



# Guajolotes, Zopilotes y Paisanos

Vol. 12 No. 41 Hillsboro Historical Society February 2019



**MINING AROUND  
HILLSBORO  
AFTER THE BOOM**

## President's Message



It is indeed a privilege for me to begin serving as president of the Hillsboro Historical Society (HHS). Taking on this responsibility was not my first choice after reaching retirement. However, it was clear that our society was in need of leadership at a crucial time. I pledge to continue the fine work of presidents before me and believe in the capabilities of the new board to help guide our efforts. I and the board are grateful to Larry Cosper and Bob Barnes for their leadership that has brought us to this exciting point in our organization's history.

The members of HHS have contributed mightily to the preservation of the history of our community by embarking on monumental projects that were once thought not possible without outside funding. It is to the credit of caring citizens of this community that we now have a museum that is on its way to becoming operational and the historic courthouse property, the acquisition of which was the society's founding dream. Through determination, persistence and the generosity of our members, the dream has become a reality. These properties will become a source of community pride and recognition of our place in history.

HHS is dedicated to the preservation of the history and artifacts of Hillsboro, Kingston and surrounding area. The acquisition of cultural historic properties is in keeping with its mission. We recognize that these remnants of the past will serve as places for interpretation and education, as well as attracting tourism to our area. My vision is that it will someday be possible to include other historic properties that deserve protection within our charter.

I would like to thank those of you who have given financially and immeasurably of your time to this cause. Because you care, we have a successful and thriving society that we all can be very proud of. However, we must not rest on our laurels. Because of our acquisitions, we now must be diligent in our administration and management of these wonderful assets. I am confident that by the continued support and encouragement of our growing membership, and our capable and talented board, that we will proceed with the dream that was set forth by our founding members. The future of HHS looks very bright thanks to its members. I look forward to serving as your new president. Onward-Andele Pues!

Steve Dobrott



*Guajolotes, Zopilotes y Paisanos* is the quarterly newsletter of the:

**Hillsboro Historical Society**  
P. O. Box 461  
Hillsboro, New Mexico, 88042

The mission of Hillsboro Historical Society's is to preserve, collect, and protect the history of Hillsboro, Kingston and the surrounding area. We are an all-volunteer, non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible.

### **Board of Directors**

President: Steve Dobrott

Vice President: Nichole Trushell

Treasurer: Joe Ficklin

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**Newsletter Editor:** Harley Shaw

The title for this newsletter is inspired by the association of Hillsboro and Kingston with Percha Creek. The name Percha may derive from the fact that turkeys (*guajolotes*) "perch" or roost along it. Perhaps there were more historically than there are now. Of course, Hillsboro and Kingston both have their own seasonal vulture (*zopilote*) roosts, so the term remains appropriate. Paisanos are countrymen or friends, a term that applies to us humans who also "roost" here. In our small towns, we are extremely diverse in roots, religion, and politics, yet we remain countrymen. In keeping with the avian title motif, in the Southwest, roadrunners, which also live within the Percha Creek watershed, are called *paisanos*.

# Hillsboro Historical Society News

## Election

We are happy to welcome Penny McCauley to our Board of Directors. Penny's roots are deep in our area, reaching back to Hillsboro founder Dan Dugan. Penny has been maintaining the Hillsboro Historical Society Web page for several years. She and her husband own and operate a ranch in the Mimbres Valley. She brings a deep understanding of the history of the region to our board, as well as a direct link to the area's ranching community. In addition to Penny, Steve Elam returned to our board. Steve was a board member until health issues forced him to drop off a couple years ago. We're happy to say that he is now back up and running and ready to bring his understanding of mining and site safety issues to the board. Also reelected for a three year term was Harley Shaw, who will continue on as editor for this newsletter.

As you can see from the President's message, Steve Dobrott was elected as board president. Steve recently retired as Manager of Ladder Ranch. He brings a host of managerial skills to the board, as well as experience in building and land management. He is also known as an expert on quail in the Southwest. Nichole Trushell has taken the job of Vice President, Sandi Ficklin stays on as Secretary, and Joe Ficklin has agreed to stay on as Treasurer.

## HHS Annual Member's Meeting April 27, 2019

We invite you to join us on April 27, 1:00 p.m. for our annual HHS members meeting. We will celebrate the accomplishments of HHS this year by gathering at the Hillsboro Courthouse/Jail Site that the Society purchased in 2018. To find this site, go to the Hillsboro Community Center and continue west about half a block. Parking is along Elanora street. Members are welcome to enjoy light refreshments, hear short progress updates by Board and other members, and relax with some music and camaraderie!

