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By Noureen Baer

The cheering of a rodeo crowd was no stranger to my father's ears - he was given a standing ovation in Cheyenne, Wyoming one year, in the steer roping. I remember the steer coming out of the chute with Dad close behind, the steer making a sharp left turn, and heading straight for the grandstands. Mother, my sister Julain and I were sitting about half way up in the stands with a perfect view of the action. There was a low railing all the way around the inside of the race track that circled the arena. Before the steer reached the rail Dad roped and tripped him, sailed over the rail on his horse onto the track, stepped off his horse, jumped back over the rail, ran to the steer and finished tying him just as the horse pulled them to a stop against the rail. It happened frighteningly fast - Dad handling it as if there were no obstacle or danger - the crowd went wild! Mother, Julie and I stood there with tears streaming down our cheeks, grateful he hadn't been hurt, and going crazy with excitement at how terrific he was.

It was by natural inheritance that Andrew came into the world of men who made their livelihood in the raising of cattle. He was born, Liandro Jauregui, to Frank and Isabella Jauregui, in 1903. His ancestors migrated to the United States via South

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America, from the Basque Country of the Pyrenees Mountains between France and Spain. Dad's father and uncle carried on the tradition of the sheepman and ran over 6,000 head of sheep on a ranch near Santa Paula, Calif. In the late 1800's they lost nearly all of them in a severe drought, and started over again raising cattle, sheep and goats. My father's responsibilities and livestock education were acquired at an early age. "When we moved to the home ranch in Wheeler Canyon," he recalls, "I was about four years old. I got my first horse to ride when I was five - rode him about three miles to a little 'ole country school - I wanted to ride all the time."

Dad was raised, the sixth of thirteen children, on the big ranch in Santa Paula, Calif. I've always felt his warmth and humor came from growing up with five brothers and SEVEN sisters! His interests were centered on riding, roping and working with stock. It was the quick response and innate ability to handle assignments, even in these growing up years, that gave the hint of destiny. This ability was so obvious to his father that he was allowed to leave school in the sixth grade, at 13, to help his older brother, Pete, run the ranch. Dad drove a team of mules, herded cattle, sheared sheep and helped farm. Gaining experience riding bucking horses on a neighboring ranch and practicing roping calves in a back field, in every spare moment, provided him with the skill that would one day make him a rodeo champion.

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"I rode in front of an audience, for the first time, when I was fifteen," Dad recalled. "A cowboy named Jesse Stahl - Jesse became one of the first great black cowboys of rodeo - came to Oxnard, in the early twenties, to break horses off the ranches. One day Jesse got a bunch of colts and advertized a rodeo - had it in a ball park. He gave us guys, Joe Yanez and me, a neighbor of mine that rode awful good, two dollars apiece to get on these colts. There weren't any chutes - we just snubbed them and climbed on." Dad grinned, "you might call that my start in 'show business'. The next year I entered a rodeo in Santa Barbara. They didn't have judges - the prize money was fifteen dollars for the man that got the biggest hand from the grandstand. I rode a horse called "Madam Hurry" - had on a pair of angora chaps - they broke loose 'n flew off. I rode the horse without any trouble and got the fifteen dollars. That was my first winnings at a rodeo. When I was seventeen I left home for awhile, to contest in some of the bigger rodeos. At a show in Hemet I learned that Pellisier's Diamond Bar Ranch, in Chino, needed a horseman to work stock. I went for an interview and got the job - only it didn't last long. When they took me off my horse and put me to chopping weeds I left for home in a hurry - didn't have luggage, so it was easy. Weren't many rodeos then - mostly Fairs - where they'd pay mount money - ten dollars a mount on bareback horses and ten on saddle broncs."

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I asked him when he first saw Mother.

"At the Fair in Ventura," he said. "I saw this real good lookin' gal waiting, with some friends, to get on the Ferris Wheel. This fella with me said she was new in town - I bet him I'd be the first to date her." Dad was a little slow - he didn't get that date until three years later when they met at a local dance. When he learned that the tall, handsome fellow with her was only her brother, he made up fast for the past three years by asking to take her home.

"The first time I saw your father I was coming out of the local drugstore," recalls Mother. "He had just gotten off his horse and was bent over fixing the pant leg in his boot - he looked up with that darling grin and winked. Well, that was it! I wasn't interested in anyone else from then on. I saw him after that riding at Fairs and thought he was great. A friend told me he was Andrew, one of the Jauregui boys. Everything I heard about him added to my first impression, and I made up my mind he was the one for me - so when he asked to take me home from the dance I accepted. Nine months later, on June 15, 1924, we were married in St. Sebastians Church in Santa Paula. Your daddy was 21 and I was 20." (Interestingly - Dad's birthday is Feb. 10th. and Mother's is Feb. 11th.).

At this time Dad was partners with a fellow who had made a deal to rent riding horses, for the summer, to dudes in the

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San Bernandino Mountains. Mother said she and Dad felt the mountains would be a romantic place to spend their honeymoon. I laughed when she told me <sup>that</sup> the boys, after the wedding reception, tried to throw Dad in the big watering trough at the ranch - only she and the SEVEN sisters stopped them - then off they went for three months spent living in a tent and wrangling dudes.

