



Timberlake Times

Timberlake Landowners' Association

A Deed Restricted Community

HC 61 Box 767, Ramah, NM 87321

© November 2009

Web site: www.trnews.info

PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS

There but for the...

For the last 16 months the Board has been attempting to get the mile stretch of road between the cattle guard and the Timberlake Volunteer Fire Department dedicated to Cibola County. We have sent numerous letters to the Cibola County Commissioners and tried to follow the County's Road Dedication Policy.

A phrase comes to mind for me when I think of this ordeal—one that I have used sparingly because of my concern for its origin—and my cautious understanding of the meaning. It is "There but for the grace of God, went we." I figure there had to be some paradox when thinking of this situation and this expression.

Internet search engines are wonderful tools. With a few keystrokes on a computer in the comfort of one's home, one can find mountains of information.

Actually the above phrase didn't appear in newspaper print until 1931 and has had variations on several occasions. Although there is no concrete proof, it is believed to have originated with John Bradford (circa 1510-1555) when seeing criminals being led to the scaffold. In essence he was saying "I too, like someone seen to have suffered misfortune, might have suffered a similar fate, but for God's mercy." He didn't enjoy that grace for long, however—he was burned at the stake in 1555.

I now see the irony with what transpired in trying to get Cibola County to accept the road for maintenance.

In the August Timberlake Times, the Board tried to explain all the steps that we had taken following the Cibola County Road Dedication Policy. After an impasse, we decided to contact TRLA's attorney for his legal advice.

Mr. Hays contacted the Board with discouraging news. Legally he couldn't do anything for TRLA as it was settled with the McGarry lawsuit some years back. Mr. McGarry contended that when they accepted the subdivision, they

accepted the roads for maintenance. Actually the bottom line was that the roads were accepted as public access and not for maintenance. The 3.3 miles currently maintained are part of the Old Forest Road 157 which was diverted through Cloh Chin Toh when a new subdivision entranceway was made and reconnects at the "Y". .2 of mile from the Savoia Creek Bridge. Mr. Hays says that the dedication of the road for maintenance is a political issue and not a legal one.

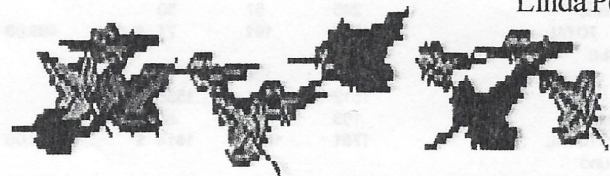
In conclusion "There but for the grace of God, went we," has the same irony for this Board as it did for John Bradford. We suffered the same fate as those before us even though we tried following a policy procedure rather than a combative legal avenue.

We have now spent \$23,530. of association dues on gravel and about \$15,000. on labor/grader time over two years to improve the road. Landowners are relieved with the winter months coming soon, as well as those who have to drive emergency vehicles.

Those of you who pay property taxes in Cibola County should ask why your Commissioner is not representing your interests and did not respond to the Board's letters. Contact your representative: Lloyd Felipe, 515 W. High Street, Grants, NM 87020-2536. Write a letter and think twice whom you vote for next time. Commissioners work for us—we don't work for them!

So for now, it is farewell from Timberlake, where the volunteers are strong, the deer are good looking and Timberlake awaits the next blanket of snow, rest for the winter, and yes—God's continuing grace, too. •

Linda Pedersen



Fiscal Year 2009-2010
2009
July August September TOTALS
INFLOWS
Assessment Fees

current yr collections	88,747.71	19,183.73	2774.53	\$	110,705.97
previous yrs collections	814.47	225	0	\$	1,039.47
Assessment fee Woodland	460	230	0	\$	690.00
Key Income	52	26	41	\$	119.00
Donations	0	0	0	\$	-
Finance Charges	144	139	370	\$	653.00
TOTAL income	90,218.18	19,803.73	3185.53	\$	113,207.44

