From Generation to Generation, Pt. 3

Teach your children well . . .

by Jeremy D. Krones

Editor’s Note: This is the final installment of a series exploring the lessons passed from generation to generation on the Bar T Bar (Ernest Chilsom to Judy & Bob Prosser) and Flying M (Herb Metzger to Kit Metzger and Diana & Alan Kessler).

Just as Ernest and Herb passed on valuable lessons and ethics to their children, so too did Judy, Bob, Diana, and Alan pass on their passions to the next generation.

Warren and Spencer Prosser, both 32 years old, grew up on the Bar T Bar Ranch. Will “Jigger” Kessler, 34, was raised on the Orme Ranch with his brother JB (Diana and Alan managed that ranch, located about halfway between Flagstaff and Phoenix, for over 30 years before moving back to the Flying M in 2014).

While none of them currently ranch, all three men keep close ties with their heritages, visiting.

Continued on page 10

Ask A Rancher

How are grazing permit numbers on federal land calculated?

From: Anonymous

Bob Prosser from the Bar T Bar and Gary Hase, District Rangeland Management Staff for the Flagstaff Ranger District (and longtime Diablo Trust friend), both helped answer the question, “How are grazing permit numbers on federal land calculated and monitored?”

Of the roughly 500,000 acres that comprises the Bar T Bar and Flying M ranches, nearly half are public lands held in trust for the American public by the US Forest Service.

A Brief History

The USFS was founded in 1905, under President Theodore Roosevelt. Coconino National Forest, our local forest, was created not long after by consolidating other, smaller forests.

Both ranches existed in one way or another before Coconino National Forest, but the Prossers and the Metzgers must now follow Forest Service rules and regulations to continue grazing their cattle on the public land.

“Grazing has occurred on the DT lands since the mid-1800s,” said Bob. The Hash Knife Cattle Company grazed much of the Diablo Trust land area in the late 1870s, alongside homesteaders and pioneers who had claims under the Homestead Act of 1862.

However, due to the lack of water and the small size of homesteads (the Stock-Raising Homestead Act of 1916 allowed new ranching homesteads to be enlarged to 640 acres), most settlers reneged on their title loans to the government.

Bob explained, “It was very common for them

Continued on page 11
10/29: Ranch Day on the Land

On Sunday, October 29, a small group gathered at the Bar T Bar Ranch Headquarters next to Meteor Crater for a discussion and tour of the facility. This Day on the Land had no ulterior mission except to further educate the public on the goings-on of the ranches, and that’s what the group heard!

The six guests ranged from DT “old-timers” to freshmen students at NAU.

We started with a visit around the Prosser’s dining room table, with Judy at the head. The talk began with a brief history of the ranch, then meandered its way through water resources, grassland restoration projects, cattle breeds, and the Prosser’s succession plan. Everyone asked questions and was engaged, whether it was through relaying stories of ranching in their youth or the interest they had in visiting the ranch.

During this discussion, Judy pulled out a map of the ranches (it happened to have both the Bar T Bar and Flying M on it) as a visual aid for her descriptions of locations and areas of the ranch.

Afterwards we all went outside to take a walk around the corrals, to see the steers and bulls, and to learn about the equipment used in “processing” on the ranch (such as vaccinations and branding).

Again, plenty of great questions were asked, such as what the animals are fed at different times of the year, how the ranch keeps track of all the animals, and what the purpose is for branding and ear-tagging.

The morning ended back at the main house for lunch.

Overall it was a lovely morning with some very friendly folks on a beautiful ranch. What else could you want out of a Sunday in October?

12/10: Bison Day on the Land

The final Day on the Land for 2017 was to the Raymond Wildlife Area (RWA), managed by the AZ Game and Fish Department (AGFD), to learn about buffalo, and to see the new herd in northern Arizona!

About 30 people attended, five of which were brand new Diablo Trust participants. The rest of the audience included representatives from the Flying M Ranch, and other interested folks who have long been involved with Diablo Trust. Our hosts were Rob Nelson, Shelly Shepherd, and Elsol Hymer, all of the AGFD.

It was a chilly morning, so we started inside, with a short video explaining the history of Raymond Wildlife Area. You can find it online by searching Raymond Wildlife Area in the “Arizona GameAndFish” channel on YouTube.

After the video Shelly and Hymer gave a slide-show presentation, focusing more on the current state of RWA, and the cultural and biological history of buffalo in North America. This presentation also invited many more questions from the audience, ranging from the specific history of RWA, to broader questions about the animal, like what the difference is between bison and buffalo. (Answer: there isn’t any! It’s two names for the same animal.)

We then drove down the road a bit to see the herd.

Hymer had fed the animals that morning, so while they were standing relatively still and in an open area, we had to look through spotting scopes and binoculars to see them clearly.

More questions arose outside; these were fielded primarily by Rob Nelson, Habitat Evaluation and Lands Program Manager for the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

There is a lot to do out on Raymond Wildlife Area, and we encourage everyone to take some time and visit the public land that borders both the Flying M and Bar T Bar ranches!
President's Message  
by Norm Lowe

This spring marks Diablo Trust’s quarter-century milestone – 25 years since the day that almost 100 natural resources stakeholders (ranchers, agency staff, NGO activists, and citizens) met together at the old Days Inn on west Rt. 66. Rancorous confrontational discussions occurred, but, thanks to some great facilitation, the Diablo Trust collaborative forum was born.

So, what is a collaborative forum?

In a word, it’s synergy. In our business-as-usual world experts are hired to do their jobs in their specialties. It’s not their fault if things fall through the cracks and problems grow due to not having enough money or enough specialists. The collaborative forum concept is different, as it recognizes that among all of the private/agency/NGO/citizen stakeholders there is plenty of talent and goodwill – if they just met together on a level playing field to, as our slogan proffers: learn together from the land, share our knowledge together, and work together on shared goals – so there will always be a healthy West.

I’m grateful for progressive ranchers, and the vital role they play in “stitching the west together” versus watching it fall apart.

Most all land resources degradation has its root in carbon loss from the land. Committed 24/7 ranchers, along with other “hands on” stakeholders, are carbon managers. When stewardship of the inter-connected-web-of-life is done well more carbon is captured to the soil and plants than is released by harvesting products (remembering that plant tissue is over 99% carbon and water that comes from the atmosphere). Building a carbon-rich plant cover synergistically slows the water cycle to: cool the atmosphere, recharge aquifers, produce more harvestable products, improve plant and animal biodiversity, and achieve stable soil development.

