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Give thanks...

Hello readers and welcome to the November issue of North Texas Farm and Ranch magazine. We start out this month by honoring those who are serving or have served our country on Veteran's Day, Nov. 11. The staff of NTFR would like to thank you for your service.



Later this month we take a moment to remember our many blessings as we gather for Thanksgiving on Nov. 28. I, for one, am thankful for all the wonderful contributors of NTFR magazine. Each month they give us their best, with dynamic and interesting articles that keep us coming back for more.

Enjoy articles from them this month on a country musician with his own style, a bestselling author, a comical tale of what happens when you leave your keys in your truck, rules to follow when married to a cowboy, information on the grama grasses that fill our lands, the road to professional rodeo, and so much more.

Another blessing provided to me was the opportunity to interview this month's profile, 19-year-old Cade McCutcheon. This teenager comes from a successful family of top riders in reining, but he has made a name for himself this past year.

He gave up his Non Pro card and proved despite his age, he could compete with the best and walked away with big wins, including the biggest show in the sport's history: The Run for a Million. The rest of the country also caught a glimpse inside this young cowboy's life as they followed him on Paramount's unscripted series, "The Last Cowboy." Despite a wild year of success, McCutcheon was nothing but gracious, kind and wise beyond his years during our interview.

This Thanksgiving I also am thankful for you, the reader, who allow the contributors and I to keep doing what we love each month. Thank you for being a part of NTFR and we hope you enjoy this issue. For more NTFR visit our website at www.NTFRonline.com where you can subscribe to an online edition. To subscribe by mail call 940-872-5922 and make sure to like our Facebook page and follow us on Instagram and Twitter.

Wishing you all the best this November.

Dani Blackburn, editor

ON THE COVER

Cade McCutcheon, 19-year-old son of National Reining Horse Association million dollar riders Tom and Mandy McCutcheon and grandson of NRHA multi-million dollar rider and Hall of Fame member Tim McQuay and NRHA Hall of Fame member Colleen McQuay. The young McCutcheon emerged onto the Professional scene this year grabbing big wins, including a co-championship at the Run for a Million, proving the family legacy will live on. Americans learned more about the sport of reining and McCutcheon this past summer on Paramount's unscripted series, "The Last Cowboy."

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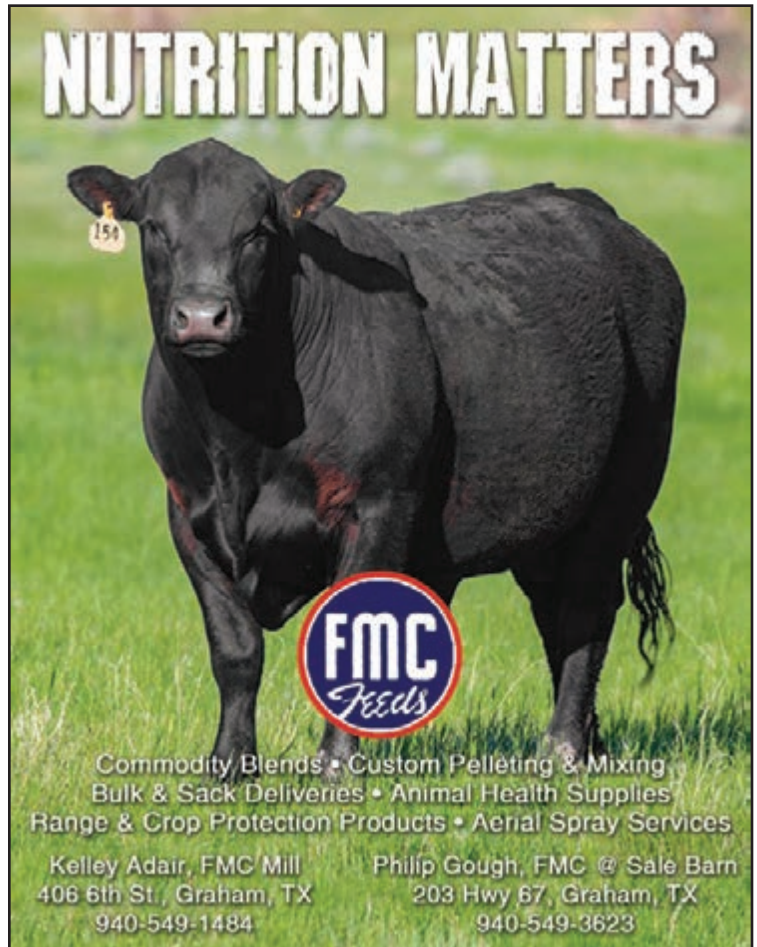


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North Texas Farm & Ranch

Published by Dani Blackburn [?] · September 26 at 4:47 PM ·

Wyatt Wells, Texas bull rider, competing in Las Cruces, N.M. at Rumble at the Rio. This tournament-style bull ride is connected with the Southern New Mexico State Fair. Wells went on to make the semi-finals round and the finals round, but unfortunately did not win the event after being bucked off. #avidvisualimageryrodeophotography



READER SUBMISSION



Kati, one-and-a-half years old, loves her chicken Ren.



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MEANWHILE BACK AT THE RANCH

By Rayford Pullen | rcpullen@yahoo.com

Here we are in the month when we normally transition from fall to the beginning of winter and with that change, we can add winter feeding to our list of chores.

The normal first freeze in our neck of the woods usually occurs around Nov. 15, and with that all perennial grass growth ceases, but the value of our grass will hang on for a couple of weeks or so. As we try to lower our cost of production, we normally don't begin our winter protein supplementation for a couple of weeks until after the first freeze, and the later that first freeze, the later in the year we begin feeding.

What do we feed? We feed some cubes to maybe our growing heifers or bulls, but the majority of our winter feeding is in the form of liquid feed, which I was never much of a fan until the cost of corn sky rocketed a few years back. Now, we put out liquid feed once a week and could increase that to every two weeks or longer if we had more feeders.

Our liquid feed has about 24 percent protein and 10 percent fat and after four years of use, we have not seen a decrease in calving percentage, weaning weights, breed back or any thing that affects our bottom line. The one thing I really like about this is overall convenience and knowing the cows are getting what they need whether or not we can get there. Another thing I like is sitting by the fire when it's 20 degrees or so and knowing the cows are getting fed. Before you rush out to get on this program, you need to have your cows in good shape and have plenty of forage in the form of either standing hay or baled hay.

For those of us who also feed

cubes to maybe our growing heifers or bulls, but the majority of our winter feeding is in the form of liquid feed, which I was never much of a fan until the cost of corn sky rocketed a few years back. Now, we put out liquid feed once a week and could increase that to every two weeks or longer if we had more feeders.

other day than every day since the cattle are able to get better use of one big feeding than several small ones. So, if you would normally feed five pounds of cubes per day, you will need to feed 10 pounds every other day. We also cheat a little on this and feed Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays with Friday feedings being 15 pounds. All this will still not compensate for poor cows going into winter.

Next on our agenda is selecting bulls for our fall calving cows and deciding which cows will be mated to certain bulls and in addition, we will breed several cows artificially to bulls we have selected for growth and good maternal qualities.

While I get calls for bulls that don't need to be registered, the potential buyer may then insert key words such as "I need one for heifers," or "I need one to wean heavy calves." It opens the door for me to explain that although they are selling commercial calves and have commercial cows, if a bull is not registered, it is a crap shoot to buy a bull that is not registered because you don't know what the EPDs indicate for birth weight or weaning weight, which is still our best resource for knowing what a bull is capable of doing. Throw the registration papers in the trash when you get them, because I make sure our customers get them, because now you have a bull, that according to the history of all his kin folks and his actual data, you are getting what you want or need.

When the grass turns color, either from green to brown in the fall or brown to green in the spring, is when we deworm our cows. Most of our customers have small herds of cows and little or no labor, making working cows




This month we can add winter feeding to our list of chores. (Photo courtesy Rayford Pullen)

through a squeeze quite a chore, and whether you have facilities or not, you can still deworm your cattle as easy as feeding cubes. Wormers such as this come in the form of either blocks or cubes and work really great, although they are not effective in preventing grubs, which enter an animal in the hoof area and surface in the back. However, for the other internal parasites, they work well and are easy to do.

Pounds of wormer per hundred pounds of body weight are in the feeding directions so if you have several cows and are concerned about them receiving the proper treatment because of boss cows or timid cows, we'll feed a few head, five or 10 at a time in a separate

pen and when that group cleans up their quota, another group is then fed. If you are using the blocks, all the cows should have equal access since it will take them several days for them to clean it up.

Please remember these ideas are my personal opinion and may not work for you.

Thanksgiving is coming up this month, and what do you have to be thankful for? Before we have dinner on Thanksgiving, our family gathers in a circle and each one there is asked what they are thankful for and hopefully in this way they all remember the reason for the holiday. From our family to yours, have a happy Thanksgiving. It's a wonderful time to be in the cattle business. 

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AG *elsewhere* SCOTLAND

PHOTO BY ANNETTE BRIDGES



NTFR contributor Annette Bridges recently ventured overseas to visit the beautiful country of Scotland. While there, she snapped some photos of what agriculture looks like in the United Kingdom's northernmost country. Pictured is a Scotland sheep farm.®

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AG *elsewhere* MONTANA

PHOTO | DESCRIPTION BY LINDSEY MONK



A time to be thankful and count your blessings, such as green grass, fat calves, outstanding neighbors and gentle horses 🌻

RANCH, Rodeo & Randomness

By Pepper Stewart



RURAL STREAMING TV IS HERE TO STAY, I THINK?

Are you a farmer, rancher, equestrian, live the country life, or are just a fan of the rural lifestyle but can't find the right outlet for Rural TV programming?

Today technology is expanding by the minute with knowledge and make believe at your fingertips.

A recent 2017 study revealed 95 percent of Americans own a mobile device and 77 percent of them are smartphones. With high-speed internet services struggling to reach rural customers, the smartphone is making up for it.

With these record numbers of users, there is no limit to the content that can be found on the smartphone, and Rural TV programming is keeping up with technology.

Let's take a look at where Rural TV started and what it has morphed into with today's technology reaching from the big city to the small town by a communication device called a smartphone.

Cable & satellite TV channel RFD-TV launched in 2000. It was the nation's first 24-hour television network featuring programming focused on the agribusiness, equine and the rural lifestyle, along with traditional country music and entertainment.

After a few years, it was made clear RFD-TV and rural programming was sticking around and recently added the Cowboy Chan-



With high-speed internet services struggling to reach rural customers, the smartphone is making up for it. (Photo courtesy Metro Creative)

nel. You can pay a monthly fee to watch RFD-TV on a smartphone and/or mobile device on a downloadable application.

Next up in 2014, another rural based channel emerged called RideTV with equine dominate programming.

Both Rural based TV channels can be found on various cable

and satellite providers in the combined channel packages. You can pay a monthly fee to now watch RideTV on a smartphone and or mobile device on a downloadable application.

In 2018 Professional Bull Riders launched RidePass, a new 24/7 digital streaming service offering the world's most comprehensive

PBR and western sports content, encompassing more than 500 hours annually of exclusive live event coverage, news and opinion programs, and original and scripted series for a monthly fee. Stream events on a smartphone, mobile device and a computer.

