



the Quarterly

Remembering the Southwest Valley

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Heroes at Luke AFB



In 1955, a young Air Force officer, Captain Richard Durkee, his wife Bunny and their three children were living on La Cienega, in what is now known as Historic Goodyear. He was a flight instructor at Luke. He had entered the Air Force during WWII and served in Korea, amassing 2,400 hours in the air.

On the morning of May 31, 1955, he arrived at Luke by seven o'clock ready to brief his flight. His assignment that morning was to fly as an instructor on an air-to-air gunnery mission. He led three students in F-84's to rendezvous with a tow plane over the gunner range. They were to make a number of firing passes on the moving target at about 500 miles per hour and then return to Luke.

At about 7:40, the flight took off from Luke. A few minutes earlier another flight of F-84s led by veteran pilot, First Lieutenant Howard Browning, had taken off from Luke. Browning and his students were on a low-level strafing of the Tactical Range.

Around 7:55 Durkee's flight rendezvoused with the tow plane. He informed the tow plane that they were ready to fire. Durkee led his students in a steep climb to their position a mile up and a mile out from the target. In their training, every move is planned and synchronized to the last detail to prevent mishaps. Discipline is the

essence of safety. During this maneuver each pilot must have the other three planes clearly in view. The first two passes on the target went smoothly. On the third pass, the No. 2 man allowed his leader to slip out of sight below his plane and squeezed the trigger as Durkee's plane came out beneath him, directly into the line of fire. Five of his .50-caliber machine-gun bullets hit Durkee's jet. One bullet knocked out the air speed indicator; another bullet blew the canopy off and ricocheted down the outer side of the pilot's right leg. The leg wound tore out a large chunk of muscle from mid thigh to upper calf and was bleeding heavily

Durkee had to fight panic and the urge to eject from the jet. He keyed the radio and called "Mayday!" the universal cry of a flyer in distress. He considered landing at the Gila Bend airstrip, but they had no medical facilities. While talking to Gila Bend on the radio, First Lieutenant Browning keyed his radio to check off the range. He heard Durkee talking to Gila Bend and realized he was in trouble and offered to assist him. The voice contact perked Durkee up and gave him hope. He requested that Browning get on his wing and call his air speeds. Struggling desperately to ward off total blackout, he had managed to pick up landmarks and was pointed on a course for Luke. The years of experience, the training and discipline had kicked in.

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Browning had trouble finding Durkee because he was dangerously low. Diving quickly to Durkee's wing he saw that Durkee's canopy was gone and he was slumped down to keep from being blown out. Browning flew alongside, directing Durkee's speed, altitude and course and keeping up a steady conversation to keep Durkee from blacking out. As they neared Luke, Durkee asked if he could land with his landing gear down and preserve the plane. Browning's reply was, "Belly it in!" Browning radioed Luke that Durkee was coming in against traffic, on his belly, and to clear the runway. The emergency personnel made preparations for a crash landing. Browning guided Durkee to the runway, advising him on speed and altitude. As Durkee hit the runway, Browning had to speed up and gain altitude to clear the base. He looked back to see Durkee skidding down the runway. Only twelve minutes had elapsed since the bullets had ripped into the jet. During those minutes great courage was demonstrated by one man and monumental presence of mind by the other.

On the ground firefighters laid a blanket of foam on the runway. A fireman climbed up on the wing and reaching into the cockpit lifted Durkee out and carried him to a waiting stretcher. He passed out as he was placed on the stretcher. The flight surgeon at Luke, Captain R.C. Foreman, cleaned the wound and dressed it. He was airlifted to Parks Air Force Base Hospital for special treatment he required. He was left with a luge hollowed out scar and diminished mobility of his foot. Unable to return to flying the jets he loved, he continued his Air Force career as a helicopter pilot. Browning commented that he should be allowed to fly jets because, "He could probably fly one in his sleep!"