## Tours to Historic Sites

We had 19 members attending the Pony Hills/Frying Pan Canyon trips (the original date was "weathered out" so Bob Barnes offered the sign-ups two alternative days. All seemed to have a great time. The Andrews trip was also well-attended; 21 participants. Bob Barnes provided an excellent overview of the history of the El Oro Mine and the Andrews hotel. Many of the locals who attended had not known about the site and were delighted to learn of something so interesting that existed right under their nose. These are the last tours for this Spring, but stay tuned for future events.

## Update on Black Range Museum

The Black Range Museum continues on its slow but sure rehabilitation trek, thanks to the contributions of some very generous donors. Insulation has just been added to the new metal roof. And by the time you read this, a complete electrical rewiring will have been completed. In addition, the Board of Directors have just approved a proposal by Bruce Cospser to put in new ceilings and more insulation in the six rooms where the old non-historic ceilings were removed. Five of those rooms will have tongue-and-groove board ceilings similar to the original ceilings remaining in the two west rooms. And one of the rooms will have pine vigas and sotol latillas reflecting the original construction of a couple of rooms.

This means that we'll have just two more steps to be able to re-open the museum: installing a heating-cooling system and putting up track lighting in each room. So look forward to a Grand Re-Opening in eight weeks or so.

Of course there remains still more to be done pursuing the museum of our dreams. Windows and doors need refurbishing or replacing. Walls need re-plastering. Floors need sanding and re-finishing. And so forth. But this old pre-1886 building and property just gets better and better for preserving and displaying the treasures in our museum collection.

## Courthouse Site Cleanup and Plans

On January 13th, 2019 we had very productive day at the Courthouse/Jail site cleanup! In attendance were Steve Dobrott, Garland Bills, Steve Elam, Steve Morgan, Gary Gritzbaugh, Linda King, Tom and Diane McEvoy, Nicki O'Dell, Inga McCord, Carol Borsello, Travis Perry, Meghan Pittman, Tricia Rossettie, Andrew Lincourt and Nichole Truschell. The group was energetic and focused, and we got a lot done. The items on our cleanup work list were accomplished and trash was loaded on a trailer provided by Harley Shaw. We hauled old unusable wood and metal off the site, stacked usable metal for use in roof repair on the small adobe building on site, weed-wacked and completely cleaned out the little adobe building.

We are excited about the quality of the small adobe building. Steve Morgan, Steve Dobrott, Gary Gritzbaugh and Nichole will repair and close in the roof and finish/seal the old wood on the building this winter. Gary has offered to repair the door and the windows (keeping original frames and adding glass to windows). The window frames still function! We hauled out a mattress, an old TV, and a lot of unsavable broken and water-damaged items; we did save a few books which Garland Bills took for safe-keeping. Then we literally dug out inches



of adobe mud off the old floor and pulled off the asphalt backed floor cover - because it was wet underneath (from the roof being open). Underneath the sheeting we found a beautiful old floor that is in very good condition. And the walls, most of the roof structure, and the adobe are in good shape as well. We have, for almost no cost, a fantastic little building we can use for events on site, with just a bit of volunteer effort to fix up roof structure, windows, door and seal the wood. In the longer-run we can add a coat of stucco on the outside.

Everyone was happy and positive about what we got accomplished. I would say it was a very successful day and good event for members to get to know our new Courthouse/Jail site and see its fantastic potential.

**Working Committees**

We currently have three working committees. There is always room for more interest and more help. Anyone who might want to serve on one of the committees, please contact any of our board members.


Museum construction: Garland Bills, Steve Morgan, and Steve Dobrott

Publications: Harley Shaw, Robert Barnes, and Garland Bills.

Courthouse Committee: Nichole Trushell, Steve Elam, Steve Morgan, Steve Dobrott.

Museum exhibits: Robbin Tuttle, Barbara Lovell.

