

WESTERNER

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THE PREMIER WESTERN CULTURE MAGAZINE

FEATURED INSIDE...

**ACTRESS CINDY MORGAN
TAKES US BEHIND THE SCENES
OF TWO FILM CLASSICS.**

**AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR
RANDALL DALE REVEALS
HIS SECRETS**

**"THE SECRET TO MY SUCCESS..."
WITH AUTHOR
SHEILA MCPHEE**

DEANO BY DEANA: DEAN MARTIN AT 100!

**THE LATE 'KING' OF COOL AS REMEMBERED BY HIS DAUGHTER IN HIS 100TH YEAR
WE TAKE A LOOK BACK AT HIS TREMENDOUS CAREER AS AN ACTOR, SINGER AND ICON.**

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



Dear Westerner© Readers:

It seems funny to think of the twentieth century as history. Many of us thought those vintage days would be all we'd have. Little did we know that texting, streaming, and Millennials would be a part of our future. That's the great part of living—you never know what you'll get next.

We have a great opportunity to look back, in this issue, to a time when complex had an entirely different meaning. I stayed at the hotel that Frank Sinatra frequented, in Chicago, about eight years ago and found a quaint item at his customary table. A white landline phone sat prominently atop the polished surface on which "Old Blue Eyes" set his numerous drinks.

Imagine a world without cell phones. I'm sure that Mr. Sinatra more than likely didn't need to take those calls from Hollywood and Las Vegas immediately, but that accoutrement certainly raised his status with the locals.

Before taking the trip through the magic time portal to those raucous days of the mid-1900s, you have to reset your mind for a time when answers weren't found on your cell phone app. These were days when neighbors gathered in backyards for picnics and kids played on well-trimmed and spacious front lawns while waiting for sunset to scan the skies for Sputnik's nightly circumvention of the globe.

Think in black and white but remember to color the edges in the Technicolor hues of the major Hollywood studios. These were the days when no one had to tell you to keep quiet about events that happened in Las Vegas. If you were there, you were probably thrilled to see Dean, Frank, or Sammy. Perhaps you'd seen them all at the same show.

The Rat Pack embodied the swinging, drinking, smoking, charismatic, and light-hearted days of the mid last century. No performer embodied the suave cool of the Rat Pack more than Dean Martin. Perhaps his only rival was fellow Italian-American, Frank Sinatra. The two would form a bond and friendship that transcended stage and screen.

Legendary is a word that is used lightly in today's society. Perhaps all such words have

been diluted by vapid enterprises like television's *Dancing with the Stars*. In the bygone days of the Twentieth Century, stars existed. They weren't all found in the heavens, either. Some could be found at famous restaurants on Hollywood's strip or off Broadway in New York City. Others gathered at tables in the capital of glitter and nightclub performances, Las Vegas.

Dean Martin was the first super-celebrity of modern times. His talent transcended any one idiom, and his personality was large enough to fill the biggest venues of the time. From his inauspicious start in little Steubenville, Ohio, he grew to one of the most stellar performers in history. But the man behind the legend is much more fascinating.

In this issue of *The Westerner*© we've taken the opportunity to pilfer a glimpse of Martin the man from one person who might know him best. Deana Martin is a singer and performer who sustains the style of her famous father. However, you might be surprised at her candid window into the family man behind the suave persona.

On the occasion of what would have been his 100th birthday, we'd like to pay tribute to the real Dean as well as the legend. You may believe that a little bit of nostalgia warms the heart. At least, that's the way I think. But that might just be *Amore*.

BB

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Spotlight on Western Writer Michael Haden

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Edited by:

Bruce G. Bennett General Partner

Nicholas Wale General Partner

Contact: dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com

**ACTRESS CINDY
MORGAN TALKS
ABOUT ICONIC MOVIES
AND THE UPS AND
DOWNS OF
HOLLYWOOD
STARDOM**



With Bruce Bennett, editor of the
Westerner©

Fans of the movies Caddyshack and Tron know the beautiful actress Cindy Morgan. What they might not know are the struggles to get to the big screen and behind the scenes antics. I caught up with the actress while she was in the middle of assembling a coffee table book featuring never seen photos and anecdotes on one of the funniest movies of the last century.

Here's the terrific result:

Cindy: I was in broadcasting, before anything else, and still have nightmares that I don't have my news pulled or my music pulled and I'm not ready. Cause I'd always show up at the last minute.

Bruce: Really?

Cindy: I was one of those. Morning drive, in Chicago, and I'd get there at a quarter to six. Read my meters real quick, pull my music, and we were reading wire copy at the time, so I was pulling wire copy to set up the news. The last minute I'd be ready to go.

Bruce: I love Chicago and the Hancock Building.

Cindy: It's not so much fun when you go there in the winter and there are ropes that go from the building to the street. The wind would pick you up and blow you into a car. Which it would. Which it did. The joke was, "How many times did you get knocked into a car this winter?"

They call it "The Windy City," not just because it's windy (because it is)—the buildings are set up like corridors and the wind comes through. They call the wind "The Hawk." They call it "The Windy City" because, at the Columbian Exhibition in the 1800s, the Chicago delegation came in and didn't shut up until they got the job.

Bruce: There was a book written, "The Devil in the White City," about the Columbian Exhibition.

Cindy: "The Devil in the White City?" Is it about Chicago?

Bruce: A fellow wrote a book, a true story, a lot of it was about how the guy who'd designed Central Park came in and was the chief architect for the Exhibition. In the meantime, there was this really nasty serial killer who'd set up shop back from the main city. He'd built a big building, and he was luring women in and hacking them to pieces.

Cindy: Here it is—"The Devil in the White City" published in 2003. H.H. Holmes, serial killer. Well, that's nice.

Bruce: I'm an avid reader.

Cindy: I miss that. It's been a really busy three years that I've taken over all my social media. I've taken over all of my computer work, all of my websites, because I had to. My dad used to be a plant manager in Chicago, a couple thousand people working for him. He used to always say, "Talk to the guy who sweeps the floor the same way you talk to the guy who owns the building. Because sooner or later, you're going to have to step in and do the job."

Thank God he did because I'm doing so much. I've got things under control now. I'm rebuilding my computer. Thank God I had back-up because I had to wipe all of my drives. I only had one iPad that never was corrupted. I had to take it out to my car, find an old thirty-pin adapter to connect it to my car, because that's the only thing that wasn't corrupted so I use it as a reference point.

I had back-up. So now I'm slowly but surely cherry picking things off my back-up drive and putting them onto my laptop. I was locked out of my own

social media, my own e-mails; these guys who were doing the job seemed to be trying to scare me. You know how people hold you hostage?

Bruce: I hide from everyone down in my little basement office.

Cindy: You're one of those guys who still lives in the basement? I got you.

Bruce: Yeah.

Cindy: So tell me about yourself.

Bruce: There's not much to tell. My business partner lives in a little town in England. A few years ago, he wanted to get into the book promotion business. When he started, he worked with a lot of Hollywood people. Classic movie stars.

He decided he wanted to promote books, and there were many people writing books, at the time, who weren't getting published. With the new ability to independently publish, he found a niche in promoting and publishing on the internet.

I'd been writing for my own amusement. I write really terrible books.

Cindy: You write terrible books? Is that what you just said?

Bruce: A teacher once told me that I ought to join a group that reads books and critiques them. Then they tell you what you're doing wrong. I said, "If I did that, there would be no way it would fit into a two-hour class." That would be a four-week program where people would

constantly berate me over my bad writing.

Cindy: I was in English Literature and had a writing class. I was a Communications major and English Lit minor, and we would do that too. How did you meet this guy who lives in central England?

Bruce: Everything is virtual now.

Cindy: It's a great deal of power and a great deal of responsibility. I had that pounded into my head, when I started in broadcasting forty years ago. The internet is the Wild West.

Bruce: Well, that's good because that's what we do. We publish Westerns.

Cindy: These are fiction?

Bruce: Yes. We publish on-line, in print, and in audible format. We started publishing the periodical, the *Westerner*, to keep in contact with our audience. The first two issues have been extremely well received, and we want to provide content that is interesting to our readers.

Cindy: I think that's a great idea. People are very visual. They call it Facebook for a reason. I can put up an essay and nobody looks at it twice. But if I put up a picture, it gets a lot of attention.

Bruce: Well, that's how we got to where we are today. We wanted to interview you because we thought you'd have much to say to our audience.

Cindy: I've never done any Westerns. I have ridden a horse a couple times.

Bruce: I think our demographic shows that you'd be a good fit for our magazine.

Cindy: I think I understand what you're saying. Though, more females are appreciating me through my interviews. It's hard work. I just didn't show up and become Lacey Underall or Yori in *Tron*. A lot goes into it.



Bruce: What projects are you working on now?

Cindy: As I said, in the last year, I've taken over my social media and website. There will never be another tech that handles my devices. I'd rather hand them my purse. I'm not kidding.

There was a massive learning curve because I had to wipe everything to keep people from my data. Now I'm

rebuilding it, and I've got a book in process. But the book on the making of the book is going to be far more interesting than the book itself. You won't believe what people will do for power and control. Have you seen that?

Bruce: I've not run into many powerful people.

Cindy: They're not powerful. They're trying to take over. I would share. I've got plenty to do. I live near the beach so I have plenty to do here. I'm finally working with a management company that I'm feeling comfortable with so I can hand some things over to them.

I'm getting the chance to do a lot of personal appearances. Can you imagine someone contacting you to invite you to an event and then treating you like part of the family? It's an amazing thing. My dad always taught me that it was a job. I started by wiring circuit boards for Arctic Cat snowmobiles in my dad's factory. It's a job.

I remember when I called him. I said, "Hey, Dad, I got a big movie for Disney called *Tron*. It's this big CGI movie."

He responded, "That's great, Cinth. When you coming home?"

I'm very lucky because I did two very different films. It wasn't 'til about five years ago that people realized that was me in those films.

Bruce: You're writing?

Cindy: Finishing the book. What's great about the new inception of the book is, over time, I copywrited over 17,000

images of the making of *Caddyshack*. Behind the scenes images.



The book started out about me. But now, the first book is going to be a coffee table book about the making of *Caddyshack* and what it was like. I'm writing it from my point of view. Imagine doing your first film and being dropped into *Caddyshack*.

I had to pick a timeline. You shoot films out of sequence. So I walk the reader through what it was like for me. The first scene I did was the high dive. I can't dive, and I can barely swim. Without correction, I'm pretty much legally blind. I had to climb that board without my lenses in. Lenses in 1979 were hard lenses, and if I'd have hit the water at that speed, a doctor would've had to take them out.

I had to climb the board blind, and walk back and forth, then jump into cement – as far as I knew. That was my

first shot – and walking past the pool. I remember sitting in the ladies room getting dressed, thinking, *I'm not this person*. I went to twelve years of Catholic school, four years of Catholic girl's school, *are they crazy?*

The only reason I got the job was because I had nothing to lose. I thought, "They're never going to cast me for this." They did. So the first shot I did was walking past the pool and somehow it worked. Then I climbed the board and somehow that worked. The photos I got were awesome.

In one, you can see the stunt diver standing next to me, showing me how to spring. You can see us side by side. She's got the same costume as me, and she's showing me how to warm up to the dive so I can do the right moves. I actually had to take the spring, then they cut to the real diver.

You can also see her watching me walk on the high board with her hands on her head. She was scared to death because I was up there. That was my first day and my first shot. It was awesome.

Bruce: You were in broadcasting in Chicago and went from that to film?

Cindy: I first got an Irish Spring commercial. I was doing Morning Drive in Chicago. I went from mid-day, to Afternoon Drive, to morning. I had a good slot in what, at the time, was the second largest market. I was making \$135 per week. I was working for the Chess Checker Record people. I believe those were the guys they wrote the movie *Cadillac Records* about.

They didn't want to pay me any more, so I went out to try some commercials. I had done on-camera before. I had a talk show, I did the weather really badly in Rockford, Illinois. I was the worst weather person in the world. I'd switch the oceans, okay? I had good ratings. I think people tuned in just to see what I'd say.

I worked in Milwaukee and then ended up in Chicago. Thing was, they wouldn't let me on camera in Chicago because they said I was the radio person. So I moved to LA. Within a month, I got an Irish Spring commercial that paid my bills until I got *Caddyshack* eight months later.

Bruce: So you went to audition for *Caddyshack* and got the job?

