October High Chaparral Newsletter

The High Chaparral Newsletter

October 2012    Penny McQueen, Editor

Season Two of The High Chaparral on DVD

Season Two of The High Chaparral on DVD is set for release on January 29. It’s available for pre-order NOW through The High Chaparral Reunion.

So many fans have ordered the Season One DVD set we just ordered a second shipment to keep up with demand. Get your own Season One of The High Chaparral from The High Chaparral Reunion!

Sponsorship with Season I DVD set is $165.00 USD, plus shipping. DVD set only is $65.00. DVDs are uncut, digitally remastered with dolby sound. These authorized releases are region-free disk format. For more information visit The High Chaparral Reunion website.

The High Chaparral on INSP TV

Exclusive on INSP cable network, The High Chaparral is back on Television

Watch for The High Chaparral as a part of INSP’s Saddle Up Saturday line-up, and also at various times in the Monday-Friday lineup.

INSP is carried by DirectTV, Dish Network, Comcast, and many other providers. To check availability in your area, visit the Find INSP page.

Fans of The High Chaparral send a huge thank you to INSP for putting our favorite western back on television.

Reunion News

High Chaparral Reunion

March 22-24, 2013

Tucson, AZ

Fans keep signing up - we’re at 33 registrations for the Reunion, with more calling or emailing all the time. 2013 looks to be the biggest, most exciting event yet.

Deadline

February 1 is the deadline to reserve your High Chaparral Reunion trip, and it’ll be here closer than you think. Don’t delay, because late registration fees become effective on FEBRUARY 1, 2013.

Reserve now and pay $350 for all three days of the Reunion. On February 1, late registration fees increase your cost to $395!
February 1 marks the last date our hotel room block at Casino del Sol is available too and we can't guarantee a room as time goes on. Casino del Sol is extremely popular and sells out every weekend. Don't risk disappointment, book your Reunion reservation today.

Is it easier for you to budget payments to pay for the Reunion? Pay $100 to make your registration to The High Chaparral Reunion, then make regular $50 payments online through the Reunion website. There are no finance or interest charges so this is an easy way to budget.

Sponsor's Dinner Seating

Dinner table seating at the Friday Night Sponsor's Dinner is a little like musical chairs - fans scramble to sit with their chosen star (will it be Henry? Don? the McCrays?). Celebrities maneuver to sit with their buddies. And everyone wants to sit close to the food!

This year we're making the game a little less stressful by using a formal seating chart. When you sponsor, give us your requested table assignment. We'll do our best, but preference is given according to the date we receive your registration. The earlier the better!

Reserve your space at The High Chaparral Reunion 2013 now!

4th Season Ad

From the David Dortort Archives at the Autry Center

Susan McCray on KUNK FM

The Skunk FM, Mendocino County's True Hits Channel, is pleased to announce Hollywood Casting Director/Producer and Radio Host Susan McCray is Co-Host with well known radio personality Hoot Hooten on their 10 a.m. pacific show every Monday thru Friday. Join Susan and Hoot for fun talk, and great music on The Skunk FM. Susan invites you to call in to say hello while she's on the air starting at 10 a.m. - Noon pacific time ...the station's hotline number is: 707 964-4653.

Susan McCray continues to report the latest news in Hollywood on her feature Hollywood Hotline at 8:10 Mon-Friday on "Rio and Brent in the morning" heard on KUNK The Skunk FM in Mendocino County - the station is also streaming on the internet at: www.theskunkfm.com

The station's General Manager and morning show co-host Hoot Hooten said, "Susan has what it takes to make for a fun, playful and thoughtful co-host. The addition of such a well-known and respected entertainment guru will further resonate with and excite our entertainment-savvy listeners. Susan's passion and energy for radio and all of the entertainment industry is undeniable and we can't wait to have her join us. She has great chemistry with Rio and myself which will definitely entertain and engage listeners every morning."

