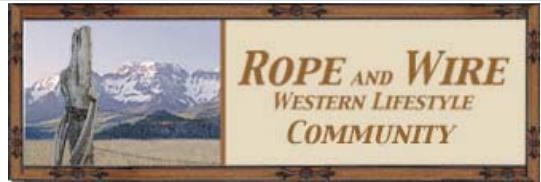


OVER THE FENCE NEWSLETTER

For the month of October 2007
<http://www.ropeandwire.com/>



FIRST THINGS FIRST

A big Western welcome to the newest members of the **ROPE AND WIRE** community. Thanks to all of you who have linked to this site and also those who have told their friends about us. Our membership keeps growing as does our viewership. The **ROPE AND WIRE** website is seen and read regularly by people around the world.

INTERVIEW

James J. Griffin

The author of the Texas Ranger Jim Blawcyzk series of western novels. The Blawcyzk stories are traditional Westerns. A lifelong horseman, Western enthusiast, and amateur historian of the Texas Rangers, Griffin has travelled extensively throughout the Western United States. He has contributed an extensive collection of Texas Ranger artifacts to the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco Texas. A member of the Connecticut Volunteer Horse Patrol, Griffin currently makes his home in New England.

Visit his website at www.jamesjgriffin.net

First of all let me say thank you for agreeing to do this interview. It sounds like you have a very busy schedule and I appreciate your taking time to answer these questions.

Has writing been a life long passion for you and when did you start getting serious about it?

Not really. I didn't even think about writing until three years ago, when Texas author James Reasoner asked me to do some research about horses for him and in return wrote me into his books SAVANNAH and APPOMATTOX as Texas Ranger Captain Jim Griffin. James kept telling me I could write westerns, and with his encouragement I finally gave it a shot. (Pun absolutely intended... I'm an incurable punster, much to the chagrin of my friends and co-workers).

Do you write full time and what are you currently working on?

Don't I wish! I have a full time job to pay the bills. I'd love to have the time and resources to write full time. Right now I am working on two more westerns, a second Texas Ranger Cody Havlicek novel which will be submitted to Condor Publishing, Inc. for their consideration, and another Texas Ranger Jim Blawcyzk novel.

What western authors have most influenced your writing?

A. Leslie Scott, Tom Curry, Peter Germano

Is there one thing in your life that stands out as a major influence in your decision to take up writing as a profession and why the western genre?

If James Reasoner and his wife Livia (L.J. Wahsburn) and my friend Mary Lucky hadn't kept encouraging, indeed nagging, me to try my hand at writing I never would have started. And since I've always loved the West

SIDE TRAIL

Here are the names of famous Hollywood cowboys (and one Indian). Do you recall the names of their horses?

Find the answers below, along with two bonus questions.

Roy Rogers
Dale Evans
Lone Ranger
Tonto
Hopalong Cassidy
Red Ryder
Tom Mix
Gene Autry
Gabby Hayes

The answers are below.

Trigger
Buttermilk
Silver
Scout
Topper
Thunder
Tony the Wonder Horse
Champion
Eddie

What was the registered name of Roy Roger's horse?

What horse was the only survivor of The Little Big Horn?
Find the answers below.

and westerns that genre was the only logical choice.

Several of your books involve Texas Rangers. Do you have a connection to the Texas Rangers?

I've always been interested in the Texas Rangers since I was a kid. Little did I know that I would become friends with a real life Texas Ranger, Jim Huggins of Company F. I always write Jim into my books.

What roll does research play in your writing? (Yes, I did mean role. The lesson here is to never trust your spell check to give you the correct word, only the correct spelling.)

I think the hamburger roll, or perhaps the hard roll. Depends on whether I'm eating a burger or a ham and swiss. (Sorry, couldn't resist...never hand a punster a line like that). You meant role, of course. Most of my research consists of travelling out West every chance I get, to actually see the places where my stories are set. Jim Huggins is also a great help when it comes to facts about the Rangers. My friends Karl Rehn and Penny Riggs of KR Training in Austin provide their expertise on the weapons and ammunition of the period in which the stories take place. And there is always the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum. As far as the relationships between the main characters and their horses, those are based on my own experience with horses, particularly the four I have owned. I try to keep my books as accurate as possible within the realm of fiction. Naturally, since the stories are novels, I do take some creative license.

How many books have you written and what are their titles?

Just released from Condor Publishing, Inc. BIG BEND DEATH TRAP, A Texas Ranger Cody Havlicek Story.

