



Former Editor Coultas Remembers Early Days of the *Trails*

This is the history of the *Terlingua Trails* as I think it happened. It is close to accurate but there may be some names and dates I have missed.

The *Terlingua Trails* was initially started as a newsletter by director Bobbie Aldridge of Shreveport, Louisiana. Prior to this all CASI upcoming and info were printed in the Goat Gap Gazette. I think the first issue was in 1989. This was a single issue and was dated April '89. There was some information about the '89 TICC held at Villa de la Mina and pictures of the champion, Barb Britton. It also announced that CASI had bought 360 acres for a permanent site, to be called Rancho CASI de los Chisos, and the establishment of the Old 320. It was printed as a newsletter on 8x10" pages and edited by Jim Ewoldson, an employee of the printer. There were no upcoming or results but it had a great recipe for Gail's Southern Baked Possum.

In the following issues, more news and features began to appear in the *Trails*, such as the groundbreaking ceremony for the Rancho in February 1990 and lists of TICC qualifiers and Life Members in September '91. The October '91 issue included eight upcoming and the fax form for submitting cookoff information.

Ken Large became editor in December '92 and began to expand the newsletter. Reports from the ED, President, Membership, and the Tallymaster were soon keeping CASI members more "in the know" about how their organization functioned.

I assumed responsibility for the *Terlingua Trails* shortly after getting elected to the Board. My first issue was in October '94. The process was simple – I bought a fax machine. The upcomings, articles and pictures were either mailed or faxed to me and then I faxed everything to the printer in Shreveport. Mr. Ewoldson then manually copied everything into the newsletter and mailed it out. This was before the internet and all communications were via fax, mail, or telephone. I started communicating with the printer via modem.

As the *Trails* continued expanding, we outgrew the newsletter format. With the Board's permission, I borrowed a newspaper publishing program from a friend and started producing the paper we have now. This caused me additional work, as I now had to type everything into the program. The Shreveport printer couldn't accommodate the new format, so I moved it to a newspaper in Tucson. I obtained a non-profit mailing permit and the CASI 800 number. The *Terlingua Trails* editor was also responsible for entering the upcomings and mailing the cookoff packages. Many trips to the post office for stamps and mailings and getting copies of the sanctioning forms.

The first newspaper format *Terlingua Trails* was published in April '97. The banner on this issue was only the name. I wrote Wendell Rankin and asked him to design a banner, and he sent me six to consider; I chose the one that we're still using.

Over the next few years, we slowly expanded, even trying color for a few issues. Sometime in 1988 Jim Stateczny came to Tucson and we worked on automating the process. After completing the programming, I could enter a cookoff and it would be pasted into the *Trails*, and with my new laser printer (supplied by CASI – I had used my own equipment before) I could print out the packets automatically for each cookoff. By this time some people were using the internet and email, and during an untimely business trip I even published one issue from Innsbruck Austria.

In 2002 I was voted off the board and Jim Stateczny took over. When I turned the whole process over to Jim Stateczny we were mailing out 1600 issues per month. Jim switched to a printer in Kerrville, Texas, several months later.

Editorship of the *Trails* changed hands several times in '02, until Bucky Seelig took the helm in October of that year; he was Editor through October '09, when he passed it to Dana Plocheck. Dana had responsibility until December '15, when she handed the reins to Pam Clark.