



# EMPIRE RANCH FOUNDATION NEWS

P.O. Box 842 • Sonoita, Arizona 85637-0842

[www.empireranchfoundation.org](http://www.empireranchfoundation.org)

## From Chaos, Order and Beauty

The hanging crew for *The Empire 100* Western Art Show and Sale met at Northern Trust Bank at none o'clock on Sunday morning, January 5, 2003. It was a skeleton crew. Scattered around the floor were still unopened crates. The arrival of Aline Goodman, experienced art organizer with the Mountain Oyster Club, and ERF's new administrative assistant, Bruce Lehmann, with four art-savvy friends, seemed like a rescue posse.

The work began. Any trepidation present at the outset disappeared as paintings were unpacked and the strength of the show unfolded. At the end of the day, the 100 works of art were well placed. Just as the artists had their different styles, so did the workers who hung the show. Some were careful and mathematical, using tape measures, pencils and calculators. Others were confident to just eyeball the situation and slam in the nail. But they all shared exhilaration when they gazed at the exciting array of media, palettes, and styles.



"Brandin' Day" 12x16" oil, by Joan LaRue

The artwork fell into categories based on subject, size or color. Sonoita's favorite celebrity and Hall of Fame artist, Dick Bryers, has his own wall. Claire Goldrick's brilliant grasses and horses took the entrance. Debbie Fellows claimed the center of the lobby with her 3' bronze cowgirl.

Four Tucson *plein-air* painters—Joan LaRue, Gwen Dean, Darcie Peet, and Nancy Prevo—added that special vibrancy and freshness of paintings done in open air.

The "bordello room" was created in the vault room to contain the bawdy women of Neil Boyle. Paintings by Robert Kembel and Sonoita's Bill Cook feature the Empire

Ranch, and Michael Stack captures our locale in his *Hills of Sonoita*.

The Native American theme is well represented in the show with bronzes by Jim Gruzalski and the paintings of Louis Maestas, Lawrence Lee, Bill Mittag, Ruben Nieto, Jessica McCain, and Stephen Lang, who recently was awarded Master Signature status by Oil Painters of America, in recognition of his outstanding work in representational painting. The show is proud to have works from three young painters receiving national recognition: Chauncey Homer, Owen Rose, and Glenn Dean.

Ray Harm, the famous naturalist and wildlife painter, submitted three original pieces for the show. They are hung together near a statement of his philosophy of painting (see additional article, p. 2).

This is show is a "must see." It's open daily during bank hours from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, through February 14. For reservations to attend the February 6 reception to meet the artists, call Carol Goddard at (520) 615-2319. Examples of the art may be seen on our website: [www.empireranchfoundation.org](http://www.empireranchfoundation.org).

## Members Respond Generously to Year-End Appeal

Thank you, readers, for your generous response to our year-end appeal for additional funds to save the Adobe Haybarn and other buildings at the Empire Ranch Headquarters. We received over \$20,500 from you during November and December! This amount includes one extraordinary gift of \$10,000 from a member.

We are awaiting our contractor's final bid for emergency stabilization and as soon

as it is approved we will begin the process of stabilizing the Adobe Haybarn for the generations to come in this millennium.

Your generosity is especially appreciated in the current economic climate. It is heartening that you recognize that steps must be taken now or this history will be lost forever. The erosive elements whittle away at our buildings in bad times as well as good times! Those old walls thank you.



"Empire Ranch Back Door," oil by Robert Kembel.

Published by the Empire Ranch Foundation, a not-for-profit organization, in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management. The purpose of the Foundation is to protect, restore, and sustain the Empire Ranch historical buildings and landscape as an outstanding western heritage site and educational center. Donations to the Foundation may be sent to: P.O. Box 842, Sonoita, AZ 85637-0842. \_



“American Bald Eagle” gouache by Ray Harm.

## Artist Ray Harm: An American Original

Living adjacent to the Empire Ranch is world famous wildlife artist Ray Harm who has lectured to huge audiences all over America, dined at the White House, appeared on the Today Show, To Tell the Truth, Mike Douglas show and started a successful art prints publishing company. Ray has been named one of only 30 of the most influential artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

Writing a few words about Ray Harm is next to impossible. His life reads like a novel. Born in West Virginia of rural parents, Ray Harm’s love of nature came automatically. In true Jeffersonian style, his parents modeled the way to studiously acquire and apply knowledge to whatever passion drove a man. They were concert violinists, his father a mountain herbalist with character to survive economic hardships through World War I and the Great Depression. Independence and hard work were just expected in the Harm family.

During the 7th grade Ray struck out on his own to Nebraska to become a cowboy and rodeo contestant. During World War II, Ray joined the navy and became a radio operator in the Pacific. After the war, he took advantage of the GI Bill to get an education. His art education has since been supplemented by five honorary doctoral degrees for accomplishments as an educator, naturalist and artist.