*Sadie Orchard*  
Madam of New Mexico's  
Black Range



Hillsboro Historical Society  
Hillsboro, New Mexico

# NEW BOOK

BY

## HILLSBORO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A completely new and updated biography of Hillsboro's legendary and beloved Madam

*RETAIL \$20*

*MEMBERS \$15*

**HHS, P. O. Box 486, Hillsboro, NM 88042. [hgshaw@windstream.net](mailto:hgshaw@windstream.net)**

**Hillsboro Historical Society board meetings have been changed to the third Sunday of each month at 2PM at the Hillsboro Community Center Conference Room. HHS members are encouraged to attend and get involved.**

## MINING AROUND HILLSBORO - STRUGGLING ON AFTER 1900

Harley Shaw

In the last issue of this newsletter, we published Fayette Alexander Jones's history of the boom days of mining that influenced Hillsboro, Kingston, and Lake Valley. Jones interviewed some of the original prospectors and speculators who developed mines in the area in 1877. Silver mining, mainly near Kingston and Lake Valley, crashed with the devaluation of silver in 1893. Mining for gold and other minerals was still active when Jones published his book in 1905, although it was already past the boom stage. The next author to discuss the history of mining in the region was George Townsend Harley. In 1934, he published a detailed book titled *The Geology and Ore Deposits of Sierra County, New Mexico* in 1934, which provided histories of most of the major mines in the area. The material below has been extracted or quoted from George Harley's book, with information after 1934 compiled by D. C. Hedlund in a report written for the U. S. Geological Survey (*Economic Geology of some selected mines in the Hillsboro and San Lorenzo quadrangles, Grant and Sierra County, New Mexico*. U.S.G.S Open-File Report 85-0456. 1985.).

Although the discussion here is limited to the region around Hillsboro, mining began all along the eastern face of The Black Range about 1877. Travel at the time was by foot, horse, and wagon, and was not necessarily influenced by the roadways we have today. Trails that we now view as remote and inaccessible, were sporadically traveled by restless prospectors and cowboys during the heyday of mining - all the way from Grafton at the north to Cooke's Spring and Lake Valley to the south. None of these landscapes were private property, hence trespass was an issue only to Apaches, although infringement on an existing mining claim might get one in trouble. A very rough wagon road existed between Hillsboro, Hermosa, and Chloride. The June 13, 1885 issue of the *Sierra County Advocate* notes:

A great drawback to the miners here is in the matter of extortionate freight rates by rail to Denver and other points for the treatment of ores. The rates from here to Engle, the nearest point to the railroad, is \$12 per ton. After that the soulless corporations owning the railroads gets a whirl at it, and unless the ore is of unusual richness, when the miner gets his return, there is scarcely anything left him but paid and unpaid freight bills. The people here are well pleased with the making of a good wagon road from Chloride to Hermosa and Hillsboro. They will make Lake Valley their railroad shipping point as soon as it is completed, and I have already been assured that they will get special and more reasonable rates of transportation. The project of building this road is meeting with the hearty endorsement of almost the whole of this end of

the county. In the matter of mail, facilities in this part of the county is also in a deplorable, and really distressing condition for business men and others of less importance to commercial circles. Here at Hermosa the people can only receive or forward mail twice a week, and then it is compelled to go by the way of Engle and Lake Valley to reach Hillsboro and Kingston.

The section of country lying between Hermosa and Percha districts, in Sierra County, is one unparalleled for richness in mineral wealth! As yet it is practically unprospected and traversed, the old Indian trail between the two sections being the only portion of it, to a great extent, that the foot of man has ever trod, save an occasional prospector.

Until the 1890s, the Apache threat perhaps made individuals uneasy about traveling alone or in small groups, and the stories of deaths at the hands of the raiders are abundant in the historical literature, including James McKenna's *Black Range Tales*. But stories of scattered incidents of Apache violence have obscured much of the day to day activity that occurred. For a person hardened to travel by horseback and on a seasoned horse, Kingston and Chloride were at most a two-day ride apart, even before the wagon road was completed. Travel from Hermosa to Kingston was possible in a long day's ride. We can only suspect that many of the tales of adventure and of day to day drudgery, independent of Apache violence, were never written and have long been lost in the ozone. But the few diaries from the era, ruins of cabins, and scattered diggings are witness to a greater presence of humans—prospectors, homesteaders, cowboys, and a few scientists—than currently exists in the back country.

Leaving Hillsboro, the 1885 wagon road passed up Warm Springs wash to its head, then crossed over into Tank Canyon. Crossing Meyers Mesa, it dropped into Cave Canyon and followed it down to Animas Creek. There it turned upstream for a short distance and climbed up the side of the canyon, and crossed the heads of all three branches of Seco.

