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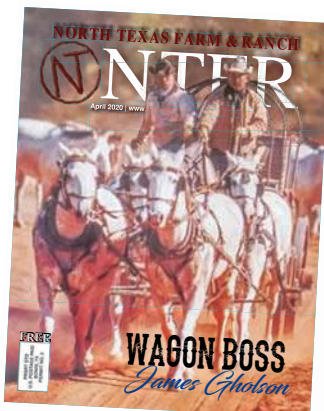
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ON THE COVER

James Gholson, wagon boss of the Pitchfork Ranch for 17 years. He would then train horses and run their satellite operation for the next three years before retiring after 20 with the ranch. Gholson also has received titles in the Ranch Horse Association of America, Working Ranch Cowboys Association, Ranch Cutting Horse Association and the American Quarter Horse Association Versatility Ranch Horse events. (Photo courtesy Bob Moorhouse)



letter from the editor

Hello readers and welcome

to the April 2020 issue of North Texas Farm and Ranch magazine.

I sat down to right this letter not quite sure how to put into words what this



month truly means to me. April is the month we say goodbye to the cooler temperatures I despise so much, reflect on the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the time of year I celebrate all three of my children and their day of birth.

As I sat tapping my fingers, I came across a quote by Martin Luther King Jr., "Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection, not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime."

The quote made me pause. I realized April is so meaningful not because of all the different things going on this month, but because it is all the same. I am celebrating life. In April, I am enjoying the new blooms the warmer temperatures bring, honoring the resurrection of Jesus Christ - his end of life on earth and his return to life in heaven, and rejoicing in the life of my three biggest blessings. April is the month I am reminded how beautiful it all is.

A man who isn't shy of attributing his blessings to the Lord is James Gholson, this month's profile. Gholson served as wagon boss of the Pitchfork Ranch for 17 years, then trained horses and ran the satellite operation for another three years before retirement. Gholson also won numerous horsemanship awards during his career.

Our contributors are full of great things this April and I hope you enjoy each of their articles as much as I have. If you have an idea for an article, feel free to share it with me at editor@ntfronline.com.

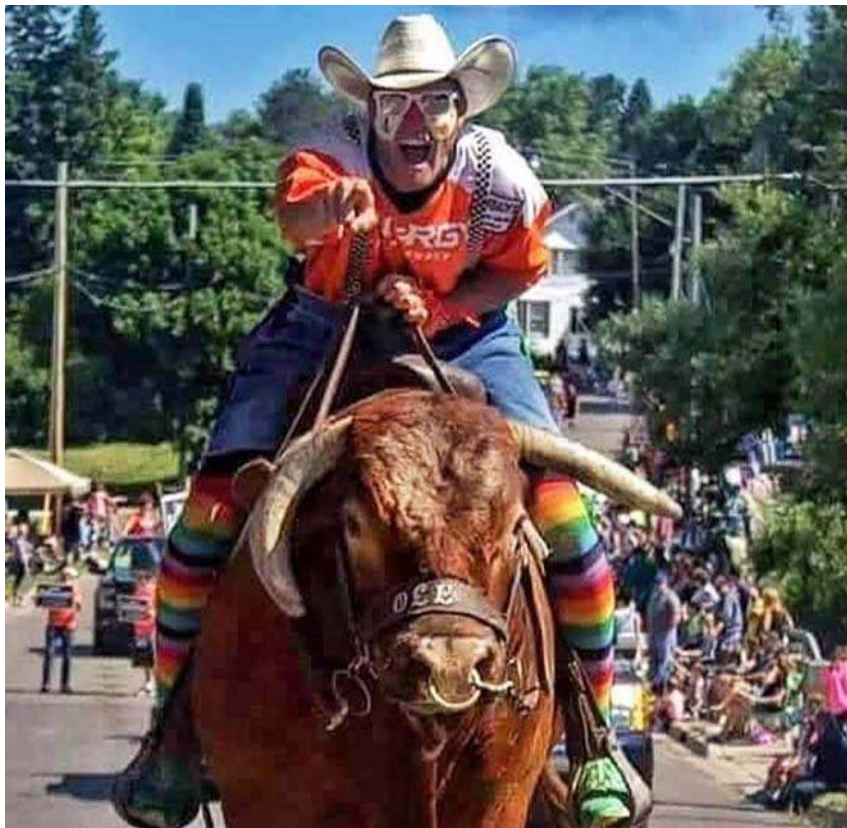
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Dani Blackburn

Dani Blackburn, Editor
editor@ntfronline.com

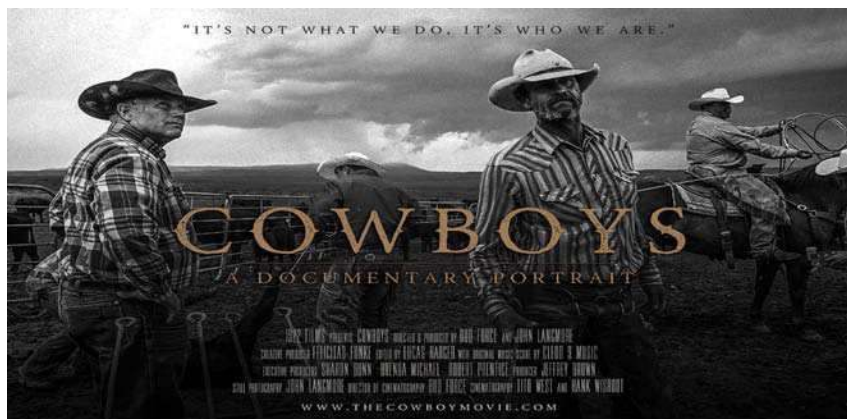
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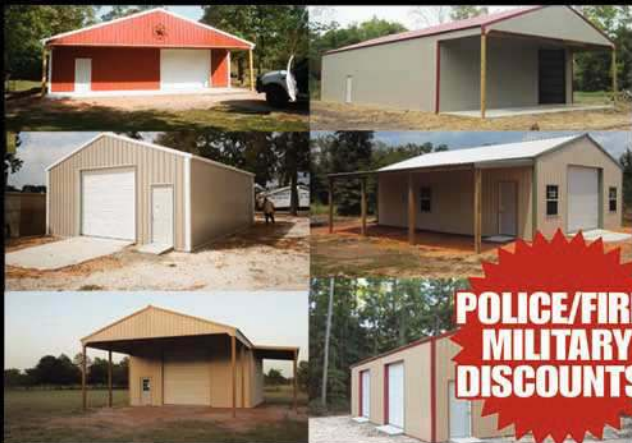
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North Texas Farm & Ranch

Published by Hootsuite [?] · March 7 at 3:00 PM ·

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MEANWHILE BACK AT THE RANCH

Time to Vaccinate

By Rayford Pullen | rcpullen@yahoo.com

We were busy during the month of March getting our babies on the ground, vaccinating our yearling heifers and bulls and making plans for the upcoming breeding season. We are so glad spring finally arrived, and the feed truck has been parked.

This month we will be vaccinating our cows with a lepto-vibrio vaccine before we turn our bulls out about the middle of April. Our yearling heifers and bulls also will be vaccinated the same with an additional blackleg, IBR and dewormed.

With the wild hogs running around everywhere these days, Lepto vaccination is even more important. Leptospirosis is spread mainly by contact with water or soil contaminated by the urine of infected animals, and from what I've been told, wild hogs are a significant host. Hogs can contract diseases such as lepto and basically be unaffected while at the same time shedding the lepto bacteria into stock ponds and on the ground.

Leptospirosis affects pregnant cows causing embryonic death, abortions, stillbirths, retained placenta, and the birth of weak calves.

There are several types of lepto, around five, so use a vaccine that includes them all, and by all means, make sure the vaccine is still in date and is handled properly to prevent the vaccine from becoming useless. Some parts of the country also are reporting a declining deer population and attributing it to fawn die-off or abortion due to the wild hogs shedding the lepto bacterium.

The new kids on the block will be getting a blackleg and IBR vaccine and dewormed as soon as we get the vast majority of them on the ground. Since we tag and weigh our calves the day they are born, we also give them an intranasal vaccine for IBR, which provides immunity for six weeks.

About 30 years ago, we dewormed our calves for the first time when they received their first blackleg vaccination at 60 to 90 days of age. We saw a big improvement in calf performance and have maintained this program for many years. We use a white dewormer on the little calves in the spring and fall and use



The next adventure for Rayford Pullen will be enjoying the four best months of grazing we will have this year in regards to forage quality.

an injectable dewormer in the fall on our older calves to get the lice in addition to the internal parasites. Depending on the year, we may use both at the same time if we think the parasite load is heavy.

Milk production and cattle gains this time of year are as good as they will get off our forages. We are making plans to control our weeds in early May after the late germinating ones, namely cocklebur and dove weed, appear.

Waiting any longer will result in less forage production due to the weeds shading our grasses. When it comes to competition from weeds, the reduction of sunlight reaching the grass itself is number one, since grass doesn't grow very well in the shade caused by the

weeds.