Ray Harm’s wildlife art came to the attention of several influential businessmen  
(continued on page 4)

## Foundation Board Elects New Officers

At the November 16 Empire Ranch Foundation Board of Directors meeting and annual election, the following officers were unanimously elected to one-year terms:

*President*—Richard T. Schorr, of Tucson AZ. A board member since 1997, Dick has been prominent in Foundation planning and development, and a mainstay in the conduct of the Foundation’s Roundup and other public events, including demonstrating his personal skills in authentic western reata making and cookery. He conducts an active veterinary practice in Tucson.

*Vice President*—Susan Ingram Hughes, of Burtonsville MD. A board member since 2000, Susan is the Foundation’s newsletter and publications editor and website webmaster, and has been heavily involved in preservation construction project oversight, and in ERF archives and database development. Her background is in reference publishing.

*Treasurer*—Laurel Wilkening, of Elgin AZ. A board member since 1998, Laurel is our previous board Vice President/Treasurer, and has been prominent in Foundation financial planning and management, while also pursuing her personal avocation for research and writing about Empire Ranch history. Laurel also managed the Empire Ranch Fall Roundup in 2000. Her background is in higher education.

*Secretary*—Billie Donaldson, of Sonoita AZ. A board member since 2001, Billie is our previous board Secretary, and has been key in developing proceedings and procedures documentation, as well as managing preparations for the ERF Fall Roundups in 2001 and 2002 and coordinating volunteer participation. She is active in the Sonoita ranching community.

Working together with the above officers are the members of the board of directors, as follow: Steve Boice, Jake Kittle, Gerald Korte, George A. Masek, Jacquie McNulty, and Jane Woods.

2002 Board members Susan M. McDonald, Lea Ward, and Chuck Stockton have chosen to retire as directors, but will continue as active volunteers. We thank them all for their valuable past contributions and hard work, and are grateful for their continuing support.

Last but not least, a special note of thanks is due to Marion Hyland who, in observance of the two-term term limits for board members contained in Foundation bylaws, has resigned as a Board Member and Board President, effective 2003.

Marion was a founding director of ERF in 1997. Prior to being elected President in 2002, Marion was ERF Vice President, supporting the organization’s growth in every way and, most notably, conceptualizing the Foundation’s western art shows and sales, and forging the marvelous partnerships with the art community that have made these events possible and so very well received.

We are enormously grateful that Marion will continue to direct these events as a volunteer, and look forward to her returning to board membership in future years.

## Administrative Services News

As the Foundation’s programs grow, ERF board members and volunteers continue to handle the majority of Foundation work. However, to provide day-to-day administrative support to our organization and activities we are very pleased to have recently contracted for the part time services of Bruce Lehmann, a long time resident of Tucson, with extemsove experience in both the business world and the nonprofit world.

Bruce will provide centralized support replacing communications services until recently supplied to ERF by Deana DeWolf on a contracted basis, and replacing financial data services provided *gratis* to ERF by Perry Doubt Bok, on a volunteer basis.

We will experience many benefits from centralizing these functions under Bruce’s single set of hands, and are pleased to be able to give respite as well as thanks to Perry, who has been a tireless volunteer.

We are deeply grateful for Perry’s many hours and professional skills applied to upgrading our accounting system and carrying it through months of data maintenance and conversion—all volunteered long-distance from her association management service in Illinois.

Thanks also and best wishes to Deana, who will be concentrating her efforts on her growing private business in Sonoita.

## Major Electrical Wiring Project Completed

The next time you visit the Empire Ranch, you will notice something's *very* different... During December 2002, all the overhead electrical wiring and electrical power poles in the headquarters building complex were removed, and new conduit and electric wires were installed underground to all the buildings.

Completing this project marks major progress both in providing a safe environment for the public and BLM employees, and in protecting and restoring the historic Empire Ranch headquarters.

In February 2002 BLM conducted a comprehensive safety inspection of the ranch headquarters. During the inspection, exposed electrical wires, electrical boxes, and the overhead electrical wires were noted as unsafe, posing an electrocution and fire hazard and not in compliance with OSHA standards or the National Electrical Code (NEC).

In addition, the overhead wiring and electric poles did not meet historic standards or timeframe for the headquarters.

BLM applied special funding earmarked for safety in order to plan and correct these problems, and BLM personnel, together with donated equipment and services from Tucson Electric Company (TEC), made it possible to do the job.

BLM maintenance staff JJ Swift and Jim Parsons and fire crew members Jason McClain and John Garret did a great job in trenching and installing a new underground electric system upgrade to the buildings.

Trenches and conduit extended across the main corral, out to the tool shed, and behind the Huachuca House, replacing power formerly served through unsightly power poles and wires. Final filling and finishing then restored the scene at ground level.

They were greatly aided by TEC's generous donation of services and equipment for removal of secondary overhead wires and poles—which would have been extremely difficult without TEC help.