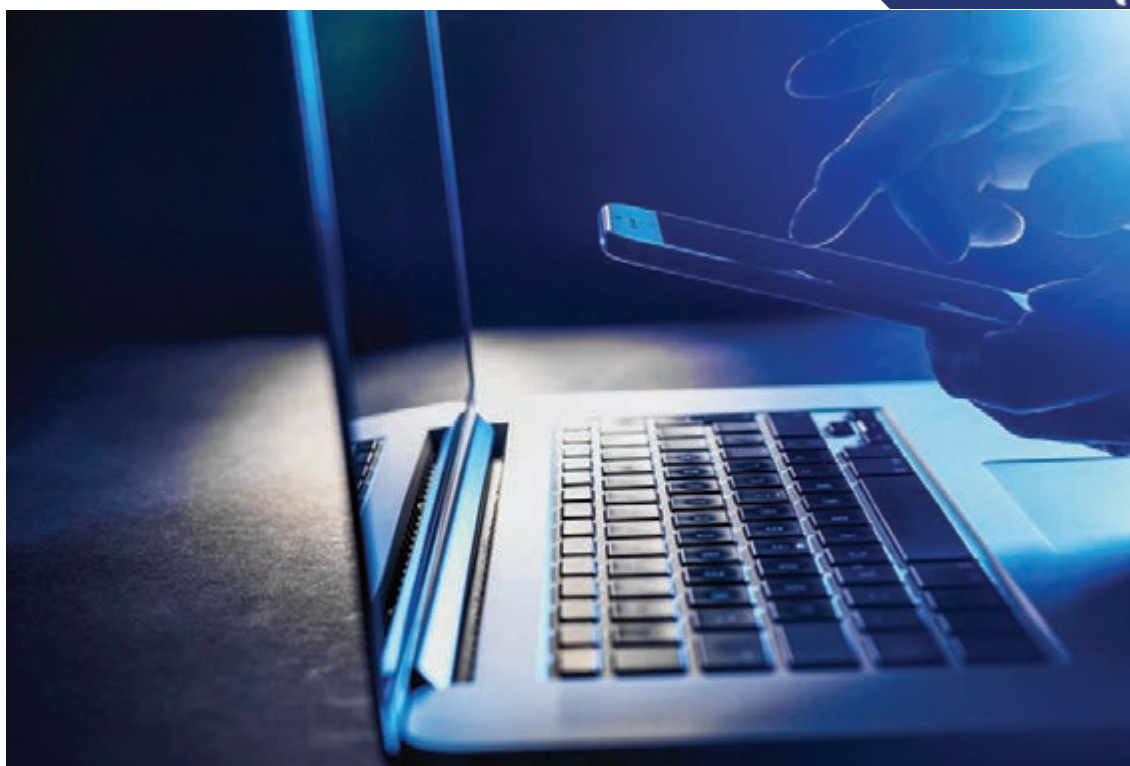
What if I told you there is a free channel full of Rural TV program-

ming you can stream online 24/7? Bursting onto the streaming Rural TV scene in 2016 came Farm and Ranch TV with 30 plus rural programs with no subscription fees and multiple outlet to stream the channel.

Farm and Ranch TV airs quality Agriculture, Equine, as well as Western Sports and Outdoors content to rural viewers without having to pay expensive cable or satellite subscriptions that air hundreds of channels that you wouldn't watch, or even want in your home.

If you have access to the internet, you have access to Farm and Ranch TV for free. Why would you not want to check it out?

The future of Rural TV is here to stay. With multiple networks and outlets, you will be sure to find something to watch that you can share with your internet savvy friends and family.®

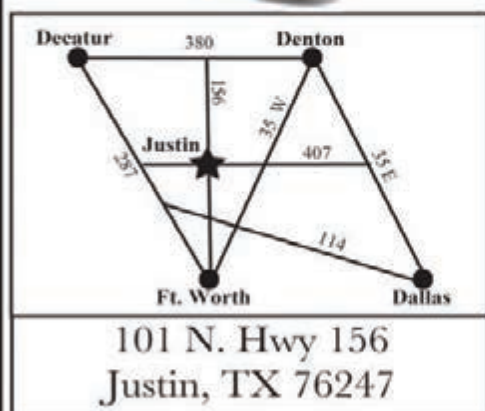


Technology has allowed users to access their favorite agriculture, equine, western sports, and outdoors content in even the remote areas of the country. (Photo courtesy Metro Creative)



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LAND MARKET REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2019 RURAL LAND SALES

September always marks the beginning of hunting season in Texas, as well as the fall buying season for rural properties. Our five-county area of North Texas has shown a strong start to the fall, with 34 properties going into contract in September, and 61 new listings coming on the market. Closings picked up their pace in all counties as well, and the days on market seem to be staying level with the rest of 2019. I do see a slight decrease in the selling to list price ratio, most likely an indicator their listings were overpriced to begin with.

This is a good time for sellers to do a little cleaning to make their property look more appealing. A simple mowing, trimming tree limbs, and straightening gates can result in more showings and higher offers. Make sure your agent takes new photos after you complete these maintenance measures so that you get the best results from your work. Spend a weekend sprucing the place up, and you'll see a noticeable difference in the number of showings you will have.

<u>COOKE COUNTY</u>					<u>MONTAGUE COUNTY</u>				
AREA	ACRES	PRICE/ACRE	SELL TO LIST PRICE	DAYS ON MARKET	AREA	ACRES	PRICE/ACRE	SELL TO LIST PRICE	DAYS ON MARKET
Muenster	40	\$5,500.00	100%	11	Bowie	14.04	\$4,985.75	90.65%	337
Gainesville	48.19	\$5,300.00	85.14%	107	Bowie	15.36	\$6,510.42	90.91%	63
Gainesville	78	\$5,126.92	100%	25	Bowie	40	\$5,500.00	91.67%	607
Gainesville	40	\$14,000.00	93.33%	44	Bowie	37.841	\$5,999.84	92.25%	81

<u>DENTON COUNTY</u>					<u>WISE COUNTY</u>				
AREA	ACRES	PRICE/ACRE	SELL TO LIST PRICE	DAYS ON MARKET	AREA	ACRES	PRICE/ACRE	SELL TO LIST PRICE	DAYS ON MARKET
Sanger	10	\$19,000.00	100%	1	Bridgeport	25	\$6,800.00	95.24%	39
Sanger	15	\$14,000.00	93.36%	159	Paradise	11.4	\$17,105.26	100%	4
Sanger	12	\$18,666.67	100%	318	Alvord	35	\$7,000.00	96.55%	11
Pilot Point	12.813	\$18,730.98	96.39%	153	Decatur	22.21	\$13,845.11	92.34%	3
					Springtown	39.25	\$9,044.59	90.45%	4
					Decatur	64.126	\$6,236.75	82.64%	123
					Bridgeport	98	\$5,612.24	95.94%	222
					Alvord	75	\$8,380.96	86.7%	53

Information from North Texas Real Estate Information Service (NTREIS) for Farm & Ranch raw land data, for 10 or more acres for the month of September 2019. (Photo by Jon Nunneley)





The road to **PROFESSIONAL RODEO**

By Phillip Kitts

The exposure of rodeo to the youth has been covered a lot over many platforms during the last few years. With the emergence of youth bull riding organizations and long lists of up and coming youth associations, it has become very apparent rodeo has a bright future. This future has the same progression as any other sport, but the path may be a little unique.

If you follow rodeo much, you probably hear a good amount about the growing junior high and high school associations that cover most all of America. These two organization are just another feeder system that guides the youth of rodeo toward their future.

A true rodeo fan knows in between high school and the pros there is a whole other level that just may have a huge influence on rodeo on all levels. The National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association might just be one of those sleeper associations that has a massive influence on the rodeo world but just does not get the fair attention it deserves.

Anyone in America knows all too well how much the National Collegiate Athletic

Association is a powerhouse in all sports. Millions of dollars are spent on promoting and conducting athletic competitions at schools all over America. No, the NIRA may not get the exposure its big brother the NCAA gets. The NCAA financial scholarships are enormous compared to the small number the NIRA awards every year. However, much like the NCAA, the NIRA is producing champions every year.

The NIRA is broken down into regions that all conduct rodeos throughout the year. Each year student athletes compete at rodeos in order to accumulate enough points to qualify for the College National Finals Rodeo in Casper, Wyo., every year. In order to qualify for CNFR, a student athlete must finish in the top three of their respective events within their region.

Unlike professional rodeo, college rodeo offers more events that a student athlete may qualify in.

The event list for college rodeo is saddle bronc, bull riding, tie down roping, team roping, steer wrestling, barrel racing, goat tying and break away roping.

During the last few years our team has been honored to take part in the New Mexico State University Spring and Fall Rodeo. The New Mexico State University team is coached by Logan Corbett, who is still an active competitor in bareback in the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association.

NMSU rodeo is part of the Grand Canyon Region and consists of a long list of strong agriculture-based schools that continue to be a strong influence in the rodeo world. These schools continue to produce strong rodeo athletes who move on to compete in the highest levels of rodeo.

The reality is it should be no surprise this section of America has so many true born cowboys.

Some of this comes along with the top-quality coaching that some of these schools have acquired. A great example of this is Mesa Lands Community College out of Tucumcari, N.M. Mesa Lands recognized their potential talent and went out and secured a superb coach in Matt Hughes, who had an exemplary bull riding career which started in the Midwest.

With this growth in college rodeo in the southwest, a new and impressive trend of Texas rodeo athletes migrating toward the Grand Canyon region has become prevalent.

During a short conversation with Hughes, he pointed out he is seeing a steady increase in Texas rodeo athletes making their college commitment to the southwest.

Some of this could be accounted for through the fact the region is somewhat smaller than most of the NIRA regions, which affords a student athlete a better chance at qualifying for the CNFR. However, while talking with some of the competitors, it seems that just as much as the smaller size is a difference, the high quality of coaching is playing a big part.

During our talks with some of these student athletes, we asked the question “Which factor paid a bigger portion of the decision making, the quality of the rodeo team or the school?” In nearly every case it was a balance of the two. Many of the student athletes chose specific schools based on the degree programs that are offered while some made their decision based on geographical preferences.

Just as many chose specific schools based on the rodeo coach and the previous successes within their school’s history.

If you are to judge how well a set of school’s rodeo recruitment is by the distance a student athlete travels in order to attend a college, you would have to rate schools within the Grand Canyon Region near the top. As you look through the hometowns of the student athletes, you see plenty of competitors from the northwest and in some schools’ cases you will even see them as far away as Canada.

In the grand scheme of things, it is proven college athletics has a strong influence in America, and some say even influences a good portion of the country’s day to day life. If one were to ask if this same influence applies to college rodeo, the answer would probably have to be yes.

No, the sport of rodeo is not as mainstream as football or any other of the college sports, but within the agricultural communities of America, youth grow up influenced by the sport. As these same youth grow, they progress just like any other youngster as they look toward the future. This vision to the forward years often leads the youth toward college and continuing to compete in a sport that has been the backbone of their lives. This means selecting a college that can support their dreams.

The southwest is becoming a stopping point for many rodeo superstars on their road to stardom.®



Each year student athletes compete at rodeos in order to accumulate enough points to qualify for the College National Finals Rodeo.



Unlike professional rodeo, college rodeo offers more events that an athlete may qualify in.



The event list for college rodeo is saddle bronc, bull riding, tie down roping, team roping, steer wrestling, barrel racing, goat tying and break away roping. (Photos courtesy Phillip Kitts)

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Contagious Ecthyma

By Barry Whitworth, DVM

Contagious Ecthyma (CE) is a highly contagious viral disease found throughout the world wherever sheep are kept. The virus primarily affects young lambs and kids within a few weeks after birth. It also is seen among weaned lambs and kids that are comingled such as in feedlot situations. Older adults not previously exposed or with compromised immune system may be affected as well as some other domestic and wild animals. Although no studies have been done, the disease most likely causes significant economic losses. Economic losses are attributed to weight loss and death loss. The disease is zoonotic, which means the virus can infect humans. The human disease is referred to as ORF. Some other common names for the disease are sore mouth, ORF, scabby mouth and contagious pustular dermatitis.

In addition to sheep and goats, the disease has been found in Alaskan mountain goats, Dall's sheep, muskoxen, caribou, Sitka black-tailed deer, alpacas, deer, pronghorn and elk. The disease was reported to be in some dogs that were fed sheep, but the virus was not confirmed. The virus was found in three cats with skin lesions. Some believe these cats may have been immunocompromised. Rabbits, mice and Macaque monkeys have been infected experimentally.

The cause of CE is an ORF virus, which is in the genus *Parapoxvirus*. In small ruminants, the virus is located in skin lesions and scabs. The virus may be transmitted by direct contact with the lesions or by fomites. The virus can be found in the healed skin lesions for a short period of time. In laboratory



Most cases of CE improve without treatment in three to four weeks. However, some intervention may be necessary. Animals that refuse to eat may require tube feeding or softened food. If secondary bacterial infections become a problem, antibiotics may be required. (Courtesy photo)

conditions, the virus is viable in the scabs for several years. The virus is thought to enter the animal through cuts or abrasions in the mouth. Also, erupting teeth may be an entry point for the virus.

Once an animal has been exposed to the virus, clinical signs appear in a few days. The clinical signs of the disease vary in severity. Initial clinical signs are a wet mouth with red areas around the commissure of the mouth. This is followed by raised circular areas that may become vesicles and pustules. The pustules will

rupture and ooze fluid on to the wool or hair. The lesions mature into scabs. The lesions are usually found on the lips, mouth and nose. Other areas where lesions may be found are the ears, eyelids, feet, genitalia and mammary glands. The lesions are painful, which leads some young animals to refuse to nurse or eat. If the feet are affected, animals may become lame. Lambs may transmit the virus to the dams while nursing. This may lead to mastitis. Ulcers may be found in the mouth on occasions. Rarely, the lesions

progress into the esophagus, digestive tract, and lungs. This may result in digestive problems and pneumonia.