Other than this, our next adventure will be enjoying the four best months of grazing we will have this year in regards to forage quality. We have our cows, bulls and calves up to date on their vaccinations, mineral is fed free choice and we can sit back and just watch them grow.

Bulls will be turned out soon, and we will be enjoying the fruits of our labor as the next set of calves head toward weaning. Being in the cattle business is our choice and despite the weather and market challenges, it continues to be a labor of love.

It's a wonderful time to be in the cattle business.🐾



This month it is time to vaccinate the cows with a leptovibrio vaccine before turning out the bulls. (Photos courtesy Rayford Pullen)

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Brett Swope, TX - "I am very happy with my calf catcher as it is a very good product. Have processed a number of calves that I would have never been able to get to because of their protective mothers."

Terry Hinton, MS - "I like my calf catcher very well. It saves lives and doctor bills. Planning to purchase a second calf catcher yet this year."

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PHOTO | DESCRIPTION BY LINDSEY MONK

Calving is in full swing in Montana with the first brandings starting by the end of the month. Hopefully we won't see too much more white stuff. ®



RANCH, RODEO and Randomness

By Pepper Stewart



It's Just Another Gas Station, Right?

If you do much traveling in Texas, at some point you will run across the biggest gas station you have ever seen.

Have you ever stopped into a Buc-ee's to have a look around? Like many others, when the news of a Buc-ee's opening up near me was all the hype, I was confused why.

It's just another gas station, so what is the big deal? I didn't get the hype and massive fan following.

Once the local Buc-ee's opened up in 2015, I stopped in to have a look around. The station is mas-

sive and full of all kinds of food and products.

After about my fifth stop to the gas station, I had fallen into a Buc-ee's trap. I now have been to all of the north and central Texas locations, and now it is part of my daily routine on my drive home from Dallas.

Here are a few things I've noticed during my travels across Texas while dropping into many of the Buc-ee's locations.

You can tell the first timers from the regulars by the amount of pictures being taken. Although they do not advertise gas prices

it will be the cheapest fuel on the road and with the massive amount of gas pumps, you always find one open. It is a traveler stop but not a truck stop, as 18-wheelers are not allowed unless they are the fuel truck. If you stop in hungry, there is plenty of food to choose from for any diet.

Once you have made Buc-ee's your daily stop, you don't realize how high you set the bar for other gas stations. There are a few stations making an attempt to compete, but it's going to be tough to beat the beaver.

I went from thinking, 'It's just

a gas station,' to a daily stop-in for fuel and a drink. It doesn't matter what time of day, it is always busy, from the local commuters to road warriors, and if you have your dog there is a dog area too.

The first Buc-ee's station opened in 1982 and has now grown to 36 locations across Texas and recently ventured off to Louisiana, Florida and Alabama. In closing, I'll leave you with a few words of wisdom, there is no possible way to keep from eating the entire bag of beaver nuggets so don't even make the attempt because you will definitely fail.®



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Breeding Bulls and Bovine Leukemia Virus

By Barry Whitworth, DVM / Area Food/Animal Quality and Health Specialist for Eastern Oklahoma

In most beef enterprises, purchasing a breeding bull is a substantial investment. Most buyers insist the bull pass a Bovine Breeding Soundness Exam.

This gives some assurance that the bull is in good health and is fertile.

However, most buyers do not routinely test bulls for reproductive or health diseases. Trichomoniasis, Bovine Viral Diarrhea Virus, and Bovine Leukemia Virus (BLV) are a few of the diseases that can have unwanted health consequences in a herd for years to come.

A recent study evaluated BLV in bulls as a possible source of transmission.¹

Bovine Leukemia Virus is a retrovirus capable of causing cancer in cattle. The disease that is caused by the virus may be referred to as Enzootic Bovine Leukosis, malignant lymphoma, or lymphosarcoma.

In the United States it is estimated that 44 percent of dairy cows and 10 percent of beef cows are infected with the virus. Most cattle that are infected with the virus are asymptomatic or show no clinical signs of the disease.

BLV is responsible for production losses due to increase veterinary cost, reproduction inefficiency, decreased milk production, and deaths.

The number one reason for USDA condemnation of a carcass at slaughter is lymphosarcoma. Another source of lost income is non-export of live cattle, semen, and embryos to foreign countries with control programs in place.

Cattle are infected with the virus when blood is transferred between animals. Lymphocytes,



Bovine Leukemia Virus will continue to be a problem in the United States until a vaccine is developed or an economic incentive to eradicate the disease develops. (Courtesy photo)

a particular white blood cell, are the specific cells that are infected with the virus.

Transfer of blood may occur through contaminated needles, instruments used for castration or dehorning, tattoo instruments, palpation sleeves or fly taggers.

Calves may be infected in the uterus or during the birthing process. Calves also can be infected from colostrum, but this appears to be rare. Some evidence indicates lack of fly control may be associated with the transfer of

the virus.

In one study, natural breeding was associated with BLV transmission in dairy herds. Trauma to the penis and vulva or vagina during breeding may account for this. In another study that was previously mentioned, BLV virus was detected in the blood and preputial secretions (smegma) of beef bulls. Smegma contains white blood cells (WBC).

As mentioned earlier, lymphocytes are a WBC and are the specific cells that are infected with

the virus. This may be another source of transmission of the virus during breeding.

Cattle that are infected with BLV have three possible outcomes. The most common outcome is an animal appears normal.

Another 30 percent of the cattle will have an elevated lymphocyte count that is referred to as persistent lymphocytosis (PL). Less than five percent of the cattle with BLV will ever develop lymphosarcoma. In the beef bull study, lymphocyte counts were significantly higher

in the BLV infected bulls than in uninfected bulls.

This would suggest that BLV infected bulls with lymphocytosis are at a higher risk for transmitting the virus to uninfected cattle.¹

Currently no treatments exist for cattle that are infected with BLV. This makes prevention a priority.

Prevention of BLV requires reducing the transfer of blood. This may be accomplished by changing needles between cattle, by using a new palpation sleeve for each cow and by keeping instruments clean and free of blood.

Calving pens also should be kept clean and disinfected. If feeding colostrum, feed frozen or pasteurized colostrum to calves since this inactivates the virus. Controlling insects may also be beneficial.

In addition to the previously mentioned preventive measures,

BLV testing of bulls used for natural service may decrease the risk of spread of the virus in the breeding herd. Also, artificial insemination might play a role in decreasing the transmission of the virus due to lower potential for trauma during breeding.

Bovine Leukemia Virus will continue to be a problem in the United States until a vaccine is developed or an economic incentive to eradicate the disease develops. Until that time, producers should follow proper biosecurity to do all they can to prevent the spread of the virus.

This includes managing the bulls to reduce the transmission of the virus. Testing bulls prior to turnout should be part of that management.

If producers would like more information on BLV, they should contact their local veterinarian or Oklahoma State University Extension Educator.

sion Educator.

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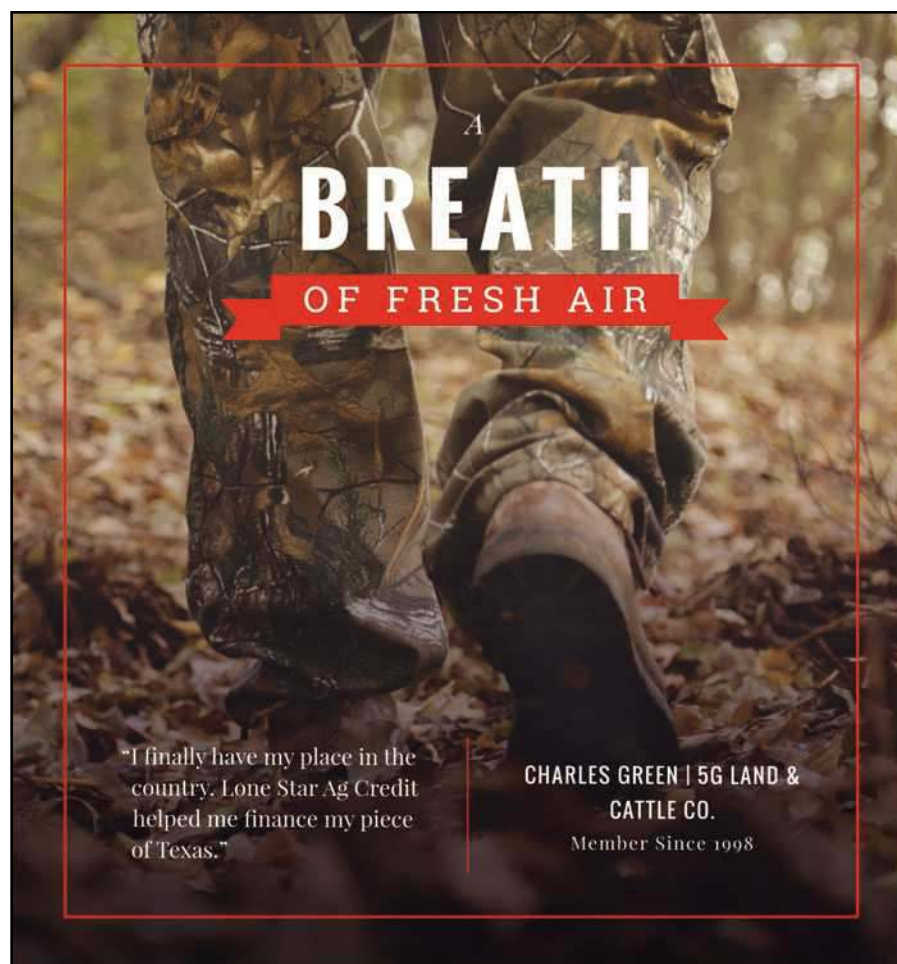
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NEW PRICE

11 ACRES - VALLEY VIEW

Gorgeous 11-acres in the beautiful area between Lake Ray Roberts and Lone Oak Road. Offers a great home site overlooking a rolling pasture, trees, and a scenic 1-acre pond. Ag Exempt, Sandy loam soil.

