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Cover—You can drive all of two days, as Albuquerque
photographer Buddy Mays did, and cover only a fraction
of New Mexico's 750-square-mile WS Ranch—a chal-
lenge in paradise to prospective new owners.

from your editors . . .

As this issue goes to press, there are three thoughts that are uppermost in our minds. The first is the need for speed and accuracy as our circulation department works to cope with the highest number of subscription and calendar orders in the history of the magazine. The rush began during the last week of October and was still going strong in early December.

The second thought is that it is still not too late to send them to friends and relatives. Our circulation staff is big enough now so that we can handle your orders on a morning-in, afternoon-out basis.

And the third thought is that you may be interested to know why and how you, as a subscriber, have been assigned a code number. We have, of course, your name and address on our subscription file, but on the file they are preceded by a code that is arranged in zip code and alphabetical sequence. Here is why:

As every schoolboy probably knows, every individual in this computerized age is identified in a computer file by a master code, which is made up of a unique combination of letters and numbers. As a subscriber to *New Mexico*, you have a master code. We assigned it to you when we received your order, and it identifies you and you only. You'll find it at the top of the name-and-address label affixed to the back cover of every issue of the magazine. It's important. When you write to us and give your master code, we know who you are immediately and can take prompt action on any inquiry or letter of instruction, like a change of address.

But how do we arrive at your master code? How can we be sure it identifies you and you only? Here's how:

Under a system which we are just putting into effect, your master code begins with your five-digit zip code. Next comes the first, third and fourth letters of your last name. Then, in general, we use the first and third letters of your street name and the first three numbers of your street address. Finally, there is a letter, which is the first letter

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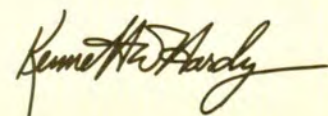
Inside Cover

of your first name, and two numbers, which will vary if by any stretch of the imagination any two persons in any part of the world should have identical master codes up to this point. Sound complicated? It really isn't. Take a look at your own master code, which probably follows this formula, unless you have a box number or live in a foreign country. Or look at how we identify Walter Briggs, editor of the magazine, who lives at 117 West Zia Road, Santa Fe, N.M. 87501. On our computerized file, he is 87501 BIG ZA117 WO4.

All right. 87501 is the zip code for Santa Fe, N.M. BIG are the first, third and fourth letters of his last name, Briggs. ZA are the first and third letter of his street name (We ignore the West in West Zia Road), and 117 are the first three numbers of his street address. Finally, we have W, the first letter of his first name, Walter, and then come the two numbers we can vary if, by chance, another subscriber comes close to Briggs' master code; for instance, a William Baigle, of 1171 East Zia Road, Santa Fe, N.M. 87501. He would be, like Briggs, 87501 BIG ZA 117 W, but we would assign to the Mythical Mr. Baigle two numbers after the W to distinguish Baigle from Briggs.

Now, why should a master code be assigned to a subscriber? First, so that we can identify him promptly, look up his record and make any adjustment that may be necessary. And second, because people have a way of signing their names in different ways. Mrs. John Doe orders a subscription, but signs her name Jane Doe when changing her address. By use of the master code, these variations become insignificant. For Mrs. John Doe and Jane Doe will generate the same master code.

So the next time you write to the magazine—whether it is to renew your subscription or change your address or file a complaint—copy the master code from your name-and-address label. Send it to us, and your instructions will be promptly carried out.





Bruce's parents brought bounty to a valley that looked arid to many of their kind. Today, as governor, he looks beyond his own ranches in an effort to enable others to enjoy a comparable bounty.

King's Dilemma:

Save Our Land? Save Our Youth?

By Tony Hillerman

A long afternoon talk with the farmer-rancher-soil conservationist who has become governor of New Mexico leaves one aware that two sorts of erosion trouble Bruce King.

He talks of a horse trail he used to ride as a boy on the family's place near Stanley . . .

It was the track left by a branch off the old Santa Fe Trail. Wore down years ago by the wagon wheels. When I was a boy you could jump your horse out of it anywhere. But when I got home from the Army, from World War II, it had washed ten feet deep and thirty or forty foot across. And

you stand there looking at it and you know it's going to take centuries of time to undo the damage and you think you shouldn't have let that happen.

And he talks of a graduation ceremony at a small northern county high school . . .

It's a happy day, you know. The family all there and everybody laughing and joking and all, but you look at that diploma in that boy's hand, you can't help thinking what it really means. It means he's going to have to leave home, now, because there's just no job around there for him. There's

just no way for him to stay. Not and make a living.

That, too, as Bruce King sees it, is erosion. He sits behind the massive executive desk, fiddling with his letter opener, trying to put together the words he wants to say that both must be stopped in New Mexico.