There have been reports with this disease of severe non-healing proliferative lesions in sheep and goats (Smith et al.) (Concha-Bermejillo et al.). The lesions are similar to the ones described above but much worse and do not heal. In these cases, additional lesions seen are swollen lymph nodes, arthritis and chronic fibrinous pneumonia. The animals
See DISEASE page 24

Disease

Continued from page 23

did not respond to treatment for secondary bacterial infections. Antiviral treatment has not been reported in these cases.

Most veterinarians diagnose CE on clinical signs. The virus can be identified by Electron microscopy (EM). However, EM cannot separate one parapoxvirus from another. In order to confirm the ORF virus, other laboratory tests are required.

Most cases of CE improve without treatment in three to four weeks. However, some intervention may be necessary. Animals that refuse to eat may require tube feeding or soften food. If secondary bacterial infections become a problem, antibiotics may be required. Applying salves to soften the scabs may help alleviate the

pain. Treatment with cidofovir has been shown to rapidly resolve the lesions (Sonvico et al.). In herd situations, the treatment is impractical and expensive.

The best way to prevent CE is to maintain a closed, disease-free herd. If that is not possible, the producer should follow a strict biosecurity protocol for the introduction of new animals. If the disease is present on the ranch or farm, a vaccine is available to reduce the incidence and severity of the disease.

The vaccine should not be used in disease-free flocks and herds. The vaccine is a live virus, so producers need to be cautious when administering the vaccine. Contagious Ecthyma is a public health concern. People involved

with sheep and goats should be cautious when handling sick animals. Immunocompromised individuals should avoid contact with CE infected animals.

CE is and will be a problem in sheep and goat operations. If a producer would like more information about CE, he/she should contact his/her veterinarian or Oklahoma State University Extension Educator. Also, information is available at <http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/DiseaseInfo/factsheets.php>.

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EQUINE SUPERSTARS & EVERYDAY HEROES

By Janis Blackwell

A Little Rooster with a Big Heart

This month Equine Superstars and Everyday Heroes will tell the story of a little bay horse who is like the candy we see in the stores around Halloween; fun size. That horse is “Rooster,” a barely 14-hand Galiceno horse, and the longtime partner of Ryan White of Weatherford, Texas.

Rooster was raised on the Tinney ranch near Jacksboro, Texas. He was sold at a young age to an English riding school and trained to be an English jumper.

After a while the school sold him to be the mount for a young girl who was one of their students. That pairing did not work out, and he was taken to Gina McPherson to sell on consignment. Coincidentally, about the same time, Ryan had told her parents she wanted a horse, and they had decided to take her to Gina for lessons once a week while looking for the right horse.

Like any horse crazy little girl, Ryan noticed the new little horse on Gina’s place right away and began to tell her she wanted to ride the new horse. Gina would repeatedly tell her, “He’s too much horse for you,” but after just a short while of being asked so persistently, Gina gave in and let her ride Rooster.

According to Ann White, Ryan’s mom, the two were the perfect match. Ryan’s birthday was coming up and her parents were thinking they’d try to buy Rooster for her, but the price was still a little high.

He was acting badly and getting in trouble with Gina who told his owners, “Sell this horse



Ryan White and Rooster. (Photo courtesy Ann White)

or come and get him.” So a reasonable price was agreed on, and the Whites bought Rooster and surprised Ryan with him on her birthday. So began a partnership that would span more than 19 years of competition and championships.

At the time Ryan got Rooster, she was just nine and he was seven. She rode him every day, but he did not stop his ornery ways. Ann said sometimes he would act up and Ryan would get off, walk around in front of him, point her little finger at his nose

and tell him, “We are not having any more of that, mister!” Rooster would hang his head and act sorry ... for a while.

Ornery or not, the pair quickly learned to compete in all the playday events. Within one year they had progressed from just riding to running and winning in the events. The team soon moved on to junior rodeos and eventually Texas high school rodeos.

During the time Ryan and Rooster were competing in rodeos, she used him in the goat tying, breakaway roping, barrel racing

and pole bending. Several of those events he didn’t really care for and they kind of fell by the wayside, but in the pole bending, they were a force to be reckoned with.

They competed in and won the Region 3 Texas High School Rodeo in the pole bending, winning a saddle and qualifying for the state rodeo. At the Texas High School State Finals Rodeo they placed in the top three and qualified for the National High School Rodeo Finals. Also at the state finals rodeo in contrast to his intensity and speed in the arena, during the special needs children’s event, Rooster stood perfectly still, dropped his head and was patient while children in walkers and wheelchairs were all around him.

When it came time to run poles, he was all business and all about the race. Ryan and Rooster won numerous championship saddles for individual events and all-around championships as well as too many buckles to count.

There isn’t much this duo hasn’t tried during their long partnership. Ryan and Rooster tried their hand at horse show events like halter, trail and western pleasure (which Ann said they did very fast), playday events, rodeos, parades, queen contests, and just carrying kids around having fun being kids.

In fact, Ann caught Ryan with four kids piled on Rooster at one time from his neck to his tail.

She rode in the Fort Worth Stock Show Parade and carried the flag while wearing her cheer-leading uniform in the Paradise Homecoming Parade where Ryan



Ryan White and Rooster.



Ryan White and a few of the awards she and Rooster have won.

attended school. In the homecoming parade, they were placed right in front of the firetruck, which kept sounding its siren, but it never bothered Rooster.

Ann said once they weren't sure where her three-year-old niece was, and when they found her, she was in the pasture with Rooster standing up against Rooster's chest with her arms reaching as far as she could around his neck giving him a hug.

Now that Ryan is grown, married and a mother herself, Rooster lives at home with her parents where he has spent the last 19 years of his life.

There are other horses there now, but make no mistake, small, 26 years old now and retired, Rooster is still the boss. Hats off to Rooster, another Equine Superstar and Everyday Hero.

Until next month faithful readers...Happy Trails.



Ryan White and Rooster. (Photos courtesy Ann White)



Equine Gastric Ulcer Syndrome (EGUS)

By Garrett Metcalf, DVM

Many horse owners will experience a horse that has gastric ulcers because it is that common of a problem across many disciplines and performance levels. Gastric ulcers don't only occur in adult horses but can affect just about every age group of horse from foals to adults. Several years ago a horse that was dropping weight, not performing normally, acted "cinchy" and was not eating well was blamed for poor doers or behavioral issues, but today it might be much more than that.

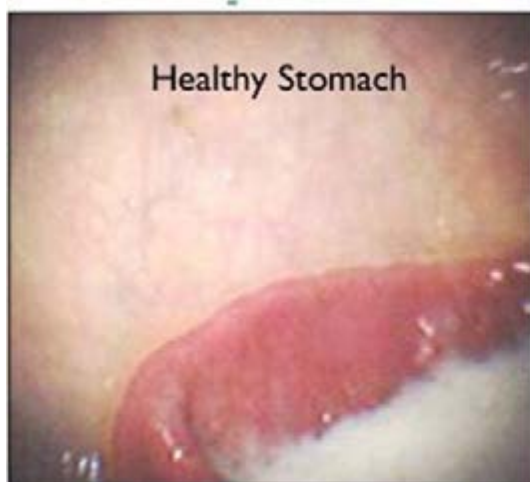
Equine Stomach

To have a better understanding of EGUS in horses a deeper understanding of the horses' stomach is needed. The equine stomach has two very distinct layers of gastric lining. The layer that gets the most attention is the most upper portion of the stomach that is lined with squamous mucosa or the non-glandular mucosa. This layer has poorer defense mechanisms to protect itself from the harsh gastric acid and low pH levels compared to the lower aspect of the stomach.

The lower level of the stomach is lined with glandular gastric mucosal cells with strong defenses against low pH and is also responsible for gastric acid production. Between these two layers is a sharp division called the margo plicatus where often gastric ulcers form. Research has shown there is a gradient of pH levels in the equine stomach with the lowest pH levels (more acidic) near the very bottom of the stomach where the stomach empties and higher levels of pH near the top. This will be important information later discussed about ways to prevent gastric ulcer formation.

Clinical Signs of EGUS

Horses with EGUS can have a



Healthy Stomach



Stomach Ulcers

Common signs of EGUS are weight loss, mild to moderate recurrent colic, eating preferences of hay before grain or refusing grain, and attitude changes. Another common symptom is loss of performance in performance horses across various disciplines. (Courtesy photo)

variety of clinical signs and symptoms. Common signs of EGUS are weight loss, mild to moderate recurrent colic, eating preferences of hay before grain or refusing grain, and attitude changes. Another common symptom is loss of performance in performance horses across various disciplines. These symptoms can vary in severity, be intermittent and overlap with various other diseases making it difficult to diagnose based on symptoms alone.

Foals and Weanlings

Gastric ulceration in young horses can be related to many factors and other concurrent diseases that young horses experience the first few months of life. Gastric ulceration in youngsters can be related to concurrent illness, stress of weaning, delayed gastric emptying and prolonged periods of time between feedings.

Foals in particular can get a much more severe form of ulceration that extends beyond the stomach into the first few inches or feet of small intestine, called the duodenum, leading to gastroduodenal ulceration. Common illnesses that cause foals to have

decrease nursing vigor, stress and delayed gastric emptying, such as enterocolitis, can set foals up to experience serious gastric and duodenum ulceration. The worst outcome of these severe ulcerations in foals is stricturing of the bowel, causing an outflow blockage of the ingesta from the stomach leading to chronic colic symptoms that ultimately necessitates euthanasia unless surgical correction is performed.

Adult EGUS, Diagnosis and Prevention

Luckily adult horses do not get as severe complications from gastric ulceration as foals do, but it can have serious effects on performance and gastrointestinal health. EGUS can be a very proliferation problem in high performance horses affecting up to 97 percent of racehorses and performance horses. Even as many as 37 percent of recreational horses were found to have EGUS in one study group.

The gold standard diagnostic method is to perform gastroscopic exam of the stomach using a long video endoscope to visualize the lining of the stomach. Gastric

ulcers are commonly found in specific regions and these areas are carefully examined for evidence of ulceration. A grading scale from 0-4 is used to classify the severity of the ulceration and to tailor the treatment plan to the severity of the disease. The only FDA approved and most proven method to treat EGUS is Gastrogard (omeprazole). The treatment course of the disease varies due to the severity but on average will require treatment for two to six weeks.

Methods of preventing or reducing the risk of gastric ulceration have been proposed and have some levels of success. Many of these methods are management and husbandry changes related to feeding.

Horses were never meant to be fed meals or high concentrate diets with longer periods of times between receiving forage. The design of the gastrointestinal tract and continuous production of gastric acid makes it necessary for a horse to forage nearly 60 to 70 percent of the time out of each day. Concentrated meal feeding methods have been shown to



exacerbate EGUS in various age groups of horses.

Matter of fact, the experimental method of inducing EGUS in horses is to fast a horse from all feed material for prolonged periods of time. The recommendations for horses that are undergoing stress of hauling, changes in environment or are performing at higher levels is to using slow feeding methods to deliver small amounts of hay over a much longer period of time, mimicking the natural behavior of foraging a horse would normally be doing.

Ways to achieve this are by feeding hay in hay bags with small openings to make it last longer or using specially designed feedings that have screens placed over the hay to limit the amount of hay taken in with each bite. It is further recommended to feed horses all the way up to an event or before being worked. Alfalfa particularly has been shown to have



If you suspect your horse has symptoms of EGUS, talk to your veterinarian to see if those symptoms are potentially signs your horse has gastric ulcers. (Courtesy photo)

a buffering ability with higher levels of calcium to increase the pH levels making it more basic and preventing gastric juices from splashing up on the more sensitive

non-glandular parts of the stomach lining.

If you suspect your horse has symptoms of EGUS, talk to your veterinarian to see if those symp-

toms are potentially signs your horse has gastric ulcers. They can further discuss performing a gastroscopic exam and treatment plan for your horse.®

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Author and Cowgirl

By Krista Lucas

The popular mystery book series Gotcha Detective Agency was created in 2011. With 12 books in the series, “Let Us Prey” has been downloaded the most, and the series is a perfect mix of suspense, humor and crime fiction.

The USA Today bestselling author of these acclaimed novels is none other than Jamie Lee Scott, who currently resides in northeast Texas and is developing her own performance horse breeding and training program called Root Beer Ranch.

Scott grew up in Salinas, Calif., home to one of the largest professional rodeos in the United States. She caught the horse bug at an early age, growing up around the racetrack.