Annual Meeting	229	0	-31		
Insurance-Directors & Officers	0	0	0		
Meetings and socials			0		
Office Supplies & Exp	335	44	2		
Postage	70	-2	29		
Subscriptions and Dues	10	0	0		
Mileage - Board Members	40	0	40		
TOTAL	684	42	40	\$	766.00

Comminications

Newsletter	0	0	183		
Website	0	0	0		
TOTAL	0	0	183	\$	183.00

Financial

Accounting	641	1005	641		
Audit	0	0	5		
Taxes - Real Estate	0	0	0		
Taxes - Income	0	2664	0		
TOTAL	641	3669	646	\$	4,956.00

Legal

Legal					
Legal - Casutt	267	0	169		
Lien & Notary Fees	18	0	10		
TOTAL	285	0	179	\$	464.00

RANCH OPERATIONS

Insurance					
Insurance - Workers Comp	0	192	116		
Insurance - Liability & Bond	1356	683	683		
TOTAL	1356	875	799	\$	3,030.00

Employee Wages & Taxes

Wages					
Grader Time (\$5100.00)	930	593	330		
Brushhog Time			0		
Snowplow (\$2,500)			0		
Sanitation & Janitorial (W-9) (\$1,400)	180	180	350		
Ranch Hand (\$5,000)	265	0	140		
Taxes					
Taxes - FICA	91	45	36		
Taxes - Federal Unemployment	5	5	3		
Taxes - State Unemployment	14	5	11		
Mileage - Foreman & Employees	0	0	0		
TOTAL	1485	828	870	\$	3,183.00

Buildings & Commons

Operating Supplies	27	0	0		
Building Maintenance & Repairs		0	0		
Ranch House	70	949	298		
Bath House	0	0	0		
Common Land Maintenance/Repairs	248	0	0		
Sanitation & Janitorial Supplies	0	0	112		
TOTAL	345	949	410	\$	1,704.00

Equipment Maint. & Repairs

Dump Truck	0	0	329		
Grader	0	0	73		
Pick Up	0	0	0		
Tractor	87	93	0		
Other	61	0	161		
TOTAL	148	93	563	\$	804.00

FUEL

Gasoline	89	85	40		
Dyed Diesel	0	880	0		
TOTAL	89	965	40	\$	1,094.00

ROADS

Gravel	13657	751	0		
Road Maintenance & Repairs	376	0	2020		
TOTAL	14033	751	2020	\$	16,804.00

UTILITIES

Telephone	72	44	21		
Electric & Propane	245	57	50		
TOTAL	317	101	71	\$	489.00

NOTES PAYABLE

Copier	136	136	0		
Grader	1512	1521	1530		
Interest Expense	103	94	84		
TOTAL	1751	1751	1614	\$	5,116.00

Contingency Fund

Total expenses	21135	10024	7436	\$	38,593.00
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TREASURER'S REPORT

For details of income and expenses for the first quarter report (July 2009- September 2009) please see the spread sheet.

The 2009-2010 Fiscal Year started with \$59,408.96 of unobligated funds.

In August, \$22,975.52 was transferred to the business saving account to cover the future cost of extra gravel, to replace old equipment and restore the Ranch house.

One-hundred-ten-thousand, seven-hundred-five dollars and ninety-seven cents (\$110,705.97) in dues has been collected for the current fiscal year. Eight-thousand three-hundred and forty-seven (\$8,347.00) dollars was still owed for previous year's dues. To date \$1,039.47 of this has been collected.

First quarter expenses were thirty-eight thousand, five-hundred ninety-three dollars (\$38,593). Seventy percent of the total was spent on Ranch operations, 16.5% on Administrative costs and 13% on loans.

A full audit of fiscal year 2008-2009 will be preformed this year. A contract has been signed and the paper work has been sent to an Michael Moore, an accountant in Santa Fe.