"After we left the mountains," Dad reminisces, "I went to work for C.Y. Jones running his Stable in Newhall. Your mother and I moved into the little house where you and Julain were born." C.Y. Jones was known affectionately as 'Fat' and the Fat Jones Stable furnished stock and equipment (wagons, buck-boards, etc.) for movies. Several years later, Carol, one of Fat's daughters, married Ben Johnson - champion roper and motion picture Academy Award winner - both dear friends of our family.

Dad's work with Fat led to his early career as a motion picture stuntman, doubling for actors in western movies. Some of the stars he doubled for were: Richard Dix (with Irene Dunne) in "Cimmaron", Warner Baxter (with Delores del Rio) in "Ramona" and Leroy Mason (also with Delores del Rio) in "The Revenge".

Although not political by nature, my father was quick to take responsibility toward his fellow man. He was appreciative of his own good fortune, hard earned though it was, and gave with no thought of repayment. In a business where publicity was sought after - and high on the list of job perpetuation -

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he never allowed his personal charity and generosity to be other than anonymous. The man that he gave to, when he saw the need, never had to feel the debt.

Andrew had the ability to recognize potential in others and did what ever necessary to see it realized. One of the first he became a mentor to was a young, freckled faced boy named William "Red" Lamaroux. Dad got Red a job doubling for the child star, Frankie Darro. "Andrew was a second father to me. I was just a scruffy kid," Red laughed as he recalled. "All I had was a pair of tennis shoes and a dollar fifty Carlsbad hat. I told your folks I was an orphan. They took me in, and Andy bought me a pair of chaps - he had the letters R.E.D. put down each side - a shiny pair of boots and a cowboy hat. I really thought I was somethin' when I got rid of them tennis shoes!"

After meeting Red's folks my parents realized what an imagination he had!

Dad saw terrific potential in Red and talked the studio F.B.O. (which later became R.K.O.) into signing him to a contract. Red proved to be a dynamite actor. The studio changed his name to "Buzz Barton" and he became one of their biggest stars and money makers of that era.

In 1928, our family moved to the ranch in Placerita Canyon. Dad was on location, so some of the boys that worked at Fat's Stable helped Mother load their belongings on a wagon, and up the Canyon we went.

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My parents named it the "J-Spear Ranch". Baldy O'Neil a ferrier (blacksmith and horse-shoer), one of the most colorful characters to work on the ranch, named it the "Rancho Griego". The name remained. There was always a crisis - humorous, tragic, hilarious, improbable and exasperating - an assortment of livestock, bare-foot kids, locationing picture companies, and cowboys camping along the creek - made the ranch a western "Walton's" with cowboy humor.

Some of the cowboys who camped at the ranch to make the Calif. rodeos were: Everett Bowman, Hugh and Ralph Bennett, Asberry Schell, Gene Ross, John Bowman, Gene Pardee, Floyd Stillings and Dick Robbins - most of them with their families. I can still hear Everett Bowman's wild cowboy yell echo through the valley every morning when the sun came up!

When we moved to the ranch Dad and Fat had become partners in a herd of cattle. In 1933 Fat moved his Stable from Newhall to North Hollywood. Dad bought Fat out and dissolved their partnership. He kept on with stunt work, began building his herd of cattle, acquiring good bucking stock (two of the J-Spear's greatest bucking horses, "Whiz Bang" and "Cheyenne" were honored at the Golden State Finals in 1972) and rodeoed on weekends. With consistent winnings, rodeo life started taking more of his time and interest - he went on locations less and traveled to rodeos more. At about this time his younger brother, Edward,





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came to work for him and again he assumed the role of mentor. "I'd graduated from high school and was getting under foot at home", Ed recounts, "so my dad sent me to Andrew's figuring he'd be a good influence on me. Andy taught me to work horses and rope. Your dad was one of the best stuntmen around then - he didn't ask for jobs - they called him. He was busy furnishing stock to rodeos for much stuntwork, so, when a call came for a location job he told the studio he was sending me - saying I could handle it. His word was good enough for them. They hired me and I was started on my 'life's work'".

Edward is a top teamster as well as outstanding stuntman. His ability to drive any kind of team got him a part in "Ben Hur", starring Charlton Heston, on location, in Rome. He drove one of the chariots in the most breathtaking and spectacular race ever filmed. He doubled such stars as Gable, Wayne and McCrea, just to name a few, and was Lorne Green's double for the ten year run of Bonanza. I have a special memory of my uncle Ed - he gave me my first saddle when I was six.

I'm aware there are men who ride as well as my father - only to me he looks better on a horse than anyone - and every-time he roped my heart stood still. I couldn't breathe until it was over. Roping to Dad was like a keyboard to Liberace or a football to Namath - he loved it. In the summer we always had dinner late at the ranch - Mom knew he and the boys would



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be at the arena roping until sundown.