How long and how often this route was used has yet to be written. The advent of the automobile and development of hard surfaced or graded roads made it easier and faster to skirt the rough country than to ride or walk through it. Perhaps the only exception to this would be the 1934 development of the highway connecting Kingston with San Lorenzo via Emory Pass.

Prior to development of that highway, travel from Kingston, Hillsboro, and Lake Valley to the west slope of the Black Range, the Mimbres Valley, and Silver City was probably more often by foot or horseback via the ancient trail going up Berrenda Creek and through the

pass connecting the heads of Pollock Creek and Gallinas Canyon, a route once slated to become the highway connecting the Rio Grande and Mimbres Valleys. Why that plan was abandoned and the more arduous and expensive route over the mountain chosen would make an interesting study of road-building politics. Stagecoaches and wagons traveling from Kingston and Hillsboro to Silver City had to go south to Cooke's spring, then follow the Butterfield Road to the Mimbres Valley, thence back north. By 1881, the railroad connected Nutt with Silver City, and by 1884 with Lake Valley, so much of the travel around the Black Range was by rail. However, the railroad branch ended at Nutt, so travel between Lake Valley and Hillsboro or Kingston was by stagecoach, wagon, horse, or Shank's mare.

Exactly how or for how long the mill at Hillsboro factored into ore transportation decisions for workings near Chloride or Hermosa is unknown. In spite of the 1885 newspaper's prediction, the area between Hermosa and the Percha Creek claims never produced significant minerals. At least some ore was hauled from the upper Palomas Creek region, including the mines around Hermosa, to the railhead at Lake Valley, once the railroad spur reached that town.

A serious factor in choice of wagon route must have been the need to get heavily laden ore wagons across the Rio Grande on a rickety flatboat of a ferry, if transport to the railroad at Engle was chosen. This might be weighed against the need to cross rugged Animas Creek and the possibility that the stretch of road down that canyon might be washed out.

## **KINGSTON**

By 1934, according to George Harley,

"The main period of activity in the Kingston district drew to a close with the decline in price of silver in 1893, and since then, mining has been done only occasionally and on a very small scale. Shipments have been limited to small lots of high-grade ores and to a few carloads of moderate to low grade ores, many of them chiefly valuable for their fluxing properties at the smelter. Harley quotes Jones's record of \$6,250,000 in ore shipped from the Kingston district prior to 1904, compared with \$90,000 to \$100,000 shipped between that date and 1930."

Hedland noted that most of the underground mining in the district ended after 1893, with a minor resurgence between 1934 and 1945. Shipment of ore from the district virtually ceased after 1952. World War II and the Korean conflict created a demand for manganese,

and a modest amount (<6000 tons of ore) was shipped from the district between 1943 and 1959.

A more valid comparison would be an average annual production. From 1880 to 1904, it amounted to \$260,414.67 per year; from 1904 to 1930, an average of \$3850 per year. Factoring in the differences in past and present dollar valuations, the latter was hardly enough to support a human population of any size.

Harley further notes that "A significant fact in regard to past production is that even while high prices prevailed during the World War (WWI), only a moderate amount of ore was shipped from this district, principally from the Lady Franklin Mine."

So, although Kingston is viewed as a "mining town" and had its origins in mining, its dependence upon that industry lasted only about 25 years. To what extent, and how, it has stayed alive since is a history yet to be written. The existence of a U. S. Forest Service Ranger Station undoubtedly sustained presence of a small ranger staff and seasonal fire and trail crews, but commercial activities in the town died with the mines. Until 1934, the town was at the end of the road, and no through traffic passed by. Once travel to Hillsboro and Hot Springs became easy, the need for basic small business services—food, gas, banking—probably faded. The remaining population was too small to support local trade. While the town never completely died, it became populated by a few forest service employees, ranchers, diehard and hopeful miners, and an increasing number of retirees and summer residents escaping from desert cities.

In recent years, the Black Range Lodge has attracted a steady flow of recreationists, tourists, birders, and various small-group workshops, helping to sustain vitality in the community. Regular music events have also contributed to the life to the town.

## **TIERRA BLANCA**

George Harley, in 1934, noted, "The Tierra Blanca district is 6 miles south of Kingston near the heads of Trujillo and Tierra Blanca Creeks. It is about 10 miles by road southwest of Hillsboro and 15 miles northwest of Lake Valley. . . . Travel is by fair mountain roads and trails."

