

Where Have All The Sheep Gone?

- **Livestock has always been important to the economy of the Peoria area as well as that of Arizona.**
- **At one time there were over a million sheep in Arizona. Today there are probably less than 20,000.**
- **The low prices of lamb, wool is worth very little, feed costs have gone up and coyotes have become a problem.**
- **Remember when you would drive your kids to school and all of sudden you had to stop the car to allow a flock of sheep to be moved from one alfalfa field to another.**
- **One of those shepherd families lived in Peoria and their kids were part of the community. Jose Manterola, a Basque from Spain came to the U.S., married and settled in the community of Peoria.**
- **The routine for the family was to be in the Peoria area in the winter, where the sheep would have their lambs. In the spring the lambs would be sold and the flock of sheep would be trucked to Black Canyon City. In Black Canyon City they would take the trail for about a month of walking to get to the area of Williams and Flagstaff. The sheep and the herders would spend the summer in the north until around the first of September. In September the flock would hit the trail back down to the valley, where they would begin the process of lambing again.**
- **The Manterola's lived on Peoria Avenue near where the fire station is now and the four kids: Silvia (Class of 1952), Carmen (Class of 1955), Marie (Class of 1957) and Joe (Class of 1963) all attended Peoria High School.**

- After graduation the family moved to the Casa Grande area where Joe took over the family sheep business. Today Joe is one of the few shepherders in the entire state.
- Other sheep companies in the Peoria area in the 50s and 60s were the Elorgas, Yriberris, Gibsons and the Perez families.



Carmen Manterola

Class of 1955