Healthy land and wide-open spaces don’t “just happen” in today’s world with so “many cooks in the kitchen.”

I invite you to join with us in our actively facilitated forum process of land stewardship.

Norm Lowe, President
Contact: president@diablotrust.org

Office Notes  
by Jeremy D. Krones

As I usually write in this column, get ready to read some great new material! And instead of it all coming from me (because how much of me can anyone really take?), our list of contributors is growing! Since there is so much text in this issue, we had to skip the map, but it’ll be back next time.

From the “freshman” list, we have a column by Ellen Parish, our newest board member. She’s been in Mormon Lake for as long as anyone in Diablo Trust has known her, and she and her family are active participants and supporters of all things conservation in the Southwest. Many of you have met her husband, Chris Parish, through his work with the Peregrine Fund at the Vermilion Cliffs.

We also have the first essay by Andrew Brischke, who works for the County Extension Office in Kingman. We thought his words might add a bit of humor to these proceedings. He started writing essays about his backcountry mishaps for the Society for Range Management newsletter a few years ago, so we’ll be republishing his past essays on our blog until we catch up to where he is now!

And finally, turn to page 9 for a look into the world of wildlife by our very own Wildlife Chair, Tom Mackin. Tom has been involved with the Trust – and with nearly every other conservation-minded organization throughout Arizona – for a good long while, and we wanted to share a bit of his knowledge with everyone.

In addition to those essays, turn these pages to meet a new agency official in the neighborhood, learn about grazing permits on federal lands, get an update from the Bar T Bar Ranch, read some words of wisdom from our resident cowpal philosopher, learn a new plant, and see what books we’ve read over the last few months.

I did have a lot of fun writing the two main articles for this issue. I don’t know Warren, Spencer, or Jigger all too well, but we’ve met a few times so calling them up to chat (for Generation to Generation Pt. 3) wasn’t totally outrageous, but some of the stories they told me were! Our ranches are in good hands if these are the types of folks who are next in line to take up the reins.

Born On a Ranch (p14) will follow the life of a calf on an imaginary ranch very much like the Flying M and Bar T Bar. This essay series is in line with our 2018 theme: Economics of Open Lands, in that our ranches make their bread and butter from cattle!

We have a lot of events lined up for 2018, and I hope to see everyone out on the land, engaging with the people that are leading our open lands into the future.

Cheers,

Jeremy D. Krones, Program Manager
Office: 210 Peterson Hall, Northern Arizona University
Contact: (928) 523-0588 or info@diablotrust.org
Getting to Know . . .
Scott Poppenberger
Region II Supervisor
AZ Game & Fish Department

Scott graduated from NAU in 1993 and was simultaneously commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army Reserve and hired as a Wildlife Manager with the AZ Game and Fish Department. He served in the Reserves until 2002, along with his Game and Fish responsibilities. Scott’s first 7 years as a WM were spent working out of the Region II, Flagstaff office. His first duty post was in Page before transferring to Game Management Unit 5A along the Rim. Scott then transferred to the Prescott area, where he served in several WM districts before being promoted to the Flagstaff Law Enforcement Program Manager in 2014. From there he was promoted to the Region III Supervisor in Kingman, and then finally to his current position as the Flagstaff Regional Supervisor in mid-2017.

Scott has enjoyed pretty much every bit of the first 24 years of his career. He works with some fantastic people and is especially grateful to have had an opportunity to work to enhance our community and our environment for the future.

Scott’s wife Deanna is a successful realtor and his daughter Claire is active in school, 4H, sports, and band. They enjoy travel, the outdoors, competing with their horses, and good friends.

Born in: St. Paul, MN
Current Hero: My wife, Deanna
Contribution to the Flagstaff Community: Working to ensure professional delivery of the best, science-based conservation available

Books You Recently Enjoyed: Blue Horizon, and everything else by Wilbur Smith
Favorite Hobbies: Hunting, the outdoors, dog and horse training

Contribution to the Flagstaff Community: Working to ensure professional delivery of the best, science-based conservation available

Books You Recently Enjoyed: Blue Horizon, and everything else by Wilbur Smith
Favorite Hobbies: Hunting, the outdoors, dog and horse training

Favorite Outdoor Memory: My 10-year-old daughter's first big game harvest - a whopper of a cow elk
Favorite Western: The Cowboys
Favorite Western-wear Item: A really good pair of boots
Possible (or Actual) Ranch Nickname: 'The Bunkhouse,' our name for our place in Prescott
Favorite College Class: Graduation. Oh, wait, that wasn't a class . . .
Favorite Quotation: "Reward the slightest try . . ."

- Pat Parelli

Talk from the
by Judy Prosser

At lot comes up for me this morning as I think about what to tell you: the grassland restoration (still in progress), pipeline construction, and remote cellular well operation that occurred in the last 12 months; the impending drought and what we are doing in preparation, Country Natural Beef, our little steers in Akron, CO, relationships with ranchers in Mexico, and my thoughts about complacency and trust.

We are almost finished with 7,175 acres of a grassland restoration project we began in April. The area is north of Chavez Mountain East, in our Deep Well and Melbourne intensively grazed pastures, or “cells.” The design work began several years ago when we sat down with Arizona Game & Fish (AGFD) Landowner Relations Specialist for Region II, Steve Cassady, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) District Conservationist Shai Schendal, and others to discuss what we all wanted to see out in that part of the ranch.

You must understand that when I was a kid, in some of these areas there were no trees. In the 1960s my father removed the trees in some areas as they got larger and denser.

In an effort to improve the habitat for pronghorn antelope by increasing their visibility, and improve the forage base for livestock and wildlife, we designed a plan for tree removal. The two new pipelines would make water more reliable and introduce it to the back of the paddocks of Melbourne Cell, to improve forage utilization and reduce stress on the cattle, by not having them walk so far for water. This will also reduce the impact on the land surrounding the cell center because there won’t be so many livestock eating, trampling, and generally "hanging out" there. Concentration of cattle (at the cell center) can also spread contagious illnesses which weaned calves are prone to acquire.