And don't forget to continue listening to Susan's "Getting To Know You" celebrating its 8th year every Tuesday evening at 6:30 p.m. pacific and eastern and "Orchestra Hall with Susan McCray" Sundays at Noon on internet radio station KSAV.com.
Henry Darrow Receives ALMA

Congratulations to Henry Darrow. On Sunday Sept 16, the National Council of La Raza honored Henry with The Ricardo Montalban Lifetime Achievement Award. High Chaparral fans know Henry richly deserves recognition for his talent and career.

The American Latino Media Arts Award, or ALMA Award highlights the best American Latino contributions to music, television, and film. The awards promote fair and accurate portrayals of Latinos. In Spanish, the word alma means spirit or soul.

To see Henry's presentation, including a video retrospective of his career (with High Chaparral clips) see the video on YouTube, LA Times coverage of the award, Latin Heat story.

For the latest Henry Darrow and Lightning sightings, keep in touch on Facebook - Henry Darrow Friends.

A Conversation with William F. Claxton

By Michele Simmons

In November, 1992, Old Tucson held a wonderful tribute party for Robert Shelton (founder of Old Tucson) in the original, Old Tucson soundstage. I was fortunate enough to be there. One of my favorite memories of that evening was the conversation I had with William Claxton. I always felt Mr. Claxton was the most skillful director and producer of The High Chaparral, so this was indeed an honor for me to talk to a man so instrumental in creating the authentic magic that separated High Chaparral from any other western series on TV. I'd heard that others in the business had referred to him as 'the John Ford' of television directors for his commitment to authentic detail in his work.

Most people know Mr. Claxton was also a director on 50 to 60 episodes of Bonanza before David Dortort handed him, and other key people, the script for a new western TV series he was interested in developing. Mr. Claxton was so impressed with the new series, he immediately left working on Bonanza to become the director and producer of High Chaparral's pilot episode and many, many others over the first and second season of the series. According to Mr. Claxton, David Dortort asked him to return to work on Bonanza. Mr. Claxton replied, "No way"! He then went on to tell me "Bonanza was never a real western. It was nothing more than Father Knows Best with cowboy hats!" He went on to say he was more proud of The High Chaparral than any other project he'd ever worked on. He added the two hour pilot was his most favorite of all and the pinnacle of his career. He felt the script and storyline were brilliant for a television series. He had high praise and enormous regard for the outstanding cast, crew and stunt people who worked on the series saying they were the best and most talented people in Hollywood.

Mr. Claxton told me of all the episodes he was involved in, they only had one day when filming had to be suspended - "Champion of the Western World". Late summer in Arizona often brings monsoon like rain. While filming this episode, there was flooding and the arroyo that separates the High Chaparral ranch set from the main Old Tucson studio lot had completely filled with raging water. It was so high the water was level with the top of the embankment and they found they could not get across it to film on the ranch set until it receded several days later. The next time you watch this episode, look closely at the ground on Front Street during the horse race that Manolito entered and you'll notice puddles of mud.

William Claxton regretfully felt it necessary to leave working on the series after the second season. It was in the late 1960's that both Senator Robert Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. were assassinated. Because of that the censors were demanding a show with less bloodshed, less violence. Mr. Claxton felt strongly the series strove hard to explain John Cannon felt the Apache was his equal and he wanted them to all live peacefully. Mr. Claxton said unless the network wanted him to rewrite history, something he firmly said he would not do, they must recognize this was a violent time in US history. Mr. Claxton felt strongly the series strove hard to explain John Cannon felt the Apache was his equal and he wanted them to all live peacefully. Mr. Claxton felt strongly the series strove hard to explain John Cannon felt the Apache was his equal and he wanted them to all live peacefully. Mr. Claxton felt strongly the series strove hard to explain John Cannon felt the Apache was his equal and he wanted them to all live peacefully. Mr. Claxton said unless the network wanted him to rewrite history, something he firmly said he would not do, they must recognize this was a violent time in US history. He refused to turn this fine program into "another Bonanza"! He insisted to the censors The High Chaparral never showed violence for violence sake. Still the network told him to cut back on excessive violence.