Invoices for unpaid 2009-2010 dues will be sent out on January 1, 2010, but interest will accrue on all accounts owing greater than \$115.00 unless payment arrangements have been made with me. If there are any questions regarding your account please do not hesitate to call 505-783-4045. •

Eileen Domer, TRLA Treasurer



Recreational Vehicle Storage

- Mustang Self Storage
505-775-3597

- Mark Baca
505-859-1004
505-864-7985

Driveway Snow Removal

- Alice 505-783-2443
- Justin's Earthworks 505-783-4194

CCT 74 (Common Area)

In July, it was brought to the attention of the Board that a resurvey of the property bordering the west of Cloh Chin Toh had been performed in April of 2007. This survey affected Lots 70-83. Ten (10) lots lost 100' to 300' on the west end.

The Board, as elected members of the Corporation, has the responsibility to maintain the Common Areas. At the Board meetings in August and September, this survey was discussed in great detail and discussions involved on how it should be handled.

On October 9th the Board filed an official complaint with the State of New Mexico Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Professional Surveyors. Four documents were submitted with the complaint:

- 1) Cloh Chin Toh Subdivision Plat Map,
- 2) "Senior Deed" Geological Survey Map from August 16, 1966,
- 3) Warranty Deed from William Eoff to current landowner, and
- 4) resurvey map from April 9, 2007.

The Board also alleges that the surveyor did not clearly state a potential conflict of "property encroachment" or inform property owners.

The Licensure Board may say there was surveyor error, but a Judge would have to determine legality. •



Final Steps Completed in Adoption of New Covenants

On July 31, 2009, the Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (CC&R) Revision Committee officially certified the tally of votes.

At a regular scheduled Board meeting on August 21st, the Board certified that the required voting power of the Association was reached under each of the prior covenants and then approved the Amended and Restated Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions for Timberlake Ranch.

Three of the directors, along with a Notary Public, signed two copies of the document on September 16th.

These documents were mailed to TRLA attorney John Hays where upon he filed each document in McKinley County (Document # 346714 on September 23, 2009 at 12:55pm) and Cibola County (Document # 200902039 on September 24, 2009 at 1:20 pm). •

Storm of the Century

On September 5th a Storm of the Century hit Timberlake. Between 3½ and 5 inches of rain fell within 90 minutes. Washes filled, roads flooded and fences collapsed.

Landowners watched as their graveled driveways disappeared. Several culverts around the ranch could not handle the sheer volume of water which caused sections of roads to wash away. Oak Drive, Lobo, Pinetree, Elk, Bobcat, and Fox Rd at Sagebrush had major destruction. Damage appeared to follow the Flood Corridor Map found in the Ramah Lake Venture/Sanchez Land Company Timberlake Ranch Disclosure document.

Converging washes and drainage areas moved the water southeasterly paralleling Sagebrush past Ash Drive and running over the main Timberlake Road from Copperweed, Lakeview Drive to Wolf Road.

Several landowners found themselves stranded on Hwy 53 when the road was closed, and later at Copperweed and Timberlake waiting for the water to recede before ferrying across bumper deep water.

The storm was part of the aftermath of the hurricane in the Gulf off the coast of Baja. We will not forget this storm or the damage done, anytime soon. May this kind of weather not occur more than once a century. •



Roads Report

The search is narrowing for a multitasking vehicle which will be more user friendly, plow snow in a shorter period of time, and transport limbs/rocks/debris/dirt, etc.

This truck would replace the current two vehicles in TRLA's equipment inventory.

• Pinetree, Elk, Sagebrush, Lobo, Culebra and Oak Drive sustained significant damage from the Sept. 5th storm. All have been repaired with the exception of Bobcat.

• Fifteen (15) loads of dirt along with several loads of big rocks were hauled. Bill for materials needed ran over \$2000.

• Mile stretch of road between cattleguard and Fire Station completed with addition of 1,239.35 tons of gravel.

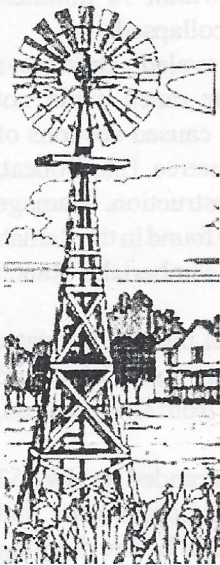
• Two 6" private driveway culverts plugged on Woodland. Landowners need to install 12" culverts.