Mines in this district produced both gold and silver. Harley notes that little activity occurred in the district after 1905. He doesn't state when the mines for the district were first opened, but says that total value of production from 1880 on was about \$120,000, or perhaps an average of \$2400/year. The small settlement of Tierra Blanca died and the site became a headquarters for one of the cattle ranches in the area and still serves that purpose.

## HILLSBORO

The first period of major production ended in 1893, even though Hillsboro was less dependent upon Silver production than Kingston or Lake Valley. A minor revival of mining occurred in 1906. There is no mention of increased activity during WWI, but from 1918 to 1921, the Rattlesnake and Opportunity mines were reopened. However, only small shipments were made. Activity was more general from 1931-1934, with several of the mines surrounding Animas and Empire Peaks being reopened. Much of this increased activity was due to the Great Depression, with individuals working placer deposits and many of the mine dumps, trying to survive. George Harley estimated the total production of the Hillsboro District between 1911 and 1931 to be \$150,000, or an average of \$7500 per year. This is to be compared with production prior to 1904 of \$6,750,000, or an average of \$250,000 per year. As with Kingston and Tierra Blanca, mining became secondary to ranching and other commerce after 1904. Undoubtedly, much of what kept Hillsboro afloat was its status as Sierra County Seat and the various legal and business opportunities associated with local government.

## LAKE VALLEY

From George Harley:

“The Lake Valley ore deposits were discovered by George W. Lufkin in August, 1878. . . . The mines were worked almost continuously until August 1893. . . . In the early eighties, the Bridal Chamber, one of the richest single bodies of silver ore ever found, made the Lake Valley District famous.

“These ore bodies are in close proximity to the Santa Fe trail and the old lanes of travel along the Rio Grande . . . It seems strange that they were not discovered by the Spaniards, who passed and repassed them for nearly 300 years.”

By 1935, no ore was being mined in the district. Harley provides an estimate of 5,000,000 ounces of silver produced between 1878 and 1893. From 1910 to 1931, some 275,000 ounces of silver were mined. Harley provides no estimate of dollar value of ores shipped from Lake Valley.

## OVERVIEW

Hedlund noted that, after the price of gold rose from \$20.67 to \$35.00 an ounce in 1933, some of the precious metal mines were reopened from 1934 to 1942. Produc-

tion remained low, however. During WWII demand for manganese supported mining of small deposits of manganese in the region, although total production amounted to about 5000 tons of ore. A fourth period of development began with the drilling of the copper deposit of Copper Flat by Peabody, a subsidiary of Kennecot, in 1952. This reached its culmination with the open-pit mining at Copper Flat in 1982. Decrease in copper prices caused this effort to be short-lived. During the 1970s, attempts were made to exploit the placers and dump material from older workings. These efforts were short-lived due to low grade and the problems of ore enhancement for extraction. Since 1980, mining activity has mainly been limited to efforts by hobby prospectors working placer claims or mine dumps in the region. A recent effort by an international corporation to reopen the Copper Flat Mine has met resistance from a new residential population in the region that moved to the area for its open spaces and low human densities, as well as downstream agricultural interests worried about impacts of large-scale mining and milling on groundwater levels. The fate of this effort remains in the hands of politicians and the courts.

Unfortunately, this brief overview does not provide much insight into day to day living in the towns as mining ceased to be a source of serious support. Hillsboro continued to be a modest economic center, supporting the county government and providing basic services—food, livestock feed, gasoline, and education—to the surrounding ranchers and farmers. Some of the citizens continued to dabble in mining, but none of the towns depended upon mining to survive. Although they were perhaps sustained briefly during WWII by mining, and received brief stimulation by the Copper Flat mine in the 1980s, the decline of towns like Hillsboro and Kingston began for real in 1936, when the county government was moved to Hot Springs (now Truth or Consequences). The trend since then has been largely toward communities of retirees. This trend has affected ranching as well as mining, and much of the influx of young retirees has been to dispersed subdivisions on ranches near Lake Valley and Berrenda Creek. The town of Lake Valley is unoccupied, except for seasonal caretakers at the historic schoolhouse museum, and residents of Hillsboro, Kingston, and the ranch subdivisions to the south depend mainly upon Truth or Consequences, Deming, or Las Cruces for most of their shopping and medical attention. How future demographics will affect the growth or decline of the area is well-beyond speculation.