“I’m the third generation to work with racehorses in my family. My grandfather gave me my first horse when I was 11, and I’ve had them ever since,” Scott said. “I started with showing horses, but by the time I got to college, I’d found rodeo to be more fun.” The love of writing came a little later in life during a critical writing course in college. Thanks to an English professor who submitted a case study Scott had written for a class to Physician and Sports Medicine, Scott realized her newfound love for writing.

Scott later became a contributing writer for Crafts Business Magazine and said her reading of choice has always been mysteries, suspense or thrillers. She has now written 23 novels and counting.

“I started writing because I needed an outlet for the stress of owning and running a restaurant with my husband, and with mysteries, I get to plot and solve a murder,” Scott said. “It is very cathartic. I can’t imagine writing



(Above) Best selling-author Jamie Lee Scott’s palomino stallion (Whogivesabugnflit) who she affectionately calls Chili. (Below) Jamie Lee Scott, USA Today best-selling author. (Photos courtesy Jamie Lee Scott)

any other genre.”

Scott and her husband, Scot Dierks, owned a fast food restaurant for 21 years, and during that time she was working more than 80 hours a week and still finding the time to write.

“For the aspiring writer out there, it’s a marathon not a sprint. I had four books published before I hit the USA Today best-seller list, and I hoped that would catapult me to another level, but it’s still a daily grind,” Scott said. “If you want to write badly enough, you’ll find the time. No matter what, just sit down and write every day.”

The bestselling author is currently working on two novels at the same time.

“Dismembers Only” is the 13th



novel in the Gotcha Detective Agency series, and Dirty Bite is the fourth novel in the Kate Darby crime fiction series.

With a thriving restaurant business and writing career, Scott spent about a decade away from barrel racing and breakaway roping. After selling their restaurant and making the move to Texas, where there are barrel races and ropings nearly every night of the week, she is returning back to her roots in the horse business.

Root Beer Ranch is even a nod to what helped buy the couple's dream ranch, their A&W restaurant. Scott has made the leap into the breeding side of the equine industry with a 2016 palomino stallion named Whogivesabugnflit.

"He's my pride and joy and a total surprise that I own a stallion. When I bought him, I wasn't sure he'd remain a stallion, but all through raising and training him, he's been a perfect gentleman," Scott said. "He was trained for breakaway roping by an incredible horseman in Iowa named

Andy Hansen, and he's currently in Lone Oak being trained for barrel racing with Baylee Bookman. We are extremely excited for his future and hope he'll soon become a household name in the barrel racing and breakaway roping industry."

A successful writing career has given Scott the flexibility to continue to do two things she loves, riding horses and solving mysteries.

"I don't know what I'd do if I didn't have horses," Scott said. "There's something about watching horses in a pasture or grooming and working with them that is better than therapy."

The California native is happy to be a permanent Texas resident these days. Scott has found her people in horse country and hopes to have a good start on a future in the industry with her young stallion and Root Beer Ranch. Look for Scott's upcoming novels online, and check out her website www.jamieleescott.com for more information. 

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WHEN A CITY GIRL *goes country*

By Annette Bridges

I'm always surprised and delighted by the messages that whisper in my ear while I'm driving my beloved red tractor. Every. Single. Time. If you read my first "When a City Girl Goes Country" column then you will notice I'm donning a new hay hauling dress in this picture. On that note, I am shocked yet tickled I have no problem these days having my photo taken and published with no make-up, hair in a ponytail and at the heaviest weight in my life, but my friends, I do have on my dang lipstick and I am in my Wonder woman pose. Enough said.

Have you ever considered how driving an old tractor on a hot summer day to pick up hay bales is like your life?

Maybe your sciatica is screaming at you as you hit every bump in the field, but you keep going because that is what you must do. There is no stopping. You wouldn't even consider quitting. You keep moving along because you know that is the only way to accomplish what is needed. It's the fastest way, too.

Some days are especially hot. There is not even a little breeze to wipe the sweat off your brow, and so you sweat. A lot. You feel every agonizing drop. The more you sweat the messier you get, too. Every piece of grass or grain of dirt gets embedded onto your skin. There is no time or way to wipe anything off. Both hands are needed to maintain control of your steering wheel. You can't allow yourself to be distracted. You must stay focused on the task at hand.



Annette Bridges in her Wonder Woman pose. (Photo courtesy Annette Bridges)

Why are those darn bales in the corners so difficult to get sometimes? Do you need to change your course? Pull out a little wider? Move in a little closer? Sometimes you have to stop and drag the bale to a better spot to make it possible for the loader to pick it up. You keep making adjustments as you take every turn. It's satisfying when what you did worked. You feel proud of yourself, and you should.

Your old tractor seat is not comfortable. Sometimes you feel

like you're going to fall off as it rocks you in every direction as you move along your way. You wish you had a new one, a better looking one without holes, one with more support, one that feels stronger and sturdier, one that is softer and provides more padding when you hit the big bumps in the ground. Yet your old seat survives every ride. Even though it always feels like it's going to fall apart, it doesn't.

There are the delights even during a not-so-pleasant ride. You

love seeing the birds that sit on hay bales in the distance. You love the broad horizon that surrounds you. You love the fragrance of fresh cut grass. You are grateful to share every moment you can with your husband.

I bought a new phone case recently that has two statements inscribed on it. Live the life you love. Love the life you live. I don't always remember to love the life I'm living, especially in a hot hay field on a hot summer day, but this day? I do remember.



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BEHIND THE CHUTES

Thoughts from a Rodeo Wife

By Lacey Corbett

"Cowboys ain't easy to love and they're harder to hold."

Well, Willie, you sure were right; however I'm going to disagree with you. Mamas, please let your babies grow up to be cowboys. There's just something about the cowboy way of life, and I'm thankful every day I married one. However, loving a cowboy isn't always roses. I thought I'd share a few things I've learned while loving my cowboy.

1. You may own a boot rack, but there won't be boots on it.

If you love a cowboy, there's a chance you own a boot rack. If your family is anything like ours, it will contain anything but boots. You can nag all you want, but I'd get used to putting boots on it yourself. Your cowboy has better things to do.

2. Copenhagen...everywhere.

Ladies, if you haven't gotten used to it, you better just get used to it. You'll find it everywhere. I find cans in my truck, in my purse, in my diaper bag and on every piece of furniture we own.

I find new hiding places for spit-ters every day and have cleaned my fair share of spilled ones. Cowboys have their hats and they also have their Copenhagen.

3. Your garage isn't for your cars. It's just an extension of the practice pen.

Double whammy. My cowboy is a college rodeo coach as well as a professional bareback rider. If he isn't on the spur board in the garage himself you'll find a team member getting tune ups. Our garage contains practice equipment as well as all the gear you'd need to use that equipment. Then there's all the tools needed to work on that gear. I don't plan on getting my truck in there anytime soon.

4. Starched jeans come before new shoes.

If it comes down to new shoes or starched jeans, I bet you can guess what takes priority.

If there's a sale on shoes the week before my cowboy leaves for the weekend, you can bet Mama ain't getting her shoes; however, you can guarantee there are at least two pairs of jeans starched so crisp you can cut your lawn with them. You cowboy wives know what I'm talking about.

I can't complain though; I do appreciate the look of fresh starched jeans.

5. Always purchase a little extra at the grocery store and be ready to cook it.

I mentioned we often have kids practicing in our garage. Well, those kids are young college men and they know how to put away some food.

If it's not college kids, it's a cowboy on the road who needs a place to crash.

I've found it handy to always have a little extra on hand because there's a great chance you'll need it with the lifestyle we choose.

6. Invest in a good stain remover.

Cow poop, blood, arena mud, grease, you name it. If you love a cowboy you're probably good at getting these out of your laundry.

7. You will become an encyclopedia of rodeo stock knowledge.

Ask me how many so and so was at such and such rodeo. If I can't give you an answer, I know how to find it. As a rodeo wife you'll learn more about rodeo stock than you do some of your family members.

You'll learn how they buck, who owns them, who owned them before that and if there's a chance you can get a big score on them or not.

You'll squeal when you hear "Babe I got so and so this weekend," and you know that horse is often associated with big pay-checks. Those are the fun ones.

8. You don't need AAA.

Okay, maybe I'm exaggerating here. However, if you love a cowboy there is a high possibility of

knowing someone within a three hour radius of any destination you travel to within the United States. It comes in handy when you're in a bind or need a place to stay away from home. Rodeo is a sport that creates lifelong friends that become family, no matter where they live.

9. Rodeo ain't cheap.

You better come from money or be really good at managing it. It also helps if you can consistently put 22s on a 22-point horse (more rodeo wife lingo for you). That's all I have to say about that.

10. Your house will be full, but so will your heart.

You will treat everyone like family and you'll always have room for them in your home.

Your house will be full whether you're feeding team members, hosting guests, having bible studies, or holding practice sessions. Your beds and dining room chairs will be full but so will your heart.

See, there's a certain joy I have received from loving my cowboy that I don't think can get anywhere else. I wouldn't trade this life. Loving a cowboy has its challenges, but the rewards far outnumber them.

Here's to all the women out there who love their cowboys. 🤠



LIFESTYLE

JESSES JEWELZ




Fall is here and I'm excited for long sleeves and western yolks. I've got some great pearl snaps and western style button ups right now. All of them have a little extra flair. Whether it's denim with embroidery or mixed prints like plaid and leopard, you'll find it all at www.jessesjewelz.com.

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LACEY'S PANTRY

By Lacey Newlin

Creamy Mushroom Chicken and Wild Rice Soup

Total Time: 1 Hour

Servings: 6-8

Ingredients:

2 tablespoons butter
1 pound mushrooms, sliced
1 tablespoon butter
1 onion, diced
2 carrots, diced
2 stalks celery, diced
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 teaspoon thyme, chopped
6 cups chicken broth
1 cup wild rice blend
1 1/2 cups chicken, cooked and shredded
1 cup milk or cream
1 cup parmesano reggiano, grated
salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Melt the butter in a pan over medium-high heat, add the mushrooms and onion and cook until the mushrooms have released their liquids and the liquid has evaporated, about 10-15 minutes, before setting aside.

2. Melt the butter in the pan, add the onions, carrots and celery and cook until tender, about 8-10 minutes.

3. Mix in the garlic and thyme and cook until fragrant, about a minute.

4. Add the broth, rice, chicken and mushrooms, bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer until the rice is tender, about 20-30 minutes.

5. Mix in the milk and cheese and cook until the cheese has melted before seasoning with salt and pepper to taste.®





PROFILE

Cade McCutcheon:

BLOOD, SWEAT AND RESPECT





The name McCutcheon is synonymous with success in the world of reining after generations have built a rock-solid reputation of being the best. This past year, the younger generation emerged to prove the legacy will live on as Cade McCutcheon burst onto the Professional scene.

While reining may be in his blood, it is Cade McCutcheon's sweat that has earned him respect in the sport. He set out to prove he could compete with the best when he made the decision to give up his Non Pro card earlier this year. He has done just that with a work ethic unparalleled in many his age, along with a competitive spirit combined with talent that has earned him major wins, including the biggest competition the sport has ever seen – the Run for a Million.

The youngest McCutcheon was riding by the time he was five, showing by the age of seven and winning major events by the time he was 15. Along the way he was learning from the best, his family, including his parents, National Reining Horse Association million dollar riders Tom and Mandy McCutcheon and grandparents, NRHA multi-million dollar rider and Hall of Fame member Tim McQuay and NRHA Hall of Fame member Colleen McQuay. However, McCutcheon said he never felt pressured to join them. He knew they would support him no matter the career path he chose. Instead, they showed him by example what working hard and humility looks like.

"When it comes to the business, I try and do everything like my dad did, because I think as a businessman, there's maybe not anybody better in our industry. It's the same thing as with reining, the best thing is just to work at it," said McCutcheon. "What I learned from my grandmother is always make sure the clients are important to you. No matter what you're doing, go and talk to your clients. They are who you get your horses from and how you make it all run, so always put the clients first and make sure to thank your owners. Thank all the people; just be thankful and be humble."

McCutcheon listened and learned from his parents and grandparents as he worked his way to the top, but during that time, he also was balancing his education. While juggling schoolwork and reining was hard, it was more difficult for him to find time for his other love – basketball. His sophomore year, he made the decision to focus on the gym.