Steve and Shai went to work looking for funding from a multitude of sources: EQIP, RCPP, US Fish & Wildlife Partners Program, ADEQ, and Rocky Mtn. Elk Foundation. They all paid for the tree removal and the Deep Well pipeline. The Compact Agreement funds from AGFD paid for our pipeline in Melbourne.

The combined pipelines totaled 14.5 miles and added 16 reliable drinkers to areas where we had very limited water, if any at all. Ranch To Ranch (RTR), owned by Duane Coleman and his sons, built the pipelines, and Matt Monahan of Reliance Brush Management did the thinning (which may be completed by the time this newsletter goes to print).

Norm Freeman, owner of Essential Data Control Systems (EDCS), established the remote control well system. We can now

Continued on page 12
Good Reads for the Western Life Book Club

October Book Review: The Day the Cowboys Quit by Elmer Kelton

It is a great shame that the book that was once called “one of the Best Western Novels of all time” has so quickly fallen into obscurity. The Day the Cowboys Quit by Elmer Kelton is indeed one of the best Westerns ever written - it has every story element needed in a good, solid novel, and is only enhanced by the fact that the story is based on a real-life tale of unity, protest, and self-determination.

Kelton used events from the mid-1880s, wherein a number of cowboys effectively unionized against their overbearing ranch owners and managers, to promote the classic Western values of individualism, open space, and freedom. While this exact story certainly wouldn’t happen today, the book club noticed many similar elements (on all sides of the fight) reminiscent of modern events. The biggest complaint, however, was that the women (two with any significant lines) were one-dimensional. That is a facet of most classic Westerns, but one that is changing.

We highly recommend this book for your immediate pleasure!

November Book Review: American Buffalo by Steven Rinella

If there were ever a book to which everyone could relate a least a little bit, it would be American Buffalo, by Steven Rinella.

Rinella is a nationally-recognized conservationist, with a hit TV show, podcast, and multiple texts to his name. This memoir is a mix of his journey learning about the American buffalo and preparing and executing a hunt of his own in central Alaska, and the cultural and ecological history of the animal that was once ubiquitous in nearly all of North America. He chronicles personal experiences, well-known events, and the long ecological history of Bison bison in North America over the last 6 million years.

The two main complaints are that Rinella tried too hard to fit all of his information into the mere 250 pages of the book, and there were times when his information was either not explanatory enough or too confusing overall. The other was that while he has a very vivid writing style, his use of metaphors and similes were sometimes superfluous. Just describing the forest as it is works equally as well.

In any case, this book was well-received by the Diablo Trust Book Club and we highly recommend it to hunters, hikers, ecologists, historians, anthropologists, ranchers, and everybody else!

December/January Book Review: One Man's West by David Lavender

One Man’s West takes a deep look into the history of our region, bringing the reader on harrowing treks through the mountains to remote mining camps and then down into the valleys to brand and sort cattle alongside a dozen or more fellow cowboys in the brush.

A memoirist and historian that straddles his lofty education (Princeton) and his down-home upbringing on the range, David Lavender brings forth the harsh beauty of the West at a time when the country was only just getting out of its own raft of hardships, and about to enter the fray of another.

This book is written in an almost conversational style, alternating between the language of the uneducated (but highly skilled) cowboys and miners, and the language found only in the halls of the Ivy League. The reader sees every flower about which Lavender writes, they smell the chicken cooking in the mess hut, and they are brought to imagine how hard life must have been for Lavender, his wife, and all of their friends, families, and neighbors in the mountains of southwestern Colorado.

We highly recommend this book, but take your time reading it. There’s a lot to digest!

Tuesday, February 27 @ 5:30PM

The Solace of Open Spaces
by Gretel Ehrlich

Flagstaff Public Library • 3000 N. Fourth St.
Buy your book at Bright Side Book Shop and support local businesses!
A Letter From Our Newest Board Member

by Ellen Parish

My first encounter with the ranches of the Diablo Trust began in the early 90s, when I arrived in Flagstaff to attend Northern Arizona University. Pine forests and pinyon-juniper ecosystems were a very new experience for me.

I grew up in the southern San Joaquin Valley of California. I was most familiar with cotton, wheat, and alfalfa fields, almond orchards, and rolling hills covered with grass and sprinkled with oak trees.

I started out on the land as many people do, camping and tagging along on fishing trips to places like Kinnikinnick Lake and Long Lake. I soon added wood cutting to my list of favorite activities. These long days of cutting often included a picnic and maybe some exploring with the dogs.

I was so happy to be surrounded by open spaces, clean air, bright sunshine, wildlife of all kinds, and often not another person to be seen all day.

It was the summer of 1997 when my husband and I purchased our home in Mormon Lake. This was a dream come true for us after spending many Sunday afternoons “taking a drive” to this area in college. I then began to use the Diablo Trust lands for hiking and horseback riding.

It felt like part of my “home range” by that time and my appreciation for the area was growing with leaps and bounds. I met Kit Metzger of the Flying M Ranch in 2007. I was hired by Western EcoSystems Technologies to do bird and bat surveys prior to possible wind tower installation. This meant I rode a quad all day, covering a variety of areas scattered over the Flying M Ranch.

I did this weekly for over a year and once again my appreciation and love for this land was growing exponentially.

This was my dream job! This introduction to the Metzger family soon became a friendship and I was full of admiration and gratitude for their kindness and welcoming ways.

My daughters and I went to “help” with processing. We were on horseback to help move cattle on the mesa, and then I began to sell Flying M Ranch beef to the locals in Flagstaff and surrounding areas.

Not long after that I met Bob and Judy Prosser, Derrick Widmark, Mandy Metzger, and was introduced to Diablo Trust, its mission and its people. Once again my appreciation, love, gratitude and admiration for these people and this place grew with unbounded enthusiasm.

I am privileged to now serve as a board member for the Diablo Trust. Many share my passion for this land and I believe together we can maintain a healthy, functioning ecosystem that supports the open spaces, economy, and community who share this place we call home.