Captain Durkee was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross; First Lieutenant Browning received an award for Outstanding Airmanship. Flight Surgeon Captain Forman returned to civilian life and became Goodyear's first doctor, opening an office in the Bayless Shopping Center. When Dr. Forman left, Dr. Robert Charnetsky started his Goodyear practice in that office.

By Sally (Stanton) Kiko who adds: "I lived this history. I knew the family, babysat the kids, and attended the award ceremony. Joseph Stocker wrote about these Luke pilot heroes for Collier's Magazine in 1956."

Drawing Open the Iron Curtain

In January of 1989 Glasnost was in the air. Global distance, political divergence and cultural differences were transcended when a unique group of Soviet citizen snowbirds came to the West Valley for a week's visit. Their visit to Arizona was the result of a program started in 1988 called "Soviets Meet Middle America" begun by the Center for U.S. – USSR initiatives in San Francisco. The goal was to improve communications between the United States and the Soviet Union via ordinary citizen participation in bi-lateral relations.

Local rancher and Rotarian Jim King had previously traveled to Russia on an agricultural exchange. He had a brainstorm to search out a way to allow Soviet citizens the opportunity to sample American life as well as giving American citizens the opportunity to interact with Soviets in a community setting. His search culminated with sponsorship by the Estrella and White Tanks Rotary clubs for eight "ordinary" Soviet citizens to come to Arizona as ambassadors of peace. The eight consisted of men

and women, young and old; six teachers; a researcher in business administration, and Delegation leader Valeri Zhikharev a member of the Soviet Peace Committee.



Jim and Marie Wells hosts Marina Mironova, non-party member, and Ludmila Yerofoeva, party member.

They were welcomed by a sea of over 50 people, including cameramen, reporters, representatives from Avondale, Goodyear, Litchfield Park, Estrella and White Tanks Rotary and the members of host families. "I feel like a Hollywood movie star," said one visitor as she entered the airport. Visitors were housed in groups of two by four host families from Litchfield Park. Communist party members were paired with non-party members.



Sunday, January 22, 1989, East meets West when Jim King welcomes the group upon arrival at Sky Harbor.

On the way home we stopped at an Alpha Beta market where Marina was brought to tears by the displays of fruits, vegetables and food, having never experienced stores like that in Moscow. She took pictures to show her mother back in Moscow so she would believe her. We went to MacDonal'd's drive through where Marina could not believe you could order a drink of orange juice while Ludmila's favorite was milk. Ludmila enjoyed the various varieties of cactus from small prickly pear to giant saguaros. Her hobby was collecting small cactus to display on her windowsill at home in Russia.

Continued on next page

Monday the group toured various shopping malls and museums. They loved shopping, especially trying on cowboy hats. Tuesday we all attended a Phoenix Suns game and met players. The next day, the group visited businesses and in the evening Marie invited local ladies to our home for coffee and a chat with the Soviet women.

Next we had a trip to snow country at the Grand Canyon via three yellow Beechcraft aircraft courtesy of Rolf Hartleb, Deputy Chief Pilot of Lufthansa Airlines training center, and Estrella Rotary club members. Breakfast was with the Grand Canyon Rotary Club at El Tovar Lodge. The group then visited Tumbleweed Dairy in Goodyear where they were able to converse in Russian with owner Paul Treguhoff, a Soviet immigrant who explained his dairy operation.

Friday we took them for a tour of the Maricopa County Courthouse and David Alster welcomed them to the Jail. In the evening a crowd of about 300 west valley residents got a chance to chat with the Soviets at a Rotary Roundup Barbecue held at the Agua Fria High School cafeteria. We entertained them with a country & western band, cloggers and bell-ringers.

This hectic six-day schedule came to an end with sincere tears from Marina and Ludmila who did not want to leave. We thought we were going to have two requests for "political asylum" but after talking to them and explaining to them that in a few years everything was going to change for the better, they departed with the group.

Of course, things did change for the better: the Berlin Wall came down less than a year later. Our daughter, Joana, visited Russia in 1990 on a "People to People" program and she was able to visit with Marina at her apartment in Moscow. Marina obtained an email account through her employer and began emailing us. She finally obtained her own computer. We keep in touch for holidays as well as talking on the phone about "That trip" to Russia to visit her.

