

White Grass Heritage Project “Sharing the Legacy”

INTERVIEWEE: Leonard Smith

INTERVIEWER: Roger Butterbaugh

LOCATION: Hammond Cabin, White Grass Ranch, Moose Wyoming

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Transcribed by Julie Greene in 2021

Note: This transcript has undergone minor edits, e.g., false starts and some text were removed to make it more “reader friendly.” Leonard’s complete interview transcript is below.

R: This interview will be archived with the White Grass Heritage Project which started formally in 2014 with planning going back 2 years before that. It is designed to collect oral history, historic photographs, memorabilia, documents and such related to the history of the White Grass from its inception in 1913 until 1985 and also to collect the history going forward into the new life at White Grass, which includes the training center which is part of the Western Center for Historic Preservation.

R: (1:06) Welcome Leonard and it is good to have you here. I should say as a clarification Leonard and I met last week here at White Grass. He brought several hundred photos (200-250) of his time at the ranch. Many of those photos were scanned and have been put into our archive of photos of White Grass ranch.

Please share the dates that you were here at White Grass and then we are going to go backward in terms of some questions about your background.

L: Thank you for the opportunity. I think it is great that the photos and the oral history will be part of the archives. Thank you for inviting me.

Our (Leonard and wife, Melissa) first year here was 1977 and we were dudes. We were pretty experienced horseback riders at that point and we were looking for an opportunity to be at a ranch and ride horses. We had 4 horses ourselves in Kansas City. I worked for Lee Jeans, which was big in western wear at that point. Our last visit was in 1983 or 1984. It seems to me we were booked for the year that Frank Galey passed away and for some reason we didn’t come. I was under the impression that they stopped the operation but I understand that they did finish out that season so I don’t have the answer why we didn’t come. Maybe we got a letter and Melissa (my former wife who joined me on all the dude experiences here) could not remember either. It was basically 1977 through 1983 or 1984.

R: Were you born and raised a Mid-Westerner?

L: (3:44) I was born Harrisonburg, Virginia and grew up in West Virginia. I ended up in Indiana for all my young life and played basketball most of the time rather than studying. It was basketball, cars, studying, and girls if you had time. I ended up going to University of Cincinnati and got an industrial design degree. I wanted to design automobiles. When I went out to my first job interview, it was clear to me that it would be helpful if I had some business credit. So, I went back and took a master’s degree and got an MBA at Xavier University in Cincinnati. The master’s degree opened all

the doors. At that time in 1966 and 1967, it was kinda unique. Most of the people you were competing against at that time didn't have a masters degree so it opened a lot of doors for me.

R: Please explain your background from designing cars to designing jeans.

L: I couldn't find anything in the automotive industry. So, in the meantime, I took a small plane single engine class and qualified for a pilot's license. I actually flew to a couple of interviews. At the time there were no opportunities at the major automobile companies. I honestly can't tell you why but I didn't find anything that would work. I took a chance and went to an interview with Skidmore Owings and Merrill, which is a world architect firm in Chicago. They were actually working on the John Hancock Building and kind of a coincidence, they were also working on the Rockefeller offices in New York. So, I went into their interior design department, not interior decorating. We designed the space and what went into the buildings as the architects were building it. My masters degree is what got me that job. They liked my drafting skills and the creative skills as I had taken full art courses and industrial design courses. We drew live models and we made things. Alcoa awarded a grant to the school and we made things out of aluminum. My project was a bar stool made out of aluminum. I did a lot of drafting. We stood at a drafting table and you did it with a pencil and a T square and a triangle. I remember standing up all day and all night because we had rushed jobs.

R: (7:41) You left there and went to Lee Jeans and that took you to Kansas City?

L: I moved into a mansion on North State Street (Chicago) and this mansion was owned by a German woman named Gingolph. She was a widow and rented out the rooms. I rented the library and it had these huge sliding doors like you would expect in a library. My bathroom was an add on back under some stairs and we had a hotplate, so it really wasn't an apartment.

Melissa, my future wife, we were married 50 years, moved into the master bedroom on the second floor and she washed her dishes in the bathroom sink. In the hallway, there was a hotplate and refrigerator in a closet. It was that type of setup. I had a cat.

Gingolph had a tendency when she rented an apartment, she would go into a room and get furnishings that she owned and did so in my apartment. She took a table and rug of mine and took them to another apartment that she wanted to rent and make it look better. She did this while I was at work. My cat, Frankie, got out the big sliding doors while they were taking the furniture out. I came home looking for the cat. I found Melissa, who was training to go with the CIA with her French and Spanish skills. At that time, the only things available for women were secretarial. They sent her to Chicago from Kansas City to get a high powered secretarial course and she would be assigned somewhere French and Spanish were used.

(10:16) After we met, she stopped her CIA plans and we got married 6-9 months later and 1 1/2 year later, her mother wanted her to come back to Kansas City and we did. I just walked in cold to Lee Jeans one day because I was driving home. They had just built this new building a couple years earlier. I didn't know who was in the building but I admired the architecture so I just stopped in. A gentleman named Howard Vandervort had been looking for a management trainee. In 1967, that was a very new concept. He hired me as management trainee. I went around the company and learned everything I could. We moved to Kansas City. That is how we got there. He liked the

creative side but liked the Masters of Business. I ended up in purchasing for awhile and then in product development. So, I ended up designing jeans for 30 years. I never did get to design cars.

R: You mentioned earlier that you had horses. Where did your involvement in horses begin? Did it begin during your childhood and the same for Melissa?

L: Yea, it came from Melissa. I had had a pony at birthday parties when I was young but had not gotten into horses. When Melissa was a young child, they took her out to a farm in Kansas City and she would do some riding. She didn't have a horse or a permanent arrangement but would occasionally go out. But she had this love and said she wanted to get a horse.