Plant Spotting: Globemallow

by Max Licher

Scientific Name(s):
Sphaeralcea parvifolia A. Nels.
Sphaeralcea ambigua var. rugosa
Sphaeralcea arizonica
Sphaeralcea marginata

Common Name(s):
Small-leaf globemallow
Smallflower globemallow

Family:
Malvaceae

Growth:
Forb/Herb

Ecology:
Globemallow is a small, native, perennial forb. It grows to between 20 and 100 cm, with leaves roughly 15-50 cm growing off of stems coming from a thick, woody crown with large roots. The flowers emerge between April and November, and are often bright in color. Globemallow is found on dry, open slopes and mesas, from 4,000 to 7,000 feet in elevation. Researchers determine that this species is “abundant in north-central and northern Arizona.” It is a decent forage, but more beneficial for native pollinators. Likewise, it has been used for sores, cuts, and wounds, along with handling constipation and treating broken bones when chewed or boiled with cactus root.

A Cowgal’s Story

by Sheila Carlson

Tonight on the ride home from town, I looked out at the fading colors in the winter sky.

The blue seemed to blend in quiet perfection to the pink of the sunset, and then into the white wispy clouds.

The silhouettes of the trees, dark starkness in contrast to the colors, created a pretty picture to my eye.

I wonder sometimes how many of us take the simple things for granted?

Is your life so full of rush, me first, instant gratification, that you miss the hawk sitting in the top of the dead pine, looking down at you?

What about that first green blade of grass growing next to that big old rock along the path?

It’s a new year, a time for new beginnings. Maybe this will be the year when you decide to slow down and realize it’s time to enjoy the journey on the way to your destination . . .
Thank You to All of Our Donors!

Diablo Trust is a donation-funded organization, and much of what we do couldn’t be accomplished without contributions from our caring community. This newsletter is mailed to nearly 700 public-landholders all over the country, and to over 700 email users. This list includes donors from 02/01/2017 to 02/01/18. Please turn to page 15 for our newsletter sponsors.

AmazonSmile Foundation
Anonymous (5)
Bar T Bar Ranch*
Christina Barker
Jan Barnes
Robert W. Barris
Susan Billingsley
Cathi Borthwick
Eldon "Buck" Buckner
Julie Creed & Steve Calish
Steve Cassady
Ronald Collotta
Coconino County
Grant & Susan Cooper
James & Bania Darrow
Robert Dawson
Sheila DeHaven*
Mary DeJong
Diablo Burger*
Craig Dible
Herb Dishlip
John Dobrinski
Sue Durling
Carrie & TC Eberly
Joel Eide
Drew Faubion
Dorrance Fund
Ana Flores
Flying M Ranch*
Bryan Friedman*
Fry’s Food Stores*
Mary Gessay*
Charles Gillick
Bruce Gordon
Kate Gowing
Alysa Greenberg*
Don & Monika Hancock
Jessica & Loren Haury
Nancy Helin
John & Mary Hendricks
Hope Construction*
Denise Hudson*
Denis Humphrey
Peter Friederici & Michele James
Edgar & Lucia Jaycocks
Barbara Jones*
Amanda Kapp*
Bill & Mary Keebler
Alan & Diana Kessler**
Johanna Klamann
Jeremy Krone’s
Ronald Krug
Melanie Lawrence
Vicki Lewis
Terri Livingston
Mike Loven
Charlie Lowe
Norm & Gail Lowe*
Eileen Mahoney
Matt Mansfield
Gilbert & Rhena Martinez
Karen Eileen Mattingly
Sam & Marjorie McClanahan
Bill & Mary McDonald
Kit Metzger*
Mandy Metzger
Mother Road Brewing Co.*
Eugene & Molly Munger
Don & Jeanie Neff
Nancy Nelson
John Neville
John & Cheryl Ossenfort
PayPal Giving Fund
Paula Plata*
Ann Pollock
Warren & Kathleen Proser
Kate Radosevic*
Ranch To Ranch
Wendy Ross
Steve Savage
Arnie Schlittenhart*
Alma Seward
Laura Shearin
Scott Harger & Pats Shriver
Tom Sisk
Sybil Smith
Deborah Sparrow
Scott & Kathleen Sweebe
Peg Swift
Phyllis Thompson
Jackie Thomas
Bill Towler
Edward van Beek
John Meredith & Patti Van Tuyl
Ellen Vaughan*
Iris Vercoe
Norm & Lisa Wallen*
Allie Weintraub*
Tempy Wessel
Nat & Jean White
Buck Wickham
Sarah Wilce*
Stephen Williams*
Steven Zeldes

*Consumer choice donation  * Conservation Exchange member  ** Board member/Ranch/Staff  * AZ Gives Day

Money matters & your support makes a difference

www.diablotrust.org/donate

Thank you for your support!

We’re an approved 1% for the Planet partner! onespercentforthisplanet.org
Field Follies: Summer SRM

by Andrew Brischke

Editor’s Note: This is a new blog segment by Andrew Brischke, Area Assistant Agent for the Cooperative Extension in Mohave and Coconino Counties, and friend of Diablo Trust. He writes these columns quarterly for the Arizona Society for Range Management (SRM) newsletter. Diablo Trust supports all activities in the outdoors and Andrew gives some... interesting advice, by way of his own mishaps and blunders, on what to do when in the wild. His first essay was in the AZSRM September 2012 newsletter. We’ll post one of his past essays a month on our blog until we catch up!

I realize I bring much of my misfortune upon myself, I really do. And in keeping with the theme of summarizing the recent summer SRM meeting in this issue, I would like to share another occurrence of self-induced calamity that happened to me during the meeting.

I arrived in Young early enough to find that I could set up my living quarters in just about any spot I wished in the camping area. The spot I chose probably had the hardest ground of the entire lot and bent every last one of my paper clip-sized tent stakes. Instead of doing the sensible thing and finding a different area, I simply said to myself, “This will do, what’s the worst that could happen?”

After coming back from dinner on the first night to see my tent standing firm, my worries about my tent blowing around drifted away with the gusty winds that we had had during the BBQ. The next morning I thought I would put some extra weight in the tent, just to be on the safe side. Luckily, I had a cooler full of ice and sodas that would do the trick.

I decided to come back to the campsite after the day’s talks to collect my cooler full of goodies and relax for the remainder of the evening. When I pulled up to where had I left my tent that morning, I clearly witnessed the evidence of a localized tornado that whipped through the campsite. I saw other tents tipped over, but ostensibly the eye of the tornado went right through where I had placed my weighted down tent and the gale force winds sailed it a good 100 feet from where it had originally been placed.