While Marina is the only Soviet we have continued to communicate with, none of the group will be forgotten because it was an unforgettable week.

By Jim and Marie Wells, Photos courtesy of Jim King Collection

Cock Fighting in the West Valley

In about 1953, I lived in Cashion, AZ. One day a neighbor asked three of us young teens if we wanted to make some money. Of course, the question was how? We were told we could bet on a rooster in a cock fight and if the rooster won we could win some money. When he picked us up he took our money explaining that we were not old enough to bet. Before leaving Cashion we were all blind-folded. The car made many turns both left and right and drove further than they needed to prevent us from figuring out where we were taken.

When we arrived we were led blind-folded into a large building. Once inside the blind-folds were removed. There was a pit in the middle with bleachers rising on all four sides of the pit. Sitting on the bleachers we peered down into the cock fighting ring.

The fights began as two roosters with sharp blades attached to their feet were released and allowed to fight to their death. It was



a very gruesome sight. It was the first and last cock fight I ever attended! I don't remember winning any money, either!

The Fall/Winter 2009 edition of the West Valley View Vista reported that cockfighting was a major sport in Arizona. The 800-seat Grand Canyon Game Club was south of Avondale. It was closed in 1989 because it was in the flood plain. I talked to a friend of mine that has lived on Southern Ave. for many years and she remembers her neighbors raising roosters for the sport. I talked to a Deputy Sheriff recently and he said they still raid cockfights in the area. *By: Ken Kiko*

Tom Ruth sent a note to the editor about his remembrance of cock fighting. Years ago, I met a fellow named Rafael, who lived near Southern Avenue. Rafael wanted two metal horse sculptures, but nothing came of that. Anyway, he was heavily involved in the cockfighting world and had many, many fighting cocks on his property. He made lots of money from it. He had about five or six acres. Now that it is illegal, he probably wouldn't want to talk about those days.

Editor's note: Our ancestors in the "old world", even in Colonial America, found it entertaining to watch two large, colorful metal-spurred, trained roosters slash each other until death. The birds had names such as Thunder and Lightning and owners made a lot of money from betting on them. It was popular with the upper class, especially royalty which added a type of loftiness to the sport. But nearly every class had game cocks. Only horse racing was more popular.

Following is an excerpt from the Humane Society of America's website: "In a cockfight, two roosters fight each other to the death while people place bets. Cockfighters let the birds suffer untreated injuries or throw the birds away like trash afterwards.

"Besides being cruel, cockfighting often goes hand in hand with gambling, drug dealing, illegal gun sales and murder. Left to themselves, roosters almost never hurt each other badly. In cockfights, on the other hand, the birds often wear razor-sharp blades on their legs and get injuries like punctured lungs, broken bones and pierced eyes—when they even survive.

"Sadly, people often bring young children to cockfights. Seeing adults relish such brutality can teach kids to enjoy violence and think that animal suffering is okay.

"Cockfighting happens in many kinds of neighborhoods and in states around the country. It is illegal in all states and a felony in 39 [PDF], which means that many states need to toughen up their laws."

So Long–Farewell Gloria King, President

Being president for the past two years has been a great experience for me. I realized how much effort and creativity Jean Stewart-Ruth put into development of Three Rivers Historical Society seven years ago.

I took the reigns of leadership when John Leach left office in January, 2008. My job was made easier because all the officers pitched in and we worked as a team! I am pleased and proud of our accomplishments. To begin, I scheduled monthly board meetings to organize new programs. I wanted a Guest Speaker to be invited to share their family or community history at every membership meeting. This revitalized interest created nostalgic memories of our past which moved the 3RHS forward at a faster pace. We videotaped our speakers and plan to use the tapes to produce our E Book of Memories. Lenore Semmler scheduled speakers, including some in their home or business. A partial, but long list of our accomplishments is in my Annual Report which you can view on our recently created website: <http://threerivershistoricalsocietyaz.org>. Mark Pelletier is our webmaster.