Ottos Drive | \$324,500



UNDER CONTRACT

38 ACRES - CROSS ROADS/AUBREY

Impeccably maintained horse ranch features a 125X250 covered arena, 12-stall show barn, covered round pen, outdoor riding track, a 3,300sf home with pool and a 1st class duplex in a prime location.

8400 Fishtrap Road | \$2,495,000



50 ACRES - PILOT POINT

Striking equestrian estate features a 4,500sf luxury home with pool, a 16-stall heated show barn, a 10-stall shed row barn with pipe runs, outdoor arena and a 50x70 storage bldg w/ 2 apartments.

9538 Wilson Road | \$2,250,000



10.7 ACRES - KRUM

Eye-catching property includes a nice 2,600SF 4BR home, inground pool, a detached 2nd garage, a 30x50 insulated workshop, 4-stall horse barn with pipe runs, riding arena and a large fenced pasture.

110 Fm2450 | \$649,900



22 ACRES - SANGER

This beautiful tract with elevation changes, expansive views and a stock pond is minutes from a boat launch and full-service marina on Lake Ray Roberts while being less than 3 miles from I-35. Ag Exempt.

Lakecrest Drive | \$419,750



8.2 ACRES - PILOT POINT

With frontage on US Hwy 377, this choice property offers a custom home, guest house, a 10-stall barn and arena. Ideal for a multitude of uses with great visibility and directly in the path of growth.

8075 Hwy 377 | \$1,599,000



5.8 ACRES - CELINA

Pretty tract of land bordering a ±20-acre reservoir at the back. Build your home on the land, launch your canoe, kayak or jon boat and fish on the lake. Coop electric and water available. Ag Exempt.

County Road 128 | \$445,000



±20 ACRES - PILOT POINT

Located across from the Isle de Bois State Park in an area of high-end estates and horse ranches, this eye-catching tract is fenced in pipe & cable, has a stock pond and sandy loam soil. Ag Exempt.

7773 Fm 455 | \$898,110

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LAND MARKET REPORT

By Jared Groce

FEBRUARY 2020 RURAL LAND SALES

Ahhh yes, another election year is upon us. In the real estate business, that typically means a slower market. Not necessarily an up or down market, just slower. It seems like many people don't want to make a life change when there are variables they feel may have an impact on their lives. Generally speaking, the six county area that I monitor and report on (Cooke, Collin, Denton, Grayson, Montague and Wise) saw a slight drop in the sold price versus the list price (SP/LP) and an increase in the number of days on the market (DOM), which indicates a slowing in the market. Average price per acre also shows a decrease over the 2019 yearly average. Keep in mind that one sale in a county can skew the averages greatly.

COOKE	ACRES	\$/ACRE	SP/LP	DOM
WHITESBORO	30.51	\$ 6,200.00	72.75%	278
MUENSTER	35	\$ 5,785.71	96.43%	64
GAINESVILLE	51.16	\$ 8,004.85	100.13%	4
GAINESVILLE	63	\$ 9,920.63	96.30%	7
AVG	44.918	\$ 7,477.80	91.40%	88
FEB 2019 AVG	13.022	\$ 11,274.71	98.74%	31

DENTON	ACRES	\$/ACRE	SP/LP	DOM
KRUM	10.474	\$ 14,321.18	93.75%	19
DECATUR	22.7	\$ 12,114.54	95.16%	4
KRUM	22	\$ 12,681.82	97.89%	118
SANGER	92.059	\$ 10,493.27	84%	704
PONDER	66.45	\$ 15,048.91	94.06%	100
AVG	42.737	\$ 12,931.94	92.97%	189
FEB 2019 AVG	50.779	\$ 21,664.21	87.92%	223

MONTAGUE	ACRES	\$/ACRE	SP/LP	DOM
NOCONA	17	\$ 5,551.76	92.53%	3
FORESTBURG	24	\$ 6,250.00	89.29%	5
SAINT JO	28	\$ 10,174.29	100.33%	500
AVG	23	\$ 7,505.35	94.05%	169
FEB 2019 AVG	25.66	\$ 6,192.90	94.17%	139

WISE	ACRES	\$/ACRE	SP/LP	DOM
DECATUR	20	\$ 11,250.00	100%	29
CHICO	33.38	\$ 8,550.90	86.49%	282
DECATUR	47.49	\$ 6,990.95	83.44%	119
BRIDGEPORT	187.49	\$ 5,333.62	83.33%	105
AVG	72.09	\$ 8,031.37	88.32%	134
FEB 2019 AVG	41.125	\$ 10,171.28	90.88%	119

Information from North Texas Real Estate Information Service (NTREIS) for raw land data, 10 or more acres, ag exempt, for the month of February 2020.



Core Vaccines Every Horse Needs

By Garrett Metcalf, DVM

There are many dreadful diseases that horses can contract through various insect vectors, ticks, wildlife and even wounds that are rather easy to prevent with routine core vaccinations. Oklahoma has just about every insect known to man to offer, as all Oklahomans are fully aware of especially in the spring and summer, making it a very good environment for some of these key viruses to spread. The five types of diseases that will be discussed in this article are commonly referred to as the deadly five, and that is why they make the core vaccine list because if one of these diseases is contracted it can be game over for your horse. Before spring arrives, the core vaccines should be on every horse owner's to-do list as a common health care checklist that should be just as routine as deworming and dental care.

The American Association of Equine Practitioners and American Veterinary Medical Association have established key guidelines for vaccinations for horses that are required based on risk to the public and to the horse themselves. The five diseases listed as core vaccines are Rabies, Tetanus, Eastern equine encephalomyelitis virus, Western equine encephalomyelitis virus and West Nile virus.

The AVMA defines core vaccinations as those "that protect from diseases that are endemic to a region, those with potential public health significance, required by law, virulent/highly infectious, and/or those posing a risk of severe disease. Core vaccines have clearly demonstrated efficacy and safety, and thus exhibit a high enough level of patient benefit and low enough level of risk to justify their use in the majority of patients." (AAEP website)

The reason these deadly five diseases are listed as core vaccines is because they pose a possible public health risk, are highly virulent or infectious, have a high mortality rate and can be effectively controlled with routine vaccination with great efficacy. It's important to remember that vaccines are not 100 percent effective for every disease but well worth that risk when it comes to protecting against these five deadly diseases.

There are many other diseases that horses may or may not need to be protected against with vaccinations. These diseases are listed under "risk based" immunizations depending on



(Courtesy photo)

travel, environment, geographic circumstances and even competition/racing venue requirements before entering into an event. With recent localized outbreaks of equine herpes virus at race tracks, shows and barrel races, many venues and race tracks require very recent vaccinations for these viruses before permitted onto the grounds. Here is a list of risk based diseases vaccinations are available for: Anthrax, botulism, equine herpes virus 1 & 4, equine viral arteritis, influenza, rotaviral diarrhea and strangles. These diseases and the risk of contracting them must be weighed on an individual horse bases versus the risk of the vaccine itself.

Many vaccines available today for horses have all core vaccines in one shot except rabies. One vaccine provider has developed the first all five core diseases in one single vaccine. Horses just like other species require multiple boosters to generate an appropriate immune response to be protective. For unvaccinated horses or horses that don't have a documented vaccine history it is recommended to have at least one booster four to six weeks after the first dose to get an adequate response and then annually after that. In some endemic areas of the country with higher cases of West Nile and

other viral encephalomyelitis diseases due to prolonged mosquito vector season it is often recommended to have a booster in the mid-to-late summer to have added protection against these particular viruses.

Below is a breakdown of each disease and its importance for your horse and even yourself to be protected against.

Rabies

Rabies is a highly deadly virus that is unsurvivable for any mammal that contracts the disease and begins to show clinical signs, even for humans. As of 2016 only four people have survived rabies infection after showing clinical signs, so the odds are very poor. One of the most difficult aspects of rabies in horses is the variability of clinical signs. Horses can display two clinical manifestations of the disease: Furious/Mad form or Dumb/Stuporous but really it can look like anything early on. Veterinarians are trained that rabies can display almost as anything and should always be on the list for a horse that presents with neurologic symptoms, especially horses with no vaccine history for rabies. Horses can display colic, ataxia, blindness, hypersalivation, depression, weakness and even lameness. Also there is no ante-mortem test meaning there is no test to



confirm rabies until the horse is dead or euthanized and the brain is collected for testing. Rabies is transmitted via bites from infected rabid wildlife such as skunks (highest transmitter in Oklahoma), raccoons, fox and bats.