"The idea I want to get at is *balance*, I guess. We want to set up a

TONY HILLERMAN, chairman of the University of New Mexico's journalism department, began a camaraderie with Bruce King while an editor of the *Santa Fe New Mexican* in the '50s when the governor was a Santa Fe County commissioner. Harper & Row recently has published two Hillerman suspense novels, *The Blessing Way* and *The Fly on the Wall*.

body of regulations that will protect what we've got here . . . keep it from being destroyed and wasted and torn up . . . but we want to get it done without making it harder for a man to get a job . . ."

King isn't satisfied with this explanation. The letter opener taps nervously on the blotter. He tries again.

"Take this strip mining business. That's a good example. They ruined a lot of West Virginia with it, ruined it forever. And now we've got it out here. We've got to do something to make sure the surface is restored to certain standards. You've got to get vegetation growing again and the erosion stopped. But when you look at that problem and how to deal with it, you've got to keep the other part of the problem in mind, too. You look at the strip mining done by Molycorp up in Taos County and you see they're cutting away a relatively few acres and providing hundreds and hundreds of jobs. And then you look at the strip mining for coal, and you're talking about thousands of acres and just a relatively few jobs. We've got to deal with that problem with two ideas in our mind. If we let the land be ruined, it's usually ruined forever. But we can't afford to forget the people who need a chance to make a living. You've got to decide how high the return has to be in terms of payroll to make it worthwhile to accept damage to the land."

(Earlier in this same day, King had established a commission to begin work on New Mexico's first comprehensive law to regulate strip mining and timber cutting.)

How about air pollution? How about King's request to federal power authorities for a moratorium on the development of an immense coal-fired power complex in the Four Corners area until better air-quality control regulations can be adopted?

"We are simply going to be firm where we have to be . . . even if some people think they're being harassed." The governor's expression turns wry. "And some people are certainly thinking that. Sure, we know it's going to cost a lot more to

keep most of that smog out of the air. And, sure, we know the power companies will find ways to pass that cost on to their customers. But most of those customers are Southern California and Arizona industries. Why shouldn't they pay? Why should we go along with a free swap where we get their smog and they get our electrical power?"

It is now well past quitting time for the day in the state capitol, but the telephone on King's desk continues its periodic interruptions. The decisions it demands are small ones, quickly made, but they serve to break the governor's chain of thoughts.

"I've got four years in this office," King says, "and when I'm done with it one thing I'd like to have finished is a good, strong, sensible set of environmental laws . . . ones that have property rights and don't interfere too much with the economy. We got started in the 1971 Legislature, but it was just a start and we made some mistakes at that."

What mistakes?

"Well, take land development regulations. We're probably causing some blowing dust and water erosion just because we're requiring the developer to grade more roads than are needed. That law needs some more work."

Another phone call, another fresh chain of thought:

"There's another kind of balance we have to think about, too . . . between what looks good for economic development now and what's good for the long term." He looks out of the fourth floor window behind his chair across the roofs of Santa Fe and to the piñon-covered Tesuque Ridge of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. Except for a late-summer thundercloud brewing over Pecos Baldy, the sky is a clean, high-altitude blue.

"We still have something here in New Mexico that most parts of the country have lost. It's just now beginning to pay off for us economically. We're beginning to cash in more and more on the vacation and outdoor recreation business, and we're beginning to attract some of

the industries that don't pollute and that are getting tired of living with other people's pollution. So, just on the pure economic basis, we've got to strike a balance now—not just between the damage an industry does against the payroll it will produce—but also against what other business it's going to be keeping away in the future.

"We've got a harder problem out here in some ways," King said, "Back where they get thirty-forty inches of rain a year, they can do something wrong and recover from the mistake. Things will usually grow back. But here where it's semiarid, you've got this delicate balance in the ecology. You do something wrong and you can change a pine forest into nothing but rocks. Or you can change a hillside of grama grass to nothing but washouts and creosote brush."

Behind King's head the eagle on the state's great seal illustrates his meaning. Its talons clutch cactus.

"I guess if you're raised in the country where everything you've got depends on the land, then you grow up conscious of it," King said. "You see a little wash and the next summer, unless you've done something about it, it's spreading and backing up the slope and it's too late to repair the damage. Or you see what happens in a dry spring when the grass got too short and the wind got at it." The governor's fingers tinker with the letter opener, but his thoughts are on what he's saying.

"Those sandy, blowing days . . . you can never forget them. It leaves a scar on a man to see that happen. It makes you think of what you're doing to what the good Lord gave you."

Back in the mid 1950s, when King's only office was as a director of the Edgewood Soil Conservation district, a cattle buyer told me he could usually tell a King Brothers ranch. "They don't graze to full capacity, so the range looks greener," he said. "Ole Bruce'll try to tell you he gets a bigger calf crop that way, but actually he just can't stand to see the dirt ablowing."