One decision we made was to redesign our brochure which is really first-class. We designed an Autobiography form so we can create a register of people in our communities. People tracing family history will be able to get information from our records.

I am happy to turn the gavel over to Bill Arnold who is preparing to move 3RHS forward with his creative ideas. We are looking forward to many new accomplishments. I know the members will support Bill as he takes 3RHS up a notch!

Blasts from the past

**ABC news
American Broadcasting Company**
New York * Detroit * Chicago * Hollywood * San Francisco

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GOODYEAR'S "GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD"
WINS PEABODY RADIO AWARD

Radio's "Most Honored Program" receives Radio's Highest Honor for
Outstanding Entertainment and Drama

The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company's radio program, "The Greatest Story Ever Told," known as "the most honored program in radio," has received additional honors from the Peabody Awards Committee, the most-sought commendation in radio.

At the annual awards luncheon on May 4 [1946], in New York City, L.E. Judd, director of public relations of Goodyear, accepted a special citation for "The Greatest Story Ever Told" as the outstanding radio program in entertainment and drama.

The program is heard over the ABC network every Sunday at 5:30 p.m., EDT is now in its fourth year, and it continues to be a favorite for millions of listeners.

In all the years, Goodyear has maintained it as a strictly public service program, without any commercial announcements, except the sponsor identification required by the FCC regulations.

The United States Armed Service beams it to our forces all over the world.

What was Going on at Goodyear Aerospace? 1964

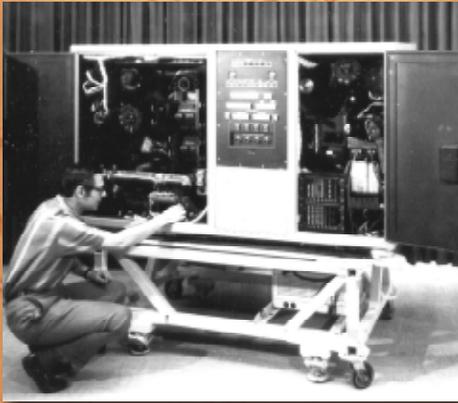
Goodyear manufactured several different products for the military and other customers. These included missile transporters, portable photo and data processor shelters, bullet proof and bird strike proof windshields for aircraft and helicopters, bullet proof automobile windows and clip boards for police departments and an optical date processor for NASA's LANDSAT program.



I joined Goodyear Aerospace in 1964 and my first assignment was to the Side Looking Radar Group. This radar was mounted in a military aircraft that had the capability of looking to the side of the aircraft. This allowed the plane to fly along the border of a country and see up to 50 miles inside the country. The radar system consisted of two components, airborne and ground station. The airborne unit was mounted in several types of military aircraft and had the capability to collect data for a 200 mile flight path. The data was transferred to a film in kind of a holographic pattern. The data film then had to be sent to the ground station where it was developed, dried and optically processed to recreate the images seen by the aircraft. After the image film was developed and dried, it could be used by photo interpreters to evaluate targets of interest. An aircraft flying at 30,000 feet could detect a target the size of a jeep 50 miles away.

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My specific project was working on the optical correlator. It would transport the data film through developing and drying and into the optical path. The system that I worked on was built and sold to the German Air Force. After all the units were designed and built, the complete system was tested at an airfield located near Lancaster, CA. The aircraft would make a flight over a specified set of targets and after its return we would process the image film and check the resolution of the targets. It was a long and tedious process, but turned out to be very successful.



On one of my visits to Palmdale, the top secret SR 71 Blackbird landed and was immediately towed into a hanger out of sight. About 5 minutes later, fire engines roared into the hanger area. The fuselage was so hot that it set off the sprinkler system and fire alarms

While the equipment was being manufactured at Goodyear, I had the opportunity to teach German Air Force personnel how to operate and repair a correlator that would be shipped to Germany. I also taught air force personnel from Israel.