Cindy: I never thought I'd get the job. I remember reading for the casting director and may have had one more audition. I really wasn't concerned because they had no reason to cast someone like me. I went to the last reading and began to panic because I saw I was the only person on the list to read.





I went in to read with Chevy Chase, Jon Peters, Doug Kenney—I didn't know who Jon Peters was at the time. Chevy, I kind of had heard of, but I was always studying and did very little TV watching. Doug Kenney, I didn't know. I gave myself one assignment: "Just make the man you're reading with sweat." When I saw Doug Kenney sweating, I knew I had the job.

Bruce: So in 1979, Chevy Chase and Bill Murray – Rodney Dangerfield was a big star at the time.

Cindy: I don't mean to correct you, but he wasn't a big star at the time. He did the Carson show, he had a nightclub act, but he'd been supporting his family selling aluminum siding. This was his first film. He was very nervous.

Bruce: These guys were early in their careers, and we didn't know they were going to be stars.

Cindy: Chevy had done *Foul Play* and Bill had done film. When I found out I was working with people from SNL, I stopped watching the show. I didn't want to walk into a job with any preconceptions or any nervousness about working with someone larger than life. I wanted to meet them as people and just do my job.

Bruce: What was it like to work with them?

Cindy: They were four of the funniest men on the planet who had very different styles. Thank God I had a little improv training and five years in broadcasting because anything can and will happen on the air. Thank God I had an improv teacher who told me to "shut up and follow the action."

You can tell I like to do all the talking, which comes from being on the radio and doing all the talking. He said, "Morgan, you're the straight. You set up the joke and react to the joke. Stop going for the joke. You're not the funny one. You will score by following the action."

This is old Vaudeville training. This guy went back. Harvey Lembeck was my teacher. He was trained by Phil Silvers. He was trained in a time when comedy had rules. Thank goodness, I learned, because my best work in *Caddyshack* was following the action.

That piano scene where Chevy sings *I Was Born to Love You* was not in the script; we didn't even talk about it. I was getting my makeup touched up and Harold Ramis said, "Come over

here and sit down next to Chevy on the piano.” I said, “Why?”

He said, “Just do it.”

I asked, “Why?”

He said, “Just sit down and say *sing me a love song*.”

So I said, “Sing me a love song.”

Next time you watch that scene, watch my eyes. I’m looking at him like, *what the hell are you doing? Are you crazy?* Which is what a normal person would do. Then all of a sudden, you see me laugh. Because, out of the corner of my right eye, I see the camera light on. That’s how I found out we were filming a scene.

You can’t rehearse that. You can’t plan what we did. I call it being struck by *comedy lightning*. You don’t plan or try to do it, but it happens. When you get it right, you’re lucky. We were very lucky. They were very talented people. It just worked.

Bruce: It’s crazy that you mentioned Harold Ramis. I loved Harold Ramis.

Cindy: Harold Ramis was such a sweetheart. Half of what Lacey did was him whispering in my ear, *Why don’t you try this?* I’d ask “why?” He’d reply, “Just do it.”

The way we shot it was like *Animal House* on a golf course. Nobody knew what we were going to shoot, when we were going to shoot, the script was thrown away. The original story was about the caddies. It evolved into something completely different.

I would just get up in the morning, roll through hair, makeup, and wardrobe, then go out on the set and see if we were doing anything that involved me or not. I was walking past the clubhouse and Harold said, “Come over here. I want you to see this.”

He was behind camera, and I was there with him. I look up by the clubhouse where somebody had planted a bunch of mums—they were freshly planted—and there’s Billy Murray whacking at them with a club.

I said, “What the hell?”

All I could think of was they were never going to be able to reset that shot. *What is he doing?* What I didn’t know is that Harold had whispered into his ear. “Bill, do the background talk. Do the commentary. You are the guy on the golf course.”

It was brilliant. He’s that good. But I’m watching it, thinking, *is he crazy?* How many shots do you have at something like that? A lot of what we did was a one take deal. It just happened.

Bruce: *Caddyshack* was a big movie at the time and continues to be a classic.

Cindy: It actually didn’t do so well when it came out. It wasn’t well received. Over time, *Caddyshack* picked up popularity and is more popular now than it ever was.

Bruce: If you look at movies of that time, you’d have to list *Caddyshack* as a classic. You mentioned *Animal House*, and when I first saw that movie, it broke all the rules.

Cindy: I loved it. I said, “This is so cool.”

Little did I know, a year later, I’d be working with the same guys.

Bruce: *Caddyshack* is really a great movie.

Cindy: There’s something about it that’s timeless. I guess, because we’re in golf clothes, it doesn’t feel dated.

Bruce: That really launched Bill Murray’s career.

Cindy: He only had a few days on the set, and all this was done in those days. He only had a few lines. That entire gopher sequence was shot after the fact. There was no animatronic gopher on the set. There was a gopher hand puppet where Rodney Dangerfield says, “Hey, that kangaroo stole my ball.”

When they got all the film back to the studio, and because everybody was ad-libbing, there was no story line. They shot the gopher sequence and threaded that story through the film.

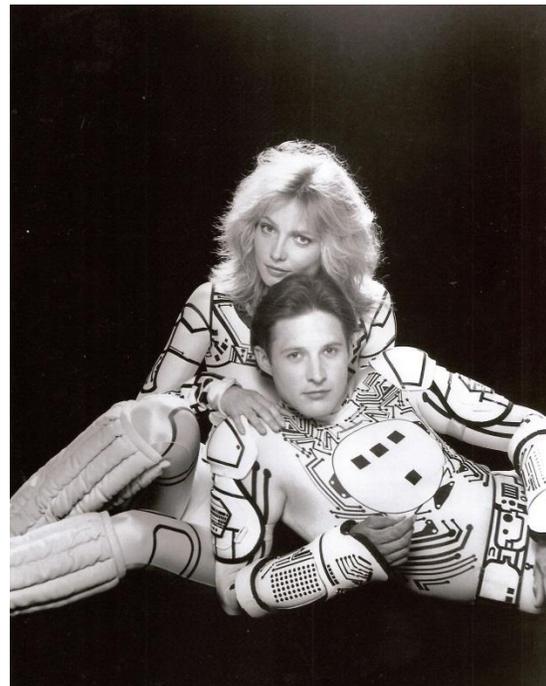
Bruce: Okay. *Caddyshack*—today we look back at it as a great ground-breaking comedy. *Tron*, not so much. *Tron* broke new ground in a different way and stars one of my favorite actors of all time.

Cindy: Jeff Bridges. Jeff is great. I remember when I heard I was going to work with Jeff, all I had seen him in was *King Kong*. I was thinking, what is this hippie-looking dude going to be like? When you meet Jeff, he’s so charismatic and fun. That’s him, pretty much. He’s that guy.

He’s great to work with. Easy going. Just knows his stuff. He has a pedigree. He does it with such ease and charisma that he was a pleasure to work with.

Bruce: Tell me a little bit about *Tron*.

Cindy: I told you about the improv class I was taking. There were three classes, and I was in the lowest class of twenty-four. In the upper class, there was this guy I was dating, who said he got a job in a cartoon. He said he was having lunch and asked me if I wanted to go.



So I had lunch at The Chronicle in Venice, CA. They were talking about the cartoon, and I listened and thought “whatever.” Then I did *Caddyshack*. I didn’t work for a long time after *Caddyshack*. I fired my agent and moved to William Morris where I had more lunches with agents than auditions.

Out of the blue, I get a call for *Tron*. I get these sides, the pages, which made no sense to me. The first audition was at the Disney Studio, and I was immediately put on tape with Jeff Bridges. The scene itself made no sense. It was an action scene, and I thought the whole thing a big mess. Then I get the job.

What I didn't know was that the cartoon, from the guy I was dating, was *Tron*. It went from being animation to CGI. Unfortunately, he was out and I was in. They took his characters and split them into two—the Jeff Bridges and Bruce Boxleitner characters.

It wasn't until many years later when I asked Larry, "*Was that Tron?*"

He said, "Yes, it was *Tron* and I never took an actress to lunch again."

That's how I got *Tron*, going to lunch. *Tron* was heavily choreographed. It was on the Disney lot where the suits would come in and watch what we were doing. It was a big, empty black sound stage. It was shot in black and white. We would run in scenes in these unbelievably difficult costumes and we'd have to hit a mark.

We were lit to hit a specific point after running twenty steps in. We had to learn to walk backwards in a running stance so we would hit that spot. You can't look down. There is no spot. You had to hit it exactly so that you were right in front of camera.

You'd say lines that made no sense at the time. I remember talking to Steven Lisberger, and I said, "I've got a small

technical background and I don't know what I'm saying. How's anyone else going to know what I'm saying?"

Steven said, "The movie's not for them."

Tron did okay, but it didn't do what I thought it would. *Caddyshack* fans, it's a lifestyle. It's remembering a time before a lot of bad things happened. *Tron* is more of a spiritual attachment. People are more attached to it on an emotional level. You would not believe how many people I meet who say they became computer techs because of the movie *Tron*. They fell in love with it when they were kids.



Bruce: I love the story. I bought into it completely when it came out.

Cindy: It's sort of corny – some of the lines are so hard to say. But it has an innocence about it that plays.

Bruce: Disney seems like they'd be super controlling.

Cindy: You mean like ENCOM in the movie *Tron*?

Bruce: Exactly.

Cindy: They have a brand, and it's a very good brand. I understand—that's the way they do business. They put their name on the line. Now they have Marvel and the Star Wars franchise. They've got a couple of winning hands there.

Bruce: They know what they're doing when it comes to entertainment.

Cindy: They want to win. Their reputation depends upon it.

Bruce: After *Tron*, what were you thinking? Where did you want to take your career?

Cindy: You make it sound like it's all to me. When in fact, at that time, there were only three and a half networks, Fox had just come out, HBO was new, we would shoot ninety pilots a year. I would shoot a pilot a year and only twenty would be selected. Today, anything that's shot gets on the air somewhere.

Very often, decisions were not made on how good the project was. The Dick Van Dyke Show wasn't getting ratings the first couple years. Somebody believed in it.

When I first got to LA, I thought everybody is doing something and nobody really knows what they're doing. I got confirmation of that thought, back in 1996, when I was a producer. You can't plan movie magic. It happens or it doesn't.

Bruce: I used to enjoy movies more than I do today. Even though my on-demand TV has hundreds of movies, very few of them are worth watching.

Cindy: Back then, movies would be in theaters for six months. People would camp out to see the next *Star Wars*.

Now when a film gets released, it gets pulled. In six months, it's on DVR. It's a whole different process. Show business is like a scale with one side show and the other business. Today, I think it's tipped a little bit more toward business.

Bruce: Nobody's making the kind of movies we've been talking about. It's difficult to look back over the past twenty years and say, "This movie changed the direction of film. With the exception of *Titanic*."

Cindy: *Avatar* was pretty awesome.

Bruce: You're correct. *Avatar* was another one.

Cindy: Same guy, James Cameron.

Bruce: Those are huge budget films.

Cindy: There are small budget films that are awesome. I'm watching PBS, which I swore I'd never watch. *Downton Abbey* is an example of how you get drawn in because it's done so well.

Demographics are more tightly targeted. There's always a plan. People are trying to make financial success out of things. There are hundreds of networks. People ask me, "Haven't you been following such and such?" and I say, "I've been following something else."

Bruce: I used to go to a movie every weekend.

Cindy: It used to be an event to go to a film. Now it will be on cable or it will be on Netflix. *I've got a fifty-inch screen, and I'll just wait.*

Bruce: What books do you like?

Cindy: The *Tipping Point* got my attention. It's a new way of thinking. There was something obvious in front of me, and it took that author to articulate it. He analyzes social phenomenon and lays it out simply. It's a short book and, if you're running through an airport, you can read it on the plane. I like to read books on the plane.

Bruce: What have I missed about you and your career?

Cindy: The market's evolved, and I've evolved. Anybody who is the entertainment industry has evolved. This is a media-determined society. Social media has become very important. I speak for myself now. Social media is powerful. You can't walk into a movie theater and yell *fire*. Yet, on social media, anyone can write

something that comes into their head and create a problem.

Social media has become part of my life. I'm lucky enough to go places and meet people. I knew better actors and people with better contacts, but I was lucky enough to be in two projects that became classics. If it takes longer to finish my book, I'll take the time. I'm releasing myself on-line. When I find a page that's interesting, I put it up.

Marketing is all on-line now. If you ignore social media, you're not on this planet.

