

– Rachele “Rocky” Gibbons

LOIS V. HARRIS
Lotta Crabtree: Gold Rush Fairy Star

Pelican Publishing Company
Hardcover, 80 pages, \$17.99
PelicanPub.com

With the California Gold Rush reaching a feverish peak, it was up to child performers called “fairy stars” to keep the miners entertained. This expertly written biography for juvenile readers showcases the most successful among them – Lotta Crabtree, and follows her early years, her struggle to support her family and her meteoric rise to fame by age 20. The book contains great historical photos and wonderful history of the Gold Rush era and glory days of San Francisco. I especially liked the informative sidebars with related information throughout.

– Rachele “Rocky” Gibbons

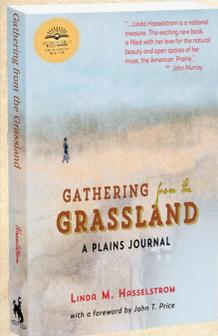
BETH JUDY
Bold Women in Montana History

Mountain Press Publishing Company
Paperback, 264 pages, \$14
Mountain-Press.com

Some of Montana’s strongest women characters are brought to life in this well-written, impeccably researched work in the “Bold Women” series. Included with the profiles of more famous women such as Congresswoman Jeanette Rankin and actress Myrna Loy are those of African-American librarian Alma Smith Jacobs; bronc-riding rodeo royalty sisters Alice and Marge Greenough; homesteader, cook and hoodoo healer Annie Morgan; and Pikuni Blackfoot woman warrior Running Eagle (Pitamakan). I found the stories of these lesser-known women just as compelling and intriguing and cannot help but admire their perseverance and grit. I lived in Montana for a number of years and had not heard of most of these women. Thank you Beth Judy for bringing forth their amazing stories!

– Rachele “Rocky” Gibbons

Award Winning Books from High Plains Press



GATHERING FROM THE GRASSLAND

Linda M. Hasselstrom

“Linda Hasselstrom’s lyrical journal grows, organically, out of a passionate love for the land, the land’s creatures, and the land’s people, present and part of her personal past. This enduring, endearing litany of a year in the life of a writer, a poet, and a rancher takes us deep into the heart of what it means to belong to a place, to live a deeply rooted life—to grow old with the land and to remain young with it, too. A precious glimpse into a year richly, uniquely, profoundly lived.”

—SUSAN WHITTIG ALBERT, *Together, Alone: A Memoir of Marriage and Place*

paperback, 288 pages, \$19.95

hardcover \$29.95



2017 Sartan Award Winner



SOAP SUDS ROW

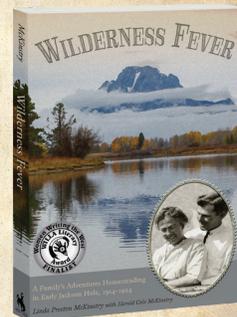
Jennifer J. Lawrence

Women have always followed the troops, but laundresses were the first women to be carried on the rolls of the U.S. Army. They traveled and lived alongside the soldiers during two of the most important conflicts in United States history: the Civil War and the War on the Western Frontier. Read about heroines, spies, eccentrics, saviors, prostitutes, cross-dressers, wives, mothers, adventurers.

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WILLA Winner

limited edition signed hardcover \$29.95



WILDERNESS FEVER

Linda Preston McKinstry

IN 1914, Linda and Mac McKinstry left their secure jobs in Washington, D.C., married, and moved to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, to homestead in country both untouched and beautiful, but also inhospitable, dangerous, and forty miles from nowhere.

“Exceptionally well written, enhanced with the inclusion of 60 photos and maps, and an inherently compelling read from cover to cover. “Wilderness Fever” is very highly recommended for both community and academic libraries, 20th Century American History collections, as well as personal reading lists of anyone...”

—Susan Bethany, Midwest Book Review

paperback, 224 pages, \$19.95 —WILLA Finalist

At bookstores or from the publisher, High Plains Press

PO Box 123, Glendo, WY 82213 Ph. 1-800-552-7819 www.highplainspress.com

FRANK KEATING (author) and **MIKE WIMMER**
(illustrator)

Abraham

Simon & Schuster
Hardcover, 32 pages, \$17.99
SimonAndSchuster.com

Author Frank Keating takes readers on an unforgettable journey through Abraham Lincoln's life using many of Lincoln's own quotes to tell the story of his upbringing, career and being elected president. The text is enhanced with beautiful oil paintings by Mike Wimmer. *Abraham* is one of four books in the Mount Rushmore Presidential Series. While some of the vocabulary might be too advanced for younger readers, the captivating artwork and engaging perspective on the politician's life successfully conveys Lincoln's appealing character. *Abraham* is an important keepsake.

— Chris Enss

SUSAN KRAWITZ

Viva, Rose!

Holiday House Publishing
Hardcover, 233 pages, \$16.95
HolidayHouse.com

When Rose Solomon's brother Abraham left El Paso to experience life for himself, his family was told one story. His 13-year-old sister knows another version, the one where he had gone off to become a cowboy. When Rose discovers a newspaper photo of the revolutionary General Pancho Villa along with her brother standing nearby, she learns even her version of the truth is a lie. With her Jewish family expounding traditional values in her life, she's determined to contact her brother and get him home. But she is soon kidnapped and taken to Pancho Villa's camp. This is an exciting story of Jewish traditions running alongside and often mixed with Mexican men and women fighting for freedom. Twists and turns abound as Rose struggles to maintain Jewish values and traditions while adjusting to the "truth" of her brother and her own desires for personal freedom.

— Phil Mills Jr.