Yes, they were the best students but when they returned home to use the new equipment, trouble would arise. Then the phone calls came from around the world at all hours of the day and night. My wife, Carol, kept a bag packed and ready because when problems arose, I would take off. She couldn't know where I was going or when I would return. We all did our part to protect our country!

*Article and photos by Joe Thornton,
Electro-optical Engineer*

Interest in Restoration of the '48 Fire Truck Continues



The first fire truck was purchased June 29, 1948, for \$2,233.22. The Volunteer Fire Department had fifteen (15) members. They were paid \$4 per call and \$2 per drill. Pictured left to right: Bill Bailey, Bob Brownlie, Wendell Price, John Padilla (butcher at Abrahams Grocery), and Ben Venoklassen, Town Clerk. John Padilla was always the first to arrive at the fire station because he could run out the back of the grocery store and start the truck.

Enclosed please find my check...it is my wish that the funds be applied to the restoration of that fire truck that I remember so well. Unfortunately, I never set myself on fire, so I have no stories to share.

Don Libby, (on board his yacht) Oakland, CA.

My recollection of this fine old Fire Truck occurred in 1953. That year I was working at the 76 gas station next to Ludlows Garage. I was a senior at Litchfield High School. My boss happened to get a contract to replace the tires on that fine Fire Truck. So of course, he said, "Larry you need to replace those tires that are on that fine (almost new then) Fire Truck. So since I was a senior at LHS I figured - OK, I can do that. Well! If you look at those wheels and those tires; they are not your every day wheels and tires. In the first place, that fine Fire Truck had been washed every day. Has to look nice, you know. That daily washing had caused the lug nuts to rust and as I found out, also the wheels to rust to the tires. Now mind you, power tools were a little further down the historical road. All I had were hand tools and a big hammer. You know, I finally did get all 6 of those tires replaced. The best thing that happened to me in regard to that fine old Fire Truck was a career change. No job should ever be that hard at 75 cents an hour.

Larry Watt, Oregon

Ken Wood adds: Larry should give us all the official version of the rusted lug bolts and what he thinks was the cause of the tires on the left side to fall off.

Three Rivers Historical Society Board of Directors

Bill Arnold, President

Joann Gongaware, 1st Vice President

Edward King, 2nd Vice President

Sally Kiko, Secretary

Peggy Jones, Treasurer

Ed Buonvecchio, Editor, The Quarterly

Gloria King, Past President

Don Jones, Frank Ross, Georgia Lord

Mark Pelletier, Web Master

threerivershistoricalsocietyaz.org

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Please join us at 3 PM on the third Tuesday of each month in room 117 in the Goodyear Financial Center.

Guest speakers are announced via email or US mail prior to the meetings.

Do we we have your address?

The Southwest Lending Closet

As the lender of home health care medical equipment at no charge for a period of 90 days, this rather new enterprise fulfills a need for the Southwest Valley. Our story is one of determination, endurance, leadership and the generosity of our local leaders - both in giving of their time and their dollars.

In 1996 Gloria (Glo) & Richard O'Donnell moved from Glenwood Springs, CO to Pebble Creek. Glo immediately became involved in activities, namely the Kare Bear organization. The president of Kare Bears wanted a wheelchair for the Eagles Nest Clubhouse and gave Glo that challenge. She found a non profit group in Peoria that lent home health equipment and thus, a long standing relationship with John Hilliard, executive director of that group, became the starting point for the Closet. Glo saw the Southwest Valley's need for an extension of the Peoria group.

Together Glo & John found a building for rent at 113 E. Western Avenue in Avondale. It would house the expansion of the Peoria non profit. Helpers were on their way...a retired military couple, Cy & Ellen Nelson volunteered in 1997; Linda (Vanderheyden) Wyman became a volunteer in January of 1999. We immediately had logistic problems getting the medical equipment from Peoria to Avondale in a timely manner. John had retired from the Peoria group, but continued to be our mainstay during those troubled days. After soliciting monetary donations from several of our Southwest Valley cities and community organizations, Linda and Ellen were told at the February board meeting that our expansion office in Avondale would be closed February 28th, 2000. No acceptable reason was given!