Bruce: Thank you for your time, and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Cindy: Thanks for saying so, and remember to have a look at *Caddyshack*, *The Inside Story*.

Bruce: I will!

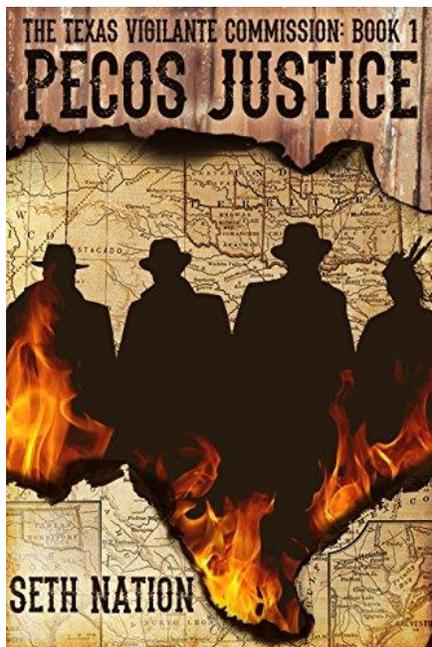
Talk to us about this article by e-mailing the Westerner© at dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com.

READERS OF THE NATION

With the Westerner© Editor, Bruce G. Bennett

Let me make a prediction: Seth Nation will be mentioned along with the best Western authors in history. Why do I say such a thing? The writer, who wants to be known as a storyteller, is one of the most read on Kindle today. Despite being an independently published author, his books have skyrocketed past American standards and continue to be in demand month after month.

Luckily, for Western readers, about the time this magazine is published, we'll have another great Nation Western in our hands. Six Gun Thunder is one of the most anticipated novels of this year. It won't end here. Not by a long shot. This is just the beginning of what I'm thinking is going to be a long and successful writing career.



I caught up with Seth at his home. Here's what followed:

Bennett: Seth Nation. Thanks for giving me a few minutes tonight. I can't tell you what a pleasure it is to finally speak with one of my favorite Western authors first hand.

Nation: Thanks for saying so. I don't think of myself as a writer, though. Even before I started with the Westerns, I liked to tell stories. People said I was a good storyteller, and the rest came naturally, I guess.

Bennett: For a guy who doesn't consider himself to be a writer, you've sure had good success gaining the attention of readers.

Nation: I'm glad people like the books. The first Western I wrote, *The Devil's Brand*, was a longer story that I spent a good amount of time writing. I wanted it to be different and better than the stories I've read from others. By no means do I consider myself to be better, but I wanted that for my story. I wanted something original.

There's not much new in Westerns. Most of what you read has already been written by someone else. That's why it's important to put a new spin on existing subjects. I want the reader to be excited about my book from the beginning and not want to put it down until the end. I want it to be fast-paced.

I'm not the kind of guy who I saw writing a series. However, I like the way series writers develop characters from one book to the next. When I decided to try the *Vigilante* series, I looked at how

to do that differently than I'd seen in the past. By cutting out a lot of the setup, I think I've captured all of the good action that readers like.

Bennett: Readers certainly are consistently buying your books. What are your plans for the near future?

Nation: I'm thrilled people like the books. It's an up and down type of market. I've actually had a good March. The key to consistency is finding a good title and putting that together with a cover that sells. I like to do my own covers. I've got accessibility to artists and find it more satisfying to come up with something new.

I see too many books with those Roy Rogers type of covers, and while there is a definite audience for that, I want my covers to be modern, and I want the cover image to be as much a part of the story as the pages themselves. When I think of my readers, I want to give them the best. It's funny... I spend a lot of time researching titles for my books, as do others. When a specific title works, it tends to get overused quickly.

I love to check out other Westerns, but sometimes I'll open the book sample and find six or seven errors in the first paragraph. I think readers deserve more.

As far as where I'm going this year? I have ideas for five or six more books before the end of the year. I have a new book, *Six Gun Thunder*, which should be out by the end of the month. I'd like to get to the point where I could be writing all the time.

Bennett: You like to read Westerns from other authors?

Nation: Not only read the books, but keep in touch with them. I think Western authors have a great little community. Heck, I'm probably the last generation that grew up watching Westerns on TV. I'm a little young to have read those pulp novels from the sixties and seventies, but I love Westerns.

I picked up your book, *Preacher's Corner*, when it first came out. I also read books from John D. Fie, Anne Holt, and Ralph Cotton. I love the new magazine, the *Westerner*©. You guys are doing a great job putting together a place where Western authors can keep in touch with what's happening.

Man, I'll tell you, I read the letter from a reader in the last issue who said they thought I was a great author, and I had to call Nick [Wale] and ask him if that was for real. It gave me such a great feeling to know that somebody enjoys what I do.

Bennett: We get a great response from readers, and everyone wants to know more about you. It seems you've been able to capture a faithful audience in a short time.

Nation: Well, I'm sort of OCD about the way I do things. I'm into data analytics, and I track when people buy my books. So I can tell you between which times most of my books are sold and on which days. So I don't waste my time posting all of the time. I post when my readers are most likely to see what I'm writing.

Social media, SEO, gives an independent guy like me a great way to contact buyers. I see the same names on reviews on Goodreads and on Amazon for just about every book. My thinking is that a large number of the same people are reading Westerns all the time. You know, instead of turning on the TV over a weekend, they grab a book and relax on the couch and read.

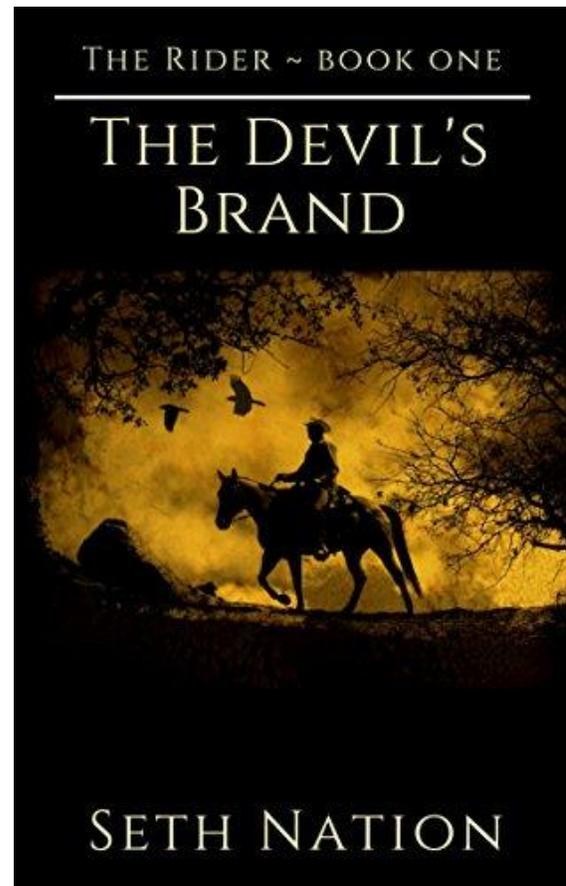
Bennett: What books do you like to read?

Nation: *Lonesome Dove* is my favorite. The way he has his two main characters, Gus McCrae and Woodrow Call, interact is amazing. That's what's great about Larry McMurtry is his characterization. I also like to concentrate less on building the scene around events and focus on the characters. Heck, in McMurtry's book *The Last Kind Word's Saloon*, the first two chapters are two guys talking to each other on the front porch. It's all dialogue.

Bennett: Simon and Schuster pumped millions of marketing dollars into *Lonesome Dove*. Still, your books have all been inside of the top five best sellers on Kindle, and I'm sure you don't have that kind of a budget. Why do you think readers are gravitating to you?

Nation: I think the concentration I have on producing the best quality work comes through for people. I know people tell me they love my books and ask me if there will be a sequel to *The Devil's Brand*. Like I said, I didn't think I would be a sequel kind of guy, but I will write a second book using those

characters. I think the success of the *Vigilante* series so far has shown me that readers really like engaging with the characters and developing a familiarity with them.



The *Vigilante* books are a little shorter but packed full of action. Western readers like books better when you get to the point. So I don't write, "There was a purple sunset." Instead, I keep the action going. The first part of my book is the introduction—it sets the action. Then the middle of the book tells the story and keeps the action going. The end of my book is non-stop gunfights and is action-packed.

That's the reason I think people buy my books. They know they're getting something honest, well-written, and no

fluff. I take out the fluff and keep the action going.

Bennett: I'm like most Western readers and highly anticipate reading your new one, *Six Gun Thunder*. Can you give away a little of the plot of your next book?

Nation: I can tell you that, for the first time, I'll have a female as one of the main characters. People who've loved *Pecos Justice*, *The Devil's Brand*, and *Dead Man's River*, will like *Six Gun Thunder*. Once again, I researched the title and have something totally different.

I'm always surprised about how quickly my books reach the top. I'm really proud of this one and hope everyone will give it a try.

Bennett: Well, I want to thank you for spending your time with me tonight. It's been great to meet you, and I look forward to grabbing a copy of your new book. By the way, how did you like my book, *Preacher's Corner*?

Nation: [Laughs] I thought it was good. Your character, Torrent, was a great character.

Bennett: Are you just saying that to be nice?

Nation: Would I do that?

BB

**DEANA MARTIN TALKS
ABOUT HER
SUPERSTAR FATHER
ON THE ANNIVERSARY
OF HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY**



With the Westerner© Editor, Bruce Bennett

Dean Martin would have been 100 years old on June 7 of this year. When I sat down to write an introduction to this thoroughly enjoyable interview with his talented daughter, Deana, I realized that nothing I could write would capture the man.

He was larger than life. The twentieth century gave us motion pictures and television, and for that we'll always be truly blessed. These records of an amazing time in history will always allow us to have a glimpse of what was. The problem I have with that statement is that Dean Martin lives on to this day in music, comedy, and movies.

In a day when great entertainers were more prolific than potholes on a Philadelphia highway, Dean surpassed the most stellar of stars. With his wonderful voice and amazingly quick wit, he was one of the most beloved personalities of his era and continues to be loved today.

We were privileged to have the opportunity to speak with actress, musician, and entertainer, Deana Martin about her own great work and how her father affected her work ethic and life. Here is the surprising result:

Bruce: Deana, Thank you for taking my call. I know you're busy, and I appreciate you giving me a few minutes to ask what you're doing these days?

Deana: I'm working on quite a few things. This is the 100th birthday year for Dean Martin. He was born June 7, 1917, so this would be his centennial year. We're working on a documentary, which I think will be terrific.

We interviewed Florence Henderson before she passed away, and Bob Newhart, Tommy Tune, Norman Lear, Regis Philbin, and Frankie Avalon. We interviewed people who were important in my dad's life, and I think the documentary will be amazing. The

documentary will be out at the end of the year.

I'm working on getting my book *Memories Are Made of This* made into a movie. Joe Montegna called me, after he read the book. He said, "Deana, I want to do the movie!" I said, "It's not a movie, it's a book right now."

I have another album coming out at the end of the year, *Deana Sings Deano*. I be performing at the Friar's Club on June 7, my father's birthday. Of course, I have my concerts coming up all over. You haven't come to one of my concerts have you?

Bruce: I've not. I don't get to do much. I mostly sit in my basement and write things.

Deana: You sound like me. I'm in my basement right now. In my studio. [She sings] *Don't get around much anymore*.

Bruce: Yeah, that's great! You can sing for me all you want. If you just want to sing for twenty minutes, that would be fine.

Deana: I can do that. My husband says I can't stop myself from singing. Someone says a line, and I just come up with a song. Growing up in the house I grew up in, there was music everywhere.

Bruce: You're a terrific singer, a terrific performer. I have some of your recordings, but I just received the book yesterday and have only had a chance to leaf through it. I really like the way it looks and the way it's formatted.

Deana: You're going to love it – you won't be able to put it down. When it first came out, I'd just received it. Ellen Degeneres' mother, Betty, lived across the hall from me. I took it to her on November third of that year. When I came back, she knocked on my door and said, "Deana, I'm so upset you gave me your book! I didn't even get to vote this year because I couldn't put down the book. I stayed in my pajamas all day then all of a sudden it was too late to vote."

I asked her if that was good, and she told me it was great. I thought that was kind of cute that she even missed going out to vote because she loved the book so much. But you're going to love it.

Bruce: Becoming an author is a big step. Obviously, this was a great story for you, but tell me about the process ramping up to writing this?