After we were married, we got Kabishawn, which was $\frac{3}{4}$ Arabian; very flighty and temperamental but she loved that horse. I ended up with a quarter horse. Our children, when they got a little older, got another quarter horse and a Tennessee walker. That is how we ended up in the horse business.

I had never been west of Kansas City. She took her degree in French and Spanish at the University of Colorado in Boulder. She loved the mountains and asked if I would like to go on a mountain vacation. We started looking for mountain vacations. I asked her before I came on this interview how we found White Grass and she couldn't remember. It was searching a place to come to in the mountains. The first place we went was Estes Park and we stayed in a cabin. We then researched dude ranches and somehow found White Grass. We both were born too late because we would have liked to be a cowboy and cowgirl. I was designing western style of jeans and, at that time, Lee was number one in western. All the clowns in the rodeos wore Lee jeans. Lee Riders were the biggest western jean.

R: (14:30) I am curious about your background, were you drawn to the West by a childhood desire?

L: No, I think it kinda evolved after I left Cincinnati. I went to Chicago and ended up in Kansas City. Kansas City is a little western. They had a little western history. Estes Park was real cowboy town in the 1960s and now it is very touristy-it looks very much like Jackson. So, I think it evolved and Estes Park is what got me interested. I was very fascinated and loved the cowboy lifestyle, cowboy code.

R: So that appealed to you, grabbed you?

L: Definitely, once we came here, we were die-hard. This was the only place we vacationed. We would probably still be vacationing here if this were an operating dude ranch. This is what we would be doing.

R: (16:06) You had the cowboy experience with the ranch horses, did you feel like you were living the cowboy life here?

L: That was the number one thing about White Grass for us. I believe that came from Frank. He set the tone and the environment. He operated as if it were a real western experience and not a "dude" experience. We weren't treated as dudes. We were treated like western visitors, ranch visitors. They had a blackboard at the barn that said "Old Dude" if you had been here before and were a good rider. We were dudes and were referred to as dudes but I never felt that we were treated like

tourists. I felt like we were treated like a visitor. We were paying visitors and it was fairly expensive compared to other vacations at the point.

R: What did you mean by the cowboy experience that was attractive to you? It kept you coming back, right? What is the cowboy experience?

L: Cowboys are romantic because of their lifestyle. Their lifestyle is independent and many of the real cowboys, at that time, had everything they owned in the back of their Ford pickup. They were sort of nomads because they went from job to job and often came back. The wranglers here at White Grass would do this in the summers because the tip pool was large and leave here and go to a working ranch and actually work cattle in the winter.

R: A lot of freedom for them.

L: It was like the John Wayne movies where the cowboys were on the trail and they had this code, knew where to draw the line and they were courteous to women. They had their own code and lifestyle. It was a very different lifestyle living as a cowboy and being a night herder from many of the people living in our country who lived a 9 to 5 job in an urban environment.

R: (19:52) Was the cowboy lifestyle more intriguing to you than the lifestyle you were living in Kansas City?

L: Yea, even though I had a wonderful job. The second year I was there, they sent me to France. Here I was a boy from Petersburg, West Virginia and didn't know nothing and all of a sudden, they sent me to France to look at the beautiful people and do sketches. I sat down in Paris and in the school district, I watched the people and the students come out of school. I sat there and had coffee with the people so I had a great job.

But, if I could had been a cowboy, I would have done it in a minute. You couldn't make a living at being a cowboy. My guess is that most of them made minimum wage.

R: Could you be married and live the cowboy lifestyle?

L: Some of them were married but the majority were not because of the nomadic lifestyle and there was not many women that would throw all their stuff in the back of a pickup and hit the road.

R: When you were working in Kansas City and you were thinking about your year ahead, was it your respite from that lifestyle being out here as a cowboy and a westerner? Did that complete you personally?

L: Yes. I worked at Lee to make the money to be a cowboy for 2 or 3 weeks at White Grass. That is the bottom line. We thought about that. I think I thought about it a little more but Melissa had kind of the same thoughts. Once we went home after our stay at White Grass, we would think about the next time we would be at White Grass. You would think about that all year.

I started out with one week of vacation and got up to 2 weeks and eventually I got more. At that time, 2 weeks of vacation was normal for a person working in a large company. I would take my whole 2 weeks here at White Grass and look forward to that. I was working in a wonderful job

designing jeans and going to Rome and Scandinavian counties looking for ideas. Very few people get that opportunity, especially coming out of my background in a small town in Virginia and West Virginia. It was kind an exotic job. I would go to New York and do song and dance presentations to major retailers and go to the west coast and do the same thing. If I could have had my choice, I would have been one of the wranglers. I don't think Melissa would have said quite that...the nomadic life.

Dave Benson, who was #2 to Curly, the foreman or ramrod at White Grass, had a big Ford pickup but it had a stretch cap and an eight foot bed. Everything he had was behind the seat or in that bed and it had a shell over the back. I think I could live that.

R: (24:32) Do you regret that you did not try?

L: No, I don't have regrets but at this point, I certainly, thought about it but I was married and after about a year, we started a family. After that your focus becomes your wife and daughter and another baby. If it had not been for the children and the marriage, I don't know, I might have tried it.

R: Did you do a lot of reading about the West and cowboys; what their lifestyle was like and did that go back to childhood or did that start as an adult?

L: I think that evolved with my exposure to the mountains. Melissa gets the credit for that because she is the one who said let's go to the mountains and we went to Estes Park. That started it all. That was a little cowboy then; real cowboys came in from the ranches; not like Jackson. That is where it started and then it grew pretty fast.