**E**ditor's note: Bobbie Ostler has contributed several chapters to our newsletter over the past decade, describing growing up in and around Hillsboro during the 1960s and 1970s. This chapter is included, because it discloses the reaction of a young girl to the opening and closing of the Quintana mine at Copper Flat--the last significant and short-lived surge of mining activity in our area.

## SEASONS OF CHANGE

### A Glimpse into the early 1970's and 1980's

Bobbie Ostler

*"Oh, you are Kathleen's little sister! I was expecting pig tails and overalls" a young lady in Albuquerque told me when I was about age 13. So many people have tried to put me in boxes: Farmer, rancher, a television show character of some sort. Strangers that I have met and still meet, are compelled to fit me in some sort of box. Janna and I wore grunge clothing long before Kurt Cobain made it famous. I often tease that he got it from us! I sold a weekly newspaper, Grit, in order to support my Avon habit. Avon and looking good was a huge deal for all the girls in Hillsboro. Janna and I loved our makeup.... we would not leave the house without it. KLAQ out of El Paso, with favorite lady DJ Sensi Bud Stevens spread hard rock through the once peaceful village. This new chapter starts in Happy Flats during the early 1970's and ends in the early 1980's.*

"Please understand, I wasn't raised in a convent, or behind any white picket fence," I said to a few guests around the Thanksgiving table. One replied, "Oh, and please understand the convent wouldn't have you then or now!" We laughed as everyone continued to share their childhood and teen years. I seem to give some people the impression I was raised behind a white picket fence in a strict religious home. I wanted to follow in Mom's footsteps and attend St. Mary's Academy in Silver City, but I did not. I was once told by my kids as they started watching a television sitcom, *That 70's Show*, "Man you were lucky to be a teen in the 70's--like the show." No, my life was far from that or really any show.

I'm here to tear down that traditional "white picket



**Bobbie and Mom, Margery**

fence" and toss it in the burn barrel--heading back to a time when burn barrels, heavy mining and earth-moving equipment, and fire wood were a great part of our

lives. We moved from the serene and magical North Percha homestead in 1974 to our brand-new home we had built at Happy Flats. Happy Flats would be home for me until about 1986. Moving from the mountains exposed me to regular playmates, instead of an imagined world of pretend friends; I became addicted to having people around. I enjoyed meeting new people, especially my age. Sleep-overs fueled my people addiction. If I didn't have someone over, I begged to sleep at any friend's house who would let me. Staying up laughing, listening to music, painting our nails or doing hair were our favorite past times. At home, sneaking out of the house after watching Johnny Carson was another favorite. We really wouldn't go anywhere except maybe a stroll around the field or to the creek.

One of the first new Hillsboro friends I met was An-



**Unknown miners, probably working placers near Copper Flat mine.**





**Angie Torres**

became friends soon. I remember her little brother Brian, I think he was three at the time. The older we got, the more time we spent playing with Barbies, listening to records, fixing each other's hair and makeup. I got the best end of the hair and makeup deal, Angie did a fabulous job! Angie always had the latest and greatest teen star magazines. I think one of the magazines was *Teen Beat*. We would look at idols such as Sean Cassidy and Eric Estrada, and of course, Sylvester Stallone.

Copper Flat mine, about ten miles east of Hillsboro, began to revive, supplying copper for Quintana Mines. This brought jobs and, best of all, more friends my age stemming from different backgrounds and ages.



**Bobbie's father, Embree Hale, Jr. at mine near Copper Flat.**

Gold Dust, a settlement near Copper Flat, actually had a few residents, and since I rode the school bus 32 miles to T or C, I discovered a beautiful Korean girl, Nanju Kim, whose dad was a supervisor, or something of that nature, for Quintana. We had assigned seating on the bus, I sat next to Nanju, and our friendship developed quickly. I was overjoyed to be invited to their mobile home in Gold Dust. I was fascinated to remove my shoes at the door, and she started teaching me a little bit of Kung fu. I don't recall eating at their home, but I was always so glad to go over. I don't remember exactly when they left or where the Kim family went, but I am

sorry I lost contact with Nanju.