Deana: It was quite amazing. After my dad passed away, we went to Steubenville, OH—that's where he was born. They were celebrating Dean Martin Day. It was amazing that he grew

up in Steubenville, OH and became one of the biggest stars in the world. His father came over on the boat, September 11, 1913.



He had two sons. One became a businessman and one became Dean Martin. He was a barber. My grandmother was a seamstress. It was amazing, to me, that he came from that little town. My husband and I went to the Dean Martin festival, and I met a lot of dad's friends. I began to think that I should be writing things down.

None of us had actually gone back to Steubenville. Once dad left there and made it big, we were all living in Beverly Hills. I have a sister and brother, who were born there; I was born in New York. But I sat there with all these people that

my dad knew and said, "I would like to interview all of you. I'm going to come back in a few months, we're going to sit down – I'm going to make a big lunch, we're going to tape stories about my dad."

So my husband and I did this. We set up some cameras, we had lunch, and people just came over and talked to me. They talked about growing up in Steubenville and knowing Dean Martin. There were things that came out about dad which I had no idea. Listening to them, I thought, *I have to write a book.*

I bought some steno pads and began calling friends of dad's like Sonny King, Alan King, Jerry Lewis, to find out what they knew about Dad. I knew him as this fun and fabulous person. He would come in and he was fun, a marvelous singer, and never got mad at anyone. But I didn't know him that well. I wanted to know what other people knew.

So I went and interviewed everybody and took my tape recorder. I'd make notes. I took notes from all his friends in Steubenville and the people that he had worked with through the years. I found amazing stories. The stories led from one to another. Thank God there was a shutdown date when I had to be finished, or I'd still be writing the book.

One memory led to another, and it became remarkable to me what Dad meant to the world. It was tough writing about all the things I went through in my life. But I found we were like just about every other family. There were marriages, divorces, deaths, and births.

The whole thing of having Frank Sinatra, Uncle Frank, Uncle Sammy Davis, Jr., plus things my mother went through. I thought, *This is going to be a fantastic book*. I sat at the dining room table and just started writing. I'd learned so much from these people who'd known my dad.

I'd be at a show and someone would come up after and say, "Deana, I love your show and you're great. I'm your dad's number one fan. I remember..."

One man told me, "I was riding my motorcycle from LA to Las Vegas, and it broke down at some gas station in Barstow. Then this limo pulls up, and I ask the limo driver if I can get a ride. 'Where are you going?' He replied, '*We're going to Vegas.*' 'Do you think I can get a ride because my bike broke down?' He said, '*You'll have to ask these guys.*'"

He got in and it was Dean, Frank, and Sammie. They were on the way to Las Vegas. He told me, "They gave me a ride and asked me if I wanted a beer!"



I realized my dad had touched the lives of all these people, so I said to myself, *I've got to write this book*. It was tough, and fun, and quite something for me to be able to put down.

Bruce: While I was preparing to speak with you, it became apparent to me that you're very hard-working and driven. Tell me about that.

Deana: In so many things, I'm exactly like my dad. Especially in the way you make time to get everything into your day. I'll never forget when he told me, "Deana, always be on time. If you're not ten minutes early, you're late. Be on time, know your lines, stand on your mark, make people happy, do your work and get out."

Everything was compartmentalized. Do this, do this, do this. That's how he was able to get up in the morning, go play golf and play cards in the afternoon if he wasn't working. He kept everything in

neat little times, and that's what I learned from him. It was always to take care of yourself, take care of your work, eat right and take care of your body, and exercise so that you can keep going and do what you need to do.

There's so many things that I want to do in my life that I understand the whole timing of everything. I wanted to learn. I thought he was an unbelievable singer so I went to him and said, "Dad, shall I take voice lessons?" He said, "Why? Do you want to sound like everybody else in the choir?" He said, "Be your own voice; get your own style."

This was totally different from when I talked to Frank Sinatra. We were going to sing a song on my dad's TV show and I said, "So, Uncle Frank, how do you do it? How do you get that voice? How do you sing?"

He said, "Well, it's all about the air. I take in a deep breath, push from the diaphragm. I can tell even before a note comes out if I'm going to be on pitch or not."

I'm saying, *my God, does my dad do this?* He says, "No. Your father has no idea what he's doing. He just does it."

These little things I've picked up along the way, I want to learn more. I want to maybe go into different genres of music.

I love the great America songbook. I'd started in country. My first album was with Lee Hazelwood on Reprise Records. I was kind of country. Then I went into rock and roll.

When my dad passed away, I started listening to his music. I thought, *I need to be doing the great American songbook*. My dad taught me to just keep going. Try to make yourself better and to learn more. There was something so interesting about him that makes me want to learn more and try new things.

So I think it's that I'm driven to do it; I love what I do. When I get up on stage, and I'm singing these songs with great musicians behind me and I'm getting the audience response, it's right there, live and happening. That's exciting to me. Going into Capitol Studios to record this last album, *Swing Street* with Patrick Williams and Al Schmidt. Being there in Studio A and doing the whole thing with fabulous musicians.

Just walking down the hall and seeing the photographs of Bobby Darin, Nat King Cole, Judy Garland, Dad, Frank Sinatra was an overwhelming experience that made me want to do more and learn more. I'm on the road two hundred and eighty days out of the year.

There'll be another book. Just from the time that I wrote the first book, there's

so much more that I've learned. I get up every day and get to do something new, something else. If it's creating a book, creating music, it's something I love to do.



My husband and I write all my shows. I've got a roast coming up. I'm going to roast Dennis Bono. It's the shows, going out doing the work, being creative... they're going to have to get the hook. When they want me off, they'll just have to get the hook because I will do it for as long as I live. I just love it.

Bruce: I haven't had the chance to read the book yet, and I imagine that folks who've read the book have a lot of insight. I grew up with Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin on the phonograph. My mother and father loved to listen to records. New generations are discovering that kind of music, especially around the holidays when those great holiday songs are played on the radio.

Fans of Dean Martin know him as a great performer. He was certainly a great singer, tremendous comedian, a great actor, really an all-around performer. So we know all of the things that Dean Martin was. What don't we know?

Deana: I don't know that people know he tried to make it home every night for dinner. I think they have a whole different impression of him. To this day, I'm surprised when people come up to me and ask, *How did he do that when he drank all day?*

That's the impression that many people have of him. I remember what Frank Sinatra told me one time, which was one of his great lines: "I spill more than Dean drinks."

Dad told me once, "Deana, the reason I do all this is so I can make money for you kids and play golf."

That's what was in his head. For me, it hurt very much when my mom and dad were divorced. That's when he met Jeanne and fell in love with Jeanne. Who wouldn't? She was a beautiful blonde, and they had their life. It was tough for me, my mom, and my sisters.

I remember asking him, "How could you leave us?"

He said, "Well, I fell in love with Jeanne."

That happened again when he left Jeanne for Cathy. So it was just life. You're up and down during your life. There's marriages, divorces, death, children. I know when I lost my brother, Dean Paul, it was devastating to Dad. We couldn't believe he was gone because he had such a life force.

Dad went on, but it was like the wind was knocked out of him. That was Dean, Jr. that he lost. Mother took it much better. Jeanne understood it, but that was her first son that passed away. The thing about Dad was that he would just go on.

I never saw my dad get mad. He would take it and take it, and when he had it up to here, he'd say, *That's it*. No big fight. Same as with the split with Jerry Lewis—he'd had it up to here. They had ten years together and that was great. When they broke up, it was finished. For Dad, that was it. You move on to the next thing.

Jeanne told me, "Your dad went home and made a fried egg sandwich."

There was something about him that allowed him to put things out of his mind. He didn't worry about things being over. That was great for him. Things touched him so deeply that he didn't want to go there. He was Italian. He was proud to be an Italian. His

mother, Angela, taught him how to be strong. It was an amazing life growing up with him.

But, going through all the different stages of his life and watching him, I would have loved for him to have been a better father. He was a great dad. He was there, he was fun; but I would have liked him to take me places and talk to me about things that were important. Give me a little more guidance. My mother did that, and that was great. But I would have liked him to do that.



He would rather just give you a present and have dinner with you and laugh. He didn't want to get into deep discussions about anything. That made him sad. But I would have liked to have had more

time with him, one-on-one, talking about the things that mattered to me.

I remember when I was sixteen years old, he said, "What do you want for your sixteenth birthday?"

I said, "I want a coat from Wilson House of Suede."

He said, "You got it. Go get it."

I said, "No, I want you to take me. I want you to be there with me to pick it out."

He kind of looked at me. But sure enough, he showed up. He left his golf game, and I walked there after school. I was going to Beverly Hills High School. There he was, sitting at Wilson's House of Suede with all the salesladies around him. I'm sure he wasn't happy.

I milked it for everything I could. I tried on every jacket that was in Wilson's House of Suede. He said, "Okay, is that the jacket?"

I said, "This will be it."

He said, "Good, can I go?"

I said, "No, now we have to pick out the color. Should it be beige? Should it be black?"

He looked at me and said, "Get the beige suede because it looks really nice. That's great. Can I go now?"

I said, "No, what about the buttons? Should they be covered?"

He looked at me and, it was so sweet, he said, "Please, can I leave now?"

I said, "Okay."

He said, "Get the buttons covered, make it the beige one, I'm going to pay for it and I'll see you at home."

It meant so much to me. In fact, I have a picture of me wearing that jacket in the book. He sat there with me. He never did that with any of the other kids. That meant so much to me. That's why I say I would have liked more times like that with him.

He was a good dad, but not a good father. But he was a great man and all of his friends loved him. Because he was easy. He knew who he was and was not insecure about anything.

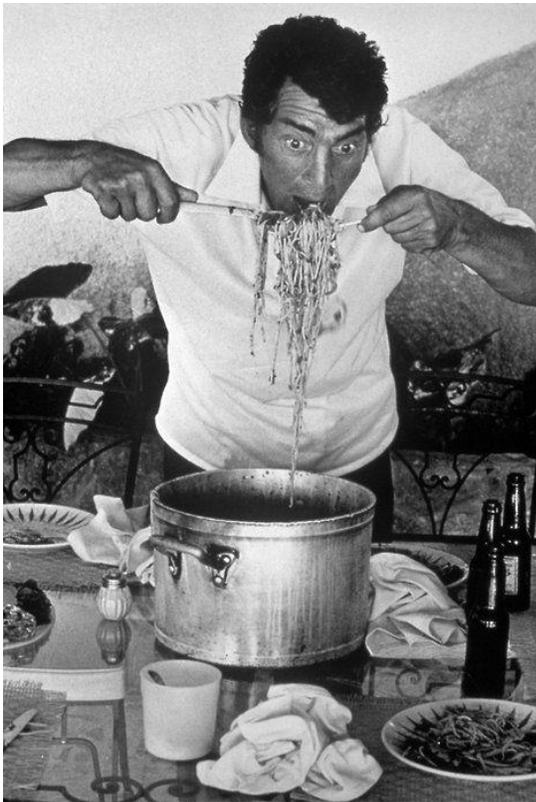
If he was out to dinner with Uncle Frank and somebody said something rude, my dad would just say, *What a jerk*. Frank would want to get up and go over to do something. My dad would say, "Why do you let that guy bother you?"

That was my dad. He didn't want to confront people with anything. He was an interesting man.

When I was very little, when I was nine years old, my grandmother taught me

how to make pasta fagioli. We would have Sunday dinners together and she would make it. I remember her making gnocchi by hand, and it would take her hours.

She taught me how to make pasta fagioli. She said, "Stand here and cook this with me." She taught me the recipe and said, "Don't tell anyone. This is a secret recipe so don't tell your sisters, your brothers, and one day when I'm gone, this will be a way for you to connect with your dad."



I thought, *Okay*. I was nine, after all. Sure enough, after my grandmother passed away and maybe twenty years later, it was Christmas and I was trying to figure

out what to give Dad for Christmas. I'm not going to give him another silver frame or V-neck cashmere sweater, and it came to me: the pasta fagioli.

I went to the market, got all the ingredients, went home and made the pasta fagioli. It came back to me like it was yesterday. I put it in a nice glass bowl mason jar with a red ribbon around it and went over to his house, went up to the door. He came to the door and I said, "Merry Christmas."

He looked at it. The look on his face! Then he looked at me and asked, "Is this what I think it is?"

It was warm. So I went in and we had some of it. It was remarkable for me. He called me the next week and—he never called anybody, but he called me and said, "This is your father."

I said, "I know your voice, Dad."

He asked, "Would you mind making that pasta fagioli for me again?"