ROD MILLER

Rawhide Robinson Rides a Dromedary

Five Star Publishing
Hardcover, 290 pages, \$25.95
Gale.Cengage.com/FiveStar

In Rod Miller's third installment of his "Rawhide Robinson" series, the title character – he of the 13-gallon hat and 26-gallon imagination – leaves his beloved American West for the adventure-brimming ports of North Africa. Hired by the War Department as an adviser, Robinson, with an entourage of military men, scours the exotic locales of the southern Mediterranean coastline in search of camels to serve as pack animals in the American Southwest. There, Rawhide and his new friends discover more perilous adventures than even a cowboy of Rawhide's extraordinary skills can get his lariat around. As with most literary series, the Rawhide Robinson novels have performed a noticeable arc in their development.

BOOK REVIEWS (continued on page 42)

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Wind River

Lions Gate
Blu-ray, \$27.99; DVD, \$19.98
LionsGateShop.com



C. COURTNEY JOYNER

We watch Westerns, and we write them. Books and movies. That's a lot of shoot'em up, a lot of violence. As a howling pack of authors, we're used to bloody action and gunplay, so when a moment of film violence is so startling, rocking you back with its power, it's an accomplishment to these slightly jaded eyes.

That's *Wind River*, this year's Spur

Award winner for Best

Western Drama Script. Like writer Taylor Sheridan's other Spur winner, *Hell or High Water* (2016), this is a modern Western, with roots sunk deep in centuries-old traditions of right, wrong and moral obligation. Sheridan is also *Wind River's* director and does a remarkable job for his first time behind the camera.



Jeremy Renner and Elizabeth Olsen portray a wildlife officer and FBI agent who are thrown together to solve the brutal homicide of a young American Indian girl on Wyoming's impoverished Wind River reservation. For the by-the-book Olsen, the case opens her eyes to a world and culture she never knew. For Renner, it's a chance to try and exorcise some old personal demons, while being pulled deeper into the tribal life.

This is all the stuff of excellent drama, but Sheridan goes further. By using a classic, police-procedural-structure, he skillfully molds *Wind River* into a story of shattered families, marred by intense emotional violence, and a thriller with intense physical violence that doesn't hold back.

Renner and Olsen give soulful, controlled performances that are totally naturalistic, but it is Graham Greene's brooding presence as a tribal police chief that haunts the film. The pain-filled life on the reservation plays across Greene's face like a faint shadow, and Sheridan captures every nuance.

When death comes in *Wind River*, it is ugly and brutal, completely the reflection of the people responsible for it. In this case, it is the amazingly arrogant oil company employees who've been placed above the law by a contract with the reservation. When the explosion between good and evil comes, it's with virtuoso directing that echoes Sam Peckinpah, but with the grit of Martin Scorsese.

Wind River is a major accomplishment in the genre, and the fact that it is Sheridan's first directing effort makes it even more rare. Its truth stings like the slap of an icy hand and stays with us. Just as it's meant to.

The Blu-ray includes short featurettes on the film's making.

C. Courtney Joyner writes in many formats, including screenplays, fiction and nonfiction. E-mail him at olcourt@yahoo.com.

BOOK REVIEWS (from page 21)

While Miller continues his tall tales and fanciful escapades with this novel, a more thoroughly researched subject – whether it’s on the care and character of dromedaries, the history of the various ports the crew (and reader) visit, or an account of the day-to-day operation of a U.S. naval supply vessel – adds an extra layer to the story that’s appreciated.

– Michael Zimmer

REBECCA VAN SLYKE (author) and **JESSIE HARTLAND** (illustrator)

Lexie the Word Wrangler

Nancy Paulsen Books
Hardcover, 40 pages, \$17.99
PenguinRandomHouse.com

Anyone looking for a delightfully clever Western book for the little cowgirl or cowboy in his or her life should consider *Lexie the Word Wrangler*. This children’s book centers on the life of a rancher named Lexie who watches over baby letters that one day will be used in words. Lexie herds words into sentences and hitches them together to tell a story. Tensions at Lexie’s Long Horn Ranch arise when a word wrangler sneaks onto the property and begins stealing the words that make the Long Horn Ranch a success. *Lexie the Word Wrangler* is fun and endearing. The whimsical and inspired drawings compliment the heartwarming tale that teaches kids the importance of spelling words correctly.

– Chris Enns

Nonfiction

MICHAEL F. BLAKE

The Cowboy President: The American West and the Making of Theodore Roosevelt

TwoDot
Trade paperback, 320 pages, \$16.95
Rowman.com

Film historian and retired Hollywood makeup artist Michael F. Blake turns to another of his passions, Theodore Roosevelt, in this outstanding study of our 26th president. “It was here that the romance of my life began,” Roosevelt recalled of his time in Dakota Territory. Blake details not only how the native

New Yorker’s time in the West shaped him for the American presidency but also how his love of the land helped shape the West. “It is not what we have that will make us a great nation; it is the way in which we use it,” said the president who established several national parks and monuments and also championed water reclamation projects. Blake shows us why Roosevelt’s likeness is deservedly carved into Mount Rushmore alongside George Washington’s, Thomas Jefferson’s and Abraham Lincoln’s.

HELEN H. BLISH (author), **AMOS BAD HEART BULL** (illustrations) and **MARI SANDOZ** (introduction)
A Pictographic History of the Oglala Sioux: 50th Anniversary Edition

University of Nebraska Press
Hardcover, 648 pages, \$95
NebraskaPress.unl.edu

First published in 1967, *A Pictographic History of the Oglala Sioux* combined more than a decade of research by Helen H. Blish and more than 400 drawings and script notations by Oglala Lakota Amos Bad Heart Bull made at the Pine Ridge Reservation between 1890 and his death in 1913. Blish’s original photographic plates, presumed lost when the first book was published, have been digitally scanned, Emily Levine and Candace S. Greene offer new introductions, and this beautiful and informative book also offers material that only made it into print in a limited number of the original 1967 book. Collectors and historians will want this book.