EEE/WEE

Eastern and Western equine encephalomyelitis is transmitted like other viral encephalitis via the mosquito vector. Clinical signs are neurologic signs of ataxia, blindness, head pressing or head tilt, recumbency, seizures and paralysis of the throat/tongue. Only up to 15 percent of horses survive EEE. WEE has a better survival rate up to 50 percent and has very similar sign as EEE. Birds are common carriers of EEE/WEE and are the reservoir for these viruses.

West Nile

West Nile is a very commonly known virus that is also transmitted by mosquitoes to horses, humans, birds and other mammals. Birds again are the largest reservoir for this virus. The virus affects the central nervous system by creating inflammation around the brain and spinal cord. Symptoms or clinical signs are fever, depression, muscle fasciculations, weakness and ataxia. The severity of the disease is horse dependent and not all horses get the disease but among those horses that do about one-third will die from it. Also almost half of horses will have lasting neurologic effects from the disease.

Tetanus

The causative bacterium was first discovered in 1884 by injecting wound exudates from humans with tetanus into animals leading to the discovery that *Clostridium tetani* is the causative bacteria. The bacteria is found everywhere in the environment including the soil and manure of horses. Horses are rather sensitive to the neurotoxin produced from *Clostridium tetani* that leads to the clinical signs of tetanus. The bacteria enter the horse's body through wounds, cuts



(Courtesy photo)

or even surgical wounds such as castration sites. The spores of the bacteria turn into the vegetative form when it begins to grow and replicate.

The neurotoxin produced from the bacteria enters the central nervous system by peripheral nerves. The clinical signs of tetanus are muscle spasms, stiffness, prolapsed third eyelids, extended head and neck, elevated tail and retracted lips.

As the disease progresses, horses will become recumbent and have difficulty breathing. Life saving treatments can be implemented to save the infected horses but still up to 75 percent of horses will die.

What all these disease have in common besides death is that these deaths are extremely excruciating, painful and miserable. There is no doubt from seeing these cases personally and from watching teaching videos that these horses are suffering enormously. What makes it even more difficult and disheartening when we see these cases is they are so easily preventable with vaccination. The bottom line is vaccines can save your horse's life from these deadly diseases and vaccines are rather

inexpensive especially compared to the expense of trying to treat the horse once they are ill. Please talk to your veterinarian about getting

your horse or horses protected with core vaccinations and if any other vaccinations are necessary based on your situation.®

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Five Countries Compete at Global Cup

By Phillip Kitts | Photos courtesy PRCA

The Professional Bull Riders has risen to a whole new level of competition in the last few years. With this growth the bull riding scene has developed into an international competition that continues to grow each year.

In 2017, the PBR recognized the international influence in the sport and decided to develop a platform to highlight the worldwide contributions of bull riding. This developed into PBR Global Cup, and the rest is active history.

Global Cup has evolved into a team event that brings athletes from five countries that regularly have athletes on the PBR Tour. Each country picks their best bull riders to compete in a global contest where the team accumulates points, and in the end, the team with the most points wins.



The Global Cup.

Winning Global Cup comes with a decent paycheck for each athlete, plus the extremely unique trophy.

The Global Cup trophy features five mock bull horns adorned with the colors of each country. When a team wins the cup, they are afforded the opportunity to remove their horn from the cup and fill it with the dirt from their winning arena.

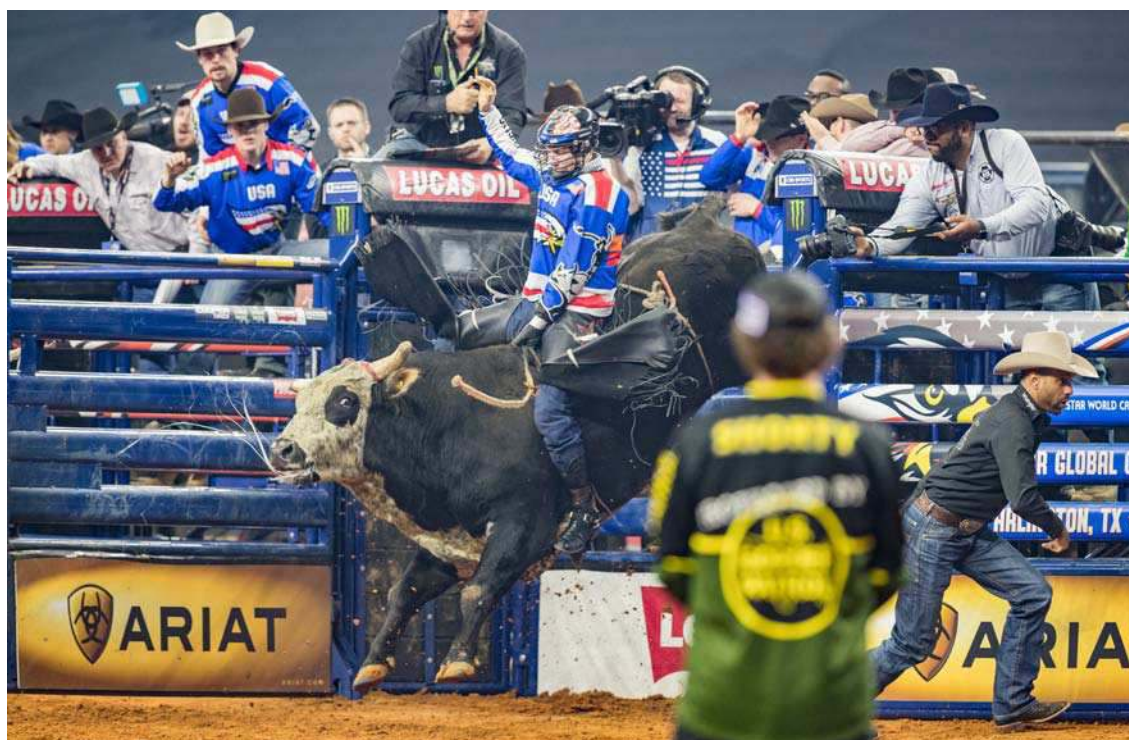
February saw the PBR bring Global Cup back to Arlington, Texas and AT&T Stadium. The big venue with all the historic precedence was a terrific backdrop for two nights of bull riding and international pride on the line. Things kicked off Saturday night with a monstrous opening, which provided each country a chance to display their national pride. Team Mexico entered with cultural

music and introduction of their nation's best bull riders. Team Canada was not to fall short when they introduced their team by presenting each of them with their national colors. Australia matched the Canadian welcome with a colorful set of jerseys that displayed their pride in their national flag. Things got turned up a notch when Team Brazil opened their walk in with Capybara dancers that jumped high and highlighted their stellar dance and fight ability.

On this stage America is granted two teams. The first of the teams includes all Native American athletes from across the United States. This team is fittingly called Team Wolves. Team Wolves entered the arena with their mascot of a wolf matched with a ceremonial dancer dressed in Native American garb. The other American team is named Team Eagles and is all American bull riders from around the nation. Their entrance may have been the most intense of all. With two Harley Davidson motorcycles making rounds around the arena, you could sense the combination of national pride and freedom every moment of their entrance.

Once all the fanfare and hype had come to an end it came down to bull riding. Night one saw each nation's bull riders get their shot at some of the best long round bulls in America. The surprise of the evening was the leaderboard. Team Australia and Team Canada had made a very quick run toward the top while the reigning champions, Team Brazil, seemed to be struggling. One of the two American teams, Team Eagles, had placed themselves within striking distance while Team Wolves seemed to be fighting and clawing to get bulls ridden. Meanwhile, Team Mexico had already seemed to fall off the radar.

At the end of the night it was obvious that regardless of the heart and try Team Mexico brought to Texas, they were just flat out-



Jess Lockwood from Montana.



Cole Melancon in round one. (Photos courtesy Phillip Kitts, Avid Visual Imagery Rodeo Photography)

matched by the bull talent that had made the trip. Meanwhile, Team Wolves showed their injury issues were getting the better of them.

Rolling into the second night of competition, Canada and Aus-

tralia seemed to be the teams to watch while Team Eagles from the United States poised themselves to be a threat. As each nation put their riders into the arena, the leaderboard began to change. When

the last section of bull riding came up, suddenly America's Eagles had put together a string of strong performances and made their way to the top. When the end of the

Continued on page 24

**Continued from page 23**

long round competition came, things looked close for the claims of the Global Cup. Three teams all had a legitimate shot at the win: Australia, Brazil and America's Team Eagles were all in a dead heat for the title.

Canada had a mathematical chance, but with the rider bull matchups it looked to be a stretch to think they would leave Cowboys Stadium with a win. Essentially, they would need monster scores and a little luck from the other teams.