My parents developed a ten-space trailer park at the east end of our 40-acre property. They saw an opportunity for more income as traveling miners came to work at Copper Flats. I remember Dad and Grandpa bringing in baby cottonwood trees from Percha Creek for each of the ten spaces. I would water the trees and weed the large water rings. Between watering the baby trees and our large garden, I was kept busy—a good thing for a hyperactive teenaged girl! *Golden Skies* was the name of our trailer park, and for a while, I do believe all spaces were filled. Space rent was \$50 a month; water was furnished. Dan and Linda Hunter, with their six children, DK, John, Matt, Roy, Brandy and Mellie were the first renters at the trailer court. The Hunters placed their old, tiny pink and white trailer in the last space, going toward the creek. This space had the largest tree and gave Dan room for his Joy Drilling Company pickup and core drilling equipment. I spent a lot of time with all six kids. DK and John took me on excursions to the Percha Box, where they taught me how to swim. We actually formed a good sized baseball team with new members joining intermittently. Dave and Olga Blair and their three boys, Ronnie, Mike and Junior moved from California into Bob Majusky's current home. Eventually, Mike and Ronnie joined our baseball team. With the diamond conveniently located right across the highway from their house, we would play evenings in the summer until it grew too dark to see the ball.

Hillsboro had one general store, a bar, a gas station with a small grocery store, two churches, and two cafes. My Mom actually worked at the Dixie Cup west of town in the place which is now a private home, an A-frame building. The Barber Shop Cafe was owned by Barbara Wilkens, and later had a lot of owners. The Hillsboro General Store, which is still open today on Main Street, was owned by Sarah and Jim Alexander. The other general store, which was with the gas station, was in the Happy Flats side, and was owned by Roy and Mary Schoenrad. The bar was the S-X and it had a small motel with it.



**Mary Schoenrad**

There were two churches in town, the Catholic and the Union. Dad, Mom and I started attending the Union Church on the hill after a very odd experience or vision I had at age six about Jesus. Mr. and Mrs. Simmons, June Ander's parents, lived in a mobile home in Happy Flats.

One Sunday after church, Mr. Simmons told me that his granddaughter, Janna, and her parents were coming to visit them for the summer. She was my age and he wanted me to meet her. The next Sunday as I sat looking around for Janna, I saw Mr. Simmons hugging a young beautiful girl. He referred to her as “Lucille” and she was dressed up nicely and even wore nylons! Oh, no! Hundreds of anxious thoughts flooded my head, “Lucille?? I thought it was Janna? What does she go by, Lucy? Lucille? Why didn’t I wear something nicer? She’s gonna hate me!” After church, Mr. Simmons introduced me to Janna and she invited me over to her grandparents. We played board games and talked a bit. I finally learned that Mr. Simmons called Janna Lucille as a humorous nickname. We strived to be inseparable from then on. To this day, Janna and Angie are my best friends! My husband, Phil still calls Janna, “Lucille” and I have to ask, “Who?”

My friends and I spent a lot of time at both general stores. Janna and I would take bike riding breaks at the Hillsboro General Store on Main Street and order coffee. It took a long time to convince the grownups, Sarah and Jim Alexander, “Yes, we seriously want coffee, not a Coke.” Roy’s Gas station and garage had a glass bottle soda machine. We could bring our empty bottles in for a dime a piece. We could drink the new bottle while listening to the grownups talk. I would often toss the football back and forth with Roy Jr. He would name all the NFL teams with each toss. I was not interested in any sports teams, but Roy Jr. insisted I repeat all the NFL teams, and I actually could name several! In Mary’s tiny but well-stocked grocery store, I enjoyed huge pickles and pickled eggs from the glass jars on the counter. Shortly after turning 12, it was time to try cigarettes. That first drag from a cigarette stub found in Mom’s ash tray was delicious. No peer pressure needed for me to start smoking; in fact, smoking in my age group in Hillsboro wasn’t too popular. I bought cigarettes at Mary’s, if I could convince anyone working that day to sell them to me. If they wouldn’t sell them, I would sneak into the S-X Bar, buy them out of the cigarette machine, and run before I got caught.

Olga Blair had taught me so many new stories, such as the fabled *La Llorona*, *La Llorona*, that instantly captured me. I was determined that *La Llorona* must be wandering Percha Creek, seeking her lost child, and I tried to meet her in person. I would slip out of the house at night to try to hear her crying along the creek.



