



Of the Journal

Yes, We Have No Saguaros

I'm proud to report that the *contrasaguaristas* have received academic recognition, which should help legitimize our lonely struggle to rid New Mexico's image of Arizona saguaro cactus clip art.

Tom Lynch, an adjunct professor of English at New Mexico State University, is the one who recognized us. He writes in really good English with only one word of French:

"I showed your comments about the saguaros attached to the New York Times review of Antonya Nelson's book to her. She told me that when her publisher sent her an initial version of her book cover, the cover had saguaros on it. She wrote back and told them that there were in fact no saguaros in the area in which the book was set; so she got a different cover *sans* saguaro."

Well, that was a near miss. Antonya's New Mexico novel is "Nobody's Girl." But the New York mighty art duckos are 2-1 on the season. Prof. Tom enclosed evidence of two direct hits:

- An edition of Edward Abbey's "Fire on the Mountain," which involves White *Sans*-Saguaro Missile Range, has a cover peopled with the armed Sonoran Desert cacti, plus one armed, upright missile.

- And the cover of Barbara Kingsolver's best-seller fiction, "Animal Dreams," is a nightmare of dark saguaros lurking in a New Mexico pueblo. "She's also got a bandanna-wearing half-coyote dog in the book, so she's not one to avoid the blatant cliché herself," writes the prof, who teaches Southwestern literature. "Keep up the good fight," he says.

John Gillis of Santa Fe, reliable veteran of both the Navy and the Santa Fe press corps, reports a saguaro placement on a ranch about four miles west of Gladstone. Beware of this decoy, *contras*. John says it's made of 8-inch steel pipe, painted yellow. This is one those crazy Arizonios probably won't shoot.

Oh. Gladstone is in northeastern New Mexico on U.S. 56 between Springer and Clayton, all west of wonderful Texline.

Our latest dispatches also include a color printout from the World Wide Web. The logo of New Mexico Internet Access ("no hourly charge, no busy signals, e-mail, ftp, telnet, slip/ppp and news for \$25 per month.") has desert monuments, a wild horse and a lone

CALLOWAY

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saguaro.

This was sent in by Ranger Runnels, our Los Lunas agent who also is the district attorney for the 13th Judicial District.

EL TURISTA: The New Mexico Environment Department, Ground Water Quality Bureau, sent a state of New Mexico warrant in the amount of \$51 to the American Society for Testing and Materials in Conshohocken, Penn. The check came back with a letter from the society's customer service representative:

"I have returned your check number 263210 in the amount of \$51.00 because we require all payments to be in U.S. funds drawn on a U.S. bank.

"This policy is the result of the rising cost of Bank Collection & Exchange charges. Please have your check reissued on a U.S. bank, or send an international money order to cover payment."

Bryon Pippin of the state agency resubmitted warrant No. 263210 with a letter informing the national group: "We proudly joined the Union in 1912. ... Please be assured that our financial draft in the amount of \$51.00 is backed by the good faith of the citizens of New Mexico."

And I might add, we have 2,450 nuclear warheads, more than any of the "real" states or France, China

and Britain, according to the Natural Resources Defense Council. And we get angry when excluded!

LOST MAIL. Early in the Civil War, however, there was some doubt where New Mexico belonged. Somebody sent a stamp show program with a brief study of the 1861 Postal Guide by Daniel C. Warren.

He found at least six post offices in this territory were under Confederate occupation at one time or another. They were: Albuquerque, Santa Fe and, all in Doña Ana County, Fort Fillmore, Las Cruces, Mesilla, and "Tucson."

Listed under "Federal Control" in the study were Fernandez de Taos in Taos County, Fort Craig in Socorro County, Fort Defiance in Bernalillo County, Fort Union in Taos County, Las Vegas in San Miguel County, Los Luceros in Rio Arriba County, Tecolote in San Miguel County and Pine Forest in Doña Ana County.

"The few Confederate covers (postal markings) known are all from Mesilla, which was under Confederate control for nearly a year," wrote Warren, adding that there are no more than 10 Mesilla covers.

He speculates, "Certainly Santa Fe and Albuquerque can be presumed to have generated some mail, both military and civilian." So check your old family letters, Rebs.

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