No problem. It takes two hours to make it. I took it up to his house, but he wasn't there because he'd gone to play golf. The housekeeper gave me an envelope that said 'Deana' on the cover. I opened it up, and there was a note and five one hundred dollar bills.

The note says, "Thanks, honey. This is for the beans."

The next week, he calls me and says, "Deana, this is your father."

I answered, "I know, Dad."

"Do you think you could make me that pasta fagioli for me again?"

I said, "I'd love to but you don't have to give me five hundred dollars. I'd just like to do it for you. "

He said, "Okay."

So I make it again. I take it up, and he's not there, but there's another envelope that says 'Deana' on it. Inside there's five one hundred dollar bills. *Thanks for the soup. Buy a house.*

I have those cards, but I made the soup for him for twenty years after that. I never took any money from him. He was just grateful. That I had that connection with him, through all those years I would make him the pasta fagioli, made him feel comfortable because he felt like he had his mother with him.

One time he asked, "Do you know how to make that chicken she used to make?"

I responded, "No, this is the only one I make."

I made it up until the day he died. I would go over and visit with him. It was such an amazing thing for me to make that for him. I put the recipe in the book. One of the last pages has my dad kissing his mother, and that's where the pasta fagioli recipe is.

Bruce: I guess he had to tell you this is your father because if he told you this is Dean Martin you wouldn't have believed him. Right?

Deana: He was the best Dean Martin ever. No matter where I go in the world, everyone seems to be able to sing the lyrics to *That's Amore*.

He opened doors for me. He wouldn't pick up a phone and say, *Could you give my daughter a job?* The one thing he said was, "Deana, please never embarrass me."

We were all good kids. We never wanted to disappoint him. Of course, we had everything we needed: a tennis court, pool, Dean Martin and all of his friends. With seven kids, if we all had a friend over, that's fourteen right there. I'm the one who's in the business of singing and carrying that on because I love it.

Bruce: You were Dean Martin's daughter, what was that like? You talked about him not picking up the phone. You're wondering what to do with your life, but

Dean Martin's daughter, it's like a catch-22, isn't it?

Deana: He taught us that this is a business. You have to get up to bat and you may strike out. I understood it was a business, and I know it was tough for him. But he made it in a big way.

I remember going on a call one time with a large number of young ladies and it got down to three people, then two people—me and one other young lady. They called me in and told me they were giving it to the other person because 'you don't need it. Your father's Dean Martin.' That's the moment I thought about writing a book called *Dad's Rich, I'm Not*.

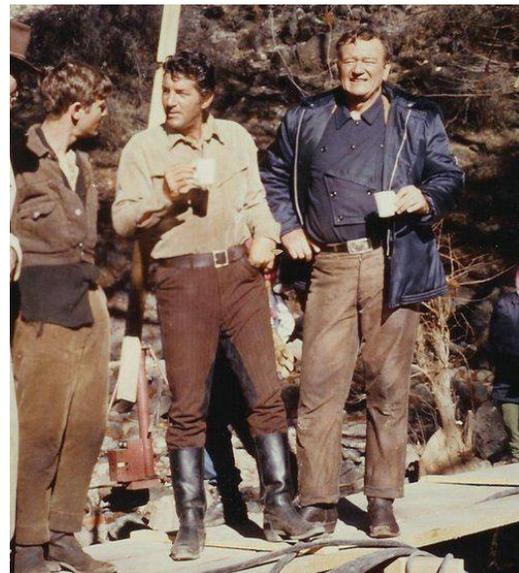
That was the first rejection I had, not because I wasn't good enough; I'd beaten out lots of ladies and it came down to two. Maybe what they said wasn't true. Maybe she was just better and that was a good excuse for them. But it hurt me deeply.

I might get a singing gig somewhere and people might think, *She got it because she's Dean Martin's daughter*. Once I have the chance to get up there and perform, they'll often come up to my table for an autograph after and say, *You're amazing*. If you work hard, and you have luck, it pays off.

Bruce: Our magazine focuses on Western culture but also promotes Western authors and Westerns in general. You did a Western, *Young Billy Young*.

Deana: Robert Mitchum, Angie Dickinson, David Carradine, Bobby Walker, Jr., who was funny. He was really funny. Everybody would be wondering, *Where's Bobby?* He'd be up on top of the mountain, meditating.

I love Westerns. I grew up with Westerns. My dad loved Westerns. We had a ranch in Northridge where we had horses. There's something about a cowboy that all women love. My dad cancelled a gig one night, when his horse passed away.



When I think of *Rio Bravo*, I think he should have been nominated for an academy award for best supporting

actor. The Westerns were great: *Sons of Katie Elder*, *Bandolero* was not my favorite but...

He loved working with John Wayne and Jimmy Stewart. Ricky Nelson – we all loved that – Ricky Nelson in *Rio Bravo*. It was funny because Dad wouldn't shave when he was doing a Western. Now, to this day, if I see somebody who didn't shave I say, *What? Are you doing a Western?*

He loved his horses. He was good at twirling guns and so was Sammy Davis, Jr. They loved making those Westerns, and it was fun to go watch them.

Bruce: You really liked Ricky Nelson?

Deana: [laughs] When I think about my life, growing up, I knew Fabian, Frankie Avalon, Frankie Valli, Elvis Presley, Bobby Darin. I went to school with Luci, Jr., Desi, Jr., Anita Montalban (her father was Ricardo Montalban), Tina and I were friends, Nancy, and Frank, Jr., and Dinah Shore's daughter, Missy Montgomery.

Her father was George Montgomery. I made a movie with him in South Africa. I tried to figure out why on Earth they would put me opposite George Montgomery when he was older and I was twenty. In those days, they always had an older man with a younger woman. Actually, they're still doing it.

Growing up in these times and knowing all these people led to an amazing life.

Bruce: Do you think if Dean Martin walked out on a stage today that he'd have the audience in his hand in the same way he did in the 1960s?

Deana: There was something so genuine and down-to-Earth about Dad. He'd come out there and feel at home. I think he was just Dino Paul Crocetti from Steubenville, OH who'd made it big. He would probably do the same show he's done since the 1960s. I don't think any new songs or jokes would be added, but that would be just fine with the audience.

He made an audience feel like they were a part of what he was doing. That's what I learned from watching him that I bring to my show. I think his voice would still be gorgeous. He wouldn't sing all the way through a song. He'd say, "If you want to hear the whole song, buy my album." [laughs]

The first time I saw him at the Sands Hotel, in Las Vegas, the audience around me audibly gasped and said, *There he is*. He had that magic, and he would still have it today.

Bruce: I watched a few clips of Dean on the Johnny Carson Show and his

quickness and ability to ad-lib was just funny. He was really funny.

Deana: I think that goes back to Steubenville, with all his buddies, 'cause they were funny. I remember Dad's huge hands, they were like mitts. They were wrinkled. He'd be sitting at the table and put his hands down and say, "I've got to go iron my hands." Then he'd get up and walk away.

To him, it was funny. All of a sudden you'd get it, and it would be funny. It was the way he would say it that was unique to my dad.



Frank Sinatra said to him one night, "You always get all the laughs in the show."

Dad said, "Because I'm funny."

So Frank said, "How about tonight I do your lines and you do my lines?"

So they do the show with Dad doing Frank's lines and vice-versa. Dad still got all the laughs. After the show, Frank says to Dean, "How come you're getting all the laughs? How come I didn't get the laughs?"

My dad said, "Frank, you're not funny."

There was something about Dad that made it funny. It was the look on his face, the takes and double-takes, that made him Dean Martin.

Bruce: While you were writing your book, you had the chance to interview Jerry Lewis. We're afraid to interview him.

Deana: As well you should be. When I called him, and went to see him, I met him on the dock. He put his hands on my cheeks and started to cry. He said, "I see my partner."

We sat down and talked for hours. He remembers things a little differently, but he's mellowed so much. He is a little scary. He's a totally different personality from my dad. My dad wanted to come in and do the show, be on time, and Jerry wanted to write, direct, do the catering, do everything. My dad could care less about that. He wanted to

entertain people and then go out and play golf.

Jerry Lewis has always been a good friend to me. Even through the years when they weren't together, I could talk to him. I'd always watch the MDA telethons because it was remarkable to watch. Those were the days when they'd stay up all night. They'd start out in the tuxedo and then the tie was out. In the morning, you'd wake up and they were still there with the tote board.

Those were the days. I'm really upset with the way they let him go, MDA. Jerry Lewis is tough, brilliant, and he is a genius. He has every photograph that was ever taken of him since the day he was born. They're in leather bound albums, it's remarkable. You walk in his house and, up on the second level, is a library with all these leather bound photographs.



Maybe on the front it will say *Jeanne Martin's twenty-sixth birthday party*. Everything will be in there. He keeps everything. He's an amazing human being.

Bruce: That period of time launched your father into real stardom. But that was just one facet of Dean Martin. There's nobody you can point to today and say, *That person is similar*.

Deana: There is no one like him. My dad was different. He was a Gemini and there were two different people there: The guy who could get out and entertain everyone and have a wild time, and the one who was perfectly happy to have a quiet time at home watching a TV show.

I don't know of anyone who's like him.

Bruce: He had a cool *savoir-faire* that few people could match. He was the "king of cool" and that emanated to his audience.

Deana: He had a sense of style in the way he would dress. I'm sure that has a lot to do with my grandmother, Angela, who would alter all of his clothes. When a big brother gave a little brother a suit, she'd alter it. When I look at my dad, his style, it's reminiscent of old pictures of my dad in Steubenville when he had on a suit, and everything was tailored perfectly.

He always looked good. At home you'd never see him in a pair of jeans unless he was going horseback riding. It was always a pair of slacks, a polo shirt, a cashmere V-neck sweater. He was always looking cool. He was classic.

There was no swearing in our house. When I read some book that had dad swearing every other word, I knew... *Wait a minute, that's not him.* I've never met anyone like him. I don't know that there is anyone like him. If there is, I'd like to meet them.

Bruce: You're a lot like him. The style that you bring to performing and the way you dress and look is very classy. That's like your father.

Deana: Thank you for saying that. I try to think about an image, how I want to look. I still, to this day, don't want to embarrass him.

I want to carry on and venture out into different areas. It's an amazing name to live up to. There's still so much I'm anxious to do and excited about learning.

Bruce: I hope that I've asked good questions and we've talked about new things that usually don't come up in interview. Because, I imagine, no matter where you go, people ask about your father. It's natural for people to want to hold on to a piece of someone who was so stellar.

When rock and roll came along, your father was able to unseat the Beatles with his hit song *Everybody Loves Somebody*.

Deana: [And] What did he do? He sent a telegram to Frank Sinatra and Elvis Presley that simply said, *I did it.*

He never boasted about anything. He never wanted publicity. He just wanted to go do his work, play golf, come home, have dinner.

Bruce: So he and Elvis were friends?

Deana: I think they recorded twenty-two of the same songs. Elvis idolized Dad.

You could tell by the way he would sing. He'd drive his motorcycle around the house.

Elvis was a sweet guy with a beautiful voice. I met him when I was so young and remember him telling me my dad was the *king of cool*. "I'm the king of Rock and Roll, but your dad is the king of cool."

Then I knew him through the jumpsuit years and going to Vegas to see him. I just adored him through the whole time. He was Elvis.

When I think about the experiences I've had, I remember one—Dad was doing the Hollywood Palace, before his TV show. I was sixteen and he called me and said, "Deana, I think you should come down here to the Hollywood Palace. There's these guys who look like they just got off the boat. I'm sure you're going to like them."

So I went down and it was The Rolling Stones. He had no idea. He kind of rolled his eyes when he was on the show. He got in trouble for that. London newspapers quoted him as saying, *I've been rolled and I've been stoned but I've never seen anything like The Rolling Stones*.

But he said, "Treat people the way you want to be treated."

That's what he did.

Bruce: I want to thank you for spending the time with me. I've thoroughly enjoyed the conversation and want to congratulate you on continuing to be a great performer and keeping alive the legacy of your father.



