

# new BACKBONE MEMBERS for April/May 2014

Bernard Cole Flagstaff AZ



Tim Steckline Spearfish SD



Richard Ingebretsen Salt Lake City, UT

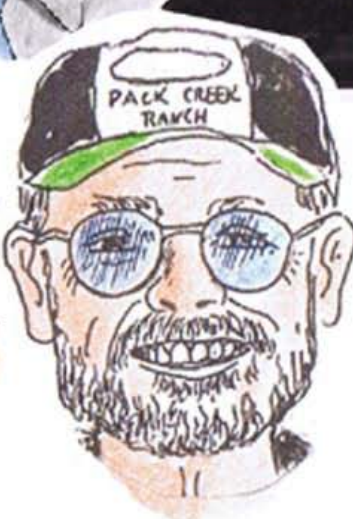


Hope Benedict Salmon, ID

Tim Conrad Ogden, UT



Bill Stokes Saint Petersburg, FL



Jim Case Flagstaff, AZ

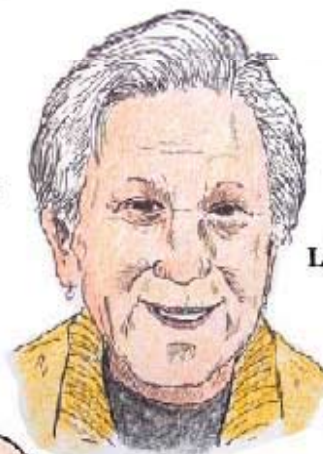


Jeff Stiles Stanton KY

And thanks to UN-TOONED Bill Gassaway Burns, TN



Al Cornett Slade KY



Sue Stiles Lexington KY

## THANKS ALSO TO

Omar Tatum AmeriCandy Co, Louisville, KY

Kathleen Raffoul Houston, TX

Justin Bendell Albuquerque, NM

John Feeney Boulder, CO

Karen Kennedy Marlborough, MA

catherine shank Moab, UT

Rex Peters Cottonwood, AZ

Julie Zych milwaukee, WI

John O'Hara Berlin NJ

Wes Shook Bluff UT

Lewis Downey Salt Lake City, UT

Dale Lee Sandy, UT



Mike Marooney 'on the road'



Steve Jones Chicago IL

# BACKBONE #2

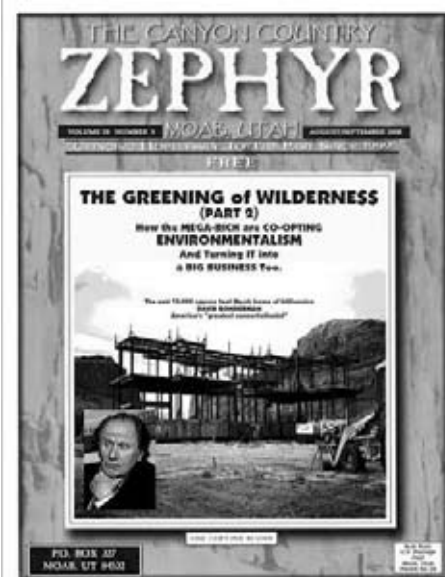
April/May 2014

# ZEPHYR CHRONICLES...PART 4 (CONTINUED)

*justifies the means, no matter how corrupt or counter-productive those means might be, does not stand. That is why the cover story to this issue is one of the most important this publication has ever published. 'The Greening of Wilderne\$\$...part 2: How the Mega-Rich are Co-opting Environmentalism and Turning IT into a Big Business,' is the sequel to Part One, which first appeared in the June/July 2005 issue and which wound up in 'Brave New West.' It is incredibly long, almost 10,000 words, and I urge you to read it slowly and thoroughly. It is also well-documented. The web links that I used to compile the story are listed at the end and the quotes therein comprise more than half the story's text. I will be curious to see the response, if any, from the mainstream environmental community. If the past is any indication, I should not hold my breath."*

**August - September 2008 online issue: The Greening of the Wilderness Part 2**  
<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/aug-sept2008/index.html>  
**and the re-posted version on the ZBlog:**  
<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/blog/2013/10/07/from-the-august-2008-zarchives-the-greening-of-wilderne-jim-stiles/>

The long article was as well-documented and carefully written as any writing project I'd ever



***“Old solutions don’t work anymore and thinking, in this day and age, that the end somehow justifies the means, no matter how corrupt or counter-productive those means might be, does not stand. That is why the cover story to this issue is one of the most important this publication has ever published.”***

taken on. The response from my readers was gratifying; I wasn't sure anyone would wade through a story that long. Our Feedback page was expanded to accommodate the readers. Legendary river runner/singer/author Katie Lee wrote, "What an utterly fantastic job of journalism. How many hours you must have spent on the research alone would be uncountable!... I've sent it on to many folks I know who won't get the Zephyr--probably the rest of the choir, but it's something everyone should read, whether they're on your side or not."

Utah author Stephen Trimble offered a more measured response, believing that environmentalists could accept large donations under certain circumstances. "I think the ideal would be for the conservation organizations to be led by fiercely independent, stubborn, and charismatic people who fight the good fight unapologetically--while gratefully accepting money from the wealthy board members who support them and who have their own reasons for donating. Maybe this is too much to ask for, maybe not. Those wealthy people do need the write-offs. And they must care about the goals (or their image) to associate themselves with the enviros...But," he noted, "it takes courage and unassailable integrity. The more money the enviro leaders make, the more they become part of the inner circle of power--and the less likely they can be effective revolutionaries....Thanks for your own journalistic courage..."