As I was straightening out my collapsed tent I noticed that I had broken a tent pole. No big deal, as it was just at the joint, and I quickly transformed it from a broken tent pole to a shortened tent pole. Then, as I like to make everything difficult on myself, I dragged my “weighted down” tent back to its original location. You may be asking yourself why I didn’t take anything out to make it lighter to drag, or even better, just set my tent up where it docked itself? The answer, my friends, is simple: I don’t think all the time (and some would argue I rarely think).

At the time I didn’t think of using the real tent stakes I regularly use for monitoring that were in my truck the entire time. I didn’t think that my “heavy,” cheap, Styrofoam cooler full of goodness would’ve tumbled about and emptied either. I didn’t think the now melted ice would soak everything in my tent. I didn’t think of taking everything out of my tent before we finally put the real stakes in. I didn’t even think of dumping the small puddles of water left behind in the bottom of my tent before we staked it down.

Indeed, I could’ve pulled the stakes and emptied the water out of my tent, and in hindsight would’ve been far less effort. But I do things the hard way and decided to mop up and wring out what I could with my already soaked clothes.

That evening was the first time I was pleased that it got so hot over the weekend. The inside of my tent was dry, my air mattress was dry, and my sleeping bag was... damp. I know I brought this on myself, I really do. But I’m also blaming Mother Nature — and Mother Nature, I’m putting you on notice! (That statement ought to really boost my karma for the future.) **
Other Wildlife

by Tom Mackin
Diablo Trust Wildlife Chair

When we look at the Diablo Trust lands south of I-40 in north-central Arizona, we think of the more commonly seen wildlife of the open grasslands, canyons, pinion-juniper woodlands, and ponderosa pine forests, namely pronghorn, mule deer, elk, and even bison, but there are numerous other species and I’d like to briefly share some information about a less common mammal, the American badger (*Taxidea taxus*).

My earliest encounters with this interesting, primarily nocturnal species occurred almost 20 years ago when I had an early archery elk tag in Game Management Unit 5B and we were hunting near Chavez Pass. Deciding that we would be more comfortable sleeping in our own beds in Flagstaff instead of roughing it in a tent and sleeping bag meant that each morning we would be driving I-40 to the Meteor Crater off-ramp and heading south in pre-dawn darkness. It was during these early morning drives, as well as the after dark return trip, that I was able to catch numerous glimpses of these elusive burrowing creatures.

I said glimpses because their mottled brown and black hides and short, stubby but powerful legs kept them close to the ground in several of the more common open grasslands we would pass through each day. While my hunting partner grew up in Flagstaff he was not too familiar with this species either, and so I wanted to learn more, looking at field guides and reading available literature at the library. What I found was interesting and with that knowledge I was able to have additional encounters at other locations and now I frequently see badgers almost every year I’m afield.

Badgers prefer open grasslands, lightly wooded areas, some canyon locations, and other sites where they can burrow down into the sandy or not too rocky soil to excavate a burrow that may be 3-4 foot deep and 8-10 foot long, often with several openings. As previously mentioned, these primarily nocturnal animals like to rest and sleep during the day and so these burrows provide insulated, sheltered living quarters for both males and females, especially when the females have recently given birth.

Badgers are pretty much loners most of the year, and they’re not very territorial and are definitely not social creatures like prairie dogs so finding groups of badgers together just doesn’t happen. Most interaction occurs in late summer or early fall when the males are seeking out receptive females for breeding.

If successful, the females go through delayed implantation and the embryo development is active for only about 6 weeks of the total 7 month gestation period. The 1-5 young are born between March and April and remain in the burrow until their eyes open in about 4 weeks and they’re fully weaned in 6-8 weeks. They’ll remain with the mother until early fall at which time they’ll disperse on their own.

Badgers are omnivores, eating lizards, grasses, small birds, eggs as well as many small mammals like gophers, mice, and even rabbits. This diet will enable badgers to grow 24-30 inches long and weighing up to 20 pounds, with the males being the larger of the two. In our area, badgers do not hibernate over the winter but they go into cycles of torpor that can last for over a day, and they will emerge from the burrows to forage when temperatures are above freezing.

They’ll forage on their home range, which can be several thousand acres, depending on prey and often these ranges will overlap.

Abandoned badger burrows are often utilized by other animals including skunks, foxes and burrowing owls. With their large front claws for digging, badgers are feisty fighters but they will be preyed upon by eagles, bobcats, mountain lions and even wolves and bears that may be present. With the settlement of the West, badgers were frequently shot on sight as another pest, responsible for creating hazards for horses and livestock. They were also trapped extensively for their fur, which was used for shaving brushes and paint brushes, but the market for these uses has significantly declined. In Arizona badgers are considered a fur-bearing game animal, with an open season August through March. A hunting license is required to take these animals.

In closing, due to their nocturnal habits and rural lifestyle, seeing a badger in the wild is a rare occurrence and is a special occasion.
From Generation to Generation (continued from p1)

their parents often and raising their own families with very similar ideals to their own upbringings.

Warren lives in Omaha, NE, and works for a commodity trading hedge fund; Spencer is the co-owner of an agricultural research firm in southwestern Tennessee, outside of Memphis. Jigger is a postal service contractor in Dewey-Humbolt.

Environmentalism

When asked about their respective ‘environmentalism’ (a delicate word, to be sure), each gave a very similar answer. Jigger replied via text, “Being good stewards of the land, proper land management with the cattle.”

Alan Kessler, a rancher for his entire life, would take his boys out to boundary fences, and Jigger recalls that due to differences in land management, there was vegetation on their side, and bare ground on the other side of the fence.

Alan was an early adopter of Holistic Resource Management, which focuses a large part on how brittle a landscape is and how much impact it can withstand. He taught his son that proper care makes a big impact on the survival and success of their land, vegetation, and water resources.

It also made a big impact on the understanding that people have about the land and what our role is on it.

“I took for granted growing up on a ranch,” said Spencer. “ Seeing nature and outdoor life … I’m pretty passionate about the preservation of the beautiful things that are out there. It doesn’t take a long look back to realize that developing [housing on] our range might not be the best idea.”

Jigger agreed, saying that he much prefers to “live in more open spaces, hunt and see the land taken care of and not just filled with homes.”