We volunteers decided that there was a definite need for continuing the services. Glo, Ellen & Linda, with the guidance of John, convinced our land lady not to rent the building until we could begin our own new venture. The Schneider Trust kept both their word and the building for what was to become The Southwest Lending Closet. Doors opened on May 1, 2000 with the help of many. Southwest Community Network was our umbrella organization. All the equipment was donated from citizens, Sunshine Services of Sun City and Helping Hands of Sun City West.

We opened the Closet with around \$9,000. Our bylaws,

administrative guideline, forms and procedures for lending equipment plus training new volunteers were all completed. The next few months were busy as Glo worked diligently getting our non profit status and Ellen & Linda took care of the equipment,



trained new volunteers and ran the office. Glo visited all City Councils keeping the Closet in the elected members' minds on a monthly basis. Linda recruited new volunteers, managed the office and our public relations needs. Together, Glo & Linda did their "Dog & Pony Shows" for any organization that would give them 5 minutes on their agenda! We are always on the lookout for additional monies.

After a great fund raiser, we built a storage unit behind our office to house our accumulated equipment.

The first Board of Directors for the Southwest Lending Closet was composed of President, Mrs. Gloria D. O'Donnell (Goodyear); Vice President, Mr. Harvey Livix (Goodyear); Secretary, Mrs. Frances Giannonatti (Buckeye); Treasurer, Mr. Seth Kanter, Council Member, (Goodyear); Mr. William Arnold, Mayor, (Goodyear); Mrs. Alicia Griffin, Family Support Center, Luke Air Force Base; Ms. Sharolyn Hohman, CEO, West Valley Chamber of Commerce; Mrs. Marie Lopez Rogers, Vice Mayor, (Avondale); Mr. Reyes Medrano, (Tolleson); Mr. Richard Vasiloff, business leader, (Litchfield Park) and Mrs. Vicki Velasquez, business owner, (Avondale). Non-voting members-at-large were Mr. John Hilliard, Sun City; Mrs. Sandy Reagan, Executive Director of Southwest Community Network; and Ms. Linda Vanderheyden.

The Closet has thrived! We are financially solvent, have 65 volunteers from Avondale, Buckeye, Goodyear, Litchfield Park and Surprise. Our donated equipment of the past has long been retired and new equipment is always available. Volunteers loan out over 175 pieces of equipment each month. The Closet issues tax-deductible receipts for donated medical equipment and monetary donations. The word is out about the Closet through the many Health Fairs that volunteers attend, local news media's frequent pictures and articles, visits to hospitals, nursing centers and medical buildings, and the continued visits to our supporting city council meetings.

Article and photo by Linda Wyman

Dean & Ruby (Pugh) Baker

Dean's Recollections of their history in the West Valley, Maricopa County, Arizona, December 2009



Ruby Phrona Pugh and Arthur Dean Baker were married in Holdenville, Hughes County, Oklahoma, in August 1940. Both their families were from southern states, had migrated to the Indian Territory, and some married members of one of the “Five Civilized Tribes”, the Cherokees.

Dean's friend Alva Brooks, from Wetumka, Oklahoma, had come to Arizona in the late 1930s with his wife Thelma (Kibbey).

Alva was working at the Perryville Café,

and when he went back to Oklahoma on family business, he persuaded Dean to come to Arizona to work at the café. The plan was to send for Ruby once Dean got settled.

Ruby hitched a ride with a cousin who was living in Winslow, Arizona, and made it to Arizona before Christmas. Ruby and Dean lived in a one-room cabin behind the Perryville Café. They used an “outhouse” and a community shower. The café was located at the northeast corner of Perryville Road and Old Yuma Road. Oberia Anderson owned the Perryville Café at that time. Dean worked as a bartender and cook at the café, and had the unpleasant duty to break up occasional fights between bar patrons who had too much to drink.