The photos accompanying this article illustrate the accomplishments of their great high wire act! Congratulations and hearty thanks for a job well done.



*Poles and wires over Zaguan breezeway (above) and west of Adobe Haybarn (right) clutter the view prior to wire relocation..*



*BLM fire crew member Jason McClain lays conduit in trench dug through main corral.*



*Tucson Electric Co. donated crew and equipment at work west of Adobe Haybarn.*



*Open skies over Zaguan breezeway (above) and Adobe Haybarn (left) following project completion. (All photos: P. Kays)*



## Preservation Projects

### Summary

Preservation of the Empire Ranch House and other buildings is a primary mission of the Foundation. Projects recently completed, underway, or scheduled are noted below. Projects we have previously shown as complete are not repeated here.

To see a list of preservation projects completed to date, visit the Foundation website at: [www.empireranchfoundation.org](http://www.empireranchfoundation.org).

- Plan and execute emergency repairs to Adobe Haybarn (*plan and cost bid near completion; start early 2003*)
- Create plan and stabilize Adobe Haybarn for the long term (*priority item once funds are raised*)
- Stabilize lintel over south entry of Zaguana/Breezeway for the long term (*plan complete; partially funded; work postponed in deference to haybarn emergency needs*)
- Plan emergency treatments for Ranch Hand's House (*plan and cost bid near completion*)
- Emergency treatment of Ranch Hand's House (*start early 2003*)
- Straighten & stabilize leaning concrete garden wall (*volunteer project; to be scheduled once plan completed & approved*)
- Emergency relocation underground of overhead electrical lines (*complete!*)
- Create plan for repair of Children's Addition floor framing and walls (*Spring 2003*)
- Repair Children's Addition floor framing and walls (*a priority item once repair plan approved and funds are raised*)
- Create plan for adaptive reuse of ranch buildings (*ongoing through 2003*)

### Advance Notice

Empire Ranch Spring Trail Ride  
Planned for May 10, 2003  
—Details To Be Available in March—

For Reservations

Call (520) 881-1510 or visit  
[www.empireranchfoundation.org](http://www.empireranchfoundation.org)

## History of the Reata

The reata was an integral part in the life of the vaquero in the Southwest. *La reata* (lariat) has a long history also among the people that herded livestock of all sorts, be they cattle and horse, yak, water buffalo, reindeer, etc.

The lariat was made from the hide of the animal it was used on. The hide was never tanned but left as rawhide. Rawhide is a very durable material and was abundant where animals were found.

The history of the rawhide lariat spans thousands of years and is found in the remote areas of Mongolia, Tibet, Turkey, Africa, etc., as well as in modern times in the New World.

At the Empire Ranch and the surrounding areas of southern Arizona and Sonora, the process of making a rawhide lariat was a simple one, yet quite tedious. Little has changed in this process today. Interviews with many vaqueros over the past twenty years from the ranchos in Sonora and Baja California, from south Texas to the Sage Brush Basin areas in Oregon and Nevada, revealed the same techniques in making the reata.

With the Industrial Revolution, the use of the rawhide rope by the cowboy was being replaced by the manufactured hemp and manila grass rope. Long spools of grass rope were purchased by the ranch owners. The lariats were fashioned out of these spools at various lengths depending on the needs of the particular cowboy.

Look in our next newsletter for a description of how a reata is made and why a return to the use of the reata, to a limited extent, is being seen in the West.



[Article author Dick Schorr (above, at Roundup 2002 demonstration), a recognized master reata maker and long time ERF Board Member, was recently elected ERF President.]



"Arizona Ringtail," gouache by Ray Harm.

## Ray Harm (cont'd from p. 2)

and politicians. He eventually became the artist co-founder of a publishing company that began the limited edition print concept in the U.S.

For all of this, Ray Harm is a humble man. Perhaps the most important accomplishment from his personal view is that he has been able to raise several million dollars for arts and conservation causes through sales of his prints. Opposed to the use of photographs in the artistic process, his paintings are created from field sketches at dens and nests of living animals.

Ray has a ready smile and a good sense of humor, but he is nonetheless a private man who is happiest in his studio or on horseback. His exuberant wife, Cathy, balances his serious nature.

Ray Harm embodies the combination of a real rancher and cowboy with an avid conservationist. The Empire Ranch Foundation is honored to have his work in *The Empire 100 Art Show and Sale* at Northern Trust Bank through February 15.

## Working Calendar

### February

6 Artists' Reception, "The Empire 100" Western Art Show, 4:30-6:00p.m. RSVP Carol Goddard (520) 615-2319

15 Closing day, "The Empire 100: Western Art Show, Northern Trust Bank, Tucson

20 Tucson Rodeo Parade

### April

12 Board meeting

### May

10 Spring Trail Ride (for signup information, call (520) 881-1510)