Warren focused more on the use of our public (and some private) lands. He said while it’s great that there is so much to do out on the open land, the downside is that access tends to be abused - there are either too many people for the land and resources to handle, or those who are out there abuse what should belong to all of us.

“Environmentalism in the Midwest is simpler,” explained Warren, elaborating that with more rain there aren’t as many forest fires, and with less public land there isn’t as much wildlife to manage.

He went on to say that there are more unknown and unpredictable variables in the Southwest, like the weather. “There’s not a lot of snowpack that can bail you out.”

That statement is very true this year, when Flagstaff received its second-latest measurable snowfall on record. But even when the city gets snow, the ranches might not. That means the land continues to get drier and drier, and there’s almost nothing to do except just wait it out.

Conservation Ethic

“My parents did something unique with Diablo Trust,” said Warren. “ Over the years, as people moved away from agriculture, [farmers and ranchers] closed their doors … my parents humbled themselves a bit to show people what they do and said, ‘you can critique us.’ That willingness to listen is special.”

Caring for our open lands and shared spaces, all three men agreed, is paramount to running a successful ranch, but in a very close second is opening your door and engaging in dialogue.

“Some ranches might do things a little rough,” Jigger said, “but overall [it’s] good for the land and cattle.”

Spencer took that further, saying that even if everyone in a room disagrees on the process, the end goals are usually the same.

“You tend to dislike people less that you can dinner with and get to know,” mused Spencer. “It took me a long time to learn about relationships. Diablo Trust was about getting people in the room together and having a discussion.”

The early days of Diablo Trust included yelling matches and tense meetings, but as Diablo Trust enters its 26th year, the frustration and disagreements that defined the early 90s are nearly gone.

Not everyone agrees all the time, but Diablo Trust participants now come with the understanding that, as Warren put it, “listening to other people is special.”

Stories From Childhood

All three men shared stories from their childhoods on the ranches, hunting, fishing, and riding around the land.

Jigger recalled, “growing up on the ranch was amazing! Working with the cattle and horses taught me a lot … most kids didn’t have the opportunity that we did.”

And some still don’t. Warren remembered fishing in East Clear Creek with his mom and grandfather, before the crawdads ‘moved in.’ Now, he said, he’s shocked to see how much the creek has changed with new species, and with the greater amount of use the entire area gets.

On a recent trip home, he said, “the road was so busy with OHVs [off-highway vehicles] that I was afraid to drive … it was covered with people.”

Warren advocates that before anyone goes out on public land, they look up the rules and regulations for what can and can’t be done on the land.

“You see some people going that way, and others who don’t care,” he lamented.

In addition to fun, there was also work.

“My dad gave me my work ethic, teaching me to work hard. I learned about the ranch, to shoot, to shoe horses, to take care of down animals, and many other things too numerous to count,” remembered Jigger.

Spencer told of a drive he once took with his grandfather when he was 10 or 11 years old. They were on a side of the ranch that had no cattle that season. They drove up to a gate that needed opening. Spencer got out and opened it, but didn’t think to close it, because the cattle were so far away.

His grandfather told him to close the gate because, “you never know when you’d need that gate closed in a pinch.”

That work ethic is ubiquitous on so many ranches: work hard once, so you don’t have to do it again.

Close the gate behind you, read the rules, and open your doors.
Ask A Rancher (continued from p1)

to run livestock on non-home-steaded lands (government land) to earn a meager existence. During this time home-steads were failing and boot-legging was the common means of revenue.”

Grazing permits were developed in our region around 1919, to bring structure to the use of the open, public lands of northern Arizona.

Maintaining “commensurate private land” and control of the waters are prerequisites to obtaining a grazing permit. The rights to graze, fence, and manage the waters on a defined area of land can be sold and transferred, as long as the Terms and Conditions of the permit are met by the owner. Permits are renewed every ten years.

“Many of the homesteads applied for and got grazing permits. Some homesteaders sold out to neighboring ranchers when they gave up trying to make a living, or were caught bootlegging. These small early permits from Mormon Lake to Red Hill were the start of Flying M and Bar T Bar Ranches today,” Bob said.

What A Permit Does

“There are two important categories when it comes to discussing livestock numbers: permitted numbers and authorized numbers,” explained Gary.

Permitted numbers are the maximum number of AUMs (animal units per month) the grazing permit allows on the established allotment.

Permitted livestock numbers on an allotment are usually established during the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act of 1969) process and are based on an analysis of historical livestock use, forage production and utilization data, and vegetation condition and trend information. The forage and habitat needs of wildlife and the necessary vegetative cover to protect and enhance soil and watershed properties are also key considerations when establishing permitted livestock numbers.

Authorized numbers are the AUMs the Forest Service authorities actually allow to graze on the allotment each year.

“We meet with permittees each year to determine what livestock numbers will be authorized on the allotment that year given the current and predicted resource conditions. [The number] cannot exceed permitted numbers,” wrote Gary. “We also develop the Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the upcoming grazing season during this meeting. The AOI contains instructions for the grazing permittee with regards to authorized livestock numbers and period of use, pasture use dates, forage utilization levels, structural range improvement constructions and maintenance, etc.”

After the meeting, permittees apply for the livestock numbers. The Forest Service reviews, modifies (if necessary), and then approves the application, and sends a bill to the ranch based on the current year’s grazing fee. Once the bill has been paid, the livestock numbers and the grazing period are authorized. The Forest Service allotments of both the Flying M and Bar T Bar are on their “summer country,” so the grazing period is usually June 01 to October 31.

“The actual number of livestock on the allotment is largely based on trust between the ranchers and the Forest Service officials. Gary says that, “in the ‘old’ days, FS range folks used to count livestock on and off the allotments; [that’s] simply not the case anymore.”

The Forest Service does have the authority to require the permittee to gather their cattle to double-check numbers, or to require numbered ear tags, but Gary has only had to do that once in his entire career.

Gary said that it’s pretty easy to tell if the herd is significantly larger – or smaller – than it should be.

“It’s not just about livestock numbers,” Gary also said. The grazing period includes the season of use, and individual pastures use periods. Anyone can easily monitor when the herd is on or off a pasture or allotment.

Bob agreed with Gary, saying that the ranches are accountable for the numbers and density they have on their permit. He explained that if either ranch sees a problem one year through their monitoring, they will take that issue into account when deciding on a plan in the next year.