In May 1941, Ruby gave birth to Larry Dean in Dr. Ward's office in Buckeye, which still stands on the northeast corner of Butler and Third Streets. Dr. Ward was out tending to his fields, and Ruby waited until he returned to town. Fortunately, the baby did not arrive before the doctor!

After about a year working at the café, Dean was offered a job as a zanjero (ditch rider) with the Roosevelt Irrigation District. Water Master Rusty Henderson made the offer, which meant a salary of \$160 a month, and housing. Dean accepted the job with the R.I.D., and he, Ruby, and Larry moved to Lateral 15, at Watson Road and the canal. At Lateral 15 they had running water and indoor plumbing—but no electricity! About a year later, Dean was assigned to another area, and the family moved to Lateral 7, with the house located at Cotton Lane and Van Buren Street. At this home, the utilities included electricity!! The McMillans, with children John and Gracie, later lived there.

In May 1944, Dolores June was born in Buckeye, and was delivered by Dr. Rubel at his clinic.

Dean worked happily at his job with the R.I.D., and then Dean met “Blackie” Dickerson who offered him an opportunity to help develop land in Citrus Valley. They were to lease 160 acres of land, clear it, and grow cotton. The well driller assured them

they would have a good water supply; enough to raise cotton. Unfortunately, the well could not produce enough water to support a cotton crop, so the venture was over in a matter of months. The Baker family needed to pack up and move again.

Fortunately, Dean had become acquainted with another zanjero at the R.I.D., named Jewell Turner. Jewell and Noma Nell, with sons Phillip and Billy Ray, had begun farming near Buckeye on land acquired from Mr. Burns. Dean worked for Jewell and the Bakers lived in housing on the Turner farm.

Within a few months Dean received an offer from Allen Belluzzi, Sr., to become a foreman on his farm, headquartered near Cotton Lane and Old Yuma Road. This was the final “farming” move for the Bakers. They lived at the northwest corner of Cotton Lane and Old Yuma Road for 33 years.

After spending 33 years working for Belluzzi, Sr. and Belluzzi, Jr., Dean retired in 1979. During this time, Ruby became well known in Avondale and Goodyear through her employment with Tony Schneider's Drug Store, Coldwater Mercantile (owned by Ted Mack), Goodale Hardware (owned by Jim King, Sr.), King's Department Store, Ben Franklin Store (managed by Herman Moses), and Wells Pharmacy (owned by Jim and Marie Wells of Litchfield Park).

When they moved to Belluzzi Farms, the Bakers became members of the First Southern Baptist Church of Avondale. They never missed church on Sunday, sang in the choir, and loved all their brethren. Dean did welding and helped in other ways in the building of the “new” church on Central Avenue in Avondale.

When Dean retired, he and Ruby bought a home from the Jeffries family, on La Jolla Boulevard in Goodyear. They spent many enjoyable years there, with their dear neighbors “Forney” and Carlene (Chisum) Kennedy, their daughter Deborah, and her daughters Danielle and Amelie Bach. Dean kept busy maintaining their two rental homes in the old Goodyear subdivision and working as a handyman for Ruby's widow friends.

Ruby died in July 2005 at the Palm Valley Care Center in Goodyear. Dean lives with his son Larry and his wife Margaret (Truman) in Litchfield Park.

He celebrated his 96th birthday in January!

Larry and Margaret thoroughly enjoy having the opportunity to hear Dean's memorable stories of hitching freight train rides from Oklahoma to west Texas to pull “bolls” (cotton). And, as always, his love of music and his stories of “making music” with his beloved fiddle and his friends on the auto hoist “bandstand” at Roy Dean's Quonset hut on Old Highway 80.