New requirements were handed down. The series could not show any sign of blood, and no clothing was to be filmed as torn from bullets. Instead, all injuries had to be implied and any horse with an implied injury must get back on its feet and walk away. Eventually even these stringent requirements were not enough to satisfy the censors and network. Mr. Claxton told them if they wanted to ruin the integrity of the best western ever filmed for TV, they wouldn't do it with his name on it. With that he left the series.

While Mr. Claxton spoke with me about his memories of working on High Chaparral his eyes seemed to literally sparkle in delight. It was wonderful to meet and shake hands with a man whose work I so greatly admired. I'll never forget that special conversation.

The Bill Claxton Director's Cut of The High Chaparral Pilot

[Image 166x276 to 478x579]

[Image 332x620 to 478x729]

[Image 357x-41 to 478x52]
Thanks to the Bill Claxton family, The High Chaparral Reunion has a copy of an exclusive ‘Director’s Cut’ of The High Chaparral pilot episode. Transferred from original 16mm film, this unique copy of the pilot episode was sent to Claxton for review during production and contains scenes from the script that were shot but not included in the broadcast version.

Bill Claxton directed the two-hour Chaparral pilot and in 1967 was named producer-director of Chaparral. The first two years he directed roughly every other Chaparral and according to Kent McCray, “Really was the thought behind the show.” As a truly one of a kind Chaparral artifact the Claxton pilot is a fascinating piece of history and provides a fresh look at the initial storyline. The 16mm film was faded but is still watchable, especially for the extra scenes which add richness to the story of how the Cannons came to Arizona to found The High Chaparral.

The High Chaparral Director’s Cut of the pilot episode will be shown during the 2013 Reunion for fans to enjoy.

Kent McCray, Destination Tucson
by Penny McQuail

The saga of John Cannon’s struggle to build an empire in the harsh Arizona territory was an abstract idea when Kent McCray, producer, was introduced to The High Chaparral. Still deep in production for Bonanza, Kent was asked to consider a new pilot, one that would become the most authentic western series on television. Kent explained, “The pilot script was being written by Denne Petticlerc at the same time we were shooting Bonanza.”

There was a three-part episode in the works for the venerable Bonanza, with a possible location at the historic Parker Ranch on Hawaii’s Big Island. As the home of the Hawaiian cowboy and covering 150,000 acres, the location promised impressive scenery including rugged volcanic ranges and lush green pastures. A scouting team of Bonanza creative talent prepared to leave Los Angeles for Hawaii; Bill Claxton, Director; David Dortort, Producer; Haskell Boggs, Cinematographer; Fenton Coe, representing NBC, and Kent McCray, Producer. Kent recalls, “Denne said he would have the pilot script for me on a given date, that was the day before we were to fly out to Hawaii. I finally got the pilot script at midnight. At five in the morning I was up getting ready to go to the airport. David Dortort called and said he wasn’t feeling well and was not going to go to Hawaii, but the rest of us should go as planned.”

The early morning flight and little sleep didn’t distract him. “I opened up my briefcase and took out the pilot script for Chaparral. I started to read it and was very excited about it. And as I finished a few pages I would pass it over to Bill Claxton. He would read it and pass it on to Haskell (Buzzy) Boggs, Buzzy in turn would pass it on to Fenton Coe. And by the time we arrived in Hawaii, we all said, what are we doing here? We should be preparing this wonderful script of High Chaparral!”

After surveying the Parker ranch and other island locations, filming the Cartwrights in Hawaii was judged to be too costly. They returned to Los Angeles, anxious to work on the new pilot. Kent remembers, “The High Chaparral was a great script to begin with; there were very little changes we had to make, the big decision was to decide what would work for locations.” After scouting locations in and around Arizona the decision was made. Kent recalls, “During the trip to Tucson, I made an agreement with Bob Shelton, to erect the exterior of the Chaparral set at Old Tucson.” Always practical, the location appealed to him for two reasons. Cast and crew would shoot between Los Angeles and Arizona; the entire town set was convenient for production, as they could travel back and forth easily. But his second reason is reminiscent of the ranch itself, guards standing on the roof and around the fence line. “By having it on the Old Tucson location site, I knew it would be protected from any vandalism when we were not in and around Tucson.”