JANE LITTLE BOTKIN

Frank Little and the IWW: The Blood That Stained an American Family

University of Oklahoma Press
Hardcover, 488 pages, \$34.95
OUPress.com

That the author is the great-grandniece of the subject adds poignancy to this biography of the firebrand labor leader who was accused by federal officials of being a socialist and was regarded, Jane Little Botkin tells us in her preface, as the “black sheep of the family,” and who wound up being “hanged ignominiously from a railroad trestle.” Born in 1878 and raised in Missouri and Oklahoma, Frank Henry Little came of age during the time

when workers who had not shared in the booming profits of the Industrial Age – meaning, of course, most of them – were trying to band together to strengthen their bargaining position for higher wages and safer workplaces. Little got behind such efforts by being an organizer for the Western Federation of Miners and the Industrial Workers of the World, who were nicknamed the Wobblies. He was an agitator on behalf of workers on farms, in the oil fields, down in the mines and logging in the forests. The perceived rabble rousing, which included promoting labor strikes and writing fiery essays, brought him to the attention of ruthless robber barons and their thugs. Little’s nasty neck-stretching end came in Butte, Montana, but fortunately, through the meticulous research and forceful writing of his great-grandniece, his harsh but inspiring life story has been told.

– Tom Clavin

CHARLES BOWDEN

The Red Caddy: Into the Unknown with Edward Abbey

University of Texas Press
Hardcover, 101 pages, \$21
UTPress.utexas.edu

After Charles Bowden’s death, the chance finding of a manuscript in his files resulted in this newly published book concerning Edward Abbey. Counting the foreword by Luis Alberto Urrea, this thin volume holds plenty of meaty writing between the covers. Bowden masks his admiration for Abbey lightly and sympathized with him after his famous *Desert Solitaire* brought unintended consequences. It lured thousands of unwelcomed guests that inflicted damage on “his” unspoiled wilderness. The three men’s names on the cover – Abbey, Bowden and Urrea – are enough to promise a good read. It is!

– Lynn Bueling

FLANNERY BURKE

A Land Apart: The Southwest and the Nation in the 20th Century

University of Arizona Press
Trade paperback, 424 pages, \$30
UAPress.arizona.edu

Like many historians who have written about the American Southwest before her, Flannery Burke, an associate professor of history at St. Louis University, at-

tempts in *A Land Apart: The Southwest and the Nation in the 20th Century* to squarely solve the questions, “What and Where is the Southwest?” She expertly makes her case in her “Introduction,” concluding to “define the twentieth-century Southwest ... as the states of Arizona and New Mexico, with occasional exceptions made for those narratives and themes that show the influence of the region’s cultures outside those states’ boundaries.” While many may disagree with her about her definition of the Southwest, Burke applies her thesis expertly and it guides her well-balanced conclusions on such primary 20th Century topics as race, gender, Indian history, WWI and WWII, urban and suburban growth, tourism and the environment.

– Stuart Rosebrook

RICHARD W. ETULAIN

Ernest Haycox and the Western

University of Oklahoma Press
Hardcover, 184 pages, \$29.95
OUPress.com

This slim but highly readable volume does a masterful job of assessing Ernest Haycox’s proper place in the pantheon of Western writers. Best known as the author of the story of which John Ford’s *Stagecoach* was based, Haycox was a prolific writer of magazine stories and novels spanning more than three decades and ranging from outright pulp to the critically acclaimed best-seller *Bugles in the Afternoon*. Like many Western writers since, Haycox struggled to navigate the journey from commercial formula to serious fiction, with mixed success. Richard Etulain credits Haycox with such now-standard tropes as “competing heroines, the Hamlet hero and introverted characterization” and makes a strong case for Haycox’s late career novels, *Canyon Passage* and *The Earthbreakers*, in which the author attempted to deepen and expand familiar Western archetypes. WWA members will be particularly intrigued by the book’s epilogue, which details the early organization’s complicated response to the author’s more genre-bending efforts.

– Kirk Ellis

STEVE FRIESEN with FRANÇOIS CHLADIUK

Lakota Performers in Europe: Their Culture and the Artifacts They Left Behind

University of Oklahoma Press
Hardcover, 315 pages, \$39.95
OUPress.com

Lakota Performers in Europe is expertly written, beautifully illustrated and exquisitely designed. Steve Friesen’s research is an outstanding example of a public history partnership between a historian, a collector (Belgian collector François Chladiuk’s 300-plus images of the Lakota and their artifacts illustrates the book) and the book’s subject, the Lakota tribe. The recently retired director of the Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave in Golden, Colorado, writes with great knowledge of his subject matter, but also with a sensitivity that brings great dignity to a nearly forgotten group of Lakota performers that performed at the Brussels International Exposition in 1935.

– Stuart Rosebrook

JUNE 2018



CAROL MARKSTROM

Desert Rose

Desert Rose Records, \$15
CarolMarkstromMusic.com



One of my favorite Western songs is “Navajo Rug” by Ian Tyson and Tom Russell. Told from the man’s point of view, it’s about a fellow in love with Katie, a waitress in a Colorado diner. One day he rolls into town to find that the diner has burned down and Katie has left town. My reaction has always been how could Katie do that to him – up and leave without letting him know how to find her.

WWA member Carol Markstrom is fond of that song, too, but her take on it – expressed in “Where Did You Go?,” a song she wrote with Bil VornDick – gives us Katie’s side of the story. It’s a great song, one that has changed the way I hear “Navajo Rug.” Story songs dominate this fine 13-cut CD, including “Range-land Lament,” a grim tale of frontier violence by WWA members John D. Nesbitt and Micki Fuhrman; and Markstrom and VornDick’s “Medicine Bottle,” a song inspired by a cruel episode from history. Powerful and affecting stuff. But hey, it’s not all heartbreak and harshness. Markstrom pumps some fun into it with songs such as VornDick and Stan Lawrence’s “Too Bad This Town Ain’t in Texas.”



