

FOR YOUR VALENTINE: CHOCOLATE P.11, CHOCOLATE P.18, CHOCOLATE P.59

FEBRUARY 2011

New Mexico

MAGAZINE

SKY HIGH

SUMMIT THE
ORGAN MOUNTAINS

A photograph of a man and a woman standing on a rocky mountain peak. The man is wearing a plaid shirt and a hat, and the woman is wearing a light-colored jacket. They are looking out over a vast valley with mountains in the distance. The sky is clear and blue.

BEST EVER
BOOKS
ISSUE

WILLA CATHER

MAX EVANS

RUDOLFO ANAYA

NATALIE GOLDBERG

VALERIE PLAME WILSON

FEATURES

COVER STORY

26 Ain't No Mountain High Enough

Outside Las Cruces, the Organ Mountains are so steep, rocky, and downright inhospitable that you'd be crazy to climb them. Luckily, writer-photographer **Laurence Parent** sets out for the summit so you don't have to.

NEW MEXICO NOW

32 Max Evans's New Mexico

As our February issue invites you to cozy up with great New Mexico books, writer-photographer **Tim Keller** sits down with our state's best-known cowboy novelist to talk about the wide-open spaces that inspired books like *The Hi-Lo Country* and *The Rounders*.

PEOPLE

38 Speaking Volumes

Notable New Mexicans—from former CIA agent Valerie Plame Wilson to author Rudolfo Anaya to artist Gregory Lomayevsa—reveal the New Mexico novels that matter to them.

By **Wolf Schneider**

HERITAGE

46 Willa's World

After 84 years in print, Willa Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop* is still considered one of the best English-language novels of the 20th century. **Michael Patterson** takes you on a tour of the New Mexico landmarks that became her unforgettable settings.

FOLKLORE

54 Escape from Starvation Peak

This butte along I-25 between Santa Fe and Las Vegas, New Mexico, has long been a magnet for legends, all of them involving settlers holding out at the top, besieged and surrounded by raiding Indians. Did they survive, or starve to death? It depends on which version you believe.

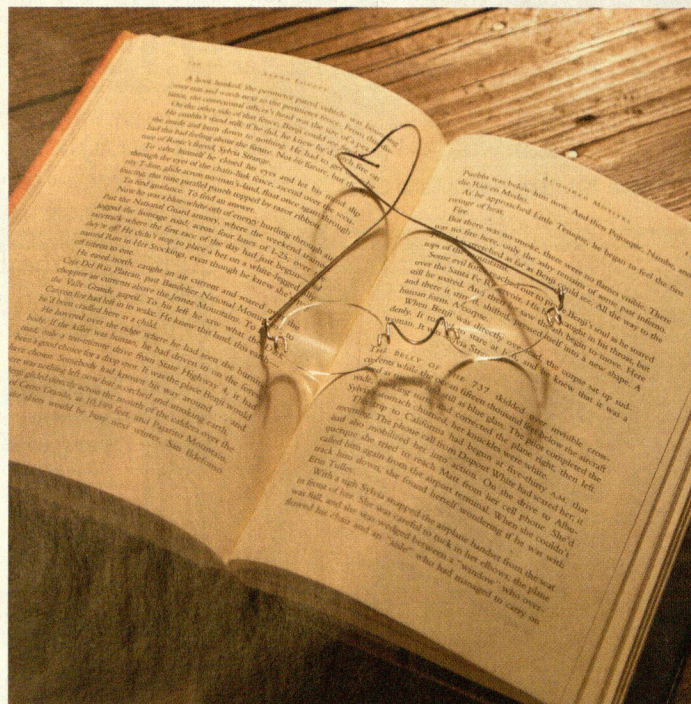
By **Maurilio E. Vigil** | Illustrations by **Ronald Kil**

ON THE COVER:

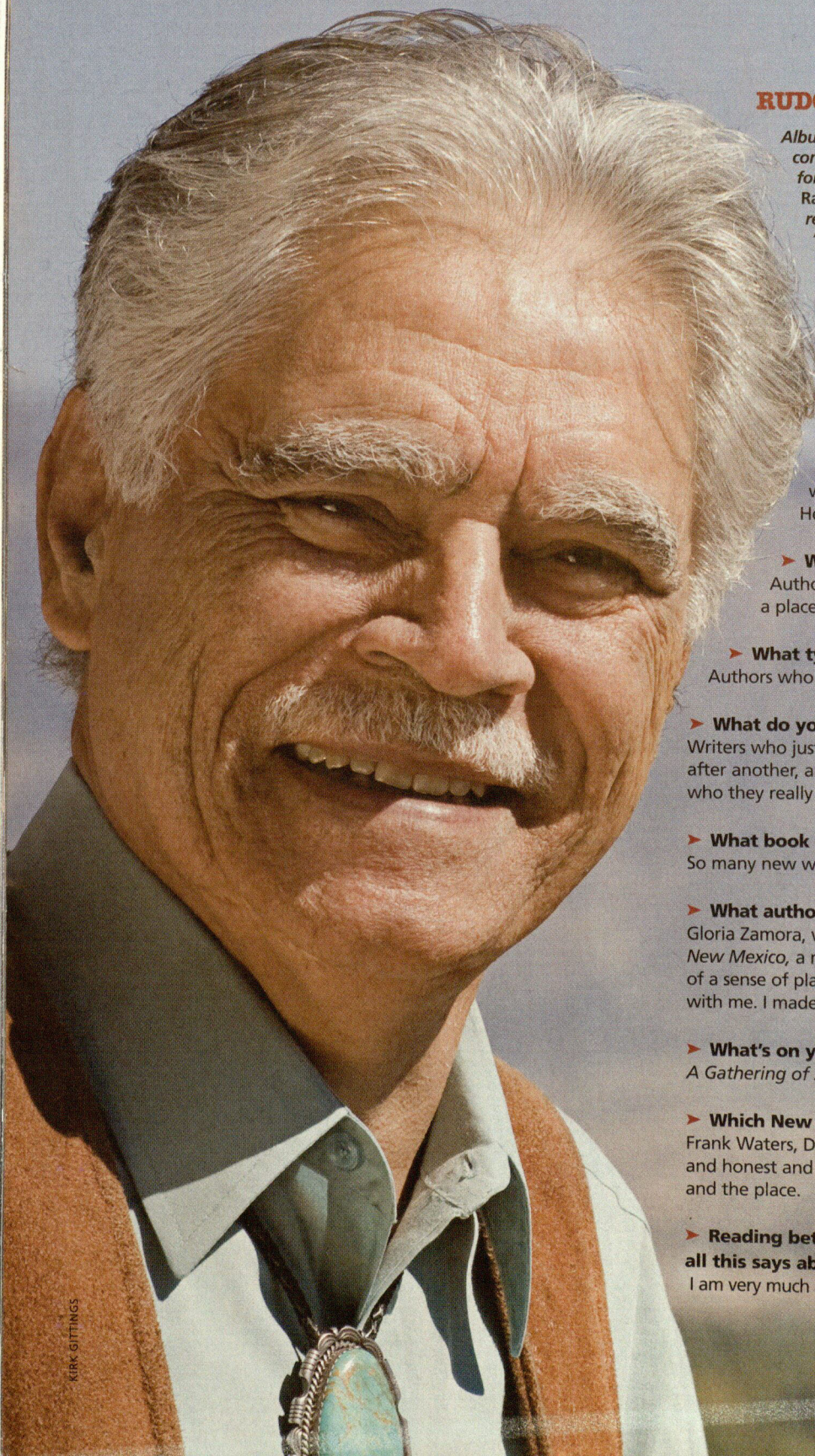
At first light, Lori Kae Schwab and Mark Uchanski survey the Mesilla Valley from the summit of the 8,950-foot Organ Needle. Read about their climb in "Ain't No Mountain High Enough," by writer-photographer **Laurence Parent** (page 26).



46 Willa Cather, author of *Death Comes for the Archbishop*. NIKOLAS MURAY - PALACE OF THE GOVERNORS ARCHIVES. NMHM/DCA NO. 111734



38 Notable New Mexicans and their favorite books. CLAY ELLIS



RUDOLFO ANAYA

Albuquerque-based Rudolfo Anaya, a founder of the contemporary Chicano literature movement, is best known for the novel *Bless Me, Ultima* and is currently finishing *Randy Lopez Goes Home*, about a young man who returns to the northern New Mexico village of his birth. "He's been living with the gringos too long, and he's afraid he's lost his real identity," explains Anaya.

► **What is your favorite New Mexico book?**

The Man Who Killed the Deer, by Frank Waters.

► **Why?**

He led me into the Pueblo world. After that, I read more, I attended ceremonials, and I went hunting with Cruz Trujillo up in the Taos Mountains. Frank was very important to me, and later on my wife and I knew him and his wife, Barbara, in Taos. He had a deep sense of spirituality and kindness.

► **What quality do you most value in an author?**

Authors who explore human nature, who take me into a place, culture, and spirituality.

► **What types of books do you read?**

Authors who relate to their own community and landscape.

► **What do you avoid?**

Writers who just use a plot or formula that's one event after another, and don't take chances with telling me who they really are, and their inner nature.

► **What book are you embarrassed not to have read?**

So many new writers in New Mexico.

► **What author would you like to share coffee or a beer with?**

Gloria Zamora, who just published *Sweet Nata: Growing Up in Rural New Mexico*, a memoir about growing up in the Mora Valley. It's full of a sense of place and wonderful descriptions. I invited her to coffee with me. I made the coffee, and she brought the cream, get it?

► **What's on your nightstand now?**

A Gathering of Some of My New Mexico Poems, by Victor di Suvero.

► **Which New Mexico author best captures the place?**

Frank Waters, Denise Chávez, John Nichols, Max Evans. They're open and honest and tell it like it is, and explore the soul of the people and the place.

► **Reading between the lines, what do you think all this says about you?**

I am very much at one with the place and the people and the history.