When the bonus round ended, Team Eagles had stellar performances from Cole Melancon and Jess Lockwood to claim the win of Global Cup 2020.

The results in Arlington looked like this: Team USA Eagles went six for 16 for a total of 523.75 points and the victory.

Team Australia also went six for 16 and accumulated a total of 514.5 points.

As a whole, Team Australia saw great performances by several of their athletes and could truly stand behind a team effort.

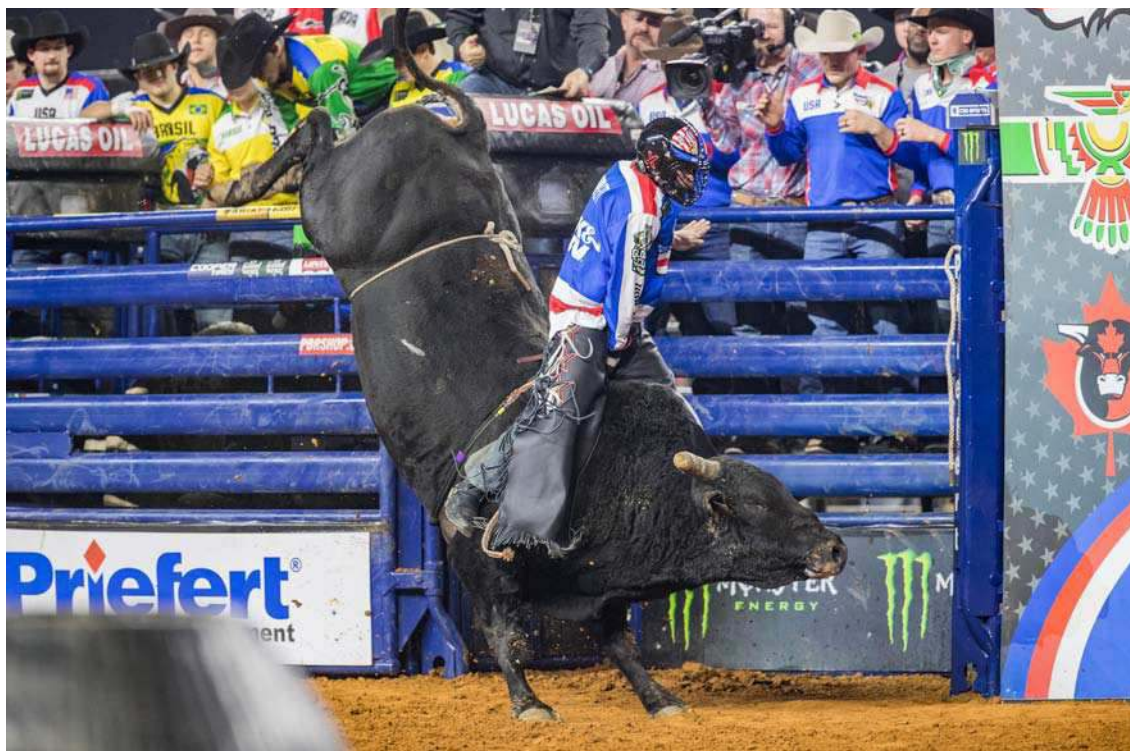
Team Brazil leaned on the great performances by Jose Vitor Leme and managed to get five of 16 bulls ridden and accumulate 435.75 points.

Even with the great start, Team Canada seemed to lose the momentum the last half of day two and lose even more energy going into the bonus round.

When it all ended, they managed to get three of 16 covered and accumulated 259.75 points.

Team Mexico made a strong surge with one of their last rides of the weekend in which they finally registered a score. On the weekend, they went one for 16 for a total of 89 points.

Bringing up the last spot was Team Wolves. With a rough set of performances mostly due to battling injuries, they only managed to get one bull ridden for a total of 85.25 points.



Matt Triplett from Montana in round one.



Cody Teel of Texas in round one. (Photos courtesy Phillip Kitts, Avid Visual Imagery Rodeo Photography)

The efforts for the weekend awarded Team Eagles, consisting of Jess Lockwood, Cole Melancon, Matt Triplett, and Cody Teel with coaches Justin McBride, JW Hart and assistant coach Cooper

Davis, one of a kind victory medals and a total check of \$362,022. The biggest award for their efforts came in the form of a years' worth of bragging rights by claiming the Global Cup.

Plans are already being made for Global Cup 2021.

Will it return to the United States or will one of the other nations host the event? We will have answers in a few short months.®

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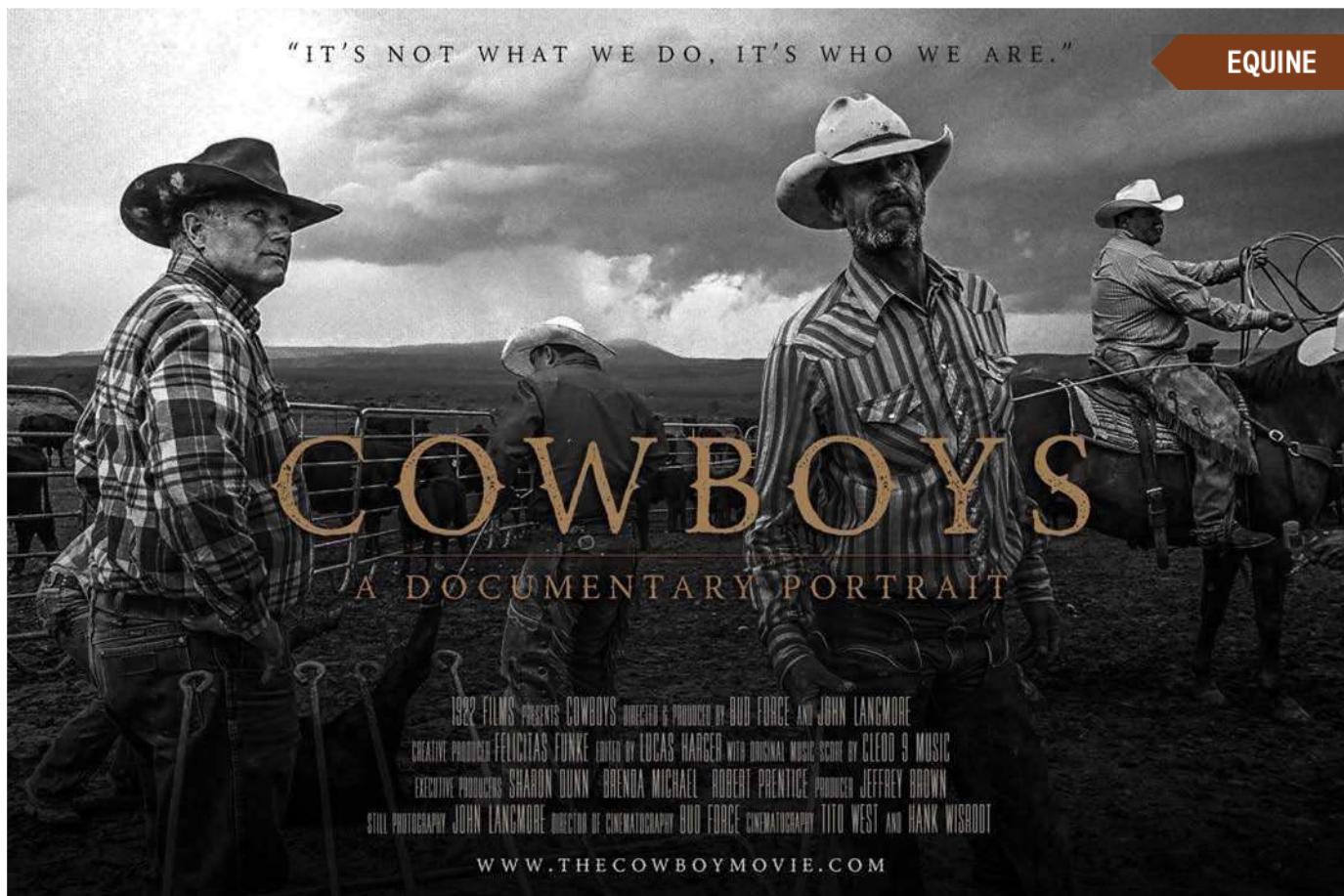
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The Work of an Insider

By Krista Lucas

It takes a special person to create something people from every walk of life can enjoy. John Langmore did exactly that in the 1922 film "Cowboys: A Documentary Portrait." Only the work of an insider can really capture the art of real cowboys on big outfits. The dedication and hard work of the American cowboy is perfectly captured in this film, which features some of the largest cattle ranches in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Montana, and several others.

In "Cowboys," viewers are treated to first-hand accounts of what it is like to work on a working cattle ranch. The audience instantly learns being a cowboy involves having an infinite love for animals. From pulling a calf from a struggling cow to save both lives, to doctoring a snake-bit horse, cowboys are shown doing whatever it takes for the well being

of their livestock.

This film also covers the changing times and the struggles that may come with it. For the traditional cowboy, it is sometimes hard to find a balance between holding on to the old way of doing things on the ranch, especially in an ever-changing modern world.