OLLIE REED JR.

JIM JONES

Headin’ Home

East Mountain Music, \$12.97
JimJonesMusic.com



An album by songwriting Spur winner Jim Jones never fails to be a rewarding experience, and these 14 tracks are no exception. They span a variety of topics and moods, but the overriding theme is finding your way home – even if that’s not where you’re from. Songs in this vein include the title track and the hauntingly beautiful “Colorado Calling,” both by Jones, and Paul Simon’s “Homeward Bound.” I like ‘em all. In fact, there is nothing I don’t like on this CD. But other Jones songs I want to point to – because they demonstrate his versatility – are “Livin’ the Dream,” about spending thousands to make hundreds so you can play cowboy music on the road; the humorous “More Meat for Me,” a thank you to vegetarians; and “Church of the Wretched Excess,” based on Jones’s adventures performing at the Mine Shaft Tavern in Madrid, New Mexico.

E-mail Ollie at oreedjr@gmail.com and send CDs to him at P.O. Box 2381, Corrales, NM 87048.

JAMES A. HANSON

Provisions of the Fur Trade: The Encyclopedia of Trade Goods, Vol. 6

Museum of the Fur Trade
Hardcover, 458 pages, \$110
FurTrade.org

In this latest volume, James Hanson continues his comprehensive review of fur-trade artifacts, gleaned in large part from the author's lifelong familiarity with the field through the Museum of the Fur Trade, founded by his father, Charles, in 1949. In this hefty tome, Hanson focuses on the material culture surrounding primarily food-related trade items that found their way to the early frontier – from chocolate to spirits and with brief forays into medicine and even soaps. This is not only a beautiful book, it is impeccably researched, well-annotated and filled with images of art and seldom-seen photographs that give the reader a richer understanding of a subject that isn't often covered in traditional offerings.

– Michael Zimmer

STEPHEN W. HINES

A Prairie Girl's Faith: The Spiritual Legacy of Laura Ingalls Wilder

WaterBrook Press
Hardcover, 224 pages, \$21.99
WaterBrookMultnomah.com

Stephen W. Hines presents a folksy supposition of Laura Ingalls Wilder's personal religious beliefs based on snippets drawn from Wilder's children's books. Hines's conclusions rest on the hymns Pa played on his fiddle, the family's emphasis on favorite Bible passages and their strong values – all found in the "Little House on the Prairie" series. While Hines's opinions are interesting and well written, his arguments leave me unconvinced concerning Laura Ingalls Wilder's personal convictions. *A Prairie Girl's Faith* is, however, a unique investigation on the religious mores of 19th Century America. I enjoyed tidbits about Rose Wilder Lane, Laura's only living child, but at times the book seemed disconnected. *A Prairie Girl's Faith* even includes a chapter of recipes that Laura *might* have enjoyed at church potluck suppers when she was living in De Smet, South Dakota. An interesting read, but it did not really work for me.

– Candace Simar

HELEN ADDISON HOWARD

Saga of Chief Joseph: Bison Classic Edition

University of Nebraska Press
Trade paperback, 380 pages, \$19.95
NebraskaPress.unl.edu

Beyond the oft-quoted phrase, "From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever," much of the epic story of Chief Joseph has faded. Thanks to a new reprint of this classic biography first copyrighted in 1941, his name and exploits have been refreshed. Of particular interest regarding the author, Helen Addison Howard was among the first to employ scholarship emphasizing the importance of American Indian accounts, therefore displaying more accuracy and balance to the historical narrative. As an impressionable young lad, this reviewer became fascinated with details of Chief Joseph leading his tribe's fighting retreat in harsh conditions as they outwitted the pursuing U.S. cavalry for four months. This volume, now added to my permanent collection, tells that story plus many details of his entire life.

– Lynn Bueling

For six generations, members of the Blawczyk family have served the Lone Star State as Texas Rangers. Follow the adventures of first generation Ranger Jim Blawczyk in *THE GHOST RIDERS*, as he tracks a gang of murderous outlaws, and his namesake, sixth generation Ranger James C. Blawczyk, as he follows the trail of a notorious drug cartel in *TEXAS JEOPARDY*.

Available at Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com and selected Barnes and Noble stores, the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco, and The Toadstool Bookshops in Keene, Peterborough, and Milford, New Hampshire. *TEXAS JEOPARDY* and other select titles available in hard cover Large Print through Center Point Large Print Publishing of Thorndike, Maine. See all of Jim's Texas Ranger and mystery novels on his website: www.jamesgriffin.net

JAMES GRIFIN

JAMES C. KEARNEY, BILL STEIN and JAMES SMALLWOOD

No Hope for Heaven, No Fear of Hell: The Stafford-Townsend Feud of Colorado County, Texas, 1871-1911

University of North Texas Press
Trade paperback, 287 pages, \$21.95
UNTPress.unt.edu.

James C. Kearney, who built upon the work of his late co-authors, warns in the introduction that “The reader cannot expect a casual read and will have to pay close attention.” That might be an understatement. Between families, extended families, distant relatives and other characters, the 60 people involved are more than an author should be expected to keep track of, let alone a reader. And bouncing around through four decades and several communities makes chronology and geography challenging. Still the reports of gunfights, murders, bushwhackers and political intrigue make fascinating reading. The book, first published in 2016, has been released in trade paperback.

– Rod Miller

JEFFREY A. LOCKWOOD

Behind the Carbon Curtain: The Energy Industry, Political Censorship, and Free Speech

University of New Mexico Press
Paperback, 304 pages, \$29.95
UNMPress.com

Jeffrey A. Lockwood, a University of Wyoming professor of natural sciences and humanities, tackles a controversial topic that he is passionate about as an academic and Wyoming resident. As he states so eloquently in his preface, “this book is intended to provide witness to the injustice of censorship by the energy industry and their political partners, and in so doing to shift the balance of power ever so slightly to bring us closer to a tipping point of outrage, action, and change.” As a historian, I admire his passion and research; as a fellow American citizen, I leave it up to each reader to reach their own conclusions – and actions.