And just for form's sake, I sent a link to 25 Utah environmentalists, but I advised them, "The Zephyr welcomes your comments but will regard any submitted as 'on the record.'"

Only the Grand Canyon Trust, via Bill Heddenagain, replied, with a short list of "corrections." I printed his comments and my response in the October issue:

**FEEDBACK:** <http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/oct-nov2008/feedback.html>

And while I had warned everyone that any comment submitted would be 'on the record,' his email named board members and other details that I had not pursued, then admonished me not to print them...

*“Unless you are as vindictive as you seem to be (for what offense I do not know), you will still not publicize it in the paper...As you know, I shared your ideas about the problems of industrial recreation from the beginning, but I am still waiting for you to tell anybody what to do about the problem. We are a small community of people trying to deal with a great many problems and we have to choose where our efforts might actually bear some fruit. You are back to the population problem, and no environmental group around is set up to deal with that one.”*

And it was once true; a decade earlier, Hedden had noted that, "Industrial-strength recreation holds more potential to disrupt natural processes on a broad scale than just about anything else." But neither he nor the GCT nor any other green groups had even remotely dealt with the issue in years.

I wrote to Hedden, "I think it's more than population. I think it's an expanding population coupled with runaway consumption. And now the whole world is infected with this Madness. What Wendell Berry said about the conservation movement, to me, nails it:

*(...this is what is wrong with the conservation movement. It has a clear conscience....To the conservation movement, it is only production that causes environmental degradation; the consumption that supports the production is rarely acknowledged to be at fault. The ideal of the run-of-the-mill conservationist is to impose restraints upon production without limiting consumption or burdening the consciences of consumers.)*

"I don't think that the green movement can be taken seriously if it doesn't deal with that. And I HAVE been talking about it for a decade. Before we can find the answers, we have to at least understand the questions---it's where we have to start. It's just that none of you wants to hear it, much less respond. But how can you? The contradictions, which were so well documented in this story, are overwhelming. It's about credibility."

Finally I wrote, "I'm not 'vindictive' Bill, I'm just doing my job. Ever since I quit being the print arm of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, you have taken it personally. But in all these years I have NEVER resorted to personal insults."

At least one of my readers of the 'Greening 2' piece expressed their disappointment with the Grand Canyon Trust directly. A couple weeks later, she received a response, from a new staffer at

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the GCT, Phil Pearl. He wrote, in part...

*"Jim Stiles' Zephyr article which, while I agree made for interesting reading, contained many misrepresentations of fact and was unnecessarily malicious in intent...the policy decisions made by the board are not influenced by individual board members--as the Stiles article suggests in a very misleading and malicious way.*

*"My sense is that Mr. Stiles is a disgruntled conservationist who watched his small town of Moab be transformed in the unfortunate way that so many western towns are changing... His article in the Zephyr reflected a mean spirited last-ditch effort directed at a group of people who care passionately and give generously to support the work he once believed in."*

The Zephyr reader who received Pearl's rant immediately passed it along to me. I eventually emailed Mr. Pearl directly, reminding him that for all of his colorful language to describe me, "malicious," "mean-spirited," the truth was, we'd never met. He didn't respond.

**Link to Pearl's letter and the Zephyr reply:**  
<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/dec2008-jan2009/lettergct.html>

There was one line in Pearl's letter that contained a grain of truth. "As you may know, he is now in the process of moving to Australia." He got that part right.

For years I had been escaping the country every winter and hiding out in Western Australia. In 1997, on a bus ride down the coast from Geraldton to Perth, I befriended John Wringe, a farmer from near Donnybrook, in the southwest part of WA. He and his family welcomed me into their clan, and I returned year after year, to wander the backcountry and enjoy the relative peace and quiet.

In 2007, I met a woman and her five year old little girl, and a few months later, I was, incredibly, engaged. As ad revenues for The Zephyr continued to decline, I made a momentous decision--I would end the print version of The Zephyr in February 2009, move to Australia, become a family man, and re-invent The Z as an online publication. It would be The Zephyr-Planet Earth Edition. I had no idea whether we'd survive the change. Most people were skeptical. The NPR station in Salt Lake City finally aired an interview with me, by Moab's Jon Kovash. But while the story discussed both the paper's demise and the planned reincarnation on the web, KUER posted the interview with the title:

*"THE DEATH OF THE ZEPHYR"---<http://kuer.org/post/death-zephyr>*

The introduction noted, "Now, just as a new book and a related documentary about his work are receiving critical acclaim, Stiles has announced the end of the Zephyr and left the country."

I wanted to jump up and down and yell, "We're not dead yet!" but the prevailing opinion was that we were done--it was time to stick a fork in us.. In September 2008, I left the United States, as unsure of the future as I'd ever been. I was hopeful, but as I hunkered down for the 15 hour flight to Sydney, I remembered what Emily Dickinson once wrote--"Hope is the thing with feathers, that perches in the soul."

**NEXT TIME: The final installment of 'The Zephyr Chronicles.'**

**LINKS TO THE ZEPHYR CHRONICLES. Parts 1-3**

**Beginnings:** <http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/2014/04/01/the-zephyr-chronicles-the-first-25-years-pt-1-by-jim-stiles/>

**A Big Change and a Sign of Things to Come:**  
<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/2014/06/02/the-zephyr-chronicles-part-2-a-big-change-the-signs-of-things-to-come-1996-2001-by-jim-stiles/>

**The Fork in the Wilderness Road (It was 'Time to Look in the Mirror')**  
<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/2014/08/03/zephyr-chronicles-3-the-fork-in-the-wilderness-road-time-to-look-in-the-mirror-by-jim-stiles/>