• Grading and ditch work is continuing on side roads with spot graveling before winter.

• Equipment will be getting winter maintenance within the next few weeks.

The Board agreed to continue plowing snow again this winter with volunteers. •

Ranch House Well Policy Proposal



In the July and November Timberlake Times, the Board explained the complexities of dealing with the usage of the well, the Zuni River Basin Adjudication, and water allocation.

On October 7, 2008 a metering system was installed so that there would be an actual account of the average number of gallons used per day. Bradley Bridgewater, U.S. Department of Justice, gave TRLA a year's extension to prove justification for obtaining three (3) acre feet and not the seven-tenths (.7) acre feet which most landowners agreed to on their personal wells.

A year has passed and the average usage was 326 gallons per day. John Hays, TRLA attorney, agreed to contact the Mr. Bridgewater and attempt to negotiate the three (3) acre feet even though our usage was less than .7 acre feet. TRLA should have an answer within the month.

In the meantime, the Board has formulated a well policy and would like feedback from landowners. A final Board vote on this policy will be made at either the February or March, 2010 public meeting.

The Ranch House Well IS to be used for:

- The "common use and enjoyment of the Members of the Association."
- Supplying the bathhouse and ranch house with water during the summer season.
- Recreational use.
- Irrigation up to one acre of noncommercial trees, lawn or community garden.
- Emergency use by resident landowners for up to seven (7) days while personal well is being repaired.

The Ranch House Well is NOT to be used for:

- Commercial irrigation purposes (i.e. gardens grown for profit)
- A source for potable water
- A public water supply

On November 1st the well will be shutdown until risk of freezing is over in the spring. A major disinfection of the water lines and apparatus will occur at that time. The lines are being drained due to plumbing updates and installation of a septic system. •

Timberlake Community Center Ranch House Restoration and Remodeling Update

- Phase I: Metal Roof Repaired and Repainted. Completed June 8th.
- Phase II: Exterior Walls and Windows Restored and Repainted. Completed September 1st. See August Timberlake Times for detailed discussion. Volunteers provided more than 400 hours of labor.
- Phase III: Rough Demolition/Removal of Interior Partition Walls. Project completed on October 7th. Work provided by volunteers who donated 84 hours.
- Phase IV: Replace and Update Interior Bathroom/Kitchen Plumbing and Fixtures. Partial Completion October 31st. Forty-nine (49) volunteer hours. Projected time of completion is Spring, 2010.
- Phase V: Update Septic System: Projected completion November, weather permitting.
- Phase VI: Rewiring of entire TCC Ranch House. Projected time of completion Spring 2010.
- Phase VII: Create Two Archways/Removal of Wall Lath. Projected time of completion Spring 2010.
- Phase VIII: Finishing Work (Drywall, Texturing, Tiling, Painting, et.) Summer 2010

"Every job is a self-portrait of the person who executed it. Autograph your work with excellence." •

Thank You One & All!

APPRECIATION CORNER

Many thanks to the following landowners:

- Steve and Nancy Wills for contributing lumber to the TCC Ranch House remodeling project.
- Rich and Julie Farrell for heading up the "mailbox area" cleaning crew. Job well done!
- Dan and Kathy Boller for donating a sorely needed Ryobi weed/grass trimmer to TRLA.
- Nancy Ramm for donating hanging file folders to be used in the TRLA office filing cabinets.
- Killarney Martinez for locating an affordable commercial stainless steel sink which is being installed at the TCC Ranch House kitchen. •

Volunteers and Volunteerism

All the accomplishments and makeovers that have occurred in Timberlake for the last three years would never have been possible without the dedication of some very giving landowners. These people have worked on behalf of other landowners without being motivated by financial or material gain. We have attempted to name these individuals in the Year End Fiscal Report at the Annual Meetings. As 2009 draws to a close we would like you to see their names in print as this was a very busy year with many changes and well over a thousand logged hours by volunteers.