R: Ever talk about writing about cowboys?

L: I don't know if I am a very good writer.

R: It would tie into your romancing the cowboy life and the comment you made earlier about creative juices.

L: I don't know what I could write hasn't already been written. But frankly, I would love to be a writer. But I don't know I am capable.

Let me say one more thing. Being with Lee and Lee being the number one in western wear, I worked very hard to outfit Melissa and me. It was not fancy western but like the wranglers. The wranglers looked sharp when they went into town. That is kind of how we dressed. The first year we came out here, I had pearl snapped shirts for both of us, Lee jeans and western boots. I don't think I wore the neckerchief because I thought that was trying to pretend to be a wrangler. We did dress it when we were here. A lot of the dudes just wore whatever they had, which was hiking or golfing clothes.

R: (28:47) When you were in Kansas City, did you wear your western clothes as normal?

L: No, we wouldn't wear them as normal. But in my job, I got to go to the Cheyenne Frontier Days and I would dress full western. I would wear a suit, a ten gallon hat, the whole nine yards. One of the salespersons put me on one of his quarter horses and I would take part in their parade as a Lee

representative. I loved that. I didn't do that in my business because it was diversified and at that time, western was about 50% of it.

R: What was your emotional experience with your ten gallon hat and dressed to the nines?

L: You have to have the hat. The hat is the last thing that comes off at night for a cowboy. The experience was escaping your regular routine in life of going into the office, traveling, or doing whatever. You put yourself in an imaginary situation where you are actually being a cowboy. Melissa and I were both good riders so we got to go out and ride by ourselves. I got to go round up the horses in the summer mornings and the horse drive to Dubois, WY in the fall. You actually immerse yourself in this western lore and you felt like you were a cowboy. You were still a dude but you didn't think in terms of being a dude. We could ride almost as good as the wranglers. We rode the whole day.

One day I rode up alone up the mountain behind the ranch to round up the horses on Wink, the horse that I was assigned. I came around the bend and here was a grizzly mother and 3 cubs. She treed the cubs and why she didn't charge I don't know. But at that point, you feel pretty cowboyish. We didn't panic and just backed up slowly. You don't think about your job and you think about survival as you are up high in the Teton Mountains. That grizzly doesn't care who you are. It is an escape.

R: It is very primal, trying to survive. It is you and the horse and you living this lifestyle that is very nomadic and not tied to stability. You are totally free.

L: I think that is what attracts women to cowboys. I do believe in the 10 cowboy commandments. Part of them is "you ride for the brand", "you know when to draw the line", etc. There is a code for cowboys...you don't lie, you respect women, everybody. (The code is printed on page 11.)

R: (34:47) You are out here 8-10 years in a row with your wife and 2 children. We have talked about driving the horses to Dubois, Wyoming. That means leaving White Grass and traversing the Gros Ventre Mountains over to Dubois in the fall. The purpose was to find a climate that was more suitable to the horses than White Grass in the winter. Take us through that experience. What attracted you to that? Did you and Melissa do this together and were your children a part of this too?

L: Yes, Melissa and I did it together, No, unfortunately, we were going to take them when they were old enough but Frank passed away. We were planning on taking them. When we first went, they were in the 7-8 yrs old category and we felt that was a little young. I think Frank would have allowed it because they were pretty good riders.

This all evolved because Melissa and I liked the western movies. I don't remember watching John Wayne movies before I married Melissa. We probably watched every John Wayne movie 3 or 4 times and there were other western movies. We loved that and in those movies you had cattle drives. The first year we came out here wide eyed and all we had was pearl snapped shirts but the second year, we were old dudes and we knew what was going on and we found out there was a horse drive and we stepped forward and said sign us up. We had these visions from the western movies and when they said it was 100 mile drive and it takes a week and you live in teepees and you go cross country, we said count us in.

R: You were living your own western movie.

L: You are living another life that not everybody gets to do. I feel so blessed and so fortunate to have been able to do that and not only to be here at White Grass and how Frank ran this western hospitality ranch but to go on a horse drive. You have the out riders so as you are going down the trail, you try to keep them in a line but one or two will go off and you have to go get them.

R: What I understand about the horse drive is that you left here and most of the time were off road and you were moving across the mountains. You had a supply team that went ahead of your drive and you would meet them at a certain point. They would set up camp and they do the cooking and get the fire going. You would sleep in the teepees and the next morning you get on your horse and you ride another day.

L: (40:11) The routine was that if you signed up for the horse drive, you were considered a reasonably competent rider because things can happen out on the trail. You would meet at the airport and they would pick you up in an old Dodge Power Wagon, which is a huge old truck. There is an experience leaving Kansas City -- get on a Frontier twin engine prop, which is an airplane which evolved out of a DC3, climb on the plane and a few hours later, you step into a green Power Wagon that was probably worn out 10 years before they drove it to the airport to pick you up. All of a sudden, you stepped into another world.

Once you get here, you were assigned your cabin, then you are expected to help get ready for this. We go down to the barn and Curly and the wranglers are there. We help put the panniers on because we took pack horses with us, but most of the stuff went into a big goose neck trailer. I took an army duffel bag for Melissa and me. You get that into the trailer, get the horses saddled, and any other duties. The dudes were expected to pitch-in and you became part of this team. You have left Kansas City and you are practicing living another lifestyle altogether. Then everybody gets organized for the horse drive.