Something that has not changed is the respect cowboys have always had for the land, livestock and each other. Boots O'Neal, a true cowboy legend who works on the Four Sixes in Guthrie, Texas, explained some of the younger generation might even be a better horseman than himself.

Not to be left out, "Cowboys" also includes the female side of things. Even though many of the larger outfits that still require crews to go out on long drives do not consist of many cowgirls, there are plenty of ways women contribute every day. Strong

women are holding down the fort at home while raising the next generation. In the director's opinion, there are many cowgirls who can ride and rope with some of the best men. The only difference in the two is when "brute strength" is required, the cowboys have the upper hand.


Langmore teamed up with Bud Force to produce "Cowboys." Spending four years on eight of America's largest cattle ranches captured all of these elements. Cameras caught action from every angle possible, and aerial footage was obtained by the use of a drone. Langmore has had previous experience as a working cowboy during the summers of his youth. He also had previously spent five years photographing cowboys for his acclaimed book "Open Range – America's Big Outfit Cowboy." Langmore learned how to earn his meals and two of the major rules

on a ranch: do not get in the way and never stand around.

"You have to like to suffer if you want to really be a good cowboy." These are the words of O' Neal, featured in the film, and many who have come before and after him would agree.

Working cowboys have always faced challenges and will continue to move forward to provide. It is the faith, determination and respect of the working cowboy that makes "Cowboys" a timeless piece.

"Cowboys" has been well received by the ranching world, as well as the every-day person who wants to experience a world they may not know much about. This documentary is educational and shows the highs and lows of the western way of life.

For a list of screening dates or to purchase Langmore's book, visit www.thecowboymovie.com. 



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- Numerous pastures cross-fenced with electric and centralized pipe catch pens. The majority of the property is fenced with cable fencing and pipe



WHEN A CITY GIRL *goes country*

By Annette Bridges

When Life Gives You Lemons

Probably most of us are familiar with the proverbial phrase, “When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.” Wikipedia explains the phrase is used to encourage optimism and a positive can-do attitude in the face of adversity or misfortune. Lemons represent difficulty in life. Making lemonade is turning those darn lemons into something positive or desirable.

My husband is a master of making the most of unexpected, unwanted events around the ranch. This also can translate into the repurposing of something too old or worn out for its original usage into finding a new way to use it that makes it still functional and helpful. He doesn’t realize his own creative genius.

Such a day happened recently. Our pecan tree limbs are so full and heavy that some have broken. Of course, we also have plenty of dead limbs that just haven’t reached the top of our priority to-do list.

One day we arrived home after visiting with neighbors to find broken limbs lying over the bed of my husband’s truck. Fortunately, the limbs did not hit any windows on our house nor do damage to his truck.

After all the limbs were cut and neatly collected in his truck bed, he came up with what I thought was a brilliant use for the little limbs full of green leaves.

Our neighbors had started raising goats. He contacted them to confirm what he thought: the goats would love to eat our fallen limbs full of tasty leaves. So off we went to deliver the leafy treats. Needless to say, the goats were delighted and happy to help us with finding a good purpose for our fallen leafy limbs.

The lesson reinforced for me that it is always possible, in some big or small way, to turn a negative situation into a positive one, to view a setback as an opportunity and transform hardship into happiness. In this instance, the result was very happy goats.

Indeed, life rarely turns out like we expect it.

I think these words by author Randy Pausch



The Bridges returned home one evening to find broken limbs lying over the bed of their truck.



The Bridges delivered some leafy treats to their neighbor’s goats. (Photos courtesy Annette Bridges)

epitomize how to approach the uncertainty of life: “We cannot change the cards we are dealt, just how we play the hand.”

This is not to say we don’t dream and have goals. I am a big dreamer kind of gal. My husband would tell you I always have a new idea for some new project.

I’m also becoming much more of a gal who loves to be surprised by my life and who overreacts less, who doesn’t overthink or over plan like I did in my youth.

I’m inspired and encouraged when forced to look for new recipes for turning lemons into lemonade. ☺

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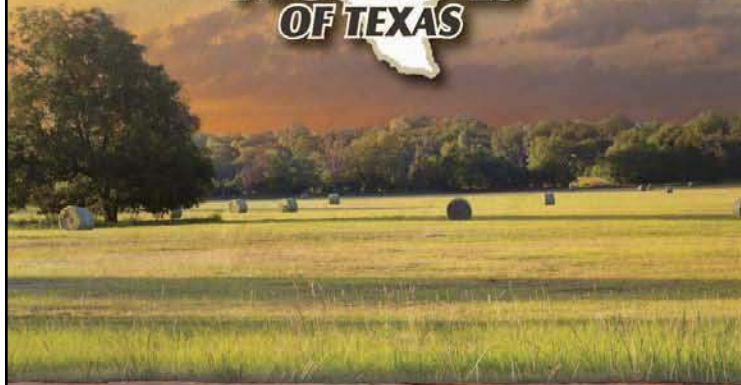
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THE BEES KNEES

Just Standing There


By Rydni Perkins

While fixing fence the other day, we came across a tree that had grown around barbwire. I didn't realize a tree was going to give a life lesson. It was my job to bring the roll of wire and stretcher from the back of the truck to the spot that needed to be fixed. I didn't want to be helping at all. I was still bitter about the day before when working cattle I got in trouble for supposedly, "just standing there."

During the walks from the back of the truck to the spots of fence that were down, I was imagining all the other things I could be doing besides helping someone who made me feel ignorant the day before. I may or may not have been plotting a revenge tactic all morning. That was until I saw a tree that had grown around barbwire.

I looked at this tree in dismay. I bent down and studied it more to see it had grown around barbwire twice. It had faced a problem while growing, then overcome it just to face the same problem again. To my amazement, the tree was still strong and stood tall.

After seeing that, I told myself I wanted to be like the tree. Instead of getting so upset and letting a problem affect me for days, I should learn to grow around it. I want to be able to stand tall and strong after facing a problem, so I can grow as a person.

I thank the Good Lord for the lessons I am taught because without them I would still be bitter for "just standing there." I also strongly believe my other half should be thankful for me "just standing there" looking at that tree or my revenge tactics would be in full swing. At the end of the day I felt silly a tree had taught me a lesson, but it did. To some they've seen a tree grow like that a million times, but I hope now they see a lesson as well. Stand strong, face the problem, and then grow. 



While fixing fence the other day, Ryndi Perkins came across a tree that had grown around barbwire. She didn't realize it would teach her a life lesson. (Photo courtesy Ryndi Perkins)

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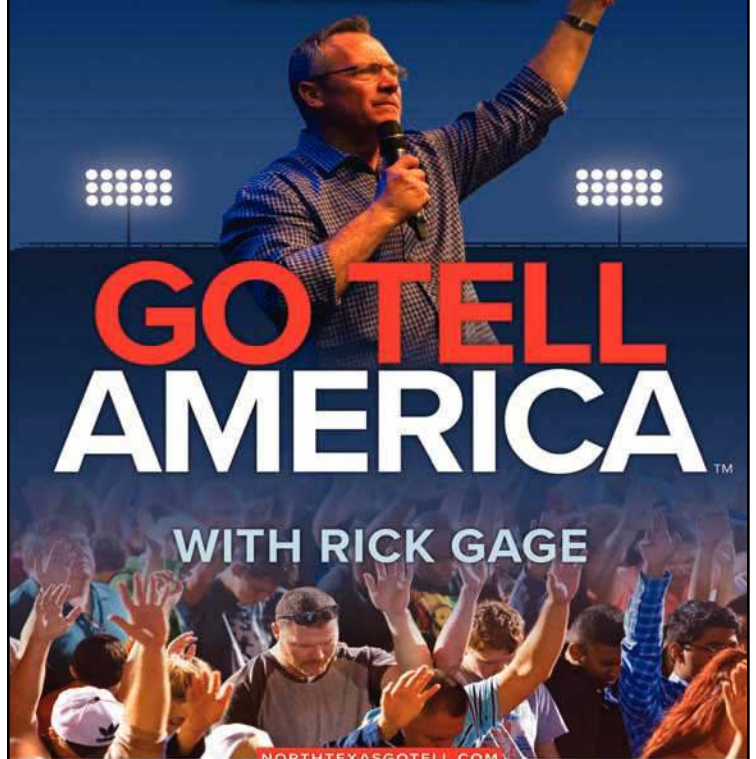


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Lacey's Pantry

By Lacey Newlin

Servings: 8 | Total time: 60 minutes


Ingredients

- 1 box Jiffy corn muffin mix
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/2 cup creamed corn
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 lb ground beef
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp cayenne
- 1/2 lb jalapeños, chopped
- 1/2 cup green chilis, diced
- 1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1 cup Monterey Jack cheese
- 1/3 cup red enchilada sauce
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1/2 bunch cilantro, chopped (if desired)

Instructions

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Prepare cornbread base by combining corn muffin mix, sour cream, creamed corn, and one egg. Pour into large cast iron skillet (we used an 11-inch skillet). Bake for 20 minutes or until golden brown on top. Let cool in pan.

