

# UTAH WESTERNERS



**July 20, 2010**

## **Springville Art Museum**

**Dr. Vern G. Swanson**

**Dinner (at the museum) -- 6:30 p.m.**

**Partners Night**

We are thrilled to announce a special event for our monthly meeting on Tuesday, July 20: an evening with Dr. Vern Swanson, director of the Springville Art Museum, who will show and discuss some of the museum's fine art pieces that will be of special interest to Westerners. Before Vern's presentation, we will enjoy a fully catered buffet-style dinner. It is sure to be a memorable evening that you won't want to miss.

Dr. Vern G. Swanson is a noted authority on the art of Utah, Russia, and nineteenth-century Europe. He has written several books on various art topics and also LDS theology, including *Artists of Utah* (co-authored by Robert S. Olpin and William C. Seifrit), *Painters of Utah's Canyons and Deserts* (co-authored by our own Donna Poulton), both published by Utah Westerner Gibbs Smith, and *Dynasty of the Holy Grail: Mormonism's Sacred Bloodline*. Under Dr. Swanson's guidance, the Springville Museum of Art (the oldest of its kind in the Intermountain West) has expanded the size and quality of its facilities and permanent collection.

We have arranged for a bus to transport 50 people to the museum from the Salt Lake area. Availability will be on a first-come, first-served basis; as soon as we have 50 reservations for the bus for members and guests, the bus option will end and everyone else will have to find their own transportation.

The bus will **depart promptly at 5:00 p.m. from the Masonic Temple, 650 E. So. Temple**, and for convenience, will stop to pick up other passengers **at 5:30 at the UDOT Park and Ride lot at 7200 So.** (just east of 1-15, south side — only accessible from the west, not the east). Be sure to be ready to board at 5:00 (downtown) and 5:30 (7200 So.). **Note: we are unable to wait at either of these stops for latecomers, who will be on their own to get to Springville.** We should arrive in Springville at about 6:30 and dinner will be served shortly thereafter.

Those who do not plan to ride the bus are encouraged to come as well, but to drive separately. The **museum** is located at **126 E. 400 So. in Springville**. We plan to board the bus home by 9:15 and be back to Salt Lake by shortly after 10:00.

## **Make your reservations by Sunday!**

Cost of the event is \$35.00 per person. **Note that you must make reservations for dinner by the *Sunday* before the meeting. Be sure to tell Walter if you are planning to ride the bus or will provide your own transportation. Remember, seating on the bus is limited to the first 50 people to reserve a place, so get your reservations in early.**

For reservations: contact Walter (801-363-1331; e-mail [walter.jones@utah.edu](mailto:walter.jones@utah.edu)). If you e-mail him, put “Westerners” in the subject line. Walter will confirm either by email or phone with everyone who makes a reservation. *If you make a reservation and fail to cancel it by the day of the meeting, you will be charged for the cost of the meal.*

## **A temporary applications freeze**

Note that the board currently has in hand a backlog of membership applications. Until that backlog is reduced, the board will not accept any more applications. You will be kept informed as to when the application process will resume.

## **Congratulations, Tom Warner!**

Congratulations to Tom Warner for his 50 years of employment at L Lorenz. That's got to be a lot of knives!

**BENCH PRESS**  
**BOOKS OF WESTERN AND REGIONAL INTEREST**  
by Curt Bench

**THE RIVER KNOWS EVERYTHING: DESOLATION CANYON AND THE GREEN** by James M. Aton. Published by Utah State University Press, 2009. 246 pp., illus., maps, photos, index. \$34.95

Utah is widely known for its spectacular red rock country, scenic canyons, and national parks and monuments in the south. Often other scenic and natural wonders remain relatively unknown. Such is the case with eastern Utah's Desolation Canyon and Green River country. Well-known to naturalists and recreationists, especially river runners, this magnificent 118-mile, serpentine, geologic wonder remains largely unseen and unexplored by most others. Desolation Canyon (along with its southern extension, Gray Canyon), was named by explorer John Wesley Powell in his trip through the region in 1869. The name, however, is misleading, for despite its wildness and remote location, it contains a rich abundance of not only magnificent rock canyon walls (at its deepest the canyon is deeper than that of the Grand Canyon) and other geological structures, but also flora and fauna, prehistoric and later rock art, and other remnants of human habitation. Humans have lived in this primitive but beautiful wilderness for thirteen millennia, from ancient hunting and gathering peoples to modern Native Americans and Euro-Americans. It has a "surprisingly rich history, from the Fremont Indians, who left abundant signs of their presence including in tributary canyons Nine Mile and Range Creek, to Utes, ranchers, moonshiners, outlaws, and today's river runners."

Author James Aton articulately and thoroughly tells how the geologic landscape formed and describes its natural features and then recounts the story of the many peoples who have come and gone in this area for thousands of years. He tells us how "humans have lived in, worked with, changed, and been changed, in turn, by that landscape." Accompanying Aton's unfailingly interesting narrative is a rich assortment of beautiful, full-color photographs by Dan Miller and also several historical black and white photos that show the landscape and people as they once were.

Gary Topping calls Aton's writing "clear, even elegant," and adds: "scholars in various disciplines will consult the book as a summary of knowledge; the prose is equally accessible to the river guide or backpacker interested in deepening his understanding of Desolation Canyon. The scholarship is fine, the writing is superb, and the topic is unique." Roy Webb describes the book as "invaluable"

and says that “there are no books that even come close to the level of detail on the subject and depth of research that this one reveals.”

This review is dedicated to one of my dearest friends and fellow Utah Westerner, Randy Wilson, who, after several years of coaxing, finally got me to accompany him and his family on one of their many river trips down the Green through Desolation Canyon. It was an experience I will remember and treasure the rest of my life. Randy died unexpectedly a few months after returning from this final trip down Desolation. Here's to you, Rubber Duck!

July 2010