

KANAB,
UTAH

Colorado

Coconino
Plateau

Verde R.

FLAGSTAFF

Bradshaw
Mtns.

PHOENIX

Salt R.

Gila R.

TUCSON

Sierra Ancha

Chiricahua

AGUA
PRIETA,
MEXICO

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC
Tuesday, March 23, 1982 □

B1



Mule walker

Troy Gillenwater, 21, of Scottsdale, leads his mules across a stream near Globe. Troy and his older brother, Gil, co-owner of a Scotts-

dale real-estate agency, are on a walk across the length of the state, from the Mexican border to the northern line. The two said they

have been on the trail for two weeks and have traveled 270 miles. By their estimate, they have to traverse an additional 540 miles.

Doyle Sanders/Republic

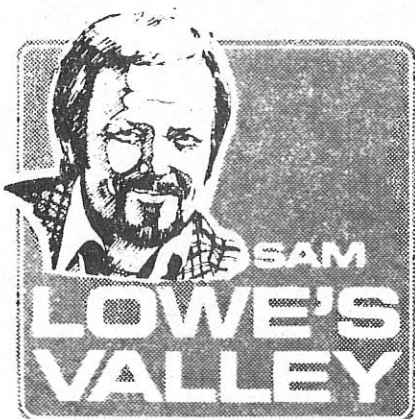
The Phoenix Gazette Metro News

Section B

Thursday, January 7, 1982



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A Real Dream

Troy Gillenwater's enthusiasm is contagious.

He's talking about taking a two-month, 800-mile odyssey across Arizona.

Through the deserts, the mountains, the canyons.

Across the flatlands, through the cactus, over the rocks.

On foot.

And everybody who listens as he outlines his dream wants to go along.

"I was born here," he says. "I grew up in Arizona, but you can never get a feel for any place any better than walking through it."

So Troy and his brother, Gil, will walk through Arizona.

They'll leave at the end of this month and plan to finish at the end of March. Typical of most hikers and backpackers, they'll seek out isolation. Their only companions, they hope, will be a pair of mules. The mules will give them the capability of packing about 11 gallons of water, and having a ready water supply available means they can travel areas that don't require water stops.

And where there ain't water, there ain't people.

"It wasn't so long ago that Arizona wasn't rich," Troy said as his finger traced the proposed south-to-north route he and his brother will follow. "When you hike it, you can understand what it took to settle a place like this."

Each brother has assumed one of the major burdens: Troy, 21 and a college student, is the planner. Gil, 27 and a businessman, is the financier. They used a similar arrangement in 1978, when they hiked from Oregon to Canada through the Cascades.

They'll start in Agua Prieta, Sonora, to make sure they actually go from border to border. They'll walk through the San Bernardino Valley, skirt the Chiricahua Mountains and wander through the Arivaipa Valley and head for Globe.

"Just think of what has happened there before," Troy says.

"Geronimo. Skeleton Canyon where he surrendered. Lost treasures. Cochise' stronghold. Apache Pass. Puerto del Dado. Billy the Kid used to hang out around there. Pancho Villa. Johnny Ringo..."

They'll walk around Roosevelt Lake, tour Punkin Center and move into the Bradshaw Mountains and up to Jerome. The lore of the silver mines, the tales of gold in Lynx Creek, the romance of the wind whispering to the pines in the high country. All are on their itinerary.

Then straight north. Red rock country. The mystique of the ancient tribes. "We won't see their cultures, but they were there, right where we'll be," Troy says. The trail will lead them to the Grand Canyon. They'll leave the mules on the South Rim, hike the nation's most spectacular river channel, then cross country ski from the North Rim to the Utah border.

It won't be a superhuman effort, but it's something most people could easily find an excuse to avoid.

When it's over, they'll meet a lot of people who'll say, "I could have done that — if I'd have wanted to."

But most of us will envy them.

And curse ourselves for never having taken the time to pursue our dreams.

Modern Day Pioneers Stay in Williams



After a hearty breakfast at Old Smoky's the young pioneers got their mules "Grandma" and "Judy" and set out for the Grand Canyon. Left to right: Troy Gillenwater, Gil Gillenwater, and Dick Smith.