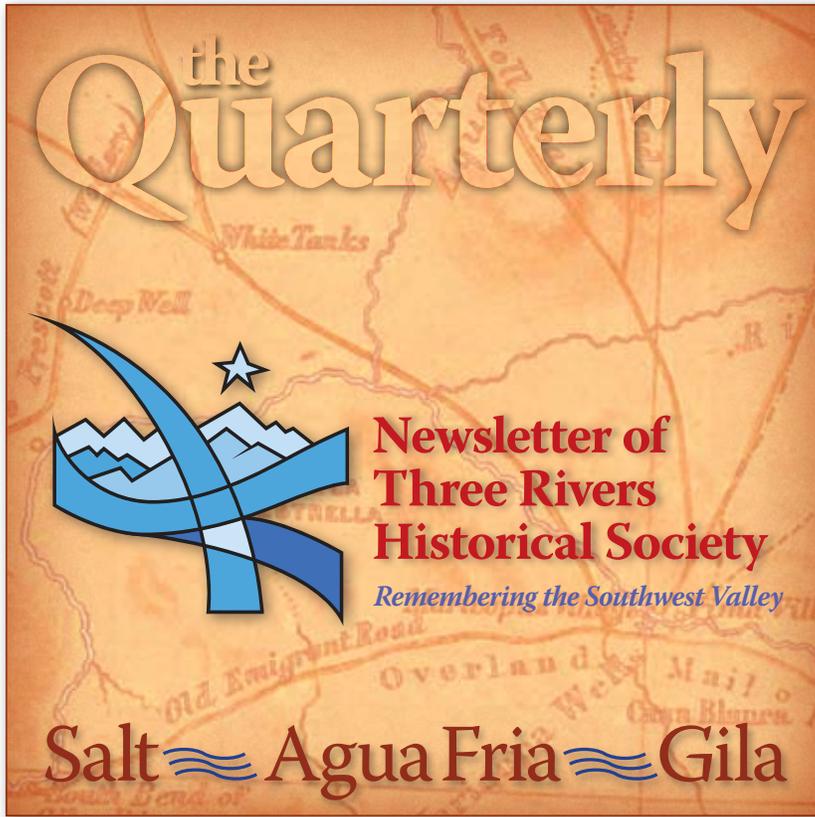
By: Larry D. Baker



Dean and Ruby Baker in front of the Perryville Café and Bar in 1940

January, February, March 2010

Yes, I want to join Three Rivers Historical Society!



- Student \$5*
- Family \$25*
- Contributor \$100*
- Lifetime \$500
- Single \$15*
- Business/Professional \$45*
- Benefactor \$250*
- * Yearly Fee

Join _____ Renew _____ Call me to volunteer _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ (Evening) _____

Cell _____ e-mail _____

Check enclosed in the amount of \$ _____

A receipt will be issued to you.

Make out your check and mail to:

Three Rivers Historical Society,
P.O. Box 7251, Goodyear, AZ 85338

Three Rivers Historical Society is a 501 (c) 3
non-profit organization



Three Rivers Historical Society

Remembering the Southwest Valley

P.O. Box 7251, Goodyear, AZ 85338

Letters to the Editor

Just want to thank your entire team for the fantastic work on the last Quarterly. We have printed it out for others to enjoy. Intriguing stories and histories: not certain which was favorite, but chuckled and laughed through all. Love how history pops when your team writes of it. Patricia Langford, Buckeye

Job well done!!! I always enjoy reading and learning more about this area. Thank you for your wonderful skills and expertise. Have a good one. Janene Van Leeuwen, Liberty Elementary School District

Received your Quarterly and realized that it is from my old stomping grounds. I was so intrigued by the stories I read that I had to tell you what a great publication it is. I was born in 1930 and lived all my life on a farm one mile east of Perryville so I am pretty familiar with that area. Many articles brought back memories of people I knew and lo and behold there was a picture of a painting by my sister, Jean Stewart Ruth!! Beverly Francis, Spokane Valley, WA

Thank you for your excellent news letter and the invitation to your meetings. I will see if I can find a driver to get me there. I want to become a member. You have an excellent organization going and I wish you every success. I will help in any way I can. Barbara Dienes, Sun City West