

American Cowboy

THE HISTORY OF THE
STARS AND STRIPES

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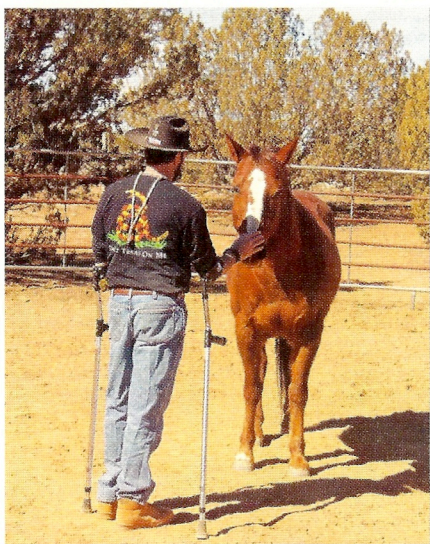
AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2014

\$4.99 US \$6.99 CAN



DISPLAY UNTIL September 2, 2014

Rank & File: Veterans' Programs



HORSES FOR HEROES—N.M. COWBOY UP!

Santa Fe, N.M.

505-798-2535, horsesforheroes.org

From day one at the Crossed Arrows Ranch in the high desert, Iraq and Afghanistan combat veterans and active-

duty personnel have the opportunity to engage with horses in a working-ranch setting. The Cowboy Up! program is self-paced and objective-based. Participants will learn groundwork and horsemanship basics, help out with ranch chores, and even work with cattle—all while enjoying the comfort and camaraderie of working with fellow cowboy-soldiers. The skills and mindset learned in the military are restructured to apply to ranch life, facilitating recuperation and reintegration into the civilian world. Many of the program participants give back by becoming instructors at Crossed Arrows, and others have found new careers as cowboys on working ranches.

WRANGLER NATIONAL PATRIOT

Nationwide

888-784-8571,

wranglernationalpatriot.com

The goal of Wrangler National Patriot is to help raise funds for charities that support military veterans and their families. Since its start in 2009, more than \$750,000 has been raised. How can you help? Purchase Wrangler National Patriot shirts at rodeos and Western retailers across the country or attend one of the events that support the initiative (a directory of events can be found on the website). Proceeds of each are donated to military charities. Additionally, each year the Wrangler National Patriot Tour brings Western singers and cowboys to entertain the troops. This year's tour brought the likes of world champion bare-back rider Kaycee Field, former Miss Rodeo America Meagan Ridley, and Nashville singer Lucas Hoge to Washington's Olympic Peninsula, where they swapped stories with the Coast Guard units stationed there, performed some acoustic sessions, and taught roping lessons.



R.W. HAMPTON
This Cowboy
Cimarron Sounds
rwhampton.com

Among a selection of 13 original and cover tracks presented in R.W. Hampton's upcoming album, *This Cowboy*, there are two interconnected pieces that capture the trials and tribulations of our nation.

"Hell in a Helmet" recounts the toll of war on a soldier's psyche—something the Hampton family is familiar with. Hampton's son is a weapons platoon sergeant with the 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines. He joined the military in 2005, served in combat deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan, and then returned stateside.

"I noticed how hard it was for him to come home," says Hampton. "It was really stressful. I said, 'Man, it was better for you over there, wasn't it Son?' and he said, 'Yeah Dad, it really was. You don't just come back here and go from trying to figure out where the muzzle flash is coming from to watching TV.'

"I just hung out with my son and his buddies and listened to their stories. Here I was, sitting in the midst of real heroes who were 18 to 22 years old. I admired these guys so much that I found myself getting emotionally involved in their story and I think that allowed me to write the song. It's not an easy song, but I just feel



like their story needed to be told."

The song "My Country's Not For Sale" came about after Hampton and his wife heard radio pundits fuming over the building of a mosque just 600 feet from Ground Zero. Rumors had it that \$100 million for the project was being put up by Middle East backers. He recalls, "I remember Lisa slammin' the cabinet and stompin' her foot and saying, 'Dangit! This country is not for sale!'

"I got to thinking all the way back to the revolutionary days, to Gettysburg and everything after. I just thought of all those men and women who fell during these difference conflicts, and about their voices crying out from their graves, saying, 'Not for sale. We're not for sale. We gave the last measure of devotion. It's not for sale.'

"What is not for sale is anything being done to cheapen the blood

that was shed to buy us our freedoms, whether it's the corrupting influence of money and politics or the attack on freedom of speech."

Other patriotic titles on the CD include "Ragged Old Flag," "Comanche (the Brave Horse)," "Jesus Take a Hold," and "Freedom Never Sleeps." Other originals include "Bass Reeves," a song about the little-known but exciting tale of the first black Deputy U.S. Marshal west of the Mississippi; "Angel in Levis," the uplifting story of a 60-year love affair as an old cowboy says goodbye to his top-hand wife on her deathbed; and "Drifting Cowboy," which takes a nostalgic look at the golden age of the old-time drover.

This Cowboy is an album sure to please anyone who likes an honest Western song polished just enough to make it shine.

—Charley Engel