– Stuart Rosebrook

SHERRY MONAHAN with JANE PERKINS

The Golden Elixir of the West: Whiskey and the Shaping of America

TwoDot
Hardcover, 236 pages, \$24.95
Rowman.com

WWA past president Sherry Monahan teams with Jane Perkins, who helped establish High West Distillery in Park City, Utah, in 2008, to trace the history of booze in the West – and it’s one raucous history lesson. But don’t expect just facts about trader’s whiskey, forty-rod and shots of rye. The history of whiskey is, the authors note, “a story of taxes, availability, and profits.” *The Golden Elixir* follows Western whiskey from Lewis & Clark to the modern day. A handy appendix that lists various liquor laws might come in handy for Western writers. The recipes, on the other hand, might be preferred for those who enjoy more intoxicating research.

DAN O’BRIEN

Great Plains Bison

University of Nebraska Press
Trade paperback, 101 pages, \$14.95
NebraskaPress.unl.edu

Nothing shouts “American West” more than the bison, also called buffalo. At one time in history, these great creatures roamed the plains of North America. What happened to these beasts, and how do the remaining animals fit into current life? Dan O’Brien gives a short history of these shaggy animals and their demise and comeback. However, it’s difficult to say if this work is one of fiction or nonfiction due to the animals being personalized with thoughts of their own. Or is this simply a lengthy political statement? The social norms when the buffalo/bison were hunted to near extinction have changed over the past century. Readers need to keep that in mind when reading this fiction/nonfiction/political statement.

– Sandy Whiting

SARAH E. OWENS

Nuns Navigating the Spanish Empire

University of New Mexico Press
Hardcover, 195 pages, \$95; Paperback, \$29.95
UNMPress.com

The intimidating artwork of stern-faced Sor Jerónima gripping a crucifix on the cover mirrors the imposing task author Sarah E. Owens undertook to bring to contemporary readers the story of the sister’s 17th Century journey from Spain

NEW RELEASE • NOW AVAILABLE!



Desert Rose

CAROL MARKSTROM

Western Female Vocalist of the Year - Academy of Western Artists
Produced and Engineered by BIL VORNDICK
Creator of Multiple Grammy-Winning Projects
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CAROLMARKSTROMMUSIC.COM

to the Philippines to establish the first female Franciscan convent there. The manuscript of a younger nun, Sor Ana de Cristo, provides chronological cohesion for readers who embark on this excursion with Owens through a variety of in-depth historical, political and religious aspects of the 17th Century. The nuns' travels included cross-country treks through Spain and later across Mexico. Owens's fascination with her subject and her clear writing style help draw readers into the story. Reading the book felt like taking an intriguing seminar on Spanish history, politics, art, ancient manuscripts, travel and ocean voyages in the 17th Century, and, of course, the practices, daily life and dress of Franciscan nuns.

—Lori Van Pelt

CHUCK PARSONS

Captain Jack Helm: A Victim of Texas Reconstruction Violence

University of North Texas Press
Hardcover, 336 pages, \$29.95
UNTPress.unt.edu

Captain Jack Helm's claim to fame came at the hands of John Wesley

Hardin. The captain was killed by the notorious Texas outlaw, his name added to a list of victims who met the same fate. Chuck Parsons's new book brings Helm's story to the forefront, adding a biography where none existed before. But beyond the trappings of recounting a man's life, Parsons takes the narrative to another level by successfully envisioning Helm as a victim of the Reconstruction. Violence and hard times are portrayed in first- and second-hand accounts, and this volume is a new treasure that recounts a turbulent time in Texas history. Other than the neglected and poorly constructed index, this book has all the trappings of a classic work that will be, and should be, revisited over and over again in the future.

—Larry D. Sweazy

KRISTEN ROGERS-IVERSEN

Interwoven: Junipers and the Web of Being

University of Utah Press
Paperback, 240 pages, \$24.95
UofUPress.com

As someone who lives in the juniper and piñon country of southern Utah (in

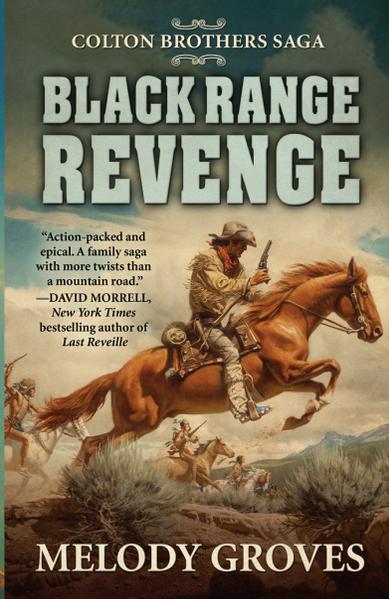
fact, my locale is pictured in this book), I can certainly relate to the author's fascination with the iconic "junies." That shaggy bark with its twisted spiraling profile and those pale blue berries are as much a natural part of the landscape as jackrabbits or sagebrush. Throughout history, junipers have influenced ecosystems, cultures, mythologies, economics and environmental controversies. Kristen Rogers-Iversen expertly explores the interconnecting aspects of junipers. I particularly enjoyed the segment on Navajo ghost beads and the author's anecdotes of her spunky great-grandmother, who distilled those gray-blue berries into "bathtub gin" in her cellar. Way to get through Prohibition, Granny! As you can tell, you don't have to be a tree-hugger to enjoy this book.