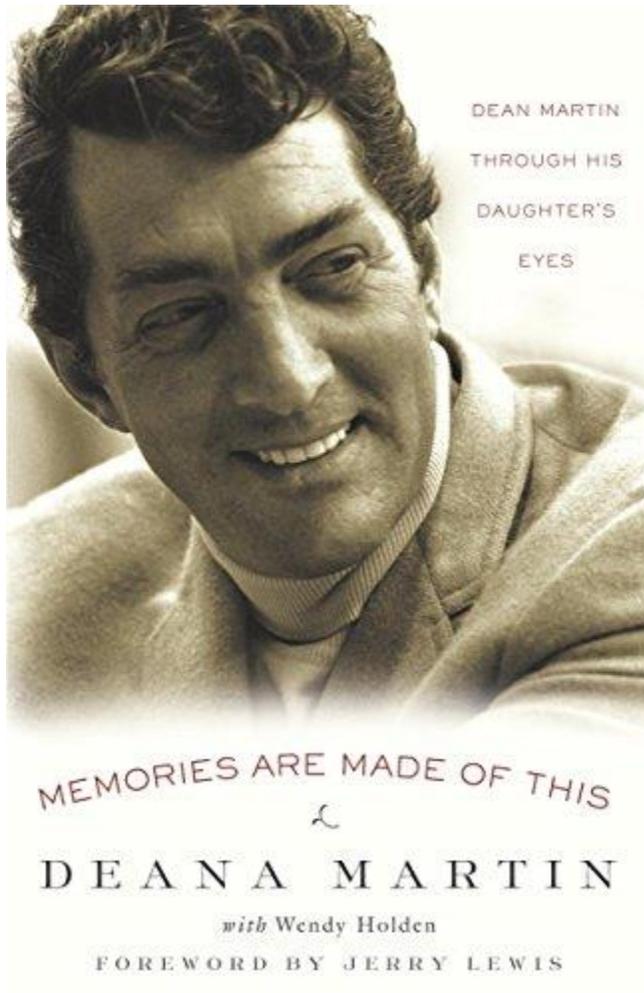
Deana: Thank you so much. I'm going to have to get you out of your basement to one of the shows. Perhaps Las Vegas?

Bruce: I've enjoyed listening to your music, downloaded from iTunes, and look forward to reading your book. I hope I'll be able to get to one of your shows soon so that I can make a quick trip out of my basement.

Deana: Thank you, Bruce.

Write your response to this article to the editor at:
dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com.

For more excellent reading on Dean Martin, pick up Deana's book,
Memories Are Made of This: Dean Martin Through His Daughter's Eyes.



RANDALL DALE: AMERICAN COWBOY WRITING TIMEWORN TALES OF THE WEST



*With Bruce Bennett, Editor of the
Westerner©*

We caught up with the author wrestling a few cows at his place in southeastern Arizona near the New Mexico and Mexican borders. Randall learned ranching from his father and also was passed down a tale that's become a bestseller for the writer.

But don't let that flavor of Americana fool you. Randall has a PhD and is dean at a nearby university. His writing is not only filled with realism but is provocative and intelligent. Meet the man who brought us a series of great Western reading. Here's the interesting result:

Bruce: Do you enjoy writing?

Randall: I enjoy writing, but it's something I never thought I would've enjoyed, and to be honest the way I got started was almost accidental. I grew up on a ranch but was already gone from home and had started a family of my own when my dad asked if I could go back one weekend to help work some cows. We were riding, and he started telling me this story that he dreamed up. I liked the story and started telling it to my kids as a bedtime story. Each time I repeated the story, it got better and better. I added new things and it became longer and more detailed, and I told it a lot.

About three years ago, my kids, who are now starting families of their own, asked me to write the story down so they could have it for their kids. I didn't want to because it didn't sound like fun, but they continued to ask. They were so persistent that I finally agreed to write it down.

One Saturday morning, I sat down at my computer and thought I'd have it done in about an hour. After half a day, I realized that it was a larger undertaking than I originally imagined. Surprisingly, I actually had fun crafting the story and decided to try to extend it to a small novella.

I'd write about twenty-five hundred words and send it out to the kids. They'd say, "It's the next Pulitzer Prize winner and a wonderful book." You know how kids are, and it's great to have kids like that.

As I went on, I opened up and let the story come, and it was like I was watching a movie in my head. All these things started swirling around in the story, and I would type as fast as possible to get it down. Before I knew it, I had a sixty thousand word book.

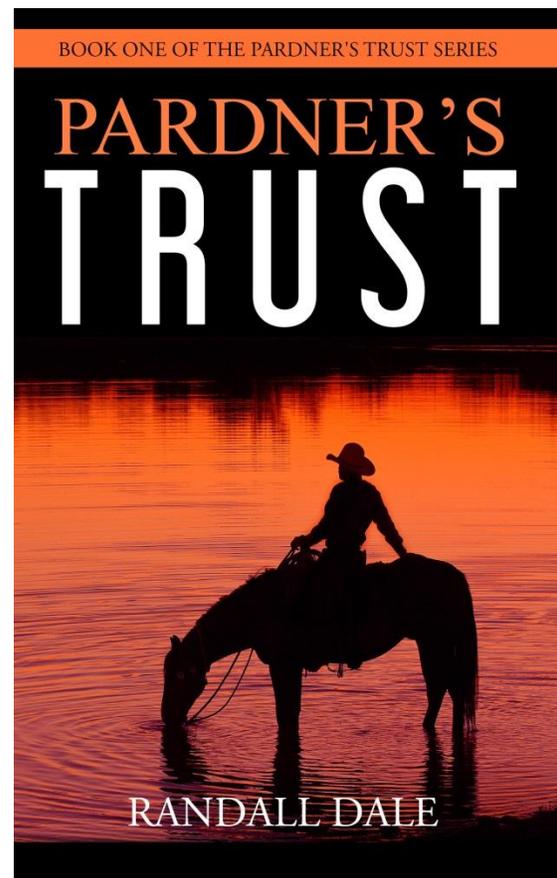
I sent it out to my kids, who had heard it many times before, and they loved it. One of my daughters really brought it home for me when she said, "I hated for it to end because I loved the characters so much."

Well, that's all it takes for a beginning author. It was so much fun that I decided to add to the first book. Before I knew it, I had a hundred thousand word novel. I'll readily admit that, originally, the book was only for them; but they started sending it to their friends and soon I was getting phone calls telling me how good the book was and asking me when the next one was scheduled.

To be honest, I had no intention of writing any more, but as more people called, wrote, or emailed asking for the next book, I started writing it. When I

finished it, I put both up on Amazon. People read them, and I began to get good reviews. I'm thankful to those people and can hardly believe that right now, for *Pardner's Trust*, I have one hundred and eighty reviews at a four point seven star rating. Well, I kept getting notes from readers asking for the next book, and the next, so I continued the series. I'm currently working on book five. It's been a fun ride, though I never would have dreamed I'd enjoy being a writer.

Bruce: That's amazing that the story that your dad and you developed while out working became the base for the book.



Randall: That's right. The book *Pardner's Trust* is a modern day story about a fatherless boy, Ricky, who wants to be a cowboy. He is taken under the wing of a kindly, older gentleman who works in a feedlot in Clovis, New Mexico. The youngster learns about horses and discovers he has a natural ability with them. As time goes on, he grows to manhood, gets married to his high school sweetheart and goes through many of the challenges and trials we all experience in the course of our lives. In time, he buys a horse but the horse has learned to mistrust humans due to some hardships of his own. Ricky is anxious to earn the horse's trust, but Pardner is not so forgiving of the human race. As they grow to trust one another, the unthinkable happens, and Ricky is faced with the possibility of losing his favorite horse forever.

The story is fiction, but I continually get comments from readers that the book seems real. To me that is probably the greatest compliment. As a boy, I read Zane Grey, Louis L'Amour and Jack Schaefer. I couldn't get enough of them at the time, so I guess I'd have to say they had a lot of influence in my writing. In particular, I enjoyed Jack Schaefer's writing because they were true to life novels. To me there is nothing more frustrating than to read a Western book

where the author seemed ignorant of what they were writing about. Maybe they'd seen a horse or a cow, one time, and then tried to write about it.

If nothing else, my books are true to life. Many of the stories that happen to characters in the book actually happened. I borrowed from incidents that happened to me growing up, or my brothers, or friends on neighboring ranches. So the experiences were real; and sometimes, fact is stranger than fiction because some pretty wild things happened to us growing up.

Bruce: With all of these ideas happening at once, how do you keep continuity in your story?

Randall: When I write a book, it's like a movie that plays in my head, and I type as fast as I can to get the movie down. Things that happen, early in the book, suddenly make sense chapters later. It's hard to describe how my writing works, but I just let my imagination run wild then write it down.

I will describe one experience: I'd finished Book One and I knew where I wanted to start and end in book two, but I didn't know exactly how I was going to get there. Along the way, a character simply showed up in my consciousness. I knew his name, his background, I could shake his hand, and

he became, in a literary sense, a good friend of mine. I never planned to have him in the book, but he showed up and became one of the main characters. When I tell people about it, they think the whole idea is weird, but that's the way I write.

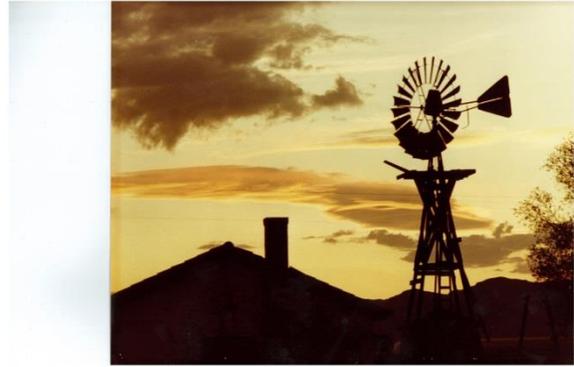
Bruce: That sounds like the creative process comes easy for you.

Randall: You're right. I can daydream and imagine all of these stories. The hardest part is to get it down on paper. I'm not a trained writer. The creative part is the most fun, for me, because it just happens.

Bruce: Are there other genres in which you'd like to write?

Randall: I've heard, all along, *write what you know*. The Western way of life, specifically the modern Western way of life, is what I know, so that's where I've started. I have other books in process that are not Westerns but they occur in places I've been and have story lines congruent with experiences I've had.

Bruce: How do you find time to write?



Randall: I make time. I try to write twenty-five hundred words a day. I'm a goal setter and that's my goal. I've heard that writing is the hardest work you'll do and not sweat, and I'll readily agree with that. Among writers, there's an oft repeated quote about inspiration versus scheduled writing. It has been attributed to a variety of successful authors so I suppose no one knows exactly who said it first, but the quote supposedly was an answer to the question, "Do you write by inspiration or on a schedule?" The answer was, "I only write by inspiration but luckily for me inspiration shows up precisely at nine o'clock every morning." That captures my philosophy. I try to write some every day.

Bruce: Do you like to read?

Randall: I do like to read. As I mentioned, I grew up reading and still read when I have time. I have two books in particular that I read over and over, which motivate me to write. The best Western ever written was a book by Jack

Schaefer called *Monte Walsh*. Some people don't like the book, but I love it.

It's not a nail biter or even a gripping story. In fact, it is rather slow moving; but Jack Schaefer is so articulately descriptive that you can see the mountains, the plains, and the cows grazing on the grass. That book motivates me to be descriptive with the fewest possible words. I want my readers to have enough detail to use their imaginations but not so much as to be tedious.

The other book I read constantly is by Stephen Hunter called *Point of Impact*. I like the way he puts things together paragraph by paragraph. The emotion in that book is so obvious it's almost palpable. I read each of these books two or three times a year just to learn from the way they do things. Then I take those ideas and try to incorporate them into my own writing.

Bruce: What makes you the most proud of your books?

Randall: A couple of things, really. First, I'd have to say that I'm extremely proud when readers share comments that the books are real, that they believe every word. Second is that my books are the type that you could give to your teenage son or daughter without fear of what

they'd read. There's nothing in them that would make a parent embarrassed.

I've also been fortunate to win some awards with the books. I entered my first two books in the Will Rogers Medallion Award Competition for Western literature. I was overjoyed to win two prestigious gold medals in 2016. That puts me in some pretty good company, and I'm certainly proud of that.

Bruce: Well, I've taken a good amount of your time and finally would like to ask if there's anything you would like to add?

Randall: It's an honor to be called and asked to do an interview like this one. As a beginning author, the hardest part is to get noticed by the reading public. There are so many choices that it's easy to get lost in the crowd. Obviously, I hope people will like my books and tell their friends, because by far the best advertising for me so far has been word of mouth. That is also, by the way, the highest compliment.

Bruce: I really appreciate you taking the time because you're the kind of Western author who brings the real west to the reader.

Randall: Thank you for taking your time. I appreciate what your publication is doing for people who like to read quality Westerns.