Dad won the World's Championship in Steer Roping in 1931 and Team Roping in 1934. "One of the biggest thrills of my life was when I won the 1938 Cheyenne Wyoming Calf Roping Championship," related Andrew. After he won the Championship Saddle (now in the Cowboy Hall of Fame) in Phoenix, Arizona, in 1941, he started easing away from the nomadic life of the rodeo cowboy to becoming a fulltime stock contractor and arena director. His integrity is legendary. His word was as good as an iron-bound contract. Rodeo committees as well as cowboys respected and valued his friendship.

Lex Connelly, one of rodeo's finest announcers, an outstanding contestant himself and close friend of my parents, stated that Andy was a main contributor among the few men that brought rodeo from an informal cowboy sport to the fast-paced, smooth-running spectator attraction of today. Lex said that through the years the famous "Jauregui Growl", which was far worse than his bite, grew to be a legend throughout the rodeo world. When Andy growled, even the most reluctant cowboy moved, because he knew that the arena director was right.

When asked for a tribute to my father, Lex said, "Andy is the most respected and revered man ever known in rodeo."

One show Dad handled for eighteen years was the Los Angeles Coliseum. It was the biggest one day rodeo ever. He went in with a large crew of men, five trucks and trailers loaded with

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over two hundred head of cattle - set up the portable chutes and arena - and in a matter of hours put on a spectacular show. That evening everything was struck, cattle loaded and on their way back to the ranch. By dawn the Coliseum was as empty as it had been at dawn the day before.

I love the story Dad tells about a man named Fletcher sending him three horses saying he could keep or sell them. Dad sold two and kept a sorrel two-year-old to break and school. He paid Fletcher half the money and agreed to pay the rest when he sold the horse. About five years later Dad won the calf roping at a rodeo in the Wrigley Field Ball Park. After the show a man walked out from the stands to congratulate him. Andy recognized Fletcher, the man he had lost contact with, and said "Say, I still owe you money for this horse." Fletcher laughed and told him to forget it. But Dad happily made out a check for him - glad to finally own his beloved calf horse "Rowdy". Dad won nearly every championship and hundreds of ropings on him - and to top it all his brother, Edward, placed second and another cowboy placed third...that same day...all three of them mounted on Rowdy!

Andy's "Let's get with it, boys," became famous. Harry Carey, a dear friend, neighboring rancher, and one of America's greatest character actors, got such a kick out of the phrase that he used it in one of his western movies.

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William S. Hart had the utmost affection and respect for my father. He gave him one of his cars - a classic Chrysler convertible touring car, with a rumble seat. We used it for everything - including hauling hay for the stock, until it finally fell apart. Today it would be a collector's dream.

"The first time I heard of Andy Jauregui was from Will Rogers," reminisced Joel McCrea. "We were on location in Lake Tahoe. I was playing my first juvenile lead. Will kept talking about Andy Jauregui. When we got back to the Fox Studio in Hollywood, Will asked me out to his ranch to rope some calves Andy had brought him. He kept talking about a horse he was buying from Andrew - who had the reputation with Will of being the best horse breaker he knew. Will and your father were great friends."

My father, rodeo cowboys and movie stuntman I know, agree that among motion picture actors, no one rides a horse as well as Joel McCrea. He told me that the secret of his success was that he rode good horses, and that the best horse he ever rode was broken and trained by my father. The horse was called Ribbon. He was a five year old bald-faced sorrel stallion. Joel rode him in his movie "Buffalo Bill." It was Ribbon's first picture and Joel said, "He was incredible - had the best stop of any horse I've ever ridden. We had him doing everything - he was a great horse, and I agree with Will, no one could break and school a horse better than Andy."

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Joel made many movies on Dad's ranch and used Ribbon in almost all of them. Dad and Joel have had a warm and lasting friendship since 1930, and a bond in their mutual love for Will Rogers.

Andrew, ready to retire, sold his J-Spear Rodeo Co., in 1967, to Ed Rutherford. However, several rodeo committees would not hear of having their show without Andy, so he remained for a few more years making the change-over less abrupt. His retirement was honored by the awarding of the Robert Paxton McCulloch Trophy at the Casey Tibbs Cowboy Reunion at Pueblo West, Colorado. The magnificent bronze sculpture was presented for fifty years of outstanding contributions as a rodeo contestant, stock contractor and arena director.

Andrew and Camille have been married fifty four years and had four daughters; Julain, Noureen, Joann and Andreena.

Their romance is like a movie script. Andy has all the qualifications of a leading man and Camille is his incredibly beautiful leading lady.

The sport of "Rodeo" and I share a debt of gratitude to this unique man, Andy Jauregui. He has given both of us a hero. What he has contributed to rodeo will live on as long

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as the sport.

The other day a new horse was brought to the ranch for the grandchildren to ride. Dad insisted on trying him out first. We were concerned as he hadn't been on a horse for some time and suffers from arthritis. We wanted to help, but he got on fine. As he rode off across the field, his shoulders straightened, the years fell away and he was young again.... the best looking cowboy I've ever seen on a horse.

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