Both ranches monitor their lands regularly. Most Diablo Trusters know about the Forage Resource Study Group (FRSG), which monitors over two dozen sites on the ranches triannually, but FRSG is currently limited to just state and private land.

Much like FRSG and IMoS (Integrated Monitoring for Sustainability, Diablo Trust’s long-term community and landscape-scale survey project with Northern Arizona University), the monitoring that the Bar T Bar and Flying M do on their Forest permits is collaborative.

The Bar T Bar and Flying M survey their Forest permits using a NEPA’ed monitoring protocol (“to NEPA” is the action of putting a program, like a monitoring study, through the process of review outlined in the 1969 Act).

The utilization surveys performed throughout the grazing period by the ranches and the USFS work to ensure permit and AOI compliance, and monitor resource conditions and forage utilization levels.

Allotment and leases can get more complicated, but at the basic level, this is what happens behind the scenes when you see cattle, sheep, goats, or any other livestock on Federal Land.
operative both Melbourne Well, which serves both Flying M and Bar T Bar, and Dog Valley Well, from Bob's cell phone or our laptop. We can determine almost any problem they are having from our remote location.

Duane, Matt, and Norm are all businessmen local to northern Arizona. Norm presented at an Annual Meeting some years ago, and Matt is presenting at the Annual Meeting this year!

We are very grateful to all the people that have made these projects possible and seen them through to fruition!

All of these projects should provide added flexibility if this drought continues. For parts of our ranch, we have not seen moisture since the end of July.

Fortunately, we had about three years of good moisture prior to August 1st, to build a good forage base. We know from history what not to do in a drought, so we are making plans in the event it continues. The long-term forecast is ugly. But my son reminds me it is a weather forecast and they are wrong more often than not.

Selling yearlings this spring is an option. Finding alternative pasture is another. Feeding more supplement to augment the feed resources is another. Hauling water is already underway.

A combination of all of these tactics is probable. There are some forest pastures that have no water nor an easy way to haul water to them. Suffice to say, we are concerned. On the other hand, as Joe Lockett said to me, “It will rain – it always does.”

He was referring to his faith in the Big Man upstairs.

Country Natural Beef – we have been a member of this very old beef co-op from the Northwest off and on for a number of years.

In 2016 we put our steer calves and open heifers into the program. They have a Global Animal Partnership (GAP) standard, to which we subscribe, GAP IV to be specific. Their beef ends up in numerous places, one of which is Whole Foods, although Whole Foods doesn't advertise it as such. The point of this is to get a significant premium for the natural beef which is GAP IV certified. One of the problems with it is that there are limited places to background the cattle with access to pasture after weaning, to feed them until they are fat, and to harvest them when they are ready.

This year's calves went to Akron, Colorado, which is a very cold place. We visited them recently and they were suffering from the below zero weather. If sick, according to GAP IV, and the criteria for “Natural,” they cannot be treated with many medications, antibiotics included. I can hardly stand that principal, because I believe in treating sick animals and relieving their discomfort. At any rate, they have instructions from us that a live steer is better than a dead one, and to use antibiotics if they need to be treated to recover.

They would then be removed from the GAP IV designation.

Speaking of temperature, Bob, our sons, and I went to Mexico this year, where it is warmer. We made a trip to the state of Sonora in October, where we visited numerous beautiful ranches with good cattle and sophisticated management. Several of the owners are people who have been our bull customers for years and we were the recipients of tremendous hospitality everywhere we went.

Our motivation for this trip was to introduce our sons to their peers in Mexico, to build some relationships, and to show them these operations. It is our hope that we can do some business with our Mexican friends with the goal of “expanding our business for the next generation.”

One of our tour guides was Sam Garcia, Ph.D., who operates the University of Arizona Food Product & Safety Lab, where we now have our beef processed for Diablo Burger restaurant. Sam and his family own a ranch in Sonora, as well. He is also on the agenda as a presenter at the DT Annual Meeting.

I will end this literary effort by saying that I think Diablo Trust must not be complacent with our outreach. It was brought to my attention that we have not been out to the Happy Jack area in a long time, and that perhaps we need, once again, to let those people who see (and sometimes cuss) our “T” cows, know who we are and what we stand for.

And that’s all about trust isn’t it? Relationships can foster trust if we nourish them. Trust brings me full circle to the subject of drought. I could lose my mind with worry if I didn’t have my faith in the Big Man upstairs.

So, full speed ahead – 2018 is here! by
On the Ground with Diablo Trust
Visit www.diablotrust.org or our Facebook page for more pictures. Articles about some events are on page 14.

Ranch Day on the Land: October 29, 2017

Judy brought out an improvements map as a visual aid to discuss geography.
The boys in the corrals. We interrupted their lunch!
Judy prepping the group on what they’ll see at the corrals and feedlot.

FRSG Monitoring on Bar T Bar: Oct 31 – Nov 01, 2017

We had a big team on the ‘T’! There were reps from CNRCD, NRCS, AGFD, Diablo Trust, and the ranch.
Judy Proser (Bar T Bar Ranch) and Hannah Griscom (Habitat Specialist, AGFD).
Steve Cassady (AGFD) removes beetles from a rain gauge on the Bar T Bar.

Bison Day on the Land: December 10, 2017

Most of the 30 attendees were Diablo Trust “old timers,” but there were a few new folks in the room!
After a short film, Shelly gave a slideshow presentation on the RWA, and some biological and cultural history of bison.

Getting a shot of the bison through the spotting scope!
The morning ended with a short talk with Rob Nelson, Habitat Evaluation and Lands Program Manager with AGFD.
The herd in the pasture.
Photo by Sheila Carlson
Born On a Ranch: The First Day

Editor’s Note: This column is to educate our readers on the life of a calf on a fictional ranch very much like the Bar T Bar and Flying M. We are working with both ranches and the A2 Beef Council to make sure this story is both fun, and educational!

Sunday, Feb 25

This morning was chilly, as most February mornings are on the range.

It hasn’t been the best winter we’ve seen, but with the new year came our first snow, and at least we aren’t in a total drought.