—Rachelle "Rocky" Gibbons

JERRY THOMPSON

Tejano Tiger: Jose de los Santos Benavides and the Texas-Mexico Borderlands, 1823-1891

Center for Texas Studies and TCU Press
Hardcover, 412 pages, \$29.95
Prs.tcu.edu



COLTON BROTHERS SAGA

BLACK RANGE REVENGE

"Action-packed and epic. A family saga with more twists than a mountain road."
—DAVID MORRELL, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Last Reville*

MELODY GROVES

www.melodygroves.net

BLACK RANGE REVENGE, new for March, is 5th in the Colton Brothers Saga. Revenge is set in southern New Mexico 1863.

KANSAS BLEEDS is 4th in the Colton Brothers Saga.

MELODY GROVES
KANSAS BLEEDS
COLTON BROTHERS SAGA

The Colton Brothers are up to their ears in danger as Melody Groves turns out another furiously paced novel sure to please lovers of old-fashioned Western fiction.

Kansas Bleeds is a rare combination of rough-and-tumble cowboy antics and fine writing... peppered with humor and laced with tension, this Colton Brothers' Western is as fine as they get.

MELODY GROVES

Jose de los Santos Benavides has the distinction of having five flags flying over his home of Laredo, Texas during his lifetime. When he was born in November 1823, Laredo was part of the Republic of Mexico. It was followed by the Republic of the Rio Grande, Republic of Texas, United States and the Confederate States of America, until 1865 when the Stars and Stripes was hoisted again. All this turmoil made for an exciting life for someone who enjoyed being both a politician and a soldier. The pinnacle of his military career was during the Civil War when Colonel Benavides became the highest-ranking Tejano in the Confederate army. Loyal to the end, he led his regiment in the Battle of Palmito Ranch, considered the last conflict of the war. Afterward, he returned to being a merchant and rancher, and in 1879 he began three terms in the Texas State Legislature. Jerry Thompson contends that Benavides “was one of the single most influential individuals in the nineteenth-century history of the border.” This thorough biography by a past president of the Texas State Historical Association explains why Benavides’s achievements as a Tejano statesman as well as a soldier should not be overlooked.

– Tom Clavin

Fiction

SALLY HARPER BATES

Willene, Jewel of the West

Self-published

Trade paperback, 268 pages, \$14

Sally Harper Bates has collected a lifetime of experiences from her family, friends and neighbors to build an authentic world and life for a woman living in the West from the 1920s to the near present time. Willene is a strong-willed woman who has made her share of mistakes and lived with the consequences. She has lived a hard life, but a good life. She has known the joys of love and family life, the heartbreak of loss, the struggles of ranching life in good times and bad. She has seen her children make their own mistakes and

overcome them. At the end, in her 90s, Willene can look back on a life well lived.

– Ann McCord

BRUCE BRADLEY

The Walker

The Pretlow Group
Trade paperback, 168 pages, \$9.95
BruceBradleyBooks.com

Bruce Bradley spins a yarn about Black Bart and the retribution he hands out to Wells Fargo by robbing their stagecoaches 28 times because of the way they wronged him earlier in his life. Before he became Black Bart, he had refused to sell his gold claim to the company, which reacted by purchasing the land surrounding his and stopping the water necessary to work his claim. Told from the perspective of Black Bart, the author covers a lot of ground in a short novel.

– Lynn Bueling

BRETT COGBURN

Buzzard Bait

Pinnacle
Mass-market paperback, 330 pages,
\$6.99
KensingtonBooks.com

This action-filled novel takes you on an adventure with “Widowmaker” Newt Jones as he goes looking for Matilda Redding’s grandson, Billy, who has been captured by a renegade Apache band. Jones is returning a favor to Matilda, who befriended and helped him. Tom Horn assists Jones in finding where the Indians have taken Billy, and the two men continue their quest to recover him. The story is filled with a lot of action that will keep your interest and keep you wondering what will happen next.

– Lowell F. Volk

MARY ELLEN DENNIS

Cirque

Five Star Publishing
Hardcover, 266 pages, \$25.95
Gale.Cengage.com/FiveStar

Here’s a novel with a fascinating storyline. Who isn’t interested in circuses, in P.T. Barnum, Tom Thumb and Jenny Lind? But even better, we are shown the smaller circuses and their finest acts - ropewalkers and trapeze artists and the

all-important elephant. Combine all this with murder and there’s a rip-roaring tale here, one that gathers Irish, French and American characters and travels with them throughout 1851 America. The plot touches on weird ways to commit murder – or perhaps justifiable homicide. Also covered are the dire straits of the Irish upon their arrival in America, freak shows and the California Gold Rush. Include a wonderful cast of characters and you’ve got a fine tale.

– Carol Crigger

RANDY LEE EICKHOFF

The Stone Place

Cane Hollow Press
Trade paperback, 350 pages, \$19.99

Against a tight-knit backdrop of high plains South Dakota ranch life in the early 1970s, Randy Lee Eickhoff has staged a rich drama of cultural turmoil and family upheaval. Accomplished word choice and pitch-perfect dialog drive a darkly compelling story told from multiple points of view. Billy, who leads with his emotions; Reppo, injured beyond repair; Ezekiel, Pantalones and Katherine; doomed Lucas Stone; and the Vietnam veteran, John Henry, who sorts it all out. Each actor plays a part in a grand tragedy as intimately familiar to me (who grew up across the border in Nebraska) as it is ultimately redemptive. With storytelling that’s quirky but polished, Eickhoff is a unique voice in the contemporary Western venue.