"It was harder to balance playing basketball and doing this because the Futurity, the biggest show of the year, is the same week as when basketball games start. I got to play the first couple of games then I was gone for a week, so I always had to sit out the next game or two," said McCutcheon. "It was harder to balance that until my sophomore through senior year. I still left for a week to go to the Futurity, but I made sure I would stay after school and play basketball instead of ride because I knew I could do this after. I'm still doing this, and I knew that was my only time to play basketball and then it was over. I wanted to make sure I focused on that and I spent a lot of time here, too. I tried to make sure basketball was my priority for those couple of years."

McCutcheon has graduated and is now entirely focused on reining, training at Tom McCutcheon Reining Horses in Aubrey. During the hot summer months, he is up and at the arena by 5 a.m., and isn't done with work until 5 p.m. When it cools off, he gets a bit later of a start, but you can find him atop a horse until 7 p.m.

"We just ride all day long," explained McCutcheon. "I usually ride 13 or 14. I have more than that on my list, but most of the time that's all you can do and do a good job on."

McCutcheon learned at an early age the importance of hard work by watching his dad and grandfather work all day.

"My drive comes from every part of my family. No matter who you are in the business, anybody that is in the top 50, or anybody who is any good at this,

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Cade McCutcheon:

BLOOD, SWEAT AND RESPECT

Continued from page 41

you have got to have a good work ethic and that's just how it is. You can't just halfway go through this and be good. It just doesn't happen no matter how talented you are," said McCutcheon. "If you want to be good, that's just how you have to do it. You can't start at 10 a.m. and be done at noon. You're not going to get anywhere that way."

What is it about reining that makes a 19-year-old want to devote his entire life to the sport?

"The horses," stated McCutcheon. "The horses start it all. You form a relationship with most of the horses and the people, too. You go to a horse show, and even when I come here every day it is fun. I am friends with everybody, there's a lot of camaraderie. I have done it my whole life, I grew up in it, and that might be part of it, but I care for my horses. They make me want to come out here every day and take care of them and ride them. That's what gets me out of bed."

The hard work has paid off, and McCutcheon has wrapped up major wins, including the Non Pro L4 Champion with Custom Made Gun at the 2015 NRHA Derby, seventh in the Non Pro L4 with One Stormy Nite at the 2017 NRHA Futurity, Champion L3/L2 Open with Shes Got Good Guns at the 2019 NRHA Derby presented by Markel Insurance.

His wins also include a third place individual and being a member of the gold-winning Team USA with Custom Made Gun at the 2018 World Equestrian Games. He joined his father, Tom, on the team, and his mother, Mandy, made her own mark at the games in 2014 when she earned team gold and individual bronze. She also was a 2011 inductee in the NRHA Hall of Fame. With so much talent in the family, competing against one another is a common occurrence, but not something that seems to faze any of them.

"I don't even think about it, really. I am used to it. I always showed against my mom since I was 12, so you kind of get accustomed to it. Now even showing with my dad, it hasn't been any different. With this, it is you and

Continued on page 44

Family History

Father, Tom McCutcheon:

Lifetime earnings exceeding \$1.6 million and NRHA Hall of Fame member. Wins include an NRBC Open Championship, NRBC Reserve Championship, two National Reining Horse Association Derby Reserve Championships, multiple NCRHA Open Futurity Championships and multiple NRHA Futurity Finalist. Named USEF Equestrian of the Year in 2010, fifth at the FEI CRI 3* at Tyron International Equestrian Center, which served as the selection trial for the U.S. Reining Team for the WEG. Owns and operates Tom McCutcheon Reining Horses. Tom's father, Bob, did everything rodeo, including bulldogging, and trained horses.

Mother, Mandy McCutcheon.

World Equestrian Games gold medalist, the only woman and Non Pro to earn more than \$2 million and NRHA Hall of Fame member, nine NRHA Non Pro Futurity wins, one Open Futurity finals qualification, six NRHA Derby titles, five National Reining Breeders Classic championships, reserve junior hunter champion at the Harrisburg National Horse Show and also won Winners Stakes while there, USET Youth Talent Derby winner, USET Futures champion, two AQHA jumping world championships,

Grandfather, Tim McQuay.

NRHA Three Million Dollar Rider, team gold and individual silver medalist from the 2006 FEI World Equestrian Games and team gold medalist at the 2010 Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games. Tim and his wife, Colleen, owned and operated McQuay Stables in Tioga, Texas.

Grandmother, Colleen McQuay.

Earned numerous USEF championships in the hunter divisions while also competing at the AQHA events. Numerous Congress wins and five AQHA World Championships, and kept a barn full of world-class hunter jumpers at McQuay Stables. Colleen also is a NRHA Hall of Fame member.

Sister, Carlee McCutcheon.

While brother Cade says his 12-year-old sister does have a talent for reining having made the Non Pro finals at many major reining events, Carlee travels all over competing as a hunter jumper, following in her grandmother's footsteps.

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Cade McCutcheon and the cast of Paramount Networks unscripted series, "The Last Cowboy." (Photo courtesy Paramount)

Cade McCutcheon

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your horse more than you and the guy next to you. If the guy next to you has a better horse, you go and get the best out of your horse, and that's as happy as you can be because there is nothing you can do if the other horse is better. In a perfect world, I would beat him. He would probably want me to be second, too, but it's probably whatever for him. I know I want to be first and he can be second by half a point, or we could tie, but I would rather just beat him," laughed McCutcheon.

Judges are the deciding factor in who wins or loses a show. The NRHA judging system combines technical and stylistic elements

coupled with consideration of degree of difficulty.

"It is all hard. There is nothing you can do on a horse that isn't hard," said McCutcheon. "They're animals, and like people wake up on the wrong side of the bed too, and if they wake up on the wrong side of the bed on show day, there it goes."

According to the NRHA website, reining is a judged event designed to show the athletic ability of a ranch type horse within the confines of a show arena. Contestants are required to run a pre-selected, approved pattern, included in the NRHA handbook. Each pattern includes small slow

circles, large fast circles, flying lead changes, roll backs over the hocks, 360-degree spins done in place and exciting sliding stops that are the hallmark of the reining horse.

"Reining is showing you can maneuver the horses. A lot of people want to call it figure skating but on the horse, and that's close to true, but not really. You spin like a figure skater, but that's about it. The horse has to be willingly guided in whatever you're doing. If you want to go fast, you have to be able to show you can go fast and slow, and put it where you want it, and do all this stuff. If it shows the horse is willingly

guided, that is the main thing," explained McCutcheon.

It is a difficult sport that requires dedication and respect isn't just earned because of a last name. McCutcheon had to prove himself to those from the bottom to the top, but after big wins this year, he has shown he isn't one to be underestimated.

"The guys at the top, I had to earn their respect, but I think I did this year for the most part. They all know I am here all day. It's the people who maybe don't know as much, those are the ones who like to come after me and say I get everything handed to me and post comments on Facebook or social



media, but it doesn't really bother me anymore," said McCutcheon.

Those in the equestrian world weren't the only ones to discover the youngest Pro rider in the family was a force to be reckoned with. The rest of the country caught a glimpse inside the life of McCutcheon in Paramount Networks' "The Last Cowboy," which premiered in July 2019. The unscripted series chronicled the lives of riders in the high-stakes sport of horse reining, culminating in a \$1 million competition at the first-ever Run for a Million event.

"Yellowstone" co-creator Taylor Sheridan already had horses at Tom McCutcheon Reining Horses, and the network approached the McCutcheons about being a part of the new series, which meant camera crews on the premises for several weeks.

"The camera crew didn't bother me; I enjoyed it all. There were times when I was riding they would be like 'Hey, can you come here for an interview,' but for as much good as it is doing our sport, I don't mind giving one day where I don't get to one or two horses because I am doing that. It is to help the sport and that is what it is all about," said McCutcheon.

The show culminated in the Run for a Million on Aug. 17 in Las Vegas, the biggest event in the history of reining, where 12 of the most successful trainers were invited to compete for the \$1 million payout. McCutcheon competed as one of three wild cards.

"I'm not sure how they picked the wild cards. Me, probably because of my dad and I am younger. I think with the wild cards they were trying to get more diversity in the competition compared to the main nine who were all guys between 40 and 55," explained McCutcheon.

Favorited by many heading into the competition were Andrea Fappani and Craig Schmursal, but McCutcheon wanted nothing more



Cade McCutcheon was ready to go win the Run for a Million and prove he belonged in the competition. (Photo by Dani Blackburn)

than to earn that top spot.

"I wanted to win. I was ready to go win and prove to them 'Hey I can compete in this competition. I am not just the kid they put on the show for a wild card.' There were a few people close to me and a few of my best friends who were betting on me, but for the most part if you look through social media it was Andrea or Craig," said McCutcheon. "Pretty much everyone thought they were going to win. I was just ready to go prove everybody wrong and prove that I do belong. And I did. I knew the horse I had, I knew he could be the winner because I have had him forever."

McCutcheon competed with Custom Made Gun, the same horse he rode in the World Equestrian Games. The horse was raised by his grandparents and spent his life at McQuay Stables until the age of seven, when he was sold last year in the Legacy Sale. A lady from Italy by the name of Cecilia Fiorucci purchased the horse and allowed McCutcheon to continue to show him.

"I was lucky enough somebody bought him last year that would allow me to keep showing him because I started showing him as a four-year-old and won \$106,000 on him. He was just a steady Eddie for me," recalled McCutcheon. "I

won the first round of the WEG and that's where we are like 'Oh, this is a really good horse, not just a good horse.' He has really just gotten better his whole life."

McCutcheon was correct in his predictions his horse could be the one to win the Run for a Million as the pair landed at the top and were named co-champions. The competition did not disappoint, with 4,000 fans in the stands.

"It was crazy. The energy at the place was unlike any other horse show I have ever been to, even the World Equestrian Games compared to this. That's a pretty good size arena and it was full, it

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Cade McCutcheon

Continued from page 45

was loud and it was fun. It was fun to show in front of that crowd,” said McCutcheon.

At the end of competition, judges could not separate the 229.5-point performances of McCutcheon and Custom Made Gun and Schmursal and No Smoking Required, both sons of the late Colonels Smoking Gun.

“Judges not separating scores is not common, but it happens enough. I was ready to run off, I was ready to run again, but the money was \$500,000 for first and \$115,000 to second. That is still a lot of money, but you say \$300,000 and you’re risking \$200,000 on one run. I can’t do that where I am at 19 years old. I can’t risk a \$100,000 on one run. I could have beat him, but he could have beat me, too, and been out of the race completely,” explained McCutcheon.

In what McCutcheon called a tricky decision, he and Schmursal made the choice not to run off and settled for the co-championship, earning \$307,000 each.

“Our horses were tired; it just didn’t make sense. It would have been fun maybe if we had to run off two days later or something and give the horses a day off, but it just didn’t make sense at that time,” said McCutcheon.

The biggest show of his life brought the highest and lowest moments of his career thus far and is an event the rider hopes he learns from as he moves forward.

“My hardest moment and best happened all at the same time almost. My top moment is winning the Run for a Million. As far back as I remember, what I do on a horse I have been alright, and I have never had a big mistake. I mean to the obvious, I would want to do good every time, but no one is going to do good every time,”



Cade McCutcheon trains alongside his dad at Tom McCutcheon Reining Horses. (Photo by Dani Blackburn)

said McCutcheon. “The biggest regret would be how I reacted after I took the lead and then watching everyone else go. I wasn’t wishing bad on anyone else, but I didn’t handle the pressure of having the camera in my face and having the runoff possibility. I wish I would have handled that differently. I handled the pressure of showing well, but I didn’t handle the pressure of what came after. If they do the television show next year, I will be better about it.”

Despite the regret, McCutcheon is happy the show premiered and the rest of the world learned more about a sport he loves so dearly.

“I think it has brought people in the stands and brought more

people around. If it keeps doing that, sooner or later someone is going to buy a horse. I think it is good for the industry. They did a good job of playing it right,” said McCutcheon.

Not only was the show and publicity good for the industry, the big event also helps McCutcheon in his career.

“I think winning the Run for a Million means a lot. I think more will send me a horse because they will think ‘Oh he can take the pressure. He can make a big run on the biggest stage,’” said McCutcheon. “On the two biggest stages I have ever been on, I had the two best runs of my life and I think people will like to see that from a kid. They are aware I have won some

stuff in the Non Pro, but they are maybe worried if I can take the pressure and I did.”

However, McCutcheon knows the pressure isn’t off completely; it has just simply changed. Now when he is atop a good horse, the expectation is a win, and with that comes nerves, normal for an athlete at the top of his game.