On one drive, Curly assigned Melissa as lead rider. She took a red flag and we would start out at the ranch and go out on the Moose-Wilson Road and she is going ahead to let the automobiles know what is going on. Then, the wranglers and dudes would be behind that. Then came the group of horses and then the men and women riding drag. We went down the Moose-Wilson Road and crossed the highway and from there on, we never went on the highway. We weren't driving them down the edge of the road like you see them moving cattle from one pasture to another. Frank had old time connections with ranchers between here and Dubois and he made arrangements with them. We had gates that we had to open from time to time, so it wasn't all open range. But mostly, we were out in the open.

The gooseneck horse trailer and a couple of ranch vehicles would go ahead of the drive and they picked up ice along the way. They would go ahead to the predetermined site on a rancher's property and would set the white teepees up. They would set the bonfire and the big tent up. The big tent had a pot-bellied stove in it but we didn't spend much time in it. We were always outside. You would ride into camp with 110-120 horses and the fire would be going; they had a few chairs set up, otherwise you just sat wherever, and there would be ice. The first thing you had to do was to corner the horses so they wouldn't wander off. There were natural places along the way where we could

contain the horses. We did have night riders and the dudes that were better riders were allowed to do the night riding. I would take my turn after one of the wranglers did their turn.

(47:27) I would go out and night riders do it calmly and don't make extra noises. You keep everything peaceful and keep your horse going very slow. The main thing you never do is you never ride your horse into the herd. You then come back and then tap another night hawk. You then go back to your teepee.

I wasn't experienced in camping in a teepee on a horse drive so I brought a piece of black plastic and I put it on the floor. The teepee had no floor, so I laid the plastic down and then laid a thin layer of foam down and we had WWII mummy sleeping bags. They keep you real warm but confining. One night after the drive, the next morning our teepee was on an incline, both Melissa and I had slid out of the teepee and the only thing left in the teepee were our heads. The plastic became like ice and we just slipped out. We were so tired we didn't even know it.

Another night we went into an area where there was not a natural coral area to contain the horses. Frank said don't worry, they won't go anywhere. Unbeknownst to him, Dave Benson, an old and experienced hand, went out and hobbled 4 horses. We got up and every single horse had disappeared except the 4 that we hobbled. We had all the wranglers and dudes standing around the campfire and all the horses were gone but we did have 4 horses.

R: (51:20) How many dudes, wranglers and horses were on this ride?

L: There were probably 110-120 horses, 3 wranglers and Frank orchestrating, Rick Seiling sometimes took over management duties and 8-12 dudes.

R: The fees at time were \$750 so that times 8 or 10 people is a nice income for the ranch.

L: It was a smart business decision because Frank had to move the horses anyway but also an unbelievable opportunity for the dudes.

So, we are standing by the campfire with no horses and I will never forget that feeling because you feel like you are part of the herd and the herd is gone. You feel so alone but you have others with you. It is almost a desperate feeling. That day I received one of the greatest honors I have ever received. They asked me to join them on one of the 4 horses that we had.

Curly was in the camp that morning so he did have the Power Wagon. The four of us go out and you ride away and you look back at the camp, and the people have this forlorn look on them. We find the horses. We walked the horses back because you did not want to wear the horses out, so you did not gallop. Instead, you rode at a walk or lope because the horses get tired. So, we find them; my horse had stepped down in a bog and he was wet. We bring the horses in and Curly sees my horse and he asked if we were over-riding these horses. Dave stepped up really quick and so no and that my horse was in a bog and we had not run them in a gallop to lather them up. That was a rule at the ranch that you didn't bring a horse back after riding that was lathered up.

R: (57:35) The literature about the drives states that you go down the center of Dubois, WY on the last day.

L: We got everything organized and we were on the trail for about 5 days and the whole event was 6 or 7 days. When we got there, we went right down the main street of Dubois, just like you would imagine in the John Wayne movies. The people were standing all along the side; these images stay with you forever. It was like a fourth of July parade.

R: Does the word celebration fit?

L: The image would be a celebration and it felt like a celebration. You sit tall in the saddle. You are on your best behavior and you want to look good.

R: Would you drive one today?

L: Yea, I would do it in a minute. So, you go to the end of town and put them in a corral. Then they had an outdoor dinner arranged. It snowed all day and we got soaked. Dave Benson had a bottle of peppermint schnapps and that was the only alcohol that we were carrying. He was passing the schnapps around about 10 am and it was cold and snowing. When we got into Dubois, we took off our boots and put our over-boots on. Then, we go up to the local bar and there was one dude that could only stand with his arm around and 4 x 4 post that went to the ceiling. I think he was so tired and been drinking, he was just holding on.

Note: Some of Leonard Smith's Horse Drive photos are viewable at www.whitegrass.org under Collections/Photos/Events/Fall Horse Drives.

Another story....On one of the drives, we came in to a little town for breakfast and one of the dudes was having ice cream with his scrambled eggs. It turned Jack Burnham off so much he couldn't have breakfast. We went back to the camp and all he had was a thermos of coffee. The thermos had a glass liner for insulation and the dude photographer was getting his horse organized and the rear foot of his horse hit Jack's thermos and broke the glass inside the thermos. Jack didn't have any breakfast and now the photographer breaks his thermos and we had a day's ride ahead of us.

R: Is there any last piece you want to talk about in regard to the horse drive?

L: On one of the drives, some sort of tack broke and Frank said he wished he has some duct tape. Melissa went to her saddle bag and pulled out some duct tape and handed it to Frank. He was totally impressed with her, a woman, having duct tape in her saddle bag! It doesn't get much better than this!

R: (1:06:54) We are going to transition to Leonard's experience unpacking the ranch to get ready for the operation of the dude ranch. What were your tasks during that 2 weeks you were here? You were staying in the wrangler's quarters?