In the meantime, prep enchilada base. In a separate skillet, sauté onions over medium heat. Season with salt and pepper to taste. When translucent, add garlic. Cook until fragrant. Add ground beef, stirring to break up the meat, and add: cumin, chili powder, salt, and cayenne. Add the jalapeños and the green chilis. Cook for a few minutes until soft. Add 1/2 cup each of the cheddar and Monterey Jack cheeses.

Remove skillet from stovetop to drain excess fat. Poke surface of cornbread base with the handle of a wooden spoon. Pour enchilada sauce over the cornbread, making sure to cover the entire surface. Spread meat mixture over cornbread base. Top with leftover 1/2 cups of the cheeses. Bake for about 20 minutes. To brown the cheese for a crisper crust, broil for five minutes. Top with chopped cilantro. Serve immediately, while warm. 

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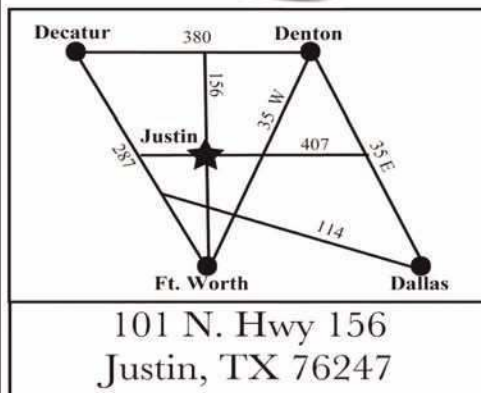


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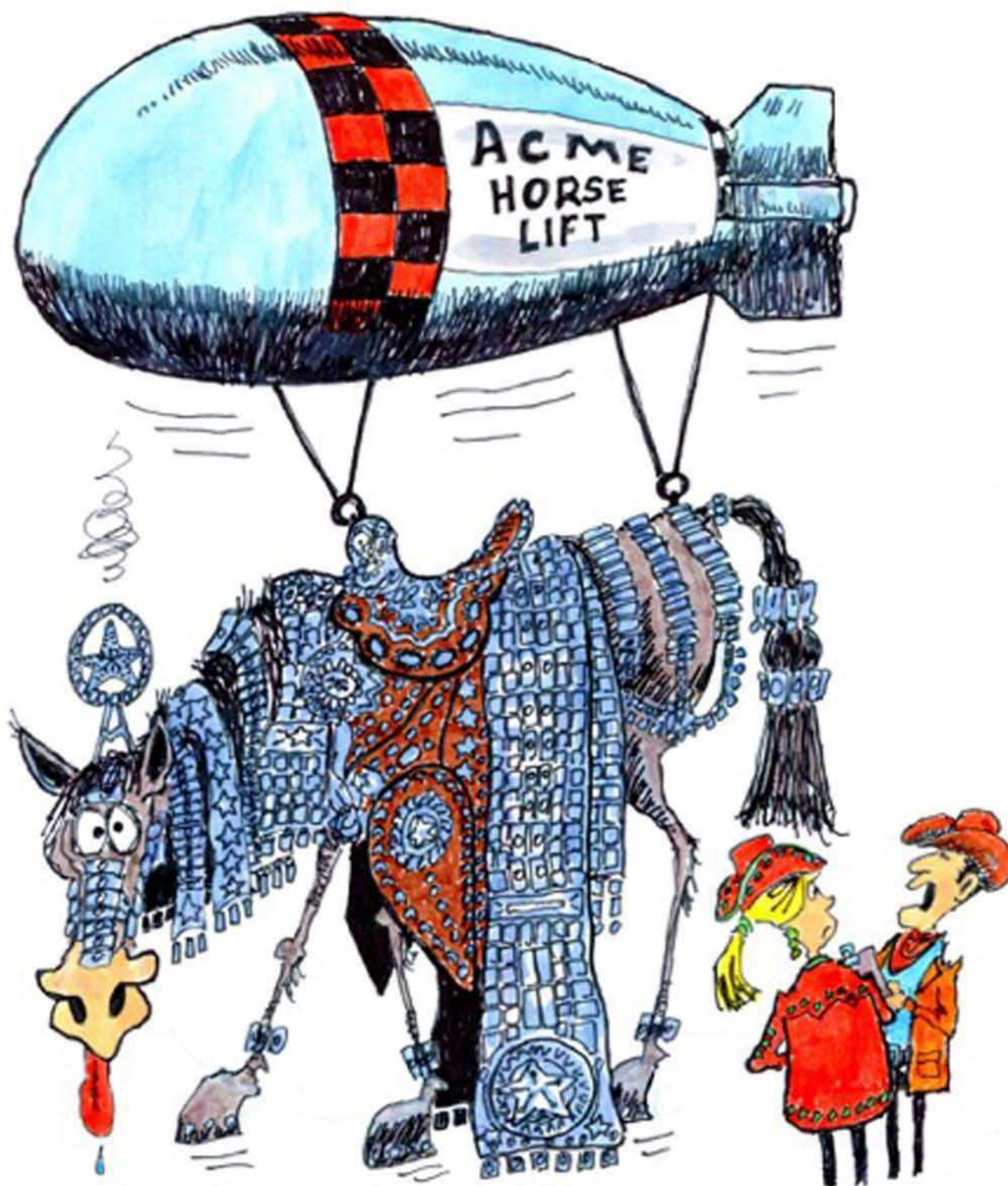
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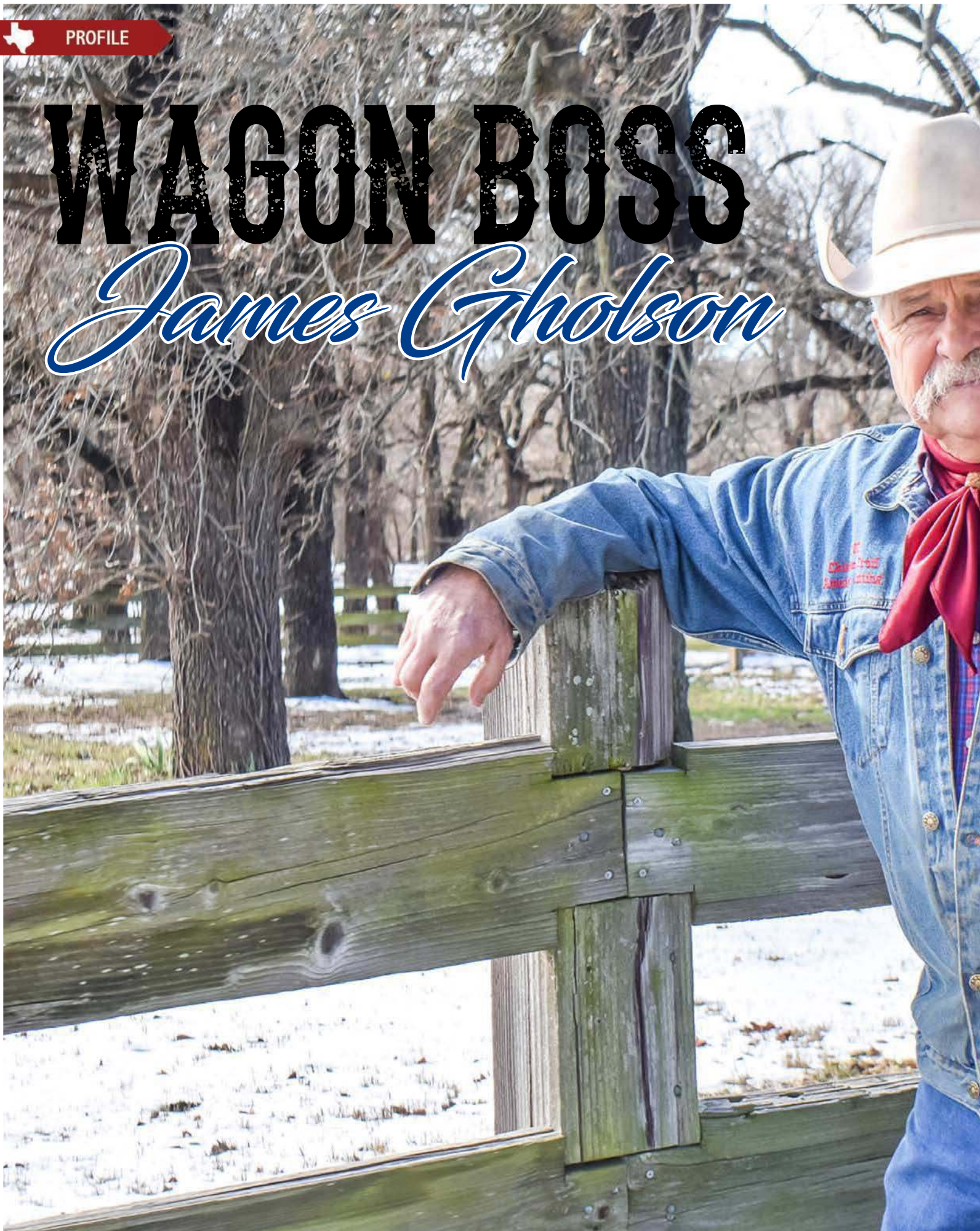
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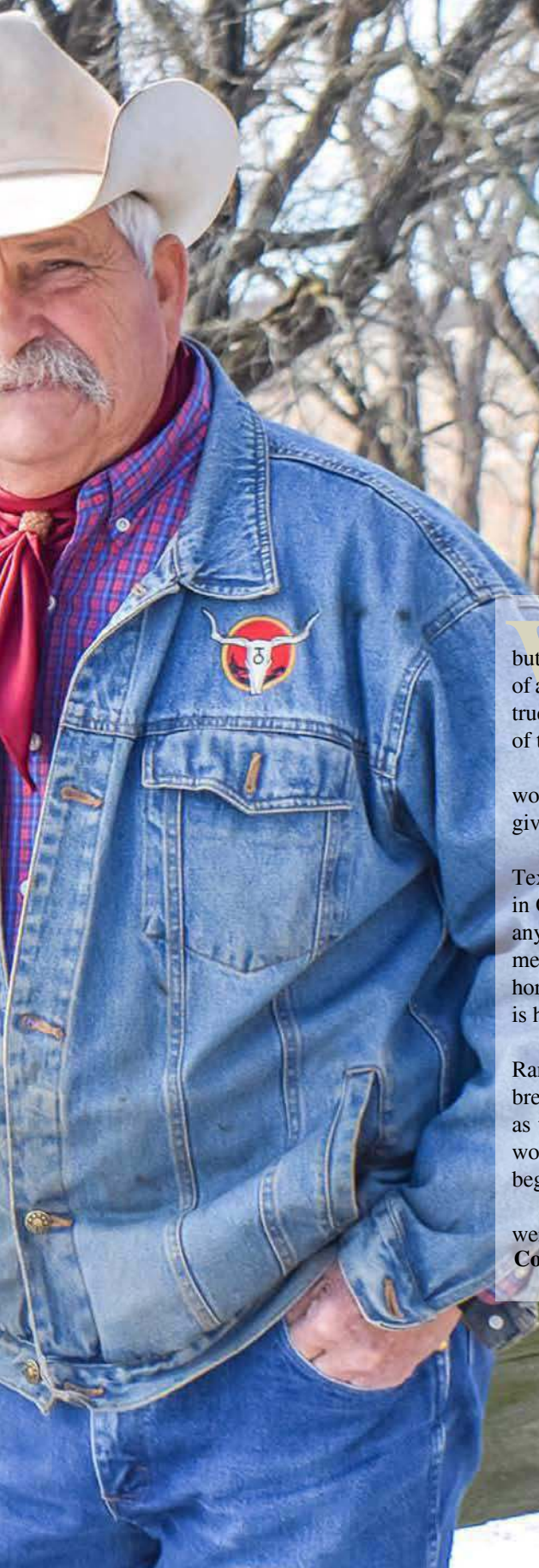