Two brothers, Gil Gillenwater (28) and Troy (21) are walking across the state of Arizona and were in Williams April 20th-22nd.

The two Arizona natives started out near the Guadalupe Canyon in Mexico where Billy the Kid hung out, according to Gil. The journey began February 29th and the final destination is Kanab, Utah. That's 810

of Utah. He is an English major and is keeping journals of the adventure for college credit.

The trip has been in the planning stages for about three years according to Troy. Gil financed the trip and Troy did the planning. This is the second hike of this nature. The first time they carried backpacks across the state of Washington. They

state like the old pioneers and settlers. Some people just are not friendly when you cross their land."

There is an 80 mile difference between private and national Forest land, they said. "The Wilderness areas that have been preserved have been really nice," they concluded.

"This is our first experience with mules"

began it took some careful planing. They had four food drop off points they had prearranged two months before taking the trip. And they brushed up on Arizona history.

"It makes it more interesting to know what has gone on in the country that your walking" says Gil. "The topography in this state is so varied that you could go through a



Sam
Lowe

A rugged hike

PUNKIN CENTER — When they started on their long and lonely journey, Troy and Gil Gillenwater wanted to relive the Arizona of 100 years ago as authentically as possible.

They're getting substantially more realism than they had bargained for.

They've been threatened, lost their pack mules, been forced to hide out along the trail, been rained on, snowed on and almost drowned a mule.

But quit?

Nope.

In the early hours of Feb. 28, the Gillenwater brothers temporarily abandoned the civilized lives they lead in Phoenix and, from a point about 20 miles east of Agua Prieta on the Arizona-Mexico border, set out to walk across Arizona from south to north.

It's an 840-mile hike and they expect to be at it until sometime in May.

When they arrived in this small community Friday, they had hiked 340 miles, tough miles because they didn't know as much about mules as they had assumed.

"The first two weeks, we were in searing heat," Troy said, "and the mules were bleeding through their noses because there was no grazing and it was so hot.

"Then we ran into trouble with the ranchers. They told us if we went on their land, we'd probably get shot. I guess they have some troubles down there; they're pretty uptight."

Because of that, they had to change their route and head into the Chiricahua Mountains and one of the mules slipped off the trail and plunged into a ravine.

"We figured one of us was going to have to go down and shoot her, but when we got there, she was standing up, eating a tree," Troy said.

Up to that point, the brothers admit they hadn't given the mules the proper credit. "Man, we were killing them," they commented. "When we started, we didn't know anything about mules, and we packed them down so hard they could hardly walk.

"Now, we have it down to a system and it's all centered on the mules because if they go, we have to carry all that equipment ourselves. We used to look for towns so we could go in and have a beer; now all we think about it is getting to a town so we can get alfalfa for the mules."

They almost had to face the challenge of trying to make it without the mules one night when the animals slipped their hobbles and wandered off. It took an unscheduled mountain climb to retrieve them.

They made another near-fatal error while crossing flooded Tonto Creek. They unpacked the mules, but left the fiberglass packs strapped to their backs. Halfway across the stream, the packs began acting as water wings and one of the mules began floating away.

"We figured she'd probably float all the way down to Roosevelt Lake, but we got her stopped. Despite that," Troy commented, "the mules are giving the trip the real flavor of the Old West."

The incident which caused them to hide out may have been an overreaction.

"We came onto the San Carlos Reservation and got stopped for not having a permit," Troy said. "We said we'd get one on the way out and told the tribal policeman where we were going to stay that night. He said he couldn't protect us there. Then a carload of people came up and started threatening us. Maybe they were just trying to scare us, but we hid out in a wash and the same car kept going back and forth for about an hour and a half.

"We were pretty sure nothing was going to happen to us, but after a while, we started wondering."

Today, the Gillenwaters are somewhere between Punkin Center and Seven Springs. In their makeshift luggage, they carry two small stones which they picked up in Mexico about three weeks ago. They'll drop one of them to the ground when they reach the Arizona-Utah border in about a month.

