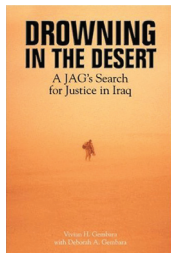


With attention to detail and a reverence for history, *Death of a Gunfighter* makes the past come alive and provides an unbiased examination of the people and events that shaped Slade. The reader is given a vivid portrait as accurate as possible of the infamous “servant of the Overland” side by side with the hard-working and hard-drinking men and women that extended the borders of the United States. (October) *Lee Gooden*



**Drowning in the Desert:  
A JAG's Search for Justice in Iraq**

**Vivian H. Gembara, with  
Deborah A. Gembara**  
Zenith Press, Hardcover  
\$26.95 (320pp)  
978-0-7603-3448-5

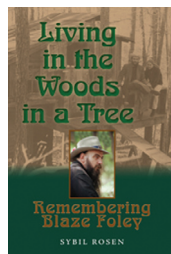
“They say the only good morning in a war zone is the morning you leave,” the author writes. She has experienced many difficult mornings in Iraq, where she serves as a U.S. army lawyer, otherwise known as a JAG (Judge Advocate General). Handling anything from detainments to divorces, she and her small staff act as legal counsel for over 3,000 soldiers. They also advise commanders about what they are permitted to target and how the Iraqi justice system functions. If managing all this while sporting a bulletproof flak jacket and a Kevlar helmet is not enough, the author is thrust into putting two soldiers on trial in Iraq for possible desertion. And when an adolescent’s body is found in the Tigris River, she is forced to investigate the conduct of American soldiers.

The author adeptly balances detailed descriptions of day-to-day events at her base, Camp Anaconda, without losing the reader along the way with either legal or military jargon. Acronyms are carefully explained after being used in casual dialogue. INTSUM is the intelligence summary, a rehash of nightly enemy activity or intelligence; RPGs are rocket-propelled grenades. Ongoing logistical frustrations compound the legal work, whether in securing safe transportation to interview witnesses or in building a structure to serve as the chapel/courtroom. Nonetheless, the author forges strong friendships with other soldiers throughout the daily stress and maintains a sense of humor. She laughs hard as Captain Noel Pace, a specialist in vaccination and insecticide risks, shimmy into a stack of wooden benches, a structure constructed for his safety in a former Iraqi airbase cafeteria.

Tragedies abound in this land, where brigade headquarters personnel spend Christmas Eve mourning the death of three civil affairs soldiers killed by a bomb under their Humvee. JAG corps senior officers die when their Blackhawk helicopter is downed in a flight from Baghdad. Any kind of traveling “outside the wire” of the base is risky. To address Iraqi losses, the author handles U.S. solatia payments as “expressions of condolence”

to the family of Iraqi citizens who are killed or injured as a result of American actions.

Whether or not readers agree with the U.S.’s involvement in Iraq, this book offers an eye-opening glimpse at a unique lifestyle. It presents a compelling story of the bravery and work ethic found among some army soldiers as well as the dishonesty of others which leads to cover-ups. (October) *Beth Henke Shapiro*



**Living in the Woods in a Tree:  
Remembering Blaze Foley**

**Sybil Rosen**  
University of North Texas,  
Softcover \$24.95 (288pp)  
978-1-57441-250-5

“If I could only fly / I’d bid this place good-bye / To come and be with you / But I can hardly stand / Got nowhere to run / Another sinkin’ sun / And one more lonely night.” These words from country music singer and songwriter Blaze Foley’s “If I Could Only Fly,” embody more than the lonesome yearnings of a rambling man; they represent the search that every dedicated artist must go through—whatever the personal cost—in order to make tangible what they see in their own heart and mind. *Living in the Woods in a Tree* captures that quest perfectly. Author Sybil Rosen, who lived with and loved Foley in the late 1970s, records both Foley’s artistic struggles and her own with disarming honesty and emotion.

Rosen met Foley, who at that time went by the name Deputy Dawg, in 1975 at an old Virginia mill. Rosen and several friends were working to rehabilitate the mill into a theater and studio for budding actors. Rosen was an aspiring actress of Jewish descent; Deputy Dawg was a lanky, quiet-spoken, Protestant-raised musician who wanted not just to become a star, but a country music legend. Despite their differences, Rosen and Deputy were drawn together. Before long, they were traveling about the Southern countryside together, staying with various friends and relations until they settled down to a lean but happy life in a Georgia tree-house Deputy christened Udo.

Before long, however, their dreams of artistic fulfillment began to clamor for attention: Deputy wanted to pursue the hard-drinking, hard-living, nomadic life that is the stuff raw country music legends are made of. Rosen wanted to pursue her acting and a new love—writing. The two slowly began to realize that, despite their love for one another, they couldn’t chase their vastly different rainbows and remain together.

*Living in the Woods in a Tree* is written from two different perspectives, both arising from Rosen’s memories of Deputy—old memories of her young life with Deputy and new memories from her recent journey to retrace his life after the two parted and Deputy went on to reinvent himself as country singer Blaze Foley. Rosen

deftly weaves both sets of memories into one harmonious whole. Readers see through Rosen’s eyes her joyous life with Deputy in Udo, her tears at Deputy/Blaze Foley’s graveside, and her ambivalence at meeting women Deputy loved after she exited his life. Rosen’s book is a triumph of straightforward, honest writing, and a fitting tribute for the enigmatic and dedicated artist that Blaze Foley became. (October) *Michelle Kerns*

## BODY, MIND & SPIRIT



**Returning to My Mother's House:  
Taking Back the Wisdom of the Feminine**

**Gail Straub**  
High Point, Softcover \$21.95  
(237pp)  
978-0-9630327-5-1

The metaphor of an “unbounded flame” ignites the interest of readers of Gail Straub’s autobiographical novel about discovering the light of feminine wisdom. Straub defines wisdom in the form of authenticity, awareness, and transcendence—all of which are revealed through breaking the chains of the “intense speed of outer life” and freeing the “intuition, stillness, and contemplation” of inner life. Gail Straub is a codirector of the Empowerment Institute, and the author of several books including *Circle of Compassion* and *Connecting Within Society*. She also partnered with UNICEF to create Earth Run, a remarkable event for the United Nations’ Year of Peace in 1986. Straub has traveled around the world to countries like China, Russia, and Bali, leading seminars that help both men and women release their own flame of feminine wisdom.

The book begins by uncovering Jacqueline Walsh’s (Gail’s mother) life in the early 1930s in Denver, Colorado. She was an artist living as a bohemian, embodying creativity and passion which followed her into life as a married woman and parent. Gail revisits fond memories of extravagant art projects, adventurous nature walks with her sister, and fruitful conversations at the dinner table. This serene life soon dissolves as her mother’s desire to belong to a prestigious community in Wilmington, Delaware, consumes their family. The passion and creativity they once had burns out, and repetitiveness and pseudo-sophistication rule instead. Gail enters her teen years confused by this dichotomy and begins her quest for meaning, fulfillment, and empowerment. Later, Gail identifies herself as flower child of the 1960s’ peace movement and begins her travels outside of the United States in search of something more. She travels across Europe, staying in Paris, and then on through Africa; her trip culminates with a spiritual pilgrimage across the Sahara Desert. These foreign journeys prepare her for her own struggles with the “archetypal powers” of reason, emotion, critical insight, and articulated awareness.