“There is going to be more pressure on that horse when I show a good one. I was more nervous for the Run for a Million than anything, but it depends on the situation. If I am on a horse I think I can win on, it makes a difference, if we are at a small show and I am on an average horse there is less pressure and less expectations

Continued on page 48

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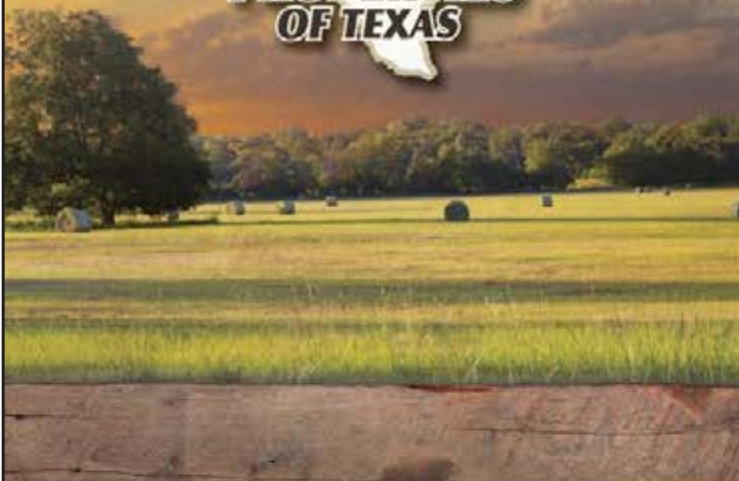
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Cade McCutcheon

Continued from page 46

and I am not as nervous," said McCutcheon.

He will once again compete with Custom Made Gun later this month and is already qualified for the Run for a Million in 2020.


McCutcheon will test his skills and how he continues to handle high stakes pressure as he works towards his next goal of winning the NRHA Futurity, where he strongly believes he has two good horses.

This time around at competition, there will be no doubting this 19-year-old's ability to win it all. Long-term, McCutcheon hopes to be the youngest million-dollar rider and in the end, have the most millions won.

"When you're done, you want

to be in the discussions as the best ever. The way to do that is win more than anybody else," said McCutcheon.

His advice for youth hoping to following in his footsteps? Get in the barn.

"Go to the barn," urged McCutcheon. "Spend as much in a barn as you can. To get good at anything, you have to practice, and it's the same at this. Even if you can't ride your horse every day, just get in the barn and help. See if you can get your trainer to let you lope something, just get on the horse as much as you can even if you aren't doing much. Watch, get in the arena, and watch. Spend time at the barn just trying to learn as much as you can." 



Run for the Million co-champion Cade McCutcheon advises youth to get in the barn. (Photo by Dani Blackburn)

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As a young singer and songwriter, Hill learned to wield a pen and guitar pick long before learning to handle a razor blade. Many of his early compositions—"Call You Cowboy," "Roundup Fire," "Burnin' Hair"—reflect a love for, and knowledge of, the West well beyond his years. These songs, and others from his repertoire, are already entrenched in the cowboy songbook and well on the way to taking their place among the timeless classics.

His latest CD "Rocky Mountain Drifter" seems to be his best work yet in his continuing career. Check it out for yourself at BrennHill.com. Long live great cowboy music and musicians.

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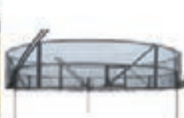
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"Laying the Brand" by Retta Collins. (Photo courtesy Retta Collins)

RETTA COLLINS:

Western Photographer

By Judy Wade

"I want my photos to show cowboys in a working environment, to show what they actually do and the authentic tack they use. I don't photoshop, don't add, don't delete, just crop when necessary," explained western photographer Retta Collins.

Growing up on a farm, moving to a ranch, being married to a cowboy and actually helping with cattle work "Helps me to know what is going to happen so I can set up a shot sometimes," she continued. She also promises the cowboys she photographs that she will never show their horsemanship in a negative light.

Collins also likes to take rodeo photos and has several used by rodeo participants. Bobbi Loran, Miss United Professional Rodeo Association Queen, used one of Collins' pictures. Others include rodeo clown Misfit Cowboy and bull fighter Hunter Allen.

A video Collins took of the belly flop in the mud contest at the Clay County Pioneer Reunion this year had more than 7,000 viewers

Retta Collins. (Photo courtesy Tony Dean)



at the time of this writing.

Collins got her first nice camera in 2009 but just used it at first to take pictures of her girls riding their horses. One day the ranch hands were working calves and her husband suggested she come down to the pens, climb up on the chute and take some photos.

When she saw her work, she was hooked. Still, she just took pictures of family and friends until a friend in North Carolina saw some of her work and encouraged her to share it. In 2018, she entered her photos in Cowboy True, an art show sponsored by The Forum in Wichita Falls that

celebrates the working cowboy through many forms of art. Collins walked away with First Place honors in photography with "Laying the Brand," depicting everyday cowboys going about their work branding calves.

The next show she entered, The Red River Museum Art Show in Vernon, again gained her first place in photography, winning the Herring Bank Award with "Boss Man," honoring Billy Chambls.

In the 2019 Cowboy True, her work gained her second place in photography with "Paint the Alley," showing cattle being pushed down the alley in a corral. Some of

her unique work showed cowboys working calves seen in the reflection of one of the ranch hand's sunglasses.

Born in Henrietta and raised in Midway, the daughter of Donna and Mike Coker, she grew up with siblings Shane, Courtney, Ryan, and Kyle (deceased).

"I've always loved horses. I was in lead line in play days before I got my own horse. My grandfather took me to a pasture south of Waurika, Okla., where there were a lot of big paint horses and one small brown Welch pony. Papa said I could have any horse I wanted, but I had to catch it. I tried and tried to catch a big horse only to discover the only one gentle enough for me to catch was the Welch," she laughed.

"I entered the play days at the Pioneer Reunion on Brownie until I was nine when I got a black Quarter Horse mare named Lady," she reminisced. After graduating from Midway High School where she excelled in basketball and FFA, Collins attended Lubbock Christian University, playing

basketball.

"I didn't know what I wanted to do, so I came home after a year, worked at the Browse Shop and then a restaurant, trying to find what I needed to do. I met my husband Cody at a team roping in 1992, and we were married in 1993," she continued. Soon three children joined the family.

"We live on the Hood River Ranch at Lake Arrowhead. It has been a wonderful place to raise our kids," Collins remarked. Son Dale, a home schooled sophomore, still lives at home, works on the ranch and hand crafts knives. Older daughter Laycee works for Triple Heart Ranch in Purcell, Okla., and is training her own barrel horse. Mikayla is enjoying the married life.

Collins wears many hats today. In addition to being a wife and mother and helping work cattle on the ranch, she works at Waggoner's Boots in Henrietta. "I've been there a total of seven years. I specialize in fitting boots properly and problem feet," she explained.

She continues to ride three or four days a week and is enjoying her AQHA gelding Tules Domino. "He is an amazing horse. He has survived cancer and laminitis. I love ranch versatility and competitive trail. It has been a challenge to get Tules Domino to understand what is expected of him on the trail, but we are doing really well now," Collins shared.

She has a new, more sophisticated camera now, ("I have a love/hate relationship with the new camera") but her first camera is still her favorite. She sold the old camera to her daughter to keep from being tempted to use it again. Collins is always looking for a scene that represents the real working cowboy, and she is good at what she does.

"Long live cowboys, farmers and ranchers," she said. They will live on through Retta Collins' photos. See more of Collins' work at prowlingcimages.com.



"Helping Hands" by Retta Collins.



"The Boss Man" by Retta Collins. (Photos courtesy Retta Collins)



THE ROAD GOES ON *Forever* BY JELLY COCANOUGH

We started off on a journey across many small west Texas towns. We drove from small town Texas towards barren land where the landscape starts to change. We had our sights set on Amarillo - to stop at one of my favorite art installations, Cadillac Ranch.

The creative winds that circulate through the air were actually just beads of spray paint falling from the sky from the crowds of people writing graffiti on the bumpy vehicles. We journeyed soon after to the famous Six Shooter Siding Route 66 town where there sits The Curiosity Shoppe in Tucumcari, N.M. A quaint but deserted town of old neon signs and humble residents.

Santa Fe was hours away and it was getting dark.

Our nightly stay was a pink adobe Airbnb that was footsteps from the plaza. A nice neighborhood with sprinkled in folks who were up to no good. This reminded me of the time I was staying across town and someone shot at our vehicle in the middle of the night. Breaking the glass for a pair of \$2 airplane



headphones laying on the seat. Taos wasn't far and we'd been to both places many times with many stories to go in hand, like driving to the Rio Grande Gorge and seeing a llama running free down the road. We stopped at a hidden earthship - where everything is totally off grid. A way to live, where no technology can hold you back from living a pure lifestyle.

From Taos we headed north towards the famous Zapata Ranch. Home of a lady who claims there are aliens in the skies - right next to Great Sand Dune National Park & Preserve. Also recognized as a light pollution free zone. We'd hiked the dunes before with much desired end results of reaching the base. We knew we didn't have it in us with the elevation change. Across the road up a few miles flows a waterfall waiting to be hiked.

We drove more towards the heart of the Zapata Ranch into an area where there were mountain fires surrounding us. No flat land in sight, how high up are we? To the Rockies by nightfall.

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Small-Town Turkey Trot Blesses Many

By Mandi Dietz

For Thanksgiving, many will travel, gather with friends or family, bake, eat and watch the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade and Dallas Cowboys' football game.

However, some kick off the heart-warming holiday with additional traditions, such as volunteering to serve meals and trot, helping others in need.


Most Thanksgiving Turkey Trots occur in big cities, but a mom and son started a small-town footrace in Aledo nearly a decade ago, aiding members of their own community.

According to Aledothanksgivingtrot.com and Thanksgiving Trot Aledo's Facebook page, attendees will participate this year for a nine-year-old local named Emma, "A fun, loving, very active girl" who is well-versed in sports and enjoys school, especially math, and ranch life, caring for baby animals. Emma attends the Aledo Trot every year and in 2018, she pushed her brother in a wheelchair due to his broken leg.

Diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia, Emma, and her family will benefit from the 9th Annual Aledo Thanksgiving Trot.

On Nov. 28, beginning at the Aledo High School Football Stadium, the 1-mile Trot starts at 8:00 a.m., and the 5K (3.10 miles) starts at 8:30 a.m.

Registrations by November 11 secure a T-shirt and cost is \$25 for adults and \$15 for children (under 12). Sign-ups after Nov. 11 cost \$25 for all ages and forgo a shirt.

People come together each November for charity, and whether it's second nature or something new, taking part in an activity or event such as the Aledo Thanksgiving Trot blesses many. 



Meet Emma, a fun-loving, active girl who loves school and caring for baby animals on the ranch.



This year, the Aledo Thanksgiving Trot will benefit nine-year-old Emma and family. (Photos courtesy www.aledothanksgivingtrot.com.)

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Chisholm Trail Heritage Center, 1000 Chisholm Trail Parkway, Duncan, OK 73533. Whether it's a pair of deer in the woods of Oklahoma, or the delicate points of a snowflake in Wisconsin, Maud photographer Sarah Rodefeld is patient and steady as she aims her lens. Her finished work is proof of her patience. "Designed by Nature" featuring the wildlife and landscape photography of Rodefeld will exhibit Oct. 1-Jan. 6 at the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center. www.onthechisholmtrail.com.

Ridin' for the Brand Cowboy Church Annual Trade Show

OCT. 26 • SANGER

Ridin' for the Brand Cowboy Church, 5926 FM 455, Sanger, TX, 76266. Ridin' for the Brand Cowboy Church will host its annual trade show on Oct. 26 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. A wide variety of items will be available, including leather works, jelly, home decor, wooden furniture and more. Lunch will be served by the church. For more information, call Dr. Roger Marsh at 940-367-1940 or email rogerrftbccc@gmail.com. www.RidinForTheBrand.org.

Ridin' for the Brand Trunk or Treat and Horse Costume Contest

OCT. 26 • SANGER

Ridin' for the Brand Cowboy Church, 5926 FM 455, Sanger, TX, 76266. Ridin' for the Brand Cowboy Church will host a Trunk or Treat and Horse Costume Contest at 5 p.m. on Oct. 26 in the arena. All ages welcome. www.RidinForTheBrand.org.