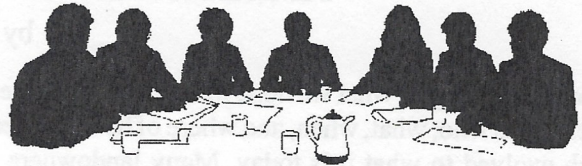
- Road Maintenance and Repair: Jerry Toellner, Tom Merritt, Danny Montoya and Don Parry.
- Common Land Maintenance and Cleanup: Jerry Toellner, Tom Merritt, Danny Montoya and Don Parry.
- Ranch House Exterior Renovation: Herb Gray, Allen & Pat Burnam, Dick Knowles, Danny Montoya, Perry Cole, Eileen Domer, Linda Pedersen, Duane Barbano, Luanne Burgin, George Dobbs, Nancy Wills, Laura Dufresne, Don Parry, Tim Amsden, and Kathy and Dan Boller.
- Ranch House Phase III and IV Interior Renovation: Allen and Pat Burnam, Tom and Darlene Merritt, Danny Montoya, Eileen Domer, Linda Pedersen, Nancy Wills and Don Parry.
- Communications (Timberlake Times): Duane and Fran Barbano; TRNews: Tim Amsden and Roger Irwin, David Skinner asst.

We are asking that others add their name to this list next spring. Why? Volunteer help adds to the fiscal stability of TRLA and reduces the financial burden on Ranch Operations. It helps to build a more cohesive community fostering greater trust among landowners. Call or E-mail a Board Member if you are interested in volunteering. Next spring will start the final phases of the Ranch House renovation. Can you help? We'd appreciate it. •

2009-2010 TRLA Board Meetings

Timberlake Community Center Ranch House

- February 20, 2010 @ Noon (Quarterly Meeting)
- March 20, 2010 @ Noon
- April 17, 2010 @ Noon
- May 29, 2010 Annual Membership Meeting



TRLA Board of Directors 2009-2010

Linda Pedersen, President
(term ends May, 2012)
HC61 Box 833
Ramah, NM 87321
Phone: (505) 783-2465
Email: pete137@juno.com

Don Parry, Vice President
(term ends May, 2012)
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Higley, AZ
Phone: (480) 988-2680

Gary Blum, Director, Secretary
(term ends May, 2010)
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Quemado, NM 87829
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Jerry Toellner, Director
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(505) 783-4373
Email: jerryandjudyt@wildblue.net

Dale Spencer, Director
(term ends May, 2012)
612 Stone Canyon Dr
Las Cruces, NM 88011
(386) 503-7315
Email: dale Spencer@msn.com •

TIMBERLAKE RANCH 101 "Origins and Stories"

by Linda Pedersen

This article begins what we hope to be a "historical series" that explains who, what, when, and where of how Timberlake Ranch evolved to what it is today. Many landowners have often asked, "When and who built the upper and lower Ranch House?" "Who owned this land years ago?" and "Why do we find these huge old cut tree stumps on our property?"

Intertwining articles and stories will appear on occasion such as the origins of Ramah Lake or how the town of Ramah received its name. We will try to be as factual as possible (but not exclude local lore) and ask that if you have any information that would help with the success of this series, to notify us.

Savoia Settlement 1870s

Excerpts taken from "Encounter with the Frontier" by Gary Tietjen,
Reprinted with permission.

Mormon missionaries to the Zuni and Navajo Indians were the first to settle Timberlake around December of 1876. They called this place Savoia (also spelled Sovoya). It is notable that the settlement at Savoia preceded any of the white settlements in Western New Mexico like Farmington, and railroad towns, Gallup and Grants. To the Mexicans, Timberlake was called Cebolla. Savoya/Savoia is the anglicized spelling of the Spanish word Cebolla meaning onion and correlates with Tloh Chin Toh (Cloh Chin Toh) which means "stinking grass" (wild onion) in the Navajo language.