From iUniverse, TROUBLE RIDES THE TEXAS PACIFIC, BORDER RAIDERS, TRAIL OF THE RENEGADE, RANGER JUSTICE, and PANHANDLE RAIDERS, all Texas Ranger Jim Havlicek stories. The two books I am currently working on are as yet untitled.

Other than writing, what do you do in your leisure time?

What leisure time? Seriously, I spend as much time as I can in the saddle. I've been a horseman most of my life, and my horse Yankee is my best buddy. He and I are members of the Connecticut Horse Council Volunteer Horse Patrol, and we act as auxiliary park rangers in some of the state parks and forests. Yank's on the cover of two of my books. He's a great horse who I got as a "rescue" after I lost my last mount, my greatly-loved Sizzle, to colic at a young age. I never expected to get another horse, especially one as good as Sizzle, but Yank's proved me wrong. He even does tricks, including a "cowboy movie" stunt where I act as if I've been shot and fall face-down, then Yank nuzzles at me until he rolls me onto my back and I "come to".

I also spend as much time as I can in my adopted home state of New Hampshire. That's where I'm happiest, up in the mountains. In a few years New Hampshire will once again be my full-time home.

And of course every couple of years I take a trip out West.

I understand you collect Texas Ranger artifacts. Tell us about your collection and what is your favorite piece?

Most of my collection is now in the possession of the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco. They always have several of my artifacts on display. I have a couple of favorites. I managed to collect all 206 issues of the pulp magazine TEXAS RANGERS, which is how I got to know both James Reasoner and Jim Huggins. Tracking down all 206 issues was a long and arduous task, so I got great satisfaction from managing to obtain all of them. And there are several Texas Ranger items that Jim Huggins has given me which of course have great meaning.

Probably my absolute favorites are two items from Jim. One is a copy of

Golden Cloud
Comanche

my first book, TROUBLE RIDES THE TEXAS PACIFIC, which he took to the Rangers' annual "In-Service" meeting and had signed by all of the Texas Rangers for me. That's priceless, of course. And the other is a large panoramic photo of all the Rangers taken at the Alamo Village in Bracketville, which is now framed and hanging prominently in my condo.

Only wish I could somehow con Jim out of his Ranger badge, and that belt he mentioned!

What would be your most important piece of advice for beginning writers?

Don't give up. It took me several years before Condor Publishing, Inc., offered me a contract for BIG BEND DEATH TRAP. If you believe in your work, just keep on working and submitting manuscripts. If your work has merit, sooner or later someone will notice.

And POD publishing can be a viable option, especially in a genre such as westerns, which is out of favor with most of the traditional publishing houses. If you do your research carefully, choose the right POD publishing house, and can market your book you can be successful going this route.

You can contact Jim at...

jamesjqr@jamesjgriffin.net

ALONG THE TRAIL

Where Do We Go From Here

Ecards

The E-CARDS have been up for a month now and they are a hit. Many people have sent them to friends. It's a great way to tell others about the Rope and Wire website. Thank you for making the Ecards page a sucessful part of this site.

My Place

Last month I changed the format of the my place page. It seems to be morphing into a blog more than anything. I guess that's ok. I'm still willing to accept article submissions from published authors if your interested. I've been told I should change the picture and think about putting my photo up. ??????.....maybe. OK, I did it, My photo is now on the "My Place" page. I still hope you enjoy the reading part. Writing is a new experience for me. I'm actually quite surprised at how much I enjoy it. I hope you do as well. I'm always open to topic suggestions.

HAPPENINGS

EMERALD VALLEY OPRY

The Second Saturday of Every Month

This months **EMERALD VALLEY OPRY** will be held on Saturday Oct. 13th at POWERS AUDITORIUM on the campus of Willamette High School in Eugene, Oregon. This months bands include **Charlie Walker, Steve Blanchard, Billy McCoy Trio, Jim Webb and Trammel & Co.** Enjoy a great night of Western music for the low low cost of only \$5. For more information go to <http://www.emeraldvalleyopry.com/>

ADDITIONS

A QUESTION OF POSSESSION

By Andy Adams

Along in the 80's there occurred a question of possession in regard to a brand of horses, numbering nearly two hundred head. Courts had figured in former matters, but at this time they were not appealed to, owing to the circumstances. This incident occurred on leased Indian lands unprovided with civil courts,--in a judicial sense, "No-Man's-Land." At this time it seemed that might graced the woolsack, while on one side Judge Colt cited his authority, only to be reversed by Judge Parker, breech-loader, short-barreled, a full-choke ten bore. The clash of opinions between these two eminent western authorities was short, determined, and to the point.

A man named Gray had settled in one of the northwest counties in Texas while it was yet the frontier, ...

Read the FULL STORY at www.ropeandwire.com