L: It was May 1981 and Melissa and my 2 children had booked a vacation in late summer. I was unable to come then due to Lee business travels. So, I called Frank and told him I did not want to miss coming to White Grass this year. I asked if there was a chance that I could come and help open the ranch. I just asked for the airfare, which was \$250 round trip from Kansas City to Jackson on Frontier Airlines. He made the arrangements and I stayed in a duplex bunkhouse. There was a skeleton crew, starting with 6 people and it grew as the ranch opened. We probably ended up with 8 or 9.

R: Were there people preparing the cabins in addition to those 6?

L: No, about 10 in total. The first thing we did every morning was hay the horses. They trucked the horses back from Dubois. Every morning, 2 of us would load up the hay wagon and we would throw off the hay. Then, we would come in and have breakfast. There was a cook here and then we would be assigned duties. Curly was here and a few of the regulars. There were some staff here that worked on the cabins.

I fed the horses every morning. I also would be assigned clearing trails and fixing wire fences. I learned to fix a rail fence and then a special rail fence around the Galey cabin. I was by myself building a log fence at a homesteaded ranch, looking at the Tetons. It was magical.

(1:14:25) They would also send me to fix the barb wire, where the moose had run through it. I took this old green Jeep pickup and it had no brakes. You had to plan carefully where to stop it. The main things I did were rails, fixing barb wired, clearing trails, feeding. One day I was riding Wink and we went to the NW corner of the ranch. There the wranglers would cut down trees and clean them to make them look like rails (for buck and rail fencing). Wink and I would go in and one of the wranglers would tie a rope around one of the logs and I would carefully walk Wink out of that. He would pull the log out and we got where we could actually stack it. That was a great project.

R: It is the cowboy lifestyle to be productive. You were with your horse and nature.

L: (1:17:24) You are immersed. That word keeps coming back because you had to pay attention. There were logs all over the place and you could break the horse's leg. The horse had to pay attention, I had to pay attention and focus and concentrate. This was not a game; it was the real thing. Then, I had a day off. You worked 6 out of 7 days per week and I was here 2 weeks for \$250. On my days off, I would take a long ride on Wink. I would take a bag of feed for Wink; I would take a lunch and that was special. I would spend the entire day just riding up in the Tetons and that was special.

R: Anything else you want to say? We have recorded the journal that you kept during that 2 weeks and the photos you took will be archived with this interview.

L: Those 2 weeks were special and I don't think another dude had done that. The reason I got to do is my family were regular dudes and I called and asked Frank if I could do it. The significant thing is how important White Grass is to me. I worked 50 weeks a year to do that. When I departed to go back to Kansas City, everybody went back to the airport with me for my send off. That was special; they didn't have to take me back.

R: Their presence confirmed what?

L: I guess they liked me here and we all got along or they appreciated me helping. They respected me and they didn't have to do that because I was really a dude.

R: (1:22:24) What did you think they were saying?

L: I guess they liked me and appreciated that I worked hard at whatever had to be done and respected their lifestyle.

R: Do you think or do you know?

L: I don't know for sure but I can't image why else they would come. They gave me a picture of White Grass that was signed. That was special. Why did they all come to the airport when just a staff could have driven me to the airport?

R: It would seem to me that was a prime compliment. It was an affirmation the Leonard met the grade and achieved something that was important to him in his thinking of being a cowboy.

L: I would agree with that. I never stopped to think about that photo. I worked my tush off and I worked all day and it could be an acknowledgment of that too.

R: Congratulations. I think you graduated from cowboy school. They saw you as a hard worker and high standards like themselves.

L: That is a good thing that came out of this interview. I never thought why all those people came down to see me off.

Another story - after my 2 weeks were done, I go to Frank's cabin to say goodbye and we are shaking hands, and he offered me a drink. He usually had a drink in his cabin. Nothing was said about the \$250 so I had to asked him and he went back into the bedroom and he and Nona were talking. Then he came out with the \$250. It wouldn't have broken either one of us but it was a deal. I think that is another part of the code of cowboys - you don't break your word. It is 'mean what you say and say what you mean.' Another one is 'the less you say, the better it is' but what you say needs to be important. (Leonard's daily journal working on the ranch begins on page 12.)

R: I look forward to receiving those 10 commandments so I can attach thrm to this interview. It has been a joy listening to you about your time at the ranch. We greatly appreciate your contributions to the Heritage Project.

L: White Grass was and is a highlight in my life and I got emotional talking about it. It is special just to have real highlights in your life.

CODE OF THE WEST

- 1. Live each day with courage.**
- 2. Take pride in your work.**
- 3. Always finish what you start.**
- 4. Do what has to be done.**
- 5. Be tough, but fair.**
- 6. When you make a promise, keep it.**
- 7. Ride for the brand.**
- 8. Talk less and say more.**
- 9. Remember that some things aren't for sale.**
- 10. Know where to draw the line.**

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Leonard Smith wanted two other known tenants added to the Code of the West as stated above:

11. Always be truthful, do not lie.
12. Be respectful of everyone.

Tues I P1

Dear Melissa
Miriam
Matthew

Miss you all!

Arrived on time Sat.
Frank picked me up -
stopped @ Moose
"Trade in Center"

Arrived at Ranch about
2 P.M. chatted with Nona
then went to work helping
Dave (Jeannie not here yet - due
to arrive Friday) fix fence
along Ranger road. Worked
out of a Green Jeep 4WD
pick-up with no brakes.

Sunday breakfast at
7:30 AM then helped Curly and
Rick load hay and feed

P2

horses (used Powerwagon) 30 bales
which are roaming at will
on Ranch grounds. (See Sun cont)

Mon ~~I~~ I went out along
till noon in the same 4WD
Jeep (still without brakes)
and repaired the fence along
the road to the old hunting
Camp and Baulderson's.