PROFILE

WAGON BOSS

James Gholson





Webster's dictionary defines wagon boss as a man in charge of a wagon train, but he is so much more than a man who gathers cattle and manages the employees of a ranch. A wagon boss represents a set of principles, demands respect and is what true grit is all about, and no one knows this better than James Gholson, wagon boss of the Pitchfork Ranch for 17 years.

Gholson began his journey with the ranch at just 13 years old when he went to work alongside his uncle. Today, the ranch has seen five generations of Gholsons give themselves to the brand that is the Pitchfork.

The ranch, founded in 1883, is one of the oldest established ranches in North West Texas. The Pitchfork home ranch covers 165,000 acres with a satellite operation in Oklahoma and is one of the few ranches that can boast it is larger today than at any time in its history. With its extremely rough terrain of steep canyons and thick mesquite and cedar trees, the ranch must be worked as it was in its first days: by horseback. When it comes time to gather the yearlings or brand the cattle, the wagon is hitched up, just as the original founders would do in the 1880s.

Gholson's maternal grandfather, known as "Wild Bill," worked on the Pitchfork Ranch. Wild Bill lived on an old remote camp called a "bach" camp, far down in the breaks with no electricity or running water. Gholson, born and raised in Aspermont as the youngest of four children to I.W. (Bill) and Honor Belle (Allen) Gholson, would visit his grandfather on the ranch. Meanwhile, Gholson's paternal lineage began ranching in Aspermont, Texas, in the late 1880s.

"My daddy was a rancher and his dad was a rancher, and my mother's folks were cowboys. And there's a difference. My dad's side had a good reputation in

Continued on page 42



WAGON BOSS

James Gholson

Continued from page 41

the ranching business, and my ol' grandad on the other side, he had a reputation for being pretty wild and wooly," Gholson laughed.

Rancher or cowboy, Gholson knew from an early age that was the life he was destined for.

"I wanted to be a cowboy all my life; it's all I've ever known," Gholson said.

Barely a teenager, Gholson began working towards his dream at just 13 when he moved into the Pitchfork Ranch bunkhouse with his uncle. Gholson would work the ranch during the summers and then return to school during the fall until he graduated. It was an exciting time in a young boy's life.

"I got to see things that now as I look back, it's not that way anymore. I got to work with what I call sure enough cowboys. They're all dinosaurs and gone pretty much now. I got to see wild cattle and broncy horses. In fact, the first day I went to work for Pitchforks, I got bucked off five times that morning at age 13. The wagon boss told Jimmy Smith, a good hand, at dinner, 'You better take that button down there on the creek and show him how to get on and off them ol' broncs and try to get along with them before we get him killed 'cause it looks like he's going to stay,'" Gholson recalled.

The ranch was like a big family, but the younger cowboys were expected to walk the line.

"It wasn't like it is anymore; they'd jerk a knot in your tail pretty quick. There was rules and you better follow them and show respect. I don't know that you'd say they earned it, but they demanded it, and you learned pretty quick if you wanted to hang around you might better pay attention,"



Five generations of the Gholson family have worked at the Pitchfork Ranch, including James, who was wagon boss for 17 years. (Photo courtesy Bob Moorhouse)

Gholson said. "They were good to show you something if you tried. If you didn't have much try, they didn't have much patience with you. I think the first day that horse bucked me off they were trying to see whether I wanted to be a cowboy or not."

After graduating high school, Gholson decided it was time to branch out and went to work in Matador, Texas. It was a smart move on his part, considering the move provided him the opportunity to meet the love of his life while out on the town one evening. Her name was June, and the two were married in the summer of 1969. Gholson moved his new wife down a 14-mile dirt road and the two set out on an adventurous life together. It was a long way from home and difficult for visitors to pop in, but in the long run, it was good for the newlyweds.

"I could probably count on one hand the number of times I spent

the night with a girlfriend growing up. It was hard, but it was probably good for us," June said.

However, the couple was only there a few months when their employee needed them in Baylor County, where they remained until the opportunity came up to move back closer to June's family.

"We were able to come back to the Red Lake part of the old Matador country and I got to go to work for a good cowboy there, the manager named Sam Whitley. I gained a lot of experience there with Sam; he was a good one to be around," James said. "He liked to cowboy the old way so we got along good. The old horses they had were pretty rough to start with, but we got to liking them and getting along with them and that kind of made things pretty good."

James explained as a young cowboy, it seems like the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence, and three or four years

in one place is a long time. James stayed around five with Whitley before moving on to a neighboring outfit.

"I always learned something at each place, what to do and some things what not to do, but it seemed like I always, from an early age, took responsibility good and seemed like I got promoted pretty fast. If you work hard, and the deal that has always been very strong in my mind is ride for the brand. If you are out to a man, you give him all you've got and you ride for it and you work. That's your deal," James said.

His next job with the neighboring outfit was a much smaller, one-man outfit, owned by Robert McAteer. However, James explained it wasn't much different than working for a big outfit because there were several ranches that worked together.

"It was good. We worked ev-

Continued on page 44

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WAGON BOSS *James Gholson*



James Gholson and his wife, June, were married June 7, 1969. (Photo by Dani Blackburn)

Continued from page 42

everything just like a big outfit, but it wasn't quite as wild, you know," James laughed. "I was always very fortunate that when I was hired out to cowboy, I cowboied. I didn't have to build fence, I didn't have to windmill, I didn't have to run a tractor, I cowboied. I was horse-back every day at all those outfits. That's what I was hired to do, and that's what I did," James said.

After five years with McAtter, James had the chance to be a foreman at the Chimney Creek Ranch

*"Our faith holds us together.
The Lord has blessed me
beyond measure, and I know
he made me a cowboy."*

James Gholson

in Calgary, Texas, a 100-section outfit with racehorses. Again, the Gholsons remained around five years when they decided it was time to branch out on their own.

"I tried farming and ranching together. The farming was pretty good, but then it didn't work out," James said. "I wasn't made out to be a farmer. I went broke, and got a chance to go back to Pitchfork, so I sold out and went back to work."

Gholson returned to the place it all began, but he was no longer



the 13-year old youngster he once was.

This time around, he was going to work as the wagon boss at one of the largest ranches in the Lone Star State.