The other one will be a souvenir of a time they dreamed a dream, then lived it.

1982
April

The Phoenix Gazette

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Sam
Lowe

Bit of Americana

CROWN KING — A slice of Americana, enacted on the side of a mountain:

It was, and probably forever will be, the only "Welcome to Crown King, Mule Packers" party ever held in this village of 65 people and some dogs. The guests of honor were almost two hours late but nobody fretted. They simply started without them.

Crown King is, if nothing else, convenient. Both saloons are within 50 feet of each other and both serve food, and the grocery store which features frozen Mexican dinners and a microwave oven is only 100 feet away so Lord knows, there was plenty of stuff going on to keep the party going, with or without the guests of honor.

About sundown, a cow wandered into town and a couple of the community's watch dogs protected Crown King from the intruder. Then everybody went back indoors to ward off the night chill and tell wild stories about getting here because the road to Crown King is fit for four-wheel drives, pickup trucks and small Army tanks, but not for humans in street cars.

It got to be about six o'clock and daytime was leaving in a hurry when Troy and Gil Gillenwater showed up. Walking their mules.

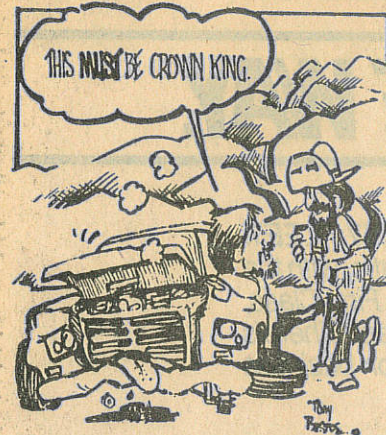
They got handshakes and hugs and were hailed as some sort of heroes. The adulation was deserved, but they still had a long way to go before rightfully donning the olive branch crown accorded to conquerers.

They've been, as they say, on the road for six weeks, walking Arizona from south to north. Most of the time, their only companions have been two mules, which the Gillenwaters say they now respect, even admire. And somewhere between here and Punkin Center, they acquired a genuine trail dog. They left from Agua Prieta, across the border from Douglas, on Feb. 26; they expect to reach the Utah border sometime in mid-May.

Crown King is slightly more than halfway, and a logical place for friends to meet, and you have to be a real friend to expose your car to the hazards of the road to Crown King.

So they gathered.

A woman named Betty, who said the two young men were doing something that would make any



mother proud and she was *really* proud because she is their mother.

A girl named Leslie, who drove down from Salt Lake City to be here because she is a special friend of Troy's. Her parents, because they're also friends, came along.

Some other people from Salt Lake City. A guy from California, who flew in to Arizona then backpacked 50 miles so he could share the occasion. A woman from Australia, who had never heard of the Gillenwaters until last week but came as the friend of a friend because she wanted to meet two men who would put such effort into an endeavor that will gain them no riches or fame, only self-satisfaction.

And a whole bunch more.

The heroes of this occasion told their stories about how they had to blindfold the mules to get them to cross Horseshoe Dam, and said they were glad to see everyone but they didn't think they'd stay here long because they could smell victory and wanted to get at it.

Then three musicians, up from Phoenix especially for the occasion, played foot-stompin' music and people howdied and shook hands until everybody knew everybody else. The Gillenwaters straightened their coon-skin hats and deer hide vests and posed for pictures and a tiny girl with long blonde hair danced around the pool table for a while, then ran to her father and got a hug.

It was like that for the rest of the night. Nothing big enough to make the social notices.

A little piece of Americana, enacted on a mountainside.

And well worth risking the perils of the road to Crown King.

Troy Gillenwater: Curiouser and Curiouser

How do you find one graduate among so many, as you move among the clusters of caps and gowns? They all look alike from the rear. Wait a minute—maybe not. There, a few yards away, is an unusual pair of boots beneath one gown. Not just cowboy boots. Pointy-toed, *snakeskin* cowboy boots. That has to be the right graduate.