Julie is cooking for all
of us. Doing a great job

After lunch I hung
a small gate in a new rail
fence around the Fry-Tag
cabin.

Then we all unloaded
a shipment of hay bales about
400. (writing on my lap in
the bunk house - the one Jack
used to stay in - by myself
real nice) then I worked on
Baulderson's rail fence.

p3

Sun. cont

After feeding horses were
supposed to be off however
3 ponies, one was Mumser
had gotten out and went all
the way down to the Rocking H
which is along the Snake levy
past Teton Village. Dave, plus
new fella's Jim & Joe and I
went down to get them
on horse back took 4 hours.
Rode back.

Tues Mumser & Nip out
again - same place Rocking H

(H) Dave and I left about
9 AM and returned at 1:30 PM
by horse back.

worked on Lake Trail fence
in same Jeep rest of Tuesday

p4

Rick is plowing and Discing
the main pasture right up to
the rail fence in front of
the lodge plus the North
pasture. The junk pasture
will be the only one used
this year for night horses.

Jim & Joe are clearing
rocks ahead of Rick.

Dave is now shoeing
horses. Curly re building inside

Julie cooking, feeding pigs
and a few head of cattle and
taking care of two new bulls
about 2 weeks old.

I'm doing fences. Pretty soon
will have to switch to horse back
and pack horse for wire and
chain saw.

Little John due about the
first. Steve will be here this

p 5

Summer. Mike probably will be here.

Naturally I'm having a great time. Pretty tired after working from 7:30 to 5 PM so not much night life - lights out early.

That's about all - Oh today when Dave and I returned with Nip & Mumsen we ~~we~~ went up the lake road and into the mountain corral. DM excited the 4 pigs (big) one ran thru the wire pig pen gate and into the woods. I went after him on horseback and "pig" wrangled him back into the pen. Keep this ST.
Love you Very Much Leon and Baddy

p 6

Didn't get a chance to mail letter Wednesday so decided to continue.

Wed

Joe and I took the trusty Jeep out to the fence between the main pasture and the North pasture. Pulled out an old wooded post, widened the gate with a new 8" Dia post 7 ft long set in ground, (solid rock) (well not solid but very slow digging) about 2 1/2 ft. Then reworked the fence to accommodate the new wide gate. Then we finished the day by working the lake trail fence. Wed. night went into town in Old Paint - Conboy bar

p7

Good music but expensive drinks. Saw Terry, he is now working deep in the woods (forest) cutting fence poles and house poles. Never did get married. Got home late about 1:30 AM. Old Paint has a short in head lights. The lights go on and off continuously as you drive ~~down~~ down the road. Quite an experience after a "few" drinks ... if you know what I mean.

Thurs AM Dave, Jim, Joe and I are moving rather slowly, however weather is great. 60's and low 70's. 36° to 40° at night. No rain.

p8

Thurs AM

Jim and I put in another post today, gate into North pasture, to match the one we put in yesterday. ~~Yesterday's~~ Yesterday's looked so good. Curly though, we should put in its mate to form the new wide gate.

Then Jim & I begin working on the rail fence ~~back~~ behind Frank's and Nona's house. A new post plus repair and ~~rehang~~ "rehang" some fallen rails.

Forgot to mention that wed AM. I worked with Rick ~~on~~ on the ~~junk~~ Junk pasture fence that separates the Junk from the North. Same Jeep which I now drive all the time.

p9

Pardon the sloppy writing I'm laying in bed now on Thurs lunch hour writing on my knee and a bit tired but happy as a pig in

Also I hit my right hand middle finger with a hay hook Monday and it swelled up and hurt like mad for two days. Getting better now. I think I probably broke or bruised a bone at the first knuckle.

About 1 PM now, must get back to work finishing Frank's rail fence and then back out to complete the lake trail fence. Hope to mail this tonight.

p10

So I'll say love you again and miss you all.

Love
Daddy

Dear Melissa Minian ^{TR} PI
and Mathew ^{PI} #

Forgot to bring stationary
that's why the small paper

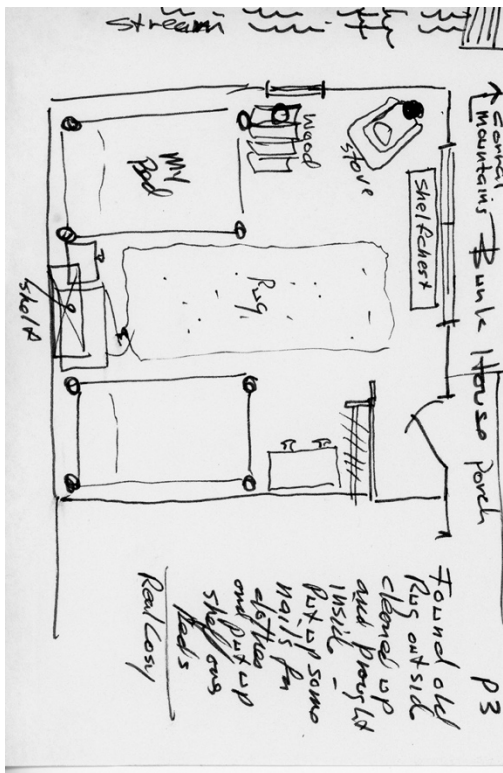
Thurs. PM built a new
pole gate leading out
of Galey's cocktail area
(backyard)

Thurs night went to Curley's
and watched Country Music
award with Lucafer on
my lap for about 1 1/2 hrs.
went to bed about 10 PM.