The cows are doing well, even those that didn’t get pregnant during the too-dry summer on the mountain. Unfortunately, they’ll probably be auctioned off, but that’s how it is on a modern ranch. We follow the Lasater Philosophy: selection, selection, selection. If a cow doesn’t take, she’s out of the herd. She might go on to live on another ranch, or become part of the marketplace, providing meat and dozens of other products for everyday use.

But we’ve still got a good number of healthy, fertile, and pregnant cows in our herd, so the future looks bright.

It snowed yesterday, adding about 40-100s of an inch to the eight inches we’ve accumulated thus far. Again, not the greatest, but good enough.

Cows like to birth (or ‘calve’) with the low pressure, so with the storm we expected a few new calves on the ground this morning. It helped that we fed the mamas last night, too. Feeding late in the day helps warm up the rumen and that encourages the birth.

One of our cowboys, Jim, lives out at the calving cell, in a rustic cabin. It’s not high society living, but it’s not a hovel, either. It’s just fine for a single man living there for a couple months, with the important task of caring for the cows during calving season.

Jim sent us a text that one of our favorite cows, Zelda (aka #52), was about to give birth.

After about 45 minutes, he sent us a picture.

It really only takes 15 to 20 minutes from the time the water breaks to the calf on the ground, but Jim knows what to look for in a cow who’s ready to drop: she gets agitated, tries to go off on her own. A good way to tell if she’s ready to give birth is when her tail is kicked up to the side.

From there it’s a waiting game.

When she’s ready to go into labor, she’ll lie down on the ground. If Jim had seen the water break and then nothing really happening in the next 10 minutes, he’d have gone out to help Zelda, strapping her into a tight chute, feeling inside of her to determine the calf’s orientation, and trying to get the calf’s hooves out around its snout.

But fortunately, for us, Zelda, and the calf, it was a smooth birth — far more common than what most people think. Zelda is 4 years old, which means that this is her third ‘rodeo,’ and that usually means smooth sailing.

Little 52 was born, and Zelda turned around to ‘talk’ to her baby, and lick him clean.

Zelda’s attention to the little bull calf helps him wake up, breathe, and get moving — instincts are much stronger in cows (and pretty much all animals) than in humans.

The bull calf, once on its wobbly legs, hobbled over to his mother’s udder to nurse. If a calf — any baby mammal — doesn’t get colostrum, or the first milk, in the first couple of hours, their immune system can be really compromised.

Fortunately for us, Zelda’s a pro and her calves inherit that trait right quick.

After the calf gets his fill, Zelda licks him down some more.

Jim has been watching from the fence this whole time, making sure Zelda and the calf are doing well. Now that they’re both moving and nothing’s awry, the cowboy gently moves them to a larger part of the corral and turns his attention to some of the other mothers who haven’t calved yet.

We’ll check back in with Zelda and her baby bull next month!
With Many Thanks to Our Sponsors:

Flagstaff’s Independent Bookshop
18 N SAN FRANCISCO ST
FLAGSTAFF, AZ 86001
T: 928.440.5041
MON - SAT 9 AM - 8 PM
SUN 10 AM - 6 PM

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, CARDS, UNIQUE GIFTS, TOYS & MORE

SedonaKind.org
Be Kind Whenever Possible.
It Is Always Possible.

SustainableArizona.org

As a member of 1% for the Planet, we grant 1% of sales to local environmental and conservation organizations including Diablo Trust.

Thanks to our customers, we’ve granted more than $135,000 to the Flagstaff community.

Downtown Flagstaff
24 N. San Francisco Street
(928) 726-2885
mountainsportsflagstaff.com
Return Service
Requested

"Learning from the land and sharing our knowledge . . .
So there will always be a West"

**Upcoming Events**

Thurs-Mon, Feb 15-19: **Flagstaff Mountain Film Fest** • 6:00PM - 9:00PM • Orpheum Theatre, 15 W. Aspen Ave

Fri, Feb 16: **Annual Meeting** • 8:00AM - 1:00PM • Thornager’s, 2640 W. Kiltie Lane
*The Economics of Open Lands: Who Benefits from Business on the Land*

Tues, Feb 27: **Book Club** • 5:30PM - 6:30PM • Flagstaff Library, 3000 N. Fourth Street
*The Solace of Open Spaces*, by Gretel Ehrlich

Fri, Mar 16: **CROP Meeting** • 10:00AM - 2:00PM • AGFD Office, 3500 S. Lake Mary Rd
*Cooperative Resource Operational Plan*, for agency partners to discuss relevant matters with the Trust

Fri, Mar 16: **Hunting Film Tour** • 7:00PM - 10:00PM • Orpheum Theatre, 15 W. Aspen Ave

Fri, Mar 23: **Meat Processor Day** • 10:00AM - 12:00PM • Perkinsville Processing, 3990 E. Perkinsville Rd, Chino Valley
*A tour and in-person discussion about a local meat packing house and ranching family!*

Thurs, Mar 29: **Book Club** • 5:30PM - 6:30PM • Flagstaff Library, 300 W. Aspen Ave
*American Serengeti: The Last Big Animals of the Great Plains*, by Dan Flores

Tues, Apr 03: **AZ Gives Day** • 12:00AM - 11:59PM • www.azgives.org/diablotrust

Mon, May 28: **First Annual Picnic** • 11:00AM - 4:00PM • Intersection of FR125 and FR126, Flying M Ranch
*Brought forth by popular demand, our first Annual Picnic! Bring something tasty to share, field games to play, and stories to tell!*

Thurs, May 31: **Book Club** • 5:30PM - 6:30PM • Flagstaff Library, 300 W. Aspen Ave
*Lazy B: Growing Up on a Cattle Ranch in the American Southwest*, by Sandra Day O’Connor

Fri, Jun 08: **4FRI Day on the Land** • 9:00AM - 2:00PM • 4FRI Project Site (TBA)
*A tour and on-the-ground discussion of the Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI), its purpose, impact, and potential.*

Thurs, Jun 28: **Book Club** • 5:30PM - 6:30PM • Flagstaff Library, 300 W. Aspen Ave
*Toward a Natural Forest: The Forest Service in Transition*, by Jim Furnish

Stay tuned for information on these events and more still in the works: [http://www.diablotrust.org/calendar](http://www.diablotrust.org/calendar)
If you have any suggestions for events, books, films, presentations, or field trips, please do not hesitate to contact us.