Using Grazing to Manage Wildlife Habitat

OCT. 29 • BURNEYVILLE, OK

Cross Timbers Wildlife Management Area, 7761 Stockton Rd., Burneyville, OK 73430. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. No registration fee. Registration closes Oct. 22. Most people think cattle and wildlife are incompatible. This is not the case. When managed correctly, native rangelands can produce optimal wildlife habitat and forage production for cattle. When native rangelands are not utilized or are overutilized, both cattle and wildlife suffer. Come find out how you can use cattle, fire and mechanical means to make productive rangelands that will benefit your cattle and wildlife. www.noble.org/events

Red Steagall Cowboy Gathering

OCT. 25-27 • FORT WORTH

Fort Worth Stockyards National Historic District, Fort Worth, TX. Attend the Fort Worth Stockyards National Historic District for the Red Steagall Cowboy Gathering and Western Swing Festival. This celebration of the nation's premier western heritage event has been voted 'Best Gathering and Best Family Event' by the readers of American Cowboy Magazine. Come enjoy these great events during the weekend: wagon train and trail ride from Jacksboro, TX, exciting ranch rodeo action, chuck wagon camp and competition, trappings show, cowboy poetry and cowboy music, Ranch Cutting Horse Assn. Rodeo Finals, youth poetry contest, youth fiddle contest, youth chuck wagon cook-off, Texas Trail of Fame, Cowboy Church, Cowboy Gospel Concert, western swing dances and the Texas Lone Star Open Live Bid Calling Contest. Visit www.redsteagallcowboygathering.com.



SARAH RODEFELD EXHIBIT
OCT. 1-JAN. 6

Oakwood Cemetery's Annual Saints and Sinners Tour

OCT. 26-27 • FORT WORTH

1701 Grand Ave., Fort Worth, Texas. One of the best places to add history to your Halloween month is Oakwood Cemetery's Annual Saint and Sinners Tour. Guided, walking tours 1-3:30 p.m. You can hear the reenacted stories of 'residents' at the cemetery established in 1879 by John Peter Smith. Other costumed characters as well as the century old chapel and casket vaults will add to your visit. Adults \$10. Students/children \$5. Buy tickets at the cemetery gates. Visit stockyardsmuseum.org or call 817-625-5082.

Annual Holiday Hanger of Wichita Falls

NOV. 9 • WICHITA FALLS

Multi Purpose Events Center, 1000 5th Street, Wichita Falls, TX 76301. Join in on the holiday fun from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Nov. 9 at the Wichita Falls Multi Purpose Events Center. This annual event is free and open to the public. There will be more than 200 vendors with unique arts, crafts, wreaths, coins, quilts, collectibles, military items, baskets, pottery, jewelry, food, photos with Santa and much more for a day full of fun. Sponsored by the Sheppard Spouses' Club, a non-profit 501 c 4 private organization. Visit <https://www.facebook.com/events/2181735448543798/>.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

How to Build Raised Beds and Container Gardens

NOV. 23 • ARDMORE, OK

Noble Research Institute Small-Scale Demonstration Area, 2510 Sam Noble Pkwy., Ardmore, OK 73401. How to Build Raised Beds and Container Gardens from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Nov. 23 at the Noble Research Institute Small-Scale Demonstration Area. \$25 registration fee, includes lunch. Come learn about the many kit and homemade garden bed/container options available and the pros and cons associated with each. You will have the opportunity to learn by participating in the construction of a novel raised garden bed and container garden ideal for use in a backyard setting. Must register online by Nov. 18 at www.noble.org/events.

MSU Burns Fantasy of Lights

NOV. 28-DEC. 28 • WICHITA FALLS

MSU, 3410 Taft Blvd, Wichita Falls, Texas 76308. Open daily at 6 p.m. The MSU - Burns Fantasy of Lights is one of the largest holiday displays of its kind. Its purpose is to provide a festive holiday atmosphere on campus, to serve as an outreach to the community and to be a focal point for holiday activities in North Texas. The displays are owned and operated by Midwestern State University for the benefit and enjoyment of the Wichita Falls community and surrounding area. It is filled with individual displays that showcase themes or characters from well-known children's stories, fairy tales and holiday themes. Fantasy of Lights is a nonprofit enterprise that relies exclusively on the generous donations and volunteerism of the MSU and Wichita Falls communities. www.msutexas.edu/fantasy.

The Nutcracker Ballet

NOV. 30 • WICHITA FALLS

Memorial Auditorium, 1300 7th Street, Wichita Falls, TX 76301. The annual production of the Wichita Falls Ballet Theatre "the Nutcracker" takes the stage at 7 p.m. Dec. 6, 1 p.m. Dec. 7 and 7 p.m. Dec. 7. With one of the biggest casts yet, this year's performance is sure to be just what you need to kick off your family's holiday season. Get your tickets through the MPEC box office online or by calling (940) 716-5500. Visit <https://wichita-falls-ballettheatre.org/event/the-nutcracker-friday-evening/> or <http://wfmpec.com/event/the-nutcracker-4/>.

It's Christmas Market

NOV. 30 • FORT WORTH

Will Rogers Memorial Center, 3401 W. Lancaster Ave. From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., join a festive, holiday experience complete with vendors, holiday music, 1000s of unique items perfect for gifts and delicious food. 817-392-7469.

Fantasy of Lights

DEC. 7 • BOWIE

Downtown Bowie. Bowie lights up in December to open the holiday season. Festivities start in the morning with Pancakes with Santa, to Elf n Magic crafts to the lighted parade at dark downtown in Bowie. www.cityofbowietx.com.

Christmas in Nocona

DEC. 7 • NOCONA

Downtown Nocona. Nocona decorates the downtown area for Christmas and the holiday festivities begin - complete with an appearance by Santa, a Christmas parade, family activities, a fish fry and downtown carolers. www.nocona.org/commerce.



HOW TO BUILD RAISED BEDS AND CONTAINER GARDENS
NOV. 23

Managing Taxes for Agricultural Producers

DEC. 10 • ARDMORE, OK

Noble Research Institute Kruse Auditorium, 2510 Sam Noble Pkwy., Ardmore, OK 73401. Managing Taxes for Agricultural Producers from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Dec. 10 at the Noble Research Institute Kruse Auditorium. No registration fee. The Internal Revenue Services continues to interpret and publish guidance and regulations pertaining to the tax legislation passed by Congress in December 2017. Some changes will become effective for the 2019 tax year. Join us to learn more details. Tax professionals will be available to answer questions. Must register by Dec. 3 at www.noble.org/events.

How to Get Wild Game from Field to Table

DEC. 12 • ARDMORE, OK

Noble Research Institute Pavilion, 2510 Sam Noble Pkwy., Ardmore, OK 73401. How to Get your Wild Game from Field to Table, 1:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Dec. 12. \$25 registration fee, includes dinner. Your fellow outdoorsmen, Noble Research Institute consultants, will demonstrate proper post-harvest animal and meat handling for popular species of large and small game. The workshop will conclude with a presentation of favorite recipes in a wild-beast feast. Come prepared to taste what nature provides and share your own stories and recipes with fellow hunters. Must register online by Dec. 5 at www.noble.org/events.

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COMMON WHITE-TAILED DEER MISCONCEPTIONS AFFECT VIEWS

By Will Moseley, Wildlife and Fisheries Consultant

Like most subjects, there is a plethora of misinformation about white-tailed deer biology and management. Most people try to be well informed about deer because they enjoy observing or hunting them.

However, even the most well-intentioned deer enthusiast has trouble finding accurate information about deer on the Internet or television. Most websites and television shows are trying to sell a product and can mislead the user about deer “facts.” This article addresses a few common deer

misconceptions.

Only Trophy Bucks Do the Breeding

There is a common thought that only large adult, or “breeder bucks,” do the majority of the breeding in the wild. However, studies have shown that at least 30 percent of the breeding is done by bucks younger than 3.5 years of age. In populations with a high proportion of bucks in lower age classes, breeding by bucks younger than three-and-a-half years old increases. This is due to the breeding strategy of white-

tailed deer.

A buck tends a doe for a short period before she comes into estrous then tries to breed her while she is receptive (usually for about 24 hours). Most does come into estrous around the same time, so an individual buck does not have time to breed a significant portion of the does.

Bucks Are Smarter Than Does

This is a common thought among hunters because they see more does than bucks while hunting. However, bucks are not any smarter than does. With sig-

nificant doe harvest, most hunters see as many if not more bucks than does. This tells us that this behavior is effected by hunting pressure and not brain power.

Culling Improves Antler Genetics of a Free-Ranging Hero

Culling is a popular topic among land managers when it comes to managing for trophy deer. However, it is difficult to cull deer that have inferior antler genetics because bucks do not express all the antler genes they carry and does contribute at least



50 percent of the antler genetics. Also, we have no control over breeding pairings of free-ranging deer. Young bucks not old enough to express their genetic potential for antler growth are often the victims of culling attempts. Wild bucks usually grow bigger antlers each year, so you never know what will happen if they grow old enough to express their antler genetics.

Spike Bucks Indicate Poor Genetics

Spike bucks are typically viewed as genetically inferior in trophy management. When there is a high percentage of spikes in a deer herd, it usually indicates other issues besides genetics. Generally, the deer herd is above carrying capacity and the animals are not getting the proper nutrition. It could also indicate a skewed sex ratio with does being bred later, resulting in late-born fawns that are bred late the following year.

These fawns can be spike bucks as yearlings but can develop very nice antlers if allowed to age and have proper nutrition.

Food Plots Increase Antler Size

Food plots are a very common management tool. However, food plots rarely increase the overall level of nutrition enough to note an increase in antler size.

The key to managing food for wildlife is to have a diverse landscape of native woody and herbaceous plants. The old adage regarding food plots “when you can grow them you don’t need them, and when you need them you can’t grow them” is very true.

However, food plots can be a useful tool to increase deer visibility for observation or to aid in doe harvest. These are just a few, among many, misconceptions pertaining to white-tailed deer biology and management.®



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Grazing North Texas

By Tony Dean

Blue grama is a major part of the Blackland Prairie native landscaping at the Busy Presidential Center in Dallas. (Photo courtesy Tony Dean)

Blue Grama

The grama family of grasses is an important part of grazing lands across almost all of the United States. Blue grama can be found in all states except parts of extreme southern areas. It is a major species in open plains of drier regions.

Blue grama is a low-growing native perennial. Although it is considered a bunch grass, it can grow thick enough to resemble a sod grass.

When growing, it is grayish-green in color. Stems can grow a seedhead up to 16 inches or taller, but the leaves seldom get over four inches long.

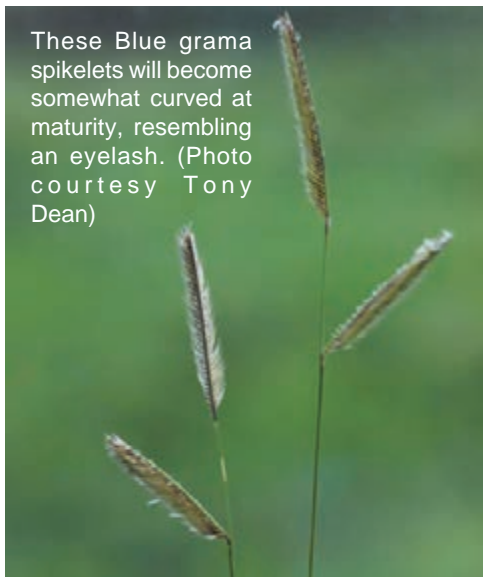
The seedhead usually consists of two comb-like spikes per stalk, but can have one to four combs. These combs remain attached to the stalk at maturity.

Blue grama provides good grazing for livestock. Like Buffalograss, another low-growing perennial, Blue grama provides good protein when actively growing and cures well to provide good winter forage.

On a trip recently to Alpine, Texas, ranchers told me that on ranches in West Texas, their cattle will normally graze Blue grama before grazing Sideoats grama.

Because it is a relatively low-growing spe-

These Blue grama spikelets will become somewhat curved at maturity, resembling an eyelash. (Photo courtesy Tony Dean)



cies, Blue grama is resistant to damage from heavy grazing, but can be affected from continual overgrazing. It grows well in a variety of soil types.

Because of its low growth form and drought tolerance, Blue grama can be used in landscape and reclamation areas.

As a result of President George W. Bush and Laura Bush's love for native plants, the 15-acre grounds around the George W. Bush Presidential Center in Dallas are almost completely covered by native Blackland Prairie plants, including Blue grama. It occupies a major portion of the lawn landscaping at the Center.

The seeds of Blue grama were reported to have been eaten during prehistoric times by the White Mountain Apache Indians in Arizona.®

Grazing Value of This Plant

Blue grama

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Blue grama is good grazing for livestock.