– Richard Prosch

LOREN D. ESTLEMAN

The Ballad of Black Bart: A Novel

Forge Books
Hardcover, 240 pages, \$24.99
US.Macmillan.com

The joys of reading a new Loren D. Estleman novel are many. First, the reader knows straight away that they are in the hands of a master storyteller with a command of language that is unequaled into today’s world of fiction. Lyrical, wry and thoroughly researched, nothing is left to chance. Not a word is out of place. A story about Black Bart, gentleman, poet and Wells Fargo stagecoach robber, going up against James B. Hume, a founding father of the art of detection,

seems tailor-made for Estleman. It is a cat-and-mouse mix of detective story and Western that not only is highly entertaining but highly informative. This is one not to be missed.

—Larry D. Sweazy

W. MICHAEL GEAR and KATHLEEN O'NEAL
Moon Hunt: A Novel of North America's Forgotten Past

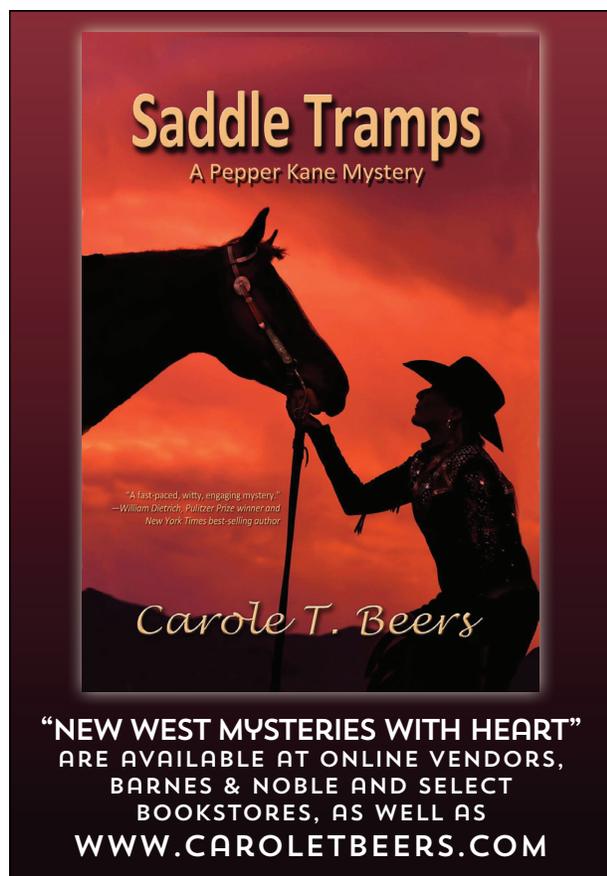
Forge Books
Hardcover, 414 pages, \$26.99
US.Macmillan.com

Michael and Kathleen Gear have done it again. Using information gleaned from archeological sites, they weave together complex societies that disappeared hundreds of years ago. *Moon Hunt*, the third book in the "Morning Star" series, brings to life the exotic culture of Cahokia, North America's prehistoric metropolis. This enthralling story begins at a fast pace that continues through to the end. It is one of those books that you want to continue reading to find out what happens next to the characters, but at the same time you don't want it to end. If you have not read the first two books in the series, *Moon Hunt* will rapidly bring you up to speed and keep you on the edge of your seat to the end.

—Bill Markley

JAMES J. GRIFFIN
Texas Jeopardy

Fire Star Press
Trade paperback, 314 pages, \$14.99
FireStarPress.com



With *Texas Jeopardy*, James J. Griffin returns to his Jim Blawczyk series of contemporary novels. A sixth-generation Texas Ranger, Blawczyk stumbles into a nest of drug runners – part of a larger, elusive criminal outfit. He makes a connection between the drug ring and the serial murders of elderly women in the area and that puts a pack of hit men on his trail. After someone fires shots at his family (which includes Blawczyk's pistol-packing mama), the case gets personal and the Ranger risks everything to stop the evil mastermind. Griffin flexes his Texas Rangers expertise, making the procedures and dialogue believable. Readers may occasionally bog down in overly meticulous details (highway numbers, left-right turns, etc.) but will enjoy the plot and action of *Texas Jeopardy*.

—Micki Fuhrman

MILANA MARSENICH
Copper Sky

Open Books
Trade paperback, 340 pages, \$16.95
Open-bks.com

Milana Marsenich's *Copper Sky* is set in the harsh mining town of Butte, Montana, in 1917. The story follows the lives of two women – one is a prostitute struggling with pregnancy and the other a Slavic immigrant being forced by her family to marry a man she doesn't know. Dark unspoken circumstances hidden in the past are slowly revealed and entwine the two women's lives. *Copper Sky* is a beautifully crafted book. Its prose verges on the poetic as it delves into complex human relationships of loss, depravity and struggle for existence as love works to redeem and restore lost lives. It's set during the Speculator Mine Disaster, in which 168 miners died. You won't put it down until you learn who lives and who dies.

—Bill Markley

JOHN D. NESBITT
Blue Springs

Fire Star Press
Trade Paperback, 250 pages, \$12.99
FireStarPress.com.

Wilf Kasmire is between jobs, between girlfriends and in an ongoing (though nonchalant) search for both. Dawn Jenkins, a former flame, calls him unexpectedly, asking for a place to stay for a few weeks. Wilf gallantly offers a spare room in his single-wide but senses there is trouble on her trail, which is confirmed when she disappears, leaving no note. Getting no help from local authorities (even though another young woman has been found murdered), Wilf takes on the task of finding Dawn himself. *Blue Springs* may not pin your ears back with nonstop action, but Wyomingite Nesbitt knows the lingo and the landscape well, delivering an engaging, descriptive tale.

—Micki Fuhrman

DAVID OSBORNE
The Coming

Bloomsbury USA
Hardcover, 519 pages, \$32
Bloomsbury.com

Nez Perce oral tradition relates that when Meriwether Lewis and William Clark's Corps of Discovery stayed with them, the expedition's co-leader, William Clark, had an affair with one of their woman and later she bore a son named Daytime Smoke. Not much is known about Daytime Smoke, who the Nez Perce introduced to many whites as Clark's son and who was one of those who fled with Chief Joseph in his attempt to reach Canada. David Osborne uses the framework of Daytime Smoke's life to recreate the Nez Perce society and its relations with Americans as they first explored, later hunted and trapped and eventually settled in the Nez Perce homeland.