At 11:30 someone banged on
my bunkhouse door I reached
for the light knocked it down
and got tangled up in the
cord - all the time the

banging continued. Finally
got to the door - Guess
who? Little John dressed in
Go to Hell in his jeans and
a bright red shirt. He had
~~the~~ just arrive and he
was carrying the biggest
bed roll I'd ever seen.
We talked awhile and ^{needed}
then went to sleep. ^{to go to}
^{bed}

Today he moved into the
bunk house by himself
where Steve stayed last
year. That's where he will
spend the summer. Steve
and Mike will use my
bunk house this summer.



FRIDAY

Finished Galey's gate and far
and I cleaned up yard
and I worked some more
on repairing their backyard
rail fence. Then did some
work on hay storage area
which is a large area fenced
with a tall buck fence next
to the Fry Tag cabin on the
workshop Barn road.

Help unload some
seed to be used to plant the
newly plowed pastures 1000lb

Dave and Jim are now
shoeing horses. Rick is
finishing the plowing by tractor
curly working on repairing
the interior fire damage
Cook city cabin. Julie cooking

Little John doesn't go onto
the payroll until Saturday AM

Jennie p5.
~~I~~ arriving today about
2 PM. She and Dave are
moving into "their" cabin.
They went to town tonight.
Rick and Julie are staying in
the cabin next to the Ice
machine. Jim & Joe are in
the bunk house which ~~is~~
a joins mine. 9 PM and
I've had my shower, talked
with all of you and ready for
bed. To be continued . . .
~~It would be great if you~~
~~would type my letters~~
~~and send them to my parents~~
~~I think they would enjoy~~
~~reading about my stay at~~
~~the ranch.~~

SAT p6
loaded and moved some
wood to the Boiler (Frank's
Hot Water Heater) Then
put in an 8 ft x 8" wooden
post by water ~~valve~~
in road outside kitchen
so people won't run over valve
Then Joe and I worked on
fence around Frank's Chicken
coup and cleaned up
around Fry Tag cabin
taking more wood to
Boiler.
After lunch Joe and I
started installing a new
wide pole gate in the stud
corral across from main
house. We are leaving existing
red swinging gate you used
last year and putting pole

gate right beside it to p7
main ~~ranch~~ ranch road.
After dinner I put up
a TV antenna using
a long fence pole with a
long piece of water pipe
wired to it. set in hole
inground and wired to one
of the main beams of
Little John's bunk house.
The TV antenna was for
Little John's TV. He hooked up
the wire and it worked.
Then Little John, Dave, Rick
and I tried to get Julie's
car started. Never did!
Don't know what's the
matter.

p8
We finally gave up and
Rick, Julie, Dave, Jennie and
I went up to Rick & Julie's
cabin and watched John
Wayne in Rio Lobo.
I left at 9:30 went to Curly's
for a drink and talked with
Curly and Jim a bit. Then
to the bunk house. Remade
my bed which was in sad
shape. the sheet was all in
a ball. Now I'm laying in
bed writing on a book with
a nice fire burning and the
stream trickling by outside
lights out. . . Good Night
Love you.

SUNDAY

p#9

4:45 P.M. back in bed - cabin swept - Fire going cloudy and about 45°-50° started off the day with break fast @ 7 A.M. coffee @ 6:30 A.M. @ curly's while shaving... Just like home... well not quite.

After break fast curly, Rick and I spread one load of hay bales for the horses. Rick and I spread second load.

Then I cut a large piece of carpet for Jim & Joe's bunk house and helped them rearrange their furniture ☺

p10

Then I gathered my spurs, yellow slicker, canteen, and Matthew's coffee thermos (thank you Matthew) and went to the barn. Got a hammer, bucket of grain and went down beyond the lake and caught wink.

(Oh ya I also made a ~~hand~~ pack lunch of turkey, lunch meat, cheese, and choc. chip cookies)

Saddled up and rode from 10:30 to 4 P.M. Lake trail up ~~to almost~~ the slide had to turn back because of snow.

p11

Back tracked thru lake trail gate and up trail along North fence. Had to turn south because of snow and came out a small mountain aspen grove. Once again headed for North gate almost made it. Skirt about 1/4 mile... snow. So turned around back to small aspen grove and had lunch. Also to a ~~snack~~ snack of gain in a paper bag for Wink. A good old horse. then west out of aspen grove across Hell Run. Ran into a Moose and

p12

new new calf at the big rock on the Hell run just up from the lake trail. Took several pictures. then around Phelps lake and back through the draw. Nice ride.

Julie and Rick just stopped in asked if I wanted to go to the stage coach tonight. They are going to Moose for gas and then coming back to pick me up. So got to run. I guess no nap. Got to get cleaned up. See ya on page 13. Love you.

Monday

P13

22° and Frost this morning.
10:10^{AM} Help load 3 pigs ^{big} ~~to~~ to take to butcher. took four of us to get the job done.

Then finished the morning working on the stud corral 219-299 fence and installing ~~the~~ new pole gate.

After lunch helped Curly and Dave cut out a herd of horses (32) in the various corrals at the barn. Then Dave, ~~Joe~~ and I took herd down to trail ranch

P14

to graze. I took the point with Dave and ~~Jim~~ Joe riding drag.

Finished afternoon pack at the O.K. stud corral.

After dinner I moon supper Jim and I saddled up (I rode Blackfoot - Jim on Wiskey) and I took a salt ~~box~~ block down to horses at trail ranch. Put block in gunny sack and tied to saddle horn.