On the advice of one of the traveling missionaries, 140 more men, women and children left their homes in Arkansas to come to Savoia. They were said to be fleeing persecution and the polygamy laws that were breaking up families. As they passed by Albuquerque, one family learned too late that the house they had stayed in there had sheltered people with smallpox. With the disease and the cold winter of 1877-78, Savoia's inhabitants were nearly wiped out. At least thirteen of the smallpox victims are buried in the cemetery between the upper and lower Ranch House.

The Zunis were not spared from the disease as a Mormon missionary (Llewelyn Harris) documented that he personally administered to 406 in one day.

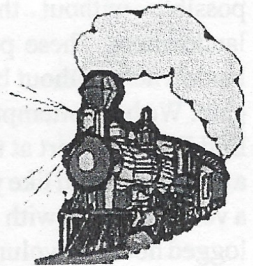
Local Lore: According to Kirk Clawson when interviewed in 2007, it was impossible for the settlers to dig graves in the frozen ground. They had to place the bodies in a hand dug well by the falls on McGaffey Road. Kirk said a man who had lost his wife to smallpox took his two small sons to the Zuni in Fish Springs (Pescado) and told them that if he didn't return in two months, the boys were theirs. He did return to fetch his sons.

Once healthy again, some of the Mormons moved on to Gila, Duncan and Graham, Arizona. The Savoia settlement survived for a few more years. Several resettled in Ramah and surrounding areas. A few families remained including the Hamblins who were part of the original Savoia group. •

Atlantic and Pacific Railroad 1860s-1880s

Information located on Wikipedia™ Web site

In July 1866, Congress passed a law incorporating the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad under control of Fremont and associates. The company was given the power to build near the 35th parallel from Springfield, Missouri west to the Pacific, with a branch from Van Buren, Arkansas. In exchange for its completion by 1878, the railroad would receive land grants along its route.



The Pacific Railroad Act of 1864 granted twenty (20) miles of alternating sections (checkerboard pattern) on either side of the tracks and full rights to all the minerals underneath all that land in exchange for completion of railroads across the southwest. When railroads traversed Indian lands, the government gave them an extra ten (10) miles called "indemnity strip." •

Note: A map of this land grant, which included Timberlake Ranch, can be viewed and/or purchased on www.rainfall Image Number: rr003290. •

Note: This part of our history also explains the section on individual Timberlake landowner Warranty Deeds which states, "SUBJECT TO Reservation of Easements contained in the Warranty Deed from the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad Company, to Cibola Cattle Company recorded November 8, 1890. •

Association Needs One More Board Member

by Publisher

The Board is currently running with six members rather than the mandated seven. The Board, at present, consists of three full-time residents, two part-time residents, and one non-resident landowner. One more member is needed to complete the Board.

If you would like to be a part of this versatile group and help keep up the good work that has been accomplished during the past three years, the Board would like to hear from you. Our current Board is the most diverse in some time. You can become a Board member no matter what your membership is in the Association, full-time, part-time, or a non-resident landowner who plans to build in the future.

Please call a Board member and offer your assistance and join them today to help keep Timberlake a better place for all. Thank you.

Cebolla Cattle Company 1880s & 1890s

(Excerpts from "Ernst Albert Tietjen, Missionary & Colonizer" by Gary Tietjen, 1992, 2003, Reprinted with permission)

In 1882, a military group started ranching operation from Ft. Wingate. In 1883, Colonel Luther Bradley, James Fornance, and Thomas Mumford formed the Cebolla Cattle Company, also known as the Box S Ranch. At a later date the name was changed to the Cibola Cattle Company. Their headquarters were just a couple of miles from the spring at Savoia. The operation became something of a land-grabbing scheme for which New Mexico was so famous. Soldiers at the fort could homestead the land without living on it; afterwards they could and did sell it to the Cattle Company.

In November 1886, the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad agreed to sell a large chunk of land (65 sections – 41,600 acres in a checkerboard pattern) to the Cebolla Cattle Company. The price was fifty cents per acre. The cattle company then seized a wonderful opportunity and they sent the following eviction message.