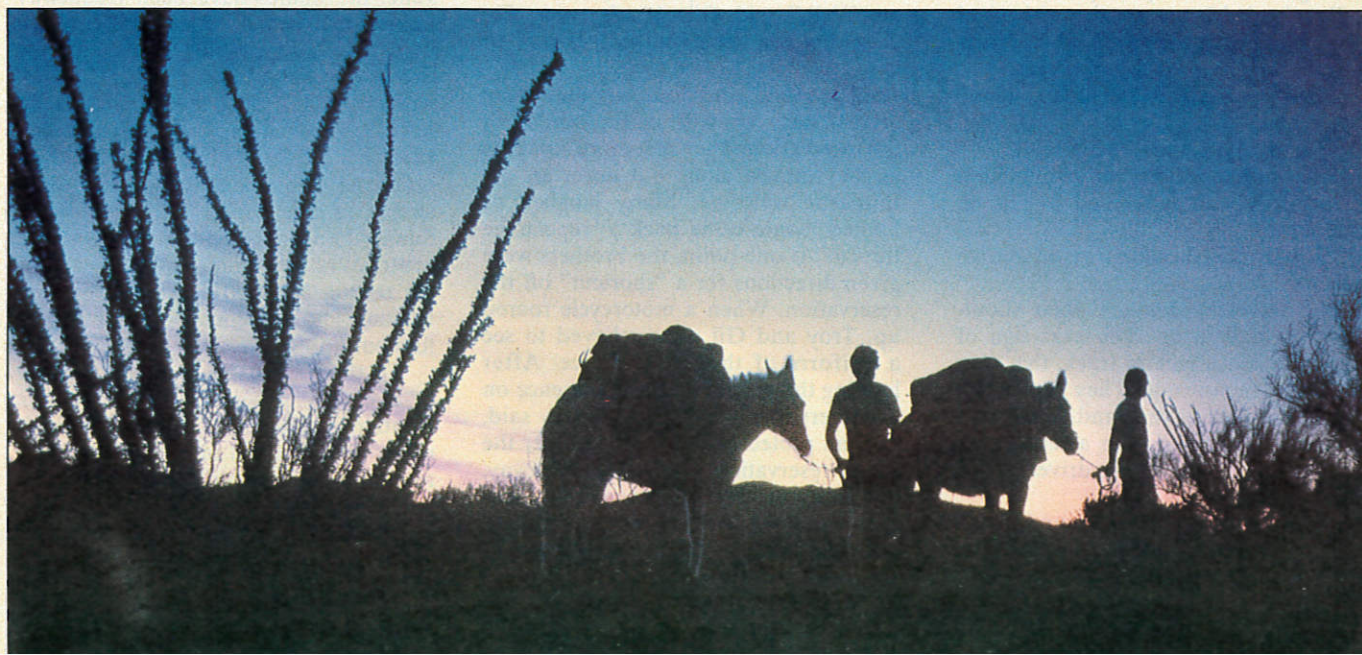
"Troy! Troy Gillenwater — turn around."

He turns and the camera clicks on the newly graduated University of Utah English major from Phoenix, Arizona. Not hard to pick out in a crowd because he's not typical. Along with a taste for snakeskin cowboy boots, Gillenwater has a fondness for bizarre excitement. Take his adventure of last year:

Seen from a distance, it must have been a strange-looking caravan. Anyone coming on the scene might do a double take seeing two men walking through the Apache Indian Reservation accompanied by pack mules in February. But there they were. Troy and Gil Gillenwater, two Arizona men, one-third of the way up from the Mexican border on a walk they said would take them clear to Utah.

A warning. They had arrived at a place called Post Office Springs, Arizona, although there was no post office in sight, or little else in this desolate spot. They were taking their bearings, planning their next move when Gil

Right: Troy Gillenwater at the end of the 810-mile, two-and-one-half-month trek from the Mexican border to Utah. Below: To sense what desert travel must have been like a hundred years ago, Troy and Gil shunned motorized transportation and modern camping equipment.



Troy Gillenwater

UTAH

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You*