HOW TO DRAW FACES BY ARTIST JUDY MASTRANGELO

I'd like to talk about drawing faces. If you are an Author, Judy's "How To Draw" articles could help you with illustrating your own book covers.

Faces are one of my favorite things I enjoy painting. They can be so expressive and are often something that will first draw the viewer into a painting if they are well done. I feel that in order to be a good painter, one must first have an excellent facility in drawing. That's why my articles are focusing in developing good drawing techniques. Great artists throughout the ages are known for painting memorable portraits, such as the great Dutch artist Rembrandt van Rijn <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rembrandt>. His self-portraits are notable for their depth of character.

1. A good way to practice drawing is to do self-portraits, such as Rembrandt and many other artists did, and still do. You can enjoy studying all the details of your face in a mirror and do many wonderful drawings. It's also an excellent thing to have a good knowledge of the anatomy of the head, by learning about its structure. As a beginning artist, I copied drawings of great artists, such as the great Leonardo da Vinci [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leonardo da Vinci](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leonardo_da_Vinci). He was a master of anatomy and was one of the first artists to do many anatomical drawings. Truthfully, I didn't have the stomach to do actual dissections such as he did, so I learned from observing and copying his drawing studies that I found in books. He was a

great inspiration to me. I suggest that you find a talented artist whom you admire, and make drawings copied from their artwork. It's a great learning experience.

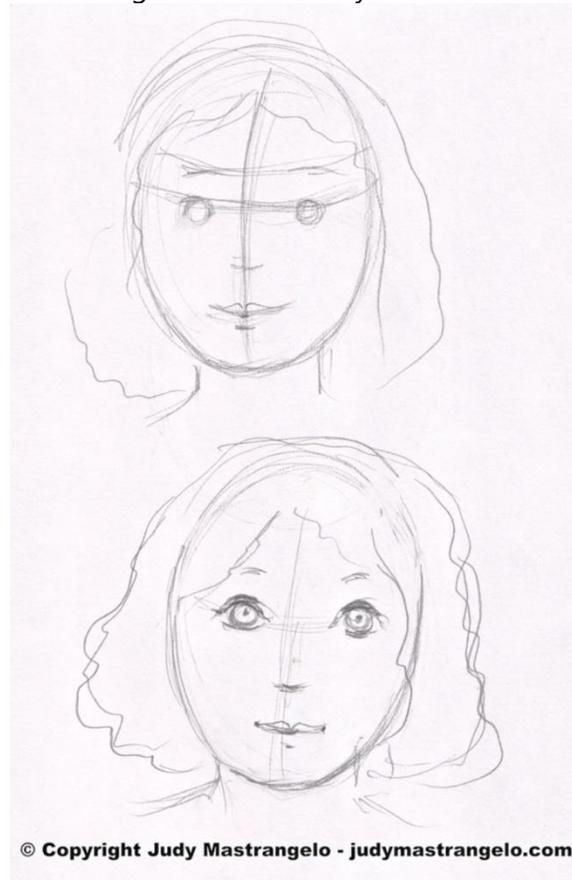


2. You can make a very good study of how the head is structured by taking a good look at yourself in the mirror. Keeping in mind the formation of a skull, observe your own face closely. Feel how your jaw opens and closes, see how the eyeball fits nicely into the eye socket, and how the top and bottom eyelids open and close so beautifully to protect it. Observe also all the other parts of your face ~ the ears, mouth and nose, etc., and how they are formed and connect to the skull. The human body is an amazingly beautiful structure that works so well!

3. Besides looking at yourself in a frontal view, try also to observe your head in profile, and in three-quarters view, by looking at yourself in a mirror that reflects into a second mirror. It's a very interesting study.

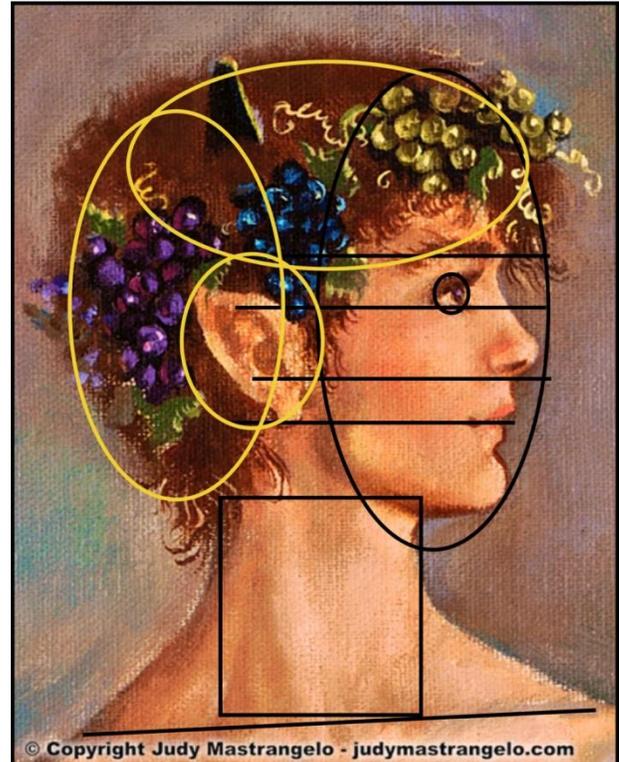
4. Planning a drawing is very necessary. It's important to try to portray what you are drawing as a 3D form by giving it a

dimensional quality. I often break down my subject matter into basic shapes first. The head is an egg-like shape. The nose is another dimensional shape, which stands out from the main plane of the face, as do the ears. The mouth is a cavity, which is seen when the jaw opens and closes, with the upper and lower lips attached. I know this sounds like very fundamental knowledge that everyone knows, but it really helps to analyze all of it when you are in the process of drawing the human body.



5. Drawing in faint guidelines, which will be erased later, is an excellent idea. I'm showing here my painting of a young girl in a frontal view, of which I've also done two sketches. As you can see in these beginning rough sketches, I drew a line down the center of her face. Then I softly drew curved guidelines to where the eyes, nose, and

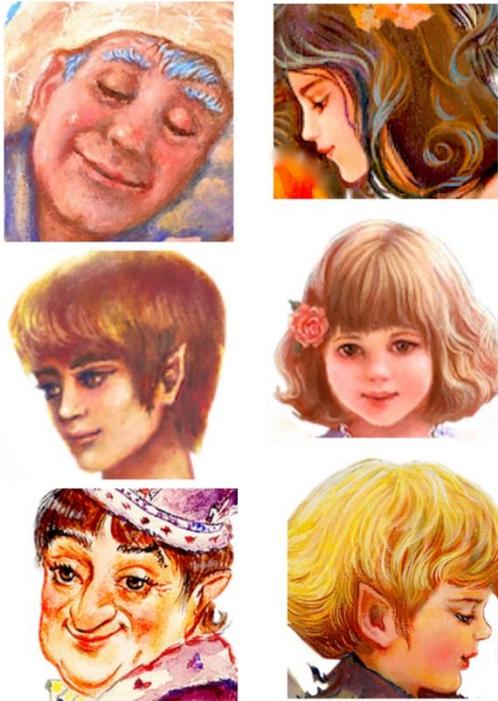
mouth will go. With careful study, you will see that nobody's face is completely symmetrical, but it's always good to be able to plan your drawing first, before going into detail.



I've included here a painting of "PAN" that I did, where I overlapped guidelines onto his profile. You will see how I've broken the head into different shapes and drawn guidelines for the various features and the neck. I've also shown the eyeball sphere that has been developed into an eye. Be aware also how the head sits on the neck, which is then attached to the shoulders.

6. After you do a preliminary drawing such as this, with your guidelines, you can go into much greater detail. Making your face drawing look three-dimensional is always a lot of fun. The beginning guidelines help so that it won't look too lopsided, which is very easy to do if you're not careful. I know this from experience.

7. No matter what you are drawing, whether it's a face, an apple, or a horse, always keep in mind where your light source is originating from. If you think of this matter, the light will hit one part of the face, and the other part, which is not facing the light source, will be in slight shadow. In this way, the face will look very dimensional.



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8. Have fun doing many sketches from your face, both as frontal views, and also as profile and three-quarter views. You can also enjoy drawing pictures of your friends and family, and do copies of other artists' work. Draw as many kinds of people that you can, of all ages, both male and female. I've included here a variety of different faces that I've painted, after first drawing them. When you become confident in your ability to render a face with pencil, you will be able to do a much better job at painting. Try doing a reflective self-portrait. It's truly a wonderful experience.

I speak about my painting techniques in my book, "PAINTING FAIRIES AND OTHER FANTASIES." I think you will find it interesting.

In it, there are also some downloadable tutorials that are very helpful.

<https://judymastrangelo.com/books-2/painting-fairies-other-fantasies/>

My books are going to be published by DSP very soon under the new imprint title of "IMAGINATION BOOKS." They will include many exciting titles in several formats, including AUDIO BOOKS, EBOOKS, HARDCOVER FANTASY, and fun-filled ACTIVITY books for the entire family. I'm also now developing a wonderful series of creative COLORING BOOKS for both adults and children. They will have themes such as: FANTASY, ELVES and FAIRIES, ANGELS, FAIRY TALES, LANDSCAPES and FLOWERS, and WHIMSICAL ANIMALS. You can get an idea of my current books in print on my website book page:

<https://judymastrangelo.com/portfolio/books/>

To find out more about my artwork, please visit my website at:

www.judymastrangelo.com

While you're there, please sign up for my newsletter to discover what's happening in my magical world:

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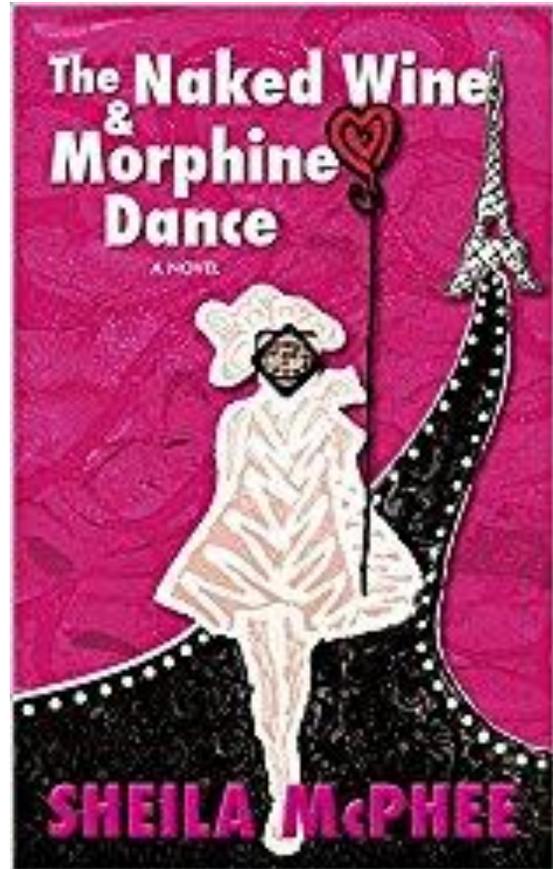
THE WESTERN AUTHOR
SHOWCASE:

HOW AUTHOR SHEILA MCPHEE MORPHED A CHARACTER FROM HER STEAMY FIRST NOVEL INTO A SUCCESSFUL COWBOY HERO

By Bruce Bennett



A few years ago, multi-talented new author Sheila McPhee turned a lifetime of experiences into a tempting novel called *The Naked Wine and Morphine Dance*. This book is what the author describes as a loose characterization of her own life events. The Kindle version is available on-line and is a good read for readers who enjoy steamy potboilers.

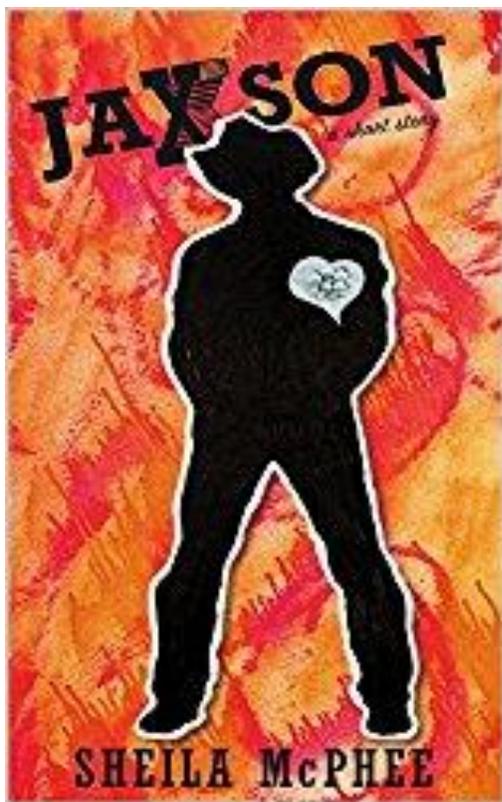


Iris is the main character in the story. Her adventures eventually lead her to a meeting with cowboy Jaxson who becomes her main love interest. Sheila describes the rest of the book as being very hot and professes she has no problem with erotic scenes. I told her the only time I wrote a real sexy scene, I was approached by my assistant pastor who told me he read the book.