NOTICE

To the people living on Section 35 of Township 11 North, Range 16 West. You are hereby notified that all settlers on Section 35 are requested to vacate the land by the 15th of March 1889, this being one of the railroad sections purchased from the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad by the Cebolla Cattle Company in 1886. It may be well to remind you that any improvements on the land in the way of houses, stables, corrals, fences, etc., you are, according to law, prohibited from removing or destroying. The company does not wish to sell or lease this land. The rent for the use of the land in the last few years will be a subject for further consideration. *(Signed) The Cebolla Cattle Company, by E.A. Carr, president. Clark M. Carr, secretary. Wingate, NM, Jan. 1 1889*

The Cattle Company certainly intended to drive the settlers out, for they set an "exorbitant" price, \$10 per acre, for land, twenty times what they had paid for it, but now they had them "over a barrel," and they pressed their advantage. The Church in Salt Lake City agreed to pay the price to secure the town of Ramah. The Box S Company did very well: the money from this one section paid for one third of the entire ranch.

With ownership of these sections the company controlled the alternate sections. The ranch now bordered on the Zuni Reservation, included the town site of Ramah, and extended to the southern edge of the Ft. Wingate military reservation (two miles south of McGaffey). Based on an interview with Clark M. Carr, the following was written: "General E.A. Carr dominated the Cebolla Cattle company, eventually taking complete control. The stockholders were also army people,

Captain Washington Matthews serving as president for a time. Apparently the ranching began while General Carr was stationed at Ft. Bayard prior to coming to Wingate in 1888, but this did not prevent his exercising active direction through his son Clark, who served as manager.

"At Ft. Bayard, the General sold shares to the wives of other officers and wrote detailed letters of instruction to Clark M. Carr.

Evidently General Carr persuaded General John Schofield to help pay for the land until the latter became alarmed at evidence of poor management. Finally, in 1894, the Schofields had a showdown with Carr over control, General Schofield's sons trying to throw the concern into bankruptcy to win domination. General Carr outmaneuvered them and five years later used this very technique to buy the company at a sheriff's sale in April 1899. He was determined to leave the ranch to his wife for her old age. The Box S never proved highly profitable and with the depression in 1893 the enterprise came to an end."

Note: The land bordering Timberlake Ranch to the north is still called the Box S even though it no longer is owned by the Cibola Cattle Company.

To be continued...

TARANTULA

by Tim Amsden

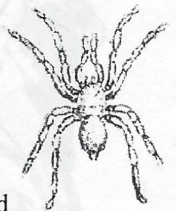
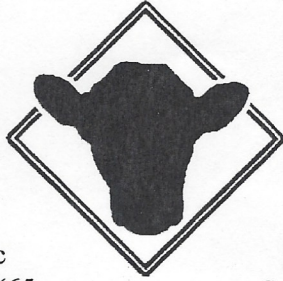
(Published in the Timberlake Times July 2001)

Sometime in early fall tarantulas suddenly appear, usually taking perilous walks across highways. Tarantulas – giant hairy spiders! Are they dangerous? What are they doing on the highway?

Normally tarantulas are only active at night, and remain very close to their burrows where they hunt for insects and small animals to eat. They do not spin webs, and females can live for thirty years. The poor males on the other hand, rarely live beyond ten years of age. They are the ones we see wandering the highways in August and September, searching for the burrows of females. If they find a female and are lucky, they will mate and then die within a few weeks. If they are unlucky, they will find a female who would rather eat them than have their babies.

When you see those male tarantulas wandering through the ends of their short and dangerous lives, wish them well. They might make your skin crawl a little, but not compared to the gigantic wasp known as the tarantula hawk.

The tarantula hawk captures and paralyzes a tarantula with its stinger, drag it into its lair, then lay a single egg inside. When the egg hatches, the wasp larva eats the still-living body of the tarantula, consuming the vital heart and nervous system last. •





God Bless America!