We then checked how far herd had drifted since 2 P.M. About 16 were

Just north of trail ranch ^{P15} we followed tracks straight through L swamp and found the other 16 between the swamp and the lake trail. sleepily so will say goodnight. Miss you -

TUESDAY

AM Finishing up pole gate to stud corral

PM More of the same 28° this AM now up to about 55°. Word is that horses we took to trail ranch may have drifted away overnight will probably have to go find them later this PM or tomorrow

P16

Also ahead is taking a pack horse and heading out to do draw fence and North fence horseback

Everything going great. ~~I~~ Feel great a bit tired now and then but a "nice" tired.

Every body says hi and are anxious to see you. This will probably be the last letter. I expect if I get it mailed tonight you will receive thurs or Friday. Looking forward to seeing you all Love fence/paddy
P.S. 5 Rolls of film so far!

~~THURS~~ WED ^{Loose in track of days #1.}

I'll bring this home to complete the story.

Wed afternoon continued work on stud corral however several 15-20 min. showers drove us into the shop where we and passed the time by "cleaning shop."

Completed stud corral gate and 219 299 fence repair about 10:30. Move some poles to pole pile behind shop and were on our way to take some old wood to the Kettle when Old Betsy (deep pick-up) would not start. So we finished morning by cleaning shop. After lunch

^{p2}
we continued cleaning shop rest of day. Just as well as it rained and snowed off and on all day.

It is now 8:30 P Thurs. I recon firmid by ticket and am once again laying on my bed enjoying the stove and stream. The Temp has dropped to about 28° and it is snowing. The snow is beginning to stick to all the rails and some on the ground. If this keeps up we ~~may~~ may have some snow tomorrow morning.

^{p3}
I'm now laying here with the lights out watching it snow as dusk comes. A beautiful sight. Miss you.

THURS

Saddle up Wink. Temp 25° 3" snow on ground and still falling. Packed Tuck with chain saw, fence stretcher, and other fence mending equipment and Jim and I went out to fix the Draw fence. I led Tuck and did chain saw cutting while Jim followed on Lucy and mended the wire. Returned to ranch for lunch and back out again in the afternoon

^{p4}
The snow was beautiful. A wet snow that stuck to every thing including the barb wire.

A new guy, Larry joined us ~~a~~ couple days ago and has now taken over the cooking from Julie.

John who was here a ~~couple~~ couple of years ago arrived today. (Help Frank build Kettle) 8 PM and still snowing.

FRIDAY

p5

Started night off by walking down below the lake in 4" of snow to catch Blackfoot and the pack mule Nip.

Saddled up - loaded fence gear plus chain saw and headed out the draw trail. ~~is~~ Snowing pretty heavy so wore yellow slicker and rubber insulated boots. Cleared the Draw trail plus up to buck fence to where wire begins. Then back in for lunch. Snow stopped

p6

After lunch back out. Snowing heavy now. Completed wire fence in area where it meets buck fence of Rockentellus & Y and then clear various trails around draw the rest of the afternoon.

I've run the chain saw now for two days and Jim has done most of the fence repair and moving cut logs out of the way.

I've done most of the tugging of Nip & Truck for two days so pretty tired. But pleasantly tired. Sun is nice to get back to Early Times in the

p7

the evening. After dinner sat and talked with the boys. Frank joined us late for dinner so Dave and I talked with him for about 1/2 hour about some of his experiences dating back to '36.

Payed Leroy a visit and then stopped in next door and talked a bit with Jim & Joe. John and Tony also dropped in.

9:30 PM. Laying in bed temp about 32° snow stopped some melting now however,

p8

Mountains have a light snow cover all way down to Lakes trail - Really beautiful.

Jim, Joe, Tony, and John went to town. I passed. Will John went to bed.

Heman & Sam Dave and Janice since dinner. Julio & Rick left to day for a "vacation" from the ranch till about the 17th.

I think I'll call it a day, read the fashion H&B paper a while and then lights out. See you ~~tomorrow~~ tomorrow,

SATURDAY

99

Last Full Day

22° went to
show with end shield
incorporating
clean & sunny

2 AM. Jennie & Dove
took me to dinner at a
Mexican restaurant. then
we went to the Cowboy
where we joined up with
L. John, John, Kevin, Curley,
Theresa, Jae Jim and Larry.
Had a great time
country singing and good as
with Nelson & songs

P10

Drinks expensive. Be sure to
go to Store Cook bar on Sunday
when you are out here.

Spent the day by repairing
the rail fence around the
cabin pasture.

after lunch took paint,
Dove, L. John, and Jae
Dag and Frank took 29
head down lake trail
to slide to gorge. Then
took to Rail fence to
complete day. Eyes falling
asleep see you tomorrow
love

Sunday

P11

Curly gave everyone
morning all because of
party at cowboy night
before.

Got up about 8 AM cleaned
up and went to kitchen.
Made own breakfast of
2 pieces toast, warmed
3 pieces of sausages on toaster
with milk.

then went to Curly's and
had cup of coffee. then back
to bunk house and packed.

After packing I cleaned
bunk house, shook out rugs
etc.

P12

About 10:30 Little John, Kevin,
John and Jae come in with
some Peppermint Peppermint
snaps. this went on for
about 45 mins. Snaps and
picture taking time.

About 11:10 Curly joined
us then @ 11:30 I
went down to Frank's
while the boys went after
Dave. Talked to Frank
and Norm a while then
'Old Paint' picked me up
with pop Lardal. Dave,
Jennie, John and Jim took

p17

me to airport ~~where~~ where
the rest of the outfit
was waiting on Curly's
tailgate. Curly, Teresa,
Little John, Joe. Unloaded
and checked ~~bags~~ bags
then we worked on another
bottle of peppermint scops
and took several pictures.
The crew presented me an
album album by Sawmill
Creek "Just Getting By"
So good well. Fronts over
the mountains