So much for life's embarrassing lessons. I guess, if you're going to be a writer, you need to forget general convention and get down to typing out the words that make sense. This is what the author explained drove her to completing her

first novel. "It was a story that I had to get out," she expressed honestly.

Sheila lives in the picturesque town of Fredericton in New Brunswick, CA. She's a hairdresser who also works at a local nursing home. In her spare time, when she's not writing, she's an accomplished artist. You can view her work on the interesting interpretive cover of her first novel. She keeps in shape by biking everywhere she can. Fredericton has one of the best biking trails in Canada and she enjoys using it profusely.



When she decided to write an authentic Western as her next endeavor, Sheila did something that most authors might find unusual. She took the character, Jaxson, from her first novel and plopped him into the second as the main focus. I'm not sure how many times a character has crossed genres, but I found this to be imaginatively unique.

The author describes Jaxson as a real cowboy. He grew up in the wilds of Montana and learned how to ranch and cowboy from his father on his own spread. The book is a continuation of his adventures in a more conventional Western vein. Readers will find the novella easy to follow and a pleasant read. It is available on Kindle for the low price of \$0.99 US.

Sheila plans to continue her writing career and is reading more Westerns to get good ideas. However, innovation and creativity won't be a problem for this author.



*Grab a copy of **Swing Street**, the great swing collection from Deana Martin on Vinyl or CD. Click above.*

For more great recordings and products, visit Deana's store by following the link below.

<http://www.deanamartin.com/store/>

**SIX BULLETS TO SUNDOWN
EXCLUSIVE**

**PUTTING THE BEST OF
THE BEST TOGETHER
UNDER THE DUSTY
SADDLE BANNER**

With all the success, *Dusty Saddle Publishing* has been having lately—there was a feeling that something greater was needed for our readers. Something that would bring together some of the greatest talent in the Western world. Something like "*Six Bullets to Sundown*."

But with conflicting schedules, release dates and writing priorities—that's awfully hard to do. However, we have managed it and this project will be hitting the market during May 2017.

"*Six Bullets to Sundown*" is actually the first of several planned collections from some of the greatest western writers in the world. Six stories that will absolutely blow readers away.

But who do you choose? Well in a few days Dusty Saddle Publishing will be announcing the author line-up for the first collection. We kid you not—this collection is the real deal with some of the greatest cowboy writers in town putting together new, and fresh, material for your consumption. You

won't want to miss this opportunity to read the best of the best... back to back.

"*Six Bullets to Sundown*" will be available on Amazon as both a Kindle eBook and as a paperback during May 2017. This is one exciting collaboration that you won't want to miss. Email dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com to discover more.

ANDY HOPKINS' WORLD OF THE SUPERNATURAL AND PSYCHIC



The Stomping Spirit

By Andy Hopkins

From time to time, some people get in touch with me because they feel that they are being haunted by a spirit or a poltergeist that is making them unsettled in their own home. I love clearing out these negative energies from people's homes, but you never know exactly what you're going to face, and that is quite exciting—if not a little scary.

The house in question was in a little village about twenty minutes' away. Picture a quaint little village with a church and small

houses—this village had the atmosphere of one that time forgot!

Susan contacted with quite a story to tell. She was a single parent living with her two children, one little girl aged six, and a young boy aged two.

Now, before this story begins, I will say that many people have been in touch about "hauntings" within their home and, speaking honestly, only about two out of ten have anything that I would classify as genuine. Most of the time, a spirit person there wants me to receive their messages. We, as humans, tend to make something out of nothing - especially when it is something we do not understand. Not in this case.

Things started about four weeks prior to my visit and gradually became worse. This entity had started by walking loudly along the upstairs hallway and opening doors along the way which, by itself is quite unnerving, but this activity quickly escalated when this otherworldly force took a liking to the young son.

The new stage started one Saturday around about ten past three in the morning, which is what some people refer to as the demonic witching hour. Susan awoke to a blood curdling scream coming from her son's room. He was standing outside his cot near the window. How he got out of his cot is not known, but he claimed, "man picked me up."

Susan felt uneasy upon walking into the room. It was significantly colder than it should have been being early morning in July. She saw what she described as a blurring shadow in between her son and herself that grew and moved towards her

until she felt a pushing on her chest that physically knocked her down. The feeling, and shadow, vanished, and the room warmed immediately. She grabbed her son and took him out of the room to comfort him.

Though nothing of significance happened in the following nights, she felt uneasy. This feeling may have been due to the encounter, or perhaps she was subconsciously aware the entity was still present.

Midweek, Susan heard whimpering from her son's bedroom around eleven at night. He was hidden under his cover, asleep but crying. She comforted him and he calmed. Susan had returned to her room when she noticed the room's temperature had changed, but she sat on the bed watching the TV.

She glanced at the mirror on her dressing table and saw a full figure of a man in a dark coat standing behind her. She reacted as most of us in this circumstance—she screamed and turned on her light, only to find herself alone in the room.

The events of this night forced Susan to admit defeat and move in to her parents' house temporarily. Later that same evening, her son started screaming again, but this time when Susan went to check on her son, his bedroom door would not open and there was the sound of laughter from behind the door.

When she managed to force the door open, after what Susan told me was around three long minutes, her son was hiding under the cot this time, and his room was a mess with toys scattered, broken, and the

picture of him with his mother and sister removed from the wall and covered in water.

The screaming woke his sister, who seemed to escape the entity's attention, or so it appeared. As the two children stood in the hallway, while Susan gathered a bag of essentials to flee the house, the young girl felt someone pull her arm just before the loft hatch lifted and slammed. In the morning, a hand-shaped bruise was discovered on her upper arm.

I was recommended to her by a previous client, and she called to see if I could help. I remember the day like it was yesterday. A Tuesday, and sunny, I was in a good mood. It was around five in the afternoon when I arrived at this normal-looking dwelling. Some people think a story of this nature needs to be set in some great mansion or house in the middle of nowhere with windows and a front door that resemble an evil face, but this was a moderately large, semi-detached house, brilliantly painted.

I knocked, and Susan answered looking like she hadn't slept in days. She almost burst out in tears as I introduced myself and reassured her that everything was going to be fine.

When I entered the house, through the small porch, the stairs were on the left near the front door and straight ahead was the kitchen. There was a cold feeling in the house and, even though the curtains were open and the light shone through the hallway between the front door and the kitchen, the inside atmosphere was quite gloomy and the air held a sullen feeling. Straight away, I knew all wasn't right.

I touched the banister of the staircase while talking to this scared, nervous lady, and it was then that the stomping started. I'm not ashamed to admit that it shocked me. The sheer volume of the steps was astonishing, and they seemed angry.

People may think me a little strange here, but I smiled and ran up the stairs to see what or who was making the sound. I stood in the middle of the upstairs landing. I had barrier alarms and K2 meters, as well as a laser grid and spirit box, so figured I'd set up there.

Shadows moved as I worked and, with Susan standing behind me, we began talking quietly while I tried to identify what and who was in the house. It turned out that not all the energies in the house were bad. I gave her a message from quite a lovely lady, in spirit, who had been her grandmother.

Susan had some rough luck and, if there was negativity in a house, bad luck can attract negative energy. This nasty spirit, who had taken up residence in the house, was a common example. I'd seen enough of the terror weighing on the family, and it was time to take action.

I started at the entrance to the house and took my time blessing each room. The atmosphere became lighter and the place felt warmer. When I went upstairs, things started to get rough. As I walked the stairs, I felt something holding me back. The best way to describe how I must have looked would be a mime artist pretending to be stuck in a box. I used my cleansing solution to get through this unseen blockage and continued to the top level.

The ambience in the hallway was harsh. Two of the doors leading to upstairs rooms slammed shut, and I can admit to being frightened. I pushed my way through the doors, continuing my cleansing ritual, but with each room I finished, it felt like the house would explode as the entity had less space.

I finished the last child's room. When I turned, below the loft hatch was a plume of mist. It slowly rose to the loft. I wasn't hampered and was resolved to end the traumatization of this family. When I grabbed a chair and lifted the loft hatch, I was greeted by a growl. The door slammed down hard. I'd been physically hurt, but my adrenaline took hold, and I pushed open the loft and went in to finish the cleansing ritual.

The family never had any issues again. They continue to happily live in the home, and all are doing wonderfully well.

Contact Andy at
spiritbeautifulcoalville@gmail.com

To comment on this article:
dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com

AUTHOR MICHAEL HADEN IS BECOMING KING OF THE WESTERN NOVELETTE



Michael Haden with Wildman Vince from the Screamin' Sam Show

By Bruce Bennett

Michael Haden is the enthusiastic author of four short Westerns that have become very popular among readers. Though he is widely known as a Western author, he stated that he started writing with an entirely different goal.

Michael coached his own daughters in a girls' soccer league a number of years ago. During this time, an exceptional player came from a nearby boarding school for girls. He coached this outstanding young woman, who eventually received a scholarship to play college soccer. One would believe this to be a story with a happy ending.

It wasn't. In her second year at school, she was killed by a drunk driver. This incident weighed heavily on the author who decided to write something to memorialize the girl's spirit. His first book, *A Deal With God*, is the result of his faithful effort.

I asked the author if it was therapeutic to get the story out. He replied that it was one of the worst times of his life, filled with sleepless nights and weight loss. Since he only knew the young soccer player for a few years, he covered as much of her life as possible in about sixty pages. Then he had an idea that turned his fictional account into a creative and beautiful testament to the lost girl.

He decided to continue the story writing what she might have done if allowed to complete her life. In *A Deal With God*, this young woman, whose life ended much too quickly, bargains with the Supreme Being to return to Earth. Michael's creative account of what comes next has been read, and loved, by many and continues its popularity today.

The author told me that his new Western series is therapeutic. In these stories, the theme is similar, but the characters change. He calls the series *Vengeance Executed*. The series consists of the four books: *Bullet Justice*, *A Fine*

Day for Bullets, Cowboy's Revenge, and Another Fine Day for Bullets.

Mike starts with a hero who is reluctant to act, but eventually his reluctance turns to vengeance when accosted by the heinous villain. There's no sex and cursing in Mike's books, but the author admits there's plenty of violence. He's a fan of the old fashioned shoot-em-up type Western, and his series demonstrates his expertise in recreating that genre.

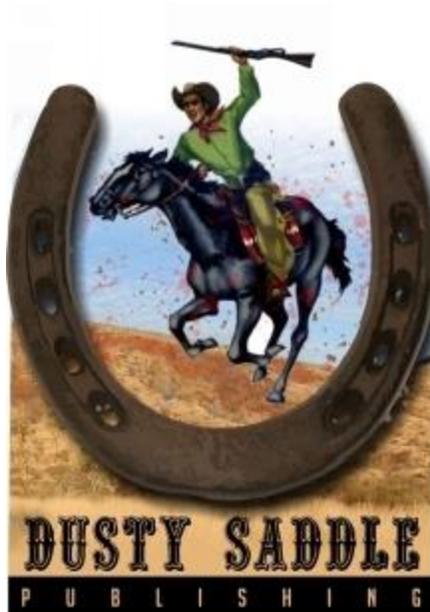
His future plans include a fifth book in the series, which should be available sometime this summer. Following that publication, he intends to put the five books into a paperback. That should be available later on this year.

The author explains that he'd like to keep writing as long as readers pick up his books. Western enthusiasts can purchase the books on Kindle, or on audio for Audible. Mike explains that he gets a kick out of the way the audio narrator includes sound effects into the reading. If you would like more information on Michael Haden, click the link below.

<https://www.amazon.com/Michael-Haden/e/B006CRGRRU>



For more information on how you might publish your Western, or if you know of a Western author whom our audience might like to share, contact Nick Wale at dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com



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