Traveling by way of the Hawaiian islands, Kent McCray found the perfect spot for The High Chaparral.

What is The High Chaparral Reunion?

What’s all the hoopla about The High Chaparral Reunion? What exactly is it, anyway?

It’s a time to bring the cast and crew back home to Tucson, to the Cannon ranch house where The High Chaparral was made. It’s where fans step onto the ranch for the first time, get to finally meet their cowboy heroes, and have a few dusty dreams come true.

For 10 years the cast, crew and fans have party to celebrate one of the best television westerns ever made. Fans get one-on-one time with the stars, ask questions, listen to backstage stories, watch uncut episodes with the people who MADE them (imagine getting to hear exactly what happened when the script was shot, told by the person who was right there), question and answer time, dinner with the cast, camaraderie and fun. There’s an auction with memorabilia, special dinners, photo and autograph sessions (free hugs are frequent all weekend), new friendships with other fans and the stars of the show, and permanent memories of a lifetime.

There’s a day at Old Tucson, where the original location set, including the Cannon ranch house, still stands. Former High Chaparral family come from...
all over to reminisce, meet fans, and tell stories. This year a bonus is Old Tucson’s Wild West Days, which will include tons of special entertainment.

The special moments and memories really can’t be described. It's a little like when you watched The High Chaparral for the first time - you have to experience it to know what it’s like. But you won’t be disappointed by any of it.

To register, see the hotel venue, check the schedule of events or other information visit the web site at www.thehighchaparralreunion.com.

Questions? Email info@highchaparralnewsletter.com.

Best Memories of the 2011 High Chaparral Reunion

by Gary Simmons

I was impressed with how appreciative the actors and crew seemed to be for the people attending the Reunion. We had finished breakfast and were waiting for registration to begin. We were waiting in the garden of the hotel when a man walked up and introduced himself with a warm handshake. “Hi, I’m Kent McCray. Welcome to the Reunion!” He asked my name and where we had traveled from to be there. It was like the entire weekend, no matter who you talked to from the series, they all seemed to genuinely appreciate everyone who attended.

The other best memory I have was Don Collier’s sense of humor. He kept us laughing throughout the whole weekend, His stories, his comments, he was hilarious!

I wasn’t sure what a High Chaparral Reunion would be like. I had a great time and now can’t wait to attend the next one.

Trail Dust Magazine

For The western or High Chaparral collector, Trail Dust Magazine is an all-Western publication dedicated to preserving the history of Television and feature-length Westerns. Their archived publications contain several interviews with Chaparral stars. The publisher also maintains a photo site designed for the private collector - http://www.mountedphotosetc.com Mounted Photo Etc.

Bonanza Round Up Two - 2014

Bonanza ™ will be making a trip back to the Carson City and Virginia City areas in 2014! The very first Bonanza Convention, run by Vicky Christian and Tona Swann was held in Lake Tahoe in 1999. In 2011, the first Bonanza Round Up was held in Burbank CA with Cheryl Whitman Dubuque taking over the reins. The show, created by David Dortort in 1959, remains just as popular today as it did with its humble beginnings therefore creating a continuous demand for get-togethers by guest stars and fans alike.

The 2014 “Round Up” will be taking place right in the heart of Carson City – hosted by the Gold Dust Hotel on Thursday, June 26 through Sunday June 29th. Cheryl, along with 4 friends recently visited to begin making plans and they were met with open arms. Traveling with Mary Beth from the Gold Dust, Janet from the Carson City CVB and Patrick from the Virginia City CVB, almost everywhere they went they were met with inquires and sometimes cheers “hey, aren’t you the Bonanza folks – you’re bringing a convention here, right?” It seems that most people consider doing larger events in Lake Tahoe or Reno, but rarely does someone consider holding such a large event in Carson City – so quickly the word spread and Bonanza soon became known as “the extravaganza that’s coming!”

The train ride from Carson City to Virginia City was a particular highlight. The old V&T was restored, so you get to travel on the train built in 1914 and sit on the original wicker seats while watching the breath taking view and going through some rather unusual tunnels. Along the way, mustangs ran free and practically came up to the train. It was quite a sight to see.

