

# Poisoned Pen hosting biographer of GI Bill's 'father'

PROGRESS NEWS STAFF

The author of an Arizona Renaissance man considered the father of the GI Bill will be discussing his biography at a book signing in Scottsdale.

Historian and law professor Gary L. Stuart recently published "Call Him Mac: Ernest W. McFarland, The Arizona Years," and will be at the Poisoned Pen Bookstore, 4014 N. Goldwater Blvd., at 7 p.m. Jan. 28.

Arizona Historian Marshall Trimble once said, "If Arizona had a Mount Rushmore, the men on it would be Carl Hayden, Ernest McFarland, Barry Goldwater and John McCain."

McFarland, who died in 1984, was a U.S. Senator and the majority leader, Arizona governor, chief justice of the Arizona Supreme Court and founder of KTVK in Phoenix.

But perhaps his biggest achievement was the GI Bill, which enabled millions of World War II veterans to get a college education and buy a home.

Less well known is his life as a family man, country lawyer, rural judge, visionary, and the story behind his unlikely rise from Oklahoma farm boy to winning the

triple crown of Arizona politics.

Stuart explores that early life and McFarland's impact on Arizona and the nation.

Stuart's book looks at McFarland as a loving husband, father and grandfather, even in times of great personal tragedy and how he dealt with threats to his own life in 1919; the loss of his first wife and three children to illness in the 1930s; and a political loss in 1952 that no one saw coming.

One of McFarland's grandsons, John D. Lewis, said "He was down to earth. When he served as Chief Justice, the other justices didn't appreciate that everyone called him Mac. They thought it wasn't dignified. Despite all of his achievements, he always considered himself just a civil servant."

As U.S. Senate Majority Leader during his second term, he relentlessly pushed for and drafted the educational and home loan provisions of the GI Bill. He had been haunted by his memories of returning vets after WWI who came home to rampant unemployment and long soup kitchen lines.

His provisions in the bill ultimately gen-



Historian Gary L. Stuart, left, worked closely with John D. Lewis, the grandson of Ernest McFarland, in researching his book.

(Photo courtesy of Everardo Keeme Photography.)

erated in excess of 450,000 trained engineers, 91,000 scientists, 67,000 doctors, 22,000 dentists, 238,000 teachers, and other college educated professionals.

McFarland is also credited for creating the Arizona Parks System and was a

staunch advocate for Arizona water rights.

"Call Him Mac: Ernest W. McFarland, The Arizona Years," published by the University of Arizona Press, is available in bookstores nationwide and will be available at the Poisoned Pen. 🐾



## Western Themed Events for the Entire Family!

Feb 4 - 10 | FREE  
(Except Arizona Native Experience)  
**Western Week Events**

ArtWalk, Western movies, Native American food tasting

[ScottsdaleWesternWeek.com](http://ScottsdaleWesternWeek.com)

Feb 8 | 10am - 1pm | FREE  
(Mail arrives at noon)

**Hashknife Pony Express Arrival**

Special envelopes to send letters to friends

**Western Spirit: Scottsdale Museum of the West** | [HashknifePonyExpress.com](http://HashknifePonyExpress.com)



Feb 9 | FREE  
**Scottsdale Parada del Sol Parade and Trail's End Festival**

• 9:00am - Pre-Parade Entertainment

• 10:00am - Main Parade

Parade route from Drinkwater Blvd. along Scottsdale Rd., finishing at Brown Ave. & Indian School Rd.

Old Town Scottsdale  
[ScottsdaleParade.com](http://ScottsdaleParade.com)

• 12pm - 4pm | **Trail's End Festival**

Lots of horses, kids area, food, dancing, bands, Multi-cultural stages with entertainment

Old Town Scottsdale  
[ScottsdaleParade.com](http://ScottsdaleParade.com)

Feb 9 • 9am - 6pm

Feb 10 • 10am - 4pm | FREE  
**Arizona Indian Festival**

22 Tribes - Inter-tribal culture, arts, crafts, foods

Old Town - Scottsdale Civic Center  
[ArizonaIndianTourism.org](http://ArizonaIndianTourism.org)

Mar 7-10 | 7pm Mon-Sat • 2pm Sun  
Tickets \$5-\$45

**Rodeo Scottsdale**

Cowboys and cowgirls show their skill at riding broncos, tie-down roping, wrestling steers and more

WestWorld of Scottsdale  
[ParadaDelSol.net](http://ParadaDelSol.net)



Photos by Riley Wilson