**Janna with taboo record**

Who knows, maybe we could become friends if I ever found her. Olga’s older sons, Ronnie and Mike bragged about Major Christian rock concerts. I had never heard of Christian rock. They also told about new and exciting California wonders, like free college classes in word processing, and even saddle making, which sounded so fun! Maybe I could learn to write all of my planned books with word processing. I became the pinball queen at *Ray’s Drive In* in T or C just about the time video games hit. I would catch rides to T or C as often as I could, often with Olga and Mike. I remember my first run-in with an actual video game. Mike took me to stand in line at Sonic in T or C, outside a shed which had a Pac Man video playing machine. I watched Mike play it for a while. It was my turn to play. “HAHAH you already lost!” Mike taunted behind me. “Here, lemme show you, you stupid hick!”

“NO!” I yelled, “I wanna go back to Ray’s! I’ll smoke you at pinball! This is a stupid damn waste of time!” I never played a video game after that.

A lot of my friends were listening to the sound track from “Grease.” Not me, I hated that album. I had inherited my grown siblings’ albums, such as *The Beatles*, *Carole King*, *Black Sabbath*, *John Denver* and my favorite, *Linda Ronstadt*. I had crumbling headphones that I attached to the stereo so that I could listen and sing with Linda for hours at a time. I was determined to become a singer, the next bestselling author, and soap opera script writer. I actually got hit by a girl in junior high for leaving her hanging on one of my soap operas that I was writing. Janna had a Beach Boys album that we listened to almost every Saturday morning, while making French toast and getting ready to venture out. But there was another form of entertainment on vinyl albums, the comedians, “Cheech and Chong” opened up a whole new way of slang and different kind of taboo humor, centering around smoking pot.

Our little Union Church had traveling preachers,



**Bobbie’s grandfather, Embree Hale, Sr.**

too, with their new ideas. A group of traveling preachers came and taught us about backward masking used by different artists like the Beatles. They convinced me that my Beatle albums had to be put in the burning barrel. Mike's mom too, asked Mike to burn Cheech and Chong. Dad tried to stop me from burning the albums. I wish I had listened. Oh well.

A few days later, I went across the street to Mike's. "Man, I wish you didn't torch *Cheech n Chong*."

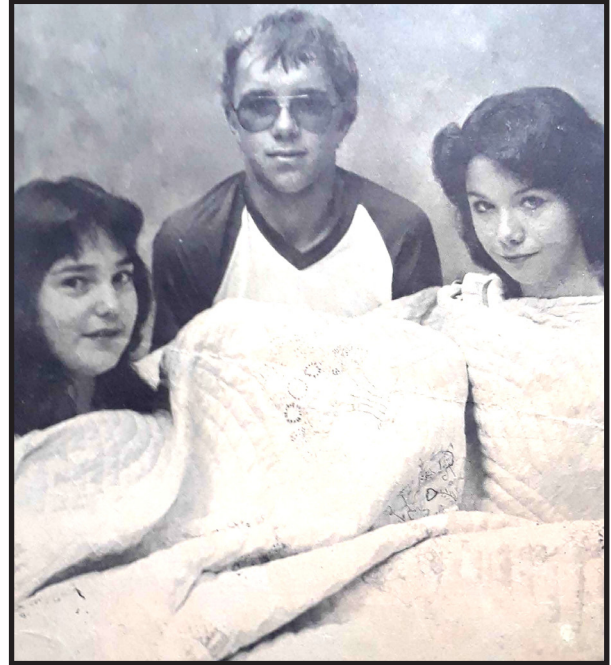
He laughed, "I didn't, Mom thinks I did"

"Oh! Well, let's go to my house, my Mom likes them.






We snuck one of the albums out and jumped on our bicycles. The album flew out of the cover and started rolling down the highway! Mike started yelling, "We need to grab it before it falls flat and we get caught!" Grabbed in the nick of time! We did it! We saved the illicit album from getting scratched. I wonder what ever happened to those *Cheech and Chong* albums?

In between all the flurry of friends was the dreaded junior high and high school years. I never took school seriously at all, although T or C provided an excellent education in a safe and strict environment. We had learned good grammar, reading--and history for sure. With Quintana Copper Mines quietly operating in the background, I assumed it would always be open for me to have a job. I assumed my kids, if any, would be raised in Hillsboro, too. I never thought I would have to leave my beloved Hillsboro. I learned the hard way that my larger

than life miner, Grandpa Hale, would not live forever. And death knows no age, as the old adage goes, taking family and even young friends, changing life forever. I did leave Hillsboro and that's a story for another time.



Carol Rubio, John Ables, and Bobbie with 4H fundraiser quilt.

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