Coffee with Lorne Greene’s son, Chuck was on the agenda. It was great to stop in Incline Village and catch up. Incline Village will definitely be one of the stops planned for 2014.

In addition to panels and guest stars who worked directly with the show, the 2014 “Round Up” features a 1959s Night honoring the year it all began, a Casino Night, an afternoon outdoor fair, buffets, games, contests, talent show, a trip to Virginia City, an auction, the Dixie Cruise, a “surprise” for Sunday nights dinner and more. This is the perfect opportunity for fans of the show to gather with other fans, see the sights and just have a grand ole time. Don’t miss out on 2014!!

Those who attended the 2011 Round Up in Burbank had good things to say:

“High five to everyone who put countless hours into making the 2011 convention a huge success! I had a great time. I thought this would be my last but I'm already looking forward to 2014!” - Marie

“In September 2011 I travelled from Australia to LA to attend my first Bonanza Convention, and the trip was well worth it. Not only did I get the chance to meet some amazing people with a love for the show that I have, but the event itself was amazing. Many actors who’d appeared on the show came, the events held were fantastic and it offered me an experience I never thought I would have in my lifetime. I’m already saving madly so I can make the next one in Carson City 2014. I just can’t wait.” - Linda Saxton

“Cheryl - even though it’s been quite a few weeks since the Bonanza Roundup – I am still on a high - and want to thank you and others again for putting it all together. Seeing pictures that are being posted of the fun time we all had are ‘almost’ as fun as being there.” - Sue
"In September 2011, I left Québec, Canada to fly to Burbank, California to attend the Bonanza Round-up, my first trip to Burbank but my third Bonanza gathering. It's always a special time to spend with old friend and meet new friends. The special guests (people involved with Bonanza) are always so welcoming, and a pleasure to meet. The Bonanza Round-up was a grand event, so much to see and do, and so many people to meet. I am now planning on Carson City 2014." - Eva Mayer

For more information please check out the Bonanza website www.bonanzaroundup.com or contact Cheryl at bonanzacon2011@yahoo.com.

Linda Cristal with Cliff "Charlie Weaver" Arquette, and radio personalities Al Lohman and Roger Barkley in a 1970 TV Guide article featuring Hollywood Squares. Linda is quoted saying, "I do this show so that people can see me out of the costume."

(thank you to Jean Graham for the memorabilia scans)

Old Tucson Announces 2012-2013 Season Opening

(Tucson, AZ) Old Tucson opens for the 2012-2013 season on October 5, 2012!

Operating hours are Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 10am to 4pm during October and then extend to 5pm in November. Old Tucson will open for special holiday hours during Thanksgiving and Christmas weeks. A detailed operating calendar is available at www.OldTucson.com/visit-ots.

During the summer hiatus, Old Tucson prepared for its annual Halloween event, Nightfall, and completed facility upgrades and improvements. “Over the past two years, Old Tucson has made great strides in providing an experience that delivers the spirit of the Old West circa 1880’s. Building on that success, this season the saloon musical will celebrate Tucson's Western and Mexican roots and dramatic gunfights will be based on stories from local Southern Arizona history,” stated Old Tucson General Manager and CEO Pete Mangelsdorf. Guests also will enjoy a new explosive stunt show as well as new additions augmenting Old Tucson's popular living history presentations depicting life on the frontier.

This summer the OldTucson.com website and Old Tucson Facebook page, designed by Mansell Graphic Design, were re-launched. The new design reflects Old Tucson's updated look and provides new graphic and video elements to inform and engage visitors. New website functionality includes a search box and Facebook feed. The new season promises a variety of special events starting with Nightfall (Sept. 28- Oct. 28) followed by a holiday celebration that will include the Heritage & Harvest Festival, Nov. 23-25 and an all-new Christmas musical debuting the same weekend and running through year-end.