– Bill Markley

ANN PARKER

A Dying Note: A Silver Rush Mystery

Poisoned Pen Press
Hardcover, 374 pages, \$26.95
PoisonedPenPress.com

Ann Parker adds another novel to her string of six mysteries featuring the protagonist Inez Stannert. Breaking from past settings, this one finds Inez moving from Colorado to San Francisco where she buys into a music store. There, a young musician's body, discovered floating in a canal, prompts Inez and her foster child to investigate. A complication arises after they learn the dead person had ties to Colorado. Now Inez's own notorious past is in danger of being exposed here in the place where she wanted to make a clean start. Through the novel's twists and turns, the mystery is resolved, and, as a good author might, Ann Parker leaves the door open for Inez to experience future adventures.

– Lynn Bueling

KRIS RADISH

A Dangerous Woman From Nowhere

Spark Press
Trade paperback, 265 pages, \$16.95
GoSparkPress.com

Raised in an orphanage, physically and emotionally abused, Briar doesn't understand kindness. She trusts no one. Her emotions are buried inside a hard shell until she meets Porter Logan. He finds a way into her heart, and they are building a future together in frontier Colorado when their world is turned upside down. Ruthless gold-mine owners make the mistake of kidnapping Porter for his skills with dynamite. They are about to find out that Briar Logan is a dangerous woman. In a twist on a common romance theme, Kris Radish has written a novel about a woman who will do what it takes to rescue her man.

– Ann McCord

DUSTY RICHARDS

The O'Malleys of Texas

Pinnacle
Mass-market paperback, 424 pages, \$7.50
KensingtonBooks.com

The O'Malleys are two young brothers that join Captain Emory Greg on their first cattle drive from Texas to sell

cattle at the railhead in Sedalia, Missouri, at the end of the Civil War. Harp O'Malley runs off the cook, and Captain Greg fires Simmons the trail boss, who was drunk, and tells Harp to take over as trail boss. The story starts out fast and continues to grow. It will keep your interest.

– Lowell F. Volk

GINA WELBORN and BECCA WHITHAM

The Promise Bride

Zebra Books
Mass-market paperback, 355 pages, \$7.99
KensingtonBooks.com

The Promise Bride is a romance and a who-dunit rolled into one. Emilia Stanek is a young woman who becomes a mail-order bride in an effort to rescue herself and her family from a life of poverty in a Chicago tenement. She arrives in Helena to find that her new husband by proxy has been murdered and his best friend, the sheriff, is looking for his killer. Romance follows, but on a bumpy path, with some surprises and interesting plot twists along the way. Welborn and Whitham have told an engaging story of an independent woman who fits her time, struggling to support her family and start a new life without breaking the rules of behavior set by society.

– Ann McCord

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF THE SPUR WINNERS AND FINALISTS!
YOU ARE A TRUE INSPIRATION AND WE APPLAUD YOUR CREATIVITY, HARD WORK, AND "STICK-TO-IT-TIVENESS."

I hope to see fellow WWA members at the 2018 Convention in Billings, Montana. If you know me, you'll know that this Southeastern girl is as excited about coming to Montana as if she were 10 years old getting a "Barbie's Blinking Beauty" horse for Christmas!

This will be my 4th convention so I still feel a bit like a newbie, on the one hand...but also as though I fit right in, on the other. I would like to thank everyone I've met through the Western Writers of America organization for your instant welcoming spirit, friendships, mentoring, encouragement, and support.

As one cowboy said to me at my very first convention, "Welcome to the tribe!" That has meant so much to me. I feel as though I have finally found my people - writers of words to be expressed via print, song, or speech; writers of the Western story.

Have a great convention, WWA members! Soak it all in. Make new friends, reacquaint with dear ones you might only see once a year, learn more about writing, be inspired!



See ya at day's end in the Roundup Room!
Denise McAllister

RICHARD S. WHEELER

The Business of Dying: The Complete Western Stories of Richard S. Wheeler

Center Point
Hardcover, 294 pages, \$34.95
CenterPointLargePrint.com

Owen Wister Award recipient Richard S. Wheeler has never been a prolific short-story writer, but when you're producing literate, richly characterized, award-winning novels of the West – more than 70 novels to his credit, and six Spur Awards – it's hard to find time to pen short fiction. The 10 stories in this collection show that the Montana-based writer can also master the toughest form of prose to write. These tales, historical and contemporary, humorous and sobering, prove that Wheeler's a consummate wordsmith and one of the best Western writers – in any format – of our time.

– Johnny D. Boggs

Book Notes

TOM CLAVIN

Dodge City: Wyatt Earp, Bat Masterson, and the Wickedest Town in the American West

St. Martin's Griffin
Trade paperback, 447 pages, \$16.99
StMartins.com

Tom Clavin's entertaining, critically acclaimed and *New York Times* bestseller, originally published last year, has been released in trade paperback. The book attempts to separate the rumors, legends and outright lies from the facts surrounding the historic Kansas stop on the Santa Fe Trail; the buffalo town, railroad town and cowtown that was made famous long before Matt Dillon stepped onto a street on radio and TV's *Gunslinger*.

HOWARD KAZANJIAN and CHRIS ENSS

The Young Duke: The Early Life of John Wayne

TwoDot
Hardcover, 224 pages, \$19.95
Rowman.com

First published in 2007, this slim overview of John Wayne's film career – focusing on his early years but covering his entire life – has been released in a revised edition by TwoDot. Plenty of photographs, but no footnotes and a skimpy bibliography.