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Confessions of a Hunter

By Andy Anderson

Don't leave your keys in your truck

At 13 years of age, I had been driving the ranch truck doing chores and using the tractor to mow. It was a normal and routine task to drive equipment to get chores done, and as such my skills in driving a truck were better than most. At 15, I obtained my learner's permit and was driving the black top roads of Texas with absolute confidence, I was looking forward to the day I turned 16 and the independence and freedom that came with it. I knew I wanted a truck; I was not about to buy a car. I couldn't be seen driving a car, I was a cowboy and cowboys drove trucks.

I quickly learned from my parents that if I wanted a truck, or any vehicle for that matter, I had to earn it on my own and I was responsible for the gas, insurance and maintenance. Well, I had already been planning for this and had saved some cash and was working an after-school job so I didn't need much more to buy a Chevrolet pickup my dad said he would sell me. It was a lime green, 1968 Chevrolet short bed, step side pickup, and that thing would run. It wasn't the prettiest thing, but it was mine.

I was now able to drive to school on my own and go to my friends' houses and after-school activities without pestering my mom for a ride. It was not an uncommon practice to leave your vehicle with the windows down and the keys in the ignition around the ranch. We did it all the time, and it had become a habit for me. I never really had any issues leaving the keys in my truck no matter



Andy Anderson's truck wasn't the prettiest thing, but it was all his. (Courtesy photo)

where I went. Back then you could do that.

I was on the high school rodeo team competing in saddle bronc riding. The other rough stock riders and I would travel to various places during the week to practice facilities in Mesquite and Chico, Texas. We usually all rode together. There were only four of us, so we would meet at one or another's house to go to practice.

This particular week in November, we were to meet at Lance's house. Lance was a bull rider and lived on a pretty big place. His parents raised peanuts, and he

and I hunted at his house often. I pulled up in the front yard as usual, grabbed my gear and loaded up in Lance's pick-up. Jessie, the bareback rider pulled up and jumped in the pick up as we were running late now and needed to get going but were waiting on Delvin. Delvin was a chute dogger and just liked to run with us and go to practice. Time was pressing and Delvin hadn't arrived yet. This was a time before cell phones so all we could do was assume he wasn't going to make it. We headed out to practice around 4p.m. without Delvin.

When we arrived back around

8:30 that evening, it was pitch black outside.

I grabbed my saddle and rigging bag and headed over to my pick-up. As I was walking towards it, something didn't look right; it had been moved. As I got up to the driver's door, I found it open, just slightly ajar. I set my gear down and looked in my pick-up.

The keys were still in the ignition, but there was something on them and something sticky on the steering wheel. There also was something on the cloth seat covers, but I couldn't tell what as there

See CONFESSIONS page 70

Confessions

Continued from page 69

was no cab light.

I called to Lance asking for a flash light and told him and Jessie what I found. Lance got a flashlight from the house, and as he and Jessie approached my truck from the passenger side, Lance shined the light down the side of my pick-up discovering a large amount of dried blood smeared down the side of it. Lance got really excited yelling at me about what he found. We looked into the pick-up to discover dried blood on the steering wheel, the seat and keys.

By this time our minds were racing about what we were seeing. Just then Lance looked into the bed of my pick-up and was startled, yelling, "Holy crap guys, check this out!"

As I gazed into the bed of my pick up, I saw a coagulated pile of blood and blood spatter on the back window. We were just blown away at what happened, standing there in awe and speechless. Lance suggested someone stole my truck, hit somebody on the highway and then hauled the body off before returning it. Jessie didn't quite know what to think; he was just taken aback by it all.

About that time, a loud crash was heard from the barn about 100 yards away. As I looked at the doors, I could see the light on through the cracks in the doors and the shadow of something or someone moving around. Lance, Jessie and I looked at each other for a second and then made for the house like our tails were on fire.

We made it through the front door, closing it behind us. I tripped over Jessie and crashed onto the floor. Lance stepped on my foot and hand as he hurried to lock the door. Jessie, trying to make it to the living room, kicked me in the head. I got up and ran over to the front window to join Jessie.

As we looked to see what was going on, Lance was in a panic. He kept telling us someone used my pick up to go kill somebody and now they were in the barn chopping them up, just like the movie Texas Chainsaw Massacre. I was still rubbing on the knot on my head and trying to collect myself.

Well now, Lance had Jessie and my attention. Lance went and got a few rifles and a shot gun, and we armed ourselves and continued watching out the window. All of a sudden, the barn door flew open, and the silhouette of a man standing there in the doorway was all



Andy Anderson and his friends just knew someone was chopping up a body in the barn, just like the movie Texas Chainsaw Massacre. (Courtesy photo)

we could see. Lance was grabbing my shoulder and shaking me. Jessie kept saying over and over "Oh, guys, oh, guys." Just then the person ducked off into the shadows, and we lost him. Lance said "Awe crap, he's going around back. I'll go cover the back door. If I shoot, you boys better come a running!" Jessie and I looked at each other as if we were questioning the seriousness of his statement.

The person returned, went back in and closed the door behind him. I got Lance to tell him the guy was back. For about 30 minutes we just watched out the windows running all kinds of theories between us, most centered around movies we had seen.

I looked at Lance and said, "Let's call the police." He said, "Good idea, but the phone is out." Lance, sitting on the coffee table, looked up and said "Boys, we're going to have to handle this on our own; we have to go out there and get this guy." We all just looked at each

other for a second or two and then agreed to venture outside.

We devised a plan. Lance was going to open the door as I was supposed to run in and put the guy on the ground and Jessie was going to back me up. Well, after a little arguing about who was going to do what, we ended up back to the original plan; it was time for me to man up.

We eased out the front door out to the barn. As we got closer, we could hear someone in there moving around and what sounded like hammering and humming a song. I tried to peek through the crack in the door to see, but it was obstructed. As I was peering through another crack, I could see the pant leg of a man. All of a sudden, I lost my balance and crashed into the door.

Jessie yelled out, "To hell with the plan!" He turned to run, and Lance was right behind him as I picked myself up and turned to run. Just then the barn door slammed open, and there stood Delvin.

"Hey guys, it's me!" he yelled out. Recognizing the voice, I turned around to see Delvin standing there, covered head to toe in blood holding two kitchen knives, one in each hand. He looked like Freddy Krueger's little brother.

Jessie said "Delvin, what the heck are you doing? We almost killed you!"

Delvin started to explain that he got here and we had already left, so he grabbed his deer rifle from his car and headed to the peanut field to see about getting a deer. He shot a doe, and it was his first deer so he didn't really know what to do. He used my pick up to go get it and when he was driving back up to the house, the deer came back to life and jumped out of the truck, fell down the side of my pick-up and started to run off.

Delvin said he stopped the truck and gave chase, tackling the deer in the field. He caught it and since he didn't have a knife or anything, he just held on to it waiting for it to expire. That's how he got covered in blood.

I stepped into the barn to see a doe hanging up about halfway through the cleaning process and one heck of a mess on the floor. We all started laughing, and Lance went and put the guns up. We helped Delvin finish cleaning his deer and tagged it. I hauled it to his house and went home, parking my pick-up and taking the keys with me from then on. (N)



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DUCK BILL RIVER FARM

\$2,250/Ac

Nice farm with over 3 miles of Wichita river frontage. It's located in Wichita County 20 minutes west of Wichita Falls. It consists of about 350 acres of improved Bermuda and Klein grass fields with the ability to flood irrigate. The remainder is heavily wooded along the Wichita River and Antelope Creek. The entire boundary is fenced and the interior is cross fenced. It has public water and electricity. There is a Quonset barn with living quarters, hay barn and two sets of livestock corrals. This is a productive farm with lots of potential.

Will Divide & Owner Finance Available

1,319.71 ACRES | CLAY COUNTY



BELL SCOTT RIVER RANCH

\$2,100/Ac

The Bell Scott River ranch consist of 1,319.71 Acres with 1.5 miles of Red River Frontage. It is primarily heavily wooded river bottom with approximately 35% being farmland and improved Bermuda pastures. Improvements consist of a frame house, workshop, equipment shed, hay barn, 2 sets of corrals, fenced and cross fenced two water wells and electricity. Its located between Charlie and Byers with easy access from FM 171 to Airport Rd, to Raymond Evans Rd. This is a well rounded recreational property. An additional 320 acres of farmland is available.

473.07 ACRES | CLAY COUNTY



MESQUITE HILL HUNTING RANCH

\$2,450/Ac

This is a prime turn-key hunting and fishing property located in Clay County, northwest of Petrolia. It primarily densely wooded with mesquite, scattered open areas and a heavily wooded creek bisecting the property. It has rolling elevation changes offering great views. There are 6 ponds, 3 of them were recently built with a max depth of 25 feet, 1 to 3 acres and were stocked with bass, catfish and crappie. There are 12 blind and feeder set ups that will convey with the property. Electricity is available.

3,206.82 ACRES | CLAY COUNTY



TRIANGEL T-NORTH DEAN RANCH

\$1,600/Ac

This ranch is a great cattle and hunting ranch. It's located in western Clay County, 15 minutes northeast of Wichita Falls. The ranch is primarily wooded with young and mature mesquites, quality native grasses, hardwoods located along the Wichita River which serves as the north boundary. The ranch is cross fenced into 9 pastures, it has 21 stock ponds, well-built metal livestock corrals with scales, brick ranch house, scale house with living quarters, public water and minerals available.

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- Kincaid Hunting Farm - 250.72 Acres - Wichita - \$1,975/Ac
- Lost Creek Ranch - 206 Acres - Young Co - \$2,375/Ac

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THE GARDEN GUY

By Norman Winter | Horticulturist, Author, Speaker

Bald Cypress

Reigns as King in the Swamp and Landscape

A trip to Garner State Park in Texas gives the feeling of being in the rare presence of trees that surely have a story to tell. These are Bald Cypress, our Texas relatives to the Giant Sequoia. It's really the same in San Antonio along River Walk.

The bald cypress is known botanically as *Taxodium distichum*, and is one of the most beautiful and yet unappreciated trees. Its native range extends much farther north than many realize. Unbelievably, the native habitat extends as far north as Delaware.

Considering the attributes, there is probably not a better all-purpose tree. The bald cypress thrives in soil that is known to be wet, which poses a hazard to almost every other quality tree. Yet on the other hand, it performs admirably on upland soils.

Many homeowners who lack patience are always in search of fast-growing trees. This is not one of the best criteria for selecting trees: longevity is. Many fast growing trees succumb to disease, insects or other environmental conditions in just a few short years.

The bald cypress, however, lives to be ancient and produces wood that is among the most durable on the planet. It is really a much faster grower than many realize. The trees normally will reach 50 to 70 feet in height and 20 to 45 feet in width. The buttressing of the trunk gives the tree a special appeal in the landscape.

The dark green fern-like foliage lends a graceful texture in the garden. Though not evergreen, the foliage does turn a rusty orange giving it good fall color. Wildlife enthusiasts will also appreciate bald cypress as the seeds produced feed several species of birds including ducks.

One of my favorite native places is the Cypress Swamp north of Jackson, Miss., on the Natchez Trace

See GARDEN GUY page 74

GARDEN GUY

Parkway. Once inside with an easy hike, you feel as though a dinosaur may be lurking nearby. The walkway seems made for the outdoor photographer. As you gaze at the large trees, you quickly spot one of the features of the bald cypress that many gardeners fear: the cypress knees.

In upland type soils the knees hardly ever become an issue. In those areas that stay wet, the knees will be formed. Yet it would be hard to imagine a prettier bog area than one with bald cypress knees, ferns and Louisiana iris.

Unfortunately, the bald cypress is almost always sold generically. One of the most picturesque varieties I have seen is called Sentinel. These tall trees are narrower or more conical in shape. Even in the winter they stood out in the garden like massive pieces of statuary. Shawnee Brave and Apache Chief are other named selections that have gained acceptance.

When planting, dig the hole two to three times as wide as the root ball, but no deeper.

This gives your roots the quickest expansion. I am a strong believer in forming a berm around the root zone that is large enough to hold five gallons of water. This comes in handy when watering. The berm can be removed in the second year.

Feed in late winter with one pound of a balanced 8-8-8 fertilizer per inch of trunk diameter. Spread the fertilizer evenly under the canopy of the tree.

The giant sequoias are great, but we can be thankful we have the bald cypress, a close relative that is native, statuesque and a great performer in the home landscape. Fall is a great time to plant.

They will be off to a great start come spring. Follow me on Facebook @NormanWinterTheGardenGuy.🌳



(Above) Stunning fall colors. The bald cypress is known botanically as *Taxodium distichum*, and is one of the most beautiful and yet unappreciated trees. (Left) Bald cypress has incredible orange foliage in the fall. (Photos by Norman Winter)



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PARTING SHOT



Forgotten relics...

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