The season kicks in to high gear with a series of events beginning in February with the Shootout at the Chaparral (Feb. 16-17), Wild Wild West Con Steampunk Festival (Mar. 8-10), Wild West Days including special High Chaparral Reunion activities, (Mar. 22-24), Wild West Performing Arts Society Convention & National Championships (Apr. 13-14), and rounding out the season, the Cowboy Music Festival & Western Art Show (Apr. 27-28).

The best way to be sure not to miss a minute is to purchase a 2012-2013 Old Tucson Wagon Wheel Season Pass. Although the season pass does not grant admission to Nightfall, guests who purchase the pass before October 1, 2012 will receive one free Nightfall admission! In addition, Old Tucson will continue to offer its popular Arizona resident discount: Buy one adult admission at the regular price of $16.95 and get a second admission of equal or lesser value free. To take advantage of the offer, guests must present a current valid Arizona ID.

Old Tucson is Southern Arizona’s premier location and Hollywood's most famous western movie location and has been immortalized in over 300 feature films and TV Westerns. For more information about Old Tucson, Where the Spirit of the Old West Comes Alive, please visit our website at www.OldTucson.com or call us at 520-883-0100. Old Tucson is located at 201 S. Kinney Road, Tucson, Arizona 85735

Nightfall Begins!
(TUCSON, AZ) – Old Tucson is pleased to announce the return of Nightfall – rated in the top ten US Halloween attractions by Haunt World magazine for four years running! For twenty-two years, terrifying haunts and entertaining live shows have made Nightfall Arizona’s biggest and best value Halloween attraction. It’s not just a Haunted House; It’s a Whole Town Gone Mad!

New Haunts
The town of Nightfall brings mystery and terror to the once peaceful desert. Nightfall 2012 features the Hollywoodstyle spectacular stunts, pyrotechnics, and horrifying effects generations of Tucsonans have come to expect. This year Nightfall features three new shows and three new haunted houses along with a new Dance Club. There is always plenty of free parking and multiple food venues for every appetite. Details at www.NightfallAZ.com.

Highlights this year include:

- Pappy’s Practically Perfect Prototypes: The incarcerated serial killer tests line of personal hygiene products for effectiveness and consumer safety on unfortunate “volunteers.”
- Death Before the Dawn: Paranormal researchers find terror when they investigate an abandoned amusement park with a dark and mysterious past.
- Demon’s Den is where the freaks go to party with laser light show and non-stop beats by DJ DU. Dance contests each Friday night with winners invited back for the Ultimate Dance Contest on Oct. 26th.
- The Gargoyles: Hysterical equal opportunity hecklers hurling nightly verbal assaults.
- Plus: Sinister characters roaming the night, festival-style food, snacks, beverages, and more!

Please note that some performances maybe not be appropriate for the easily offended. Subject matter may contain mature themes and innuendo.

Operating Days
Nightfall, not to be confused with mere “haunted houses” or corn mazes, is open: Thursday and Sunday, 6-10pm; Friday and Saturday, 6pm to midnight.

This year, partial proceeds will benefit Marana Foundation for Education; Sunnyside Alumni Association, Scholars for Dollars; Sunnyside Unified School District Foundation, Inc.; Education Enrichment Foundation supporting Tucson Unified School District; and Amphi Foundation. Middle and High School students in these districts should see their school administrator for huge savings on Nightfall!

Go Shopping

High Chaparral Reunion Merchandise - own a piece of Chaparral Memorabilia!

- Magazine with lots of photos
- High Chaparral Water Bottle
- 2009 CD

Sharing is a Good Thing

Do you have a favorite piece of memorabilia, or an article you’d like to share with other fans? Send it to info@highchaparralnewsletter.com, and we’ll do our best to add it to a future newsletter.

Are you cleaning out the attic? Do you have HC or western items you'd like to share? DONATE to the Reunion auction! Email us to discuss how - and know the treasures you pass along will be just as treasured by the fan who receives it.

(Thanks to Fan M. who prefers to remain anonymous - for donating a beautiful artisan hand-made necklace to the auction. The two sisters who make this original jewelry have supported the Reunion in the past and their creations are always fought over so we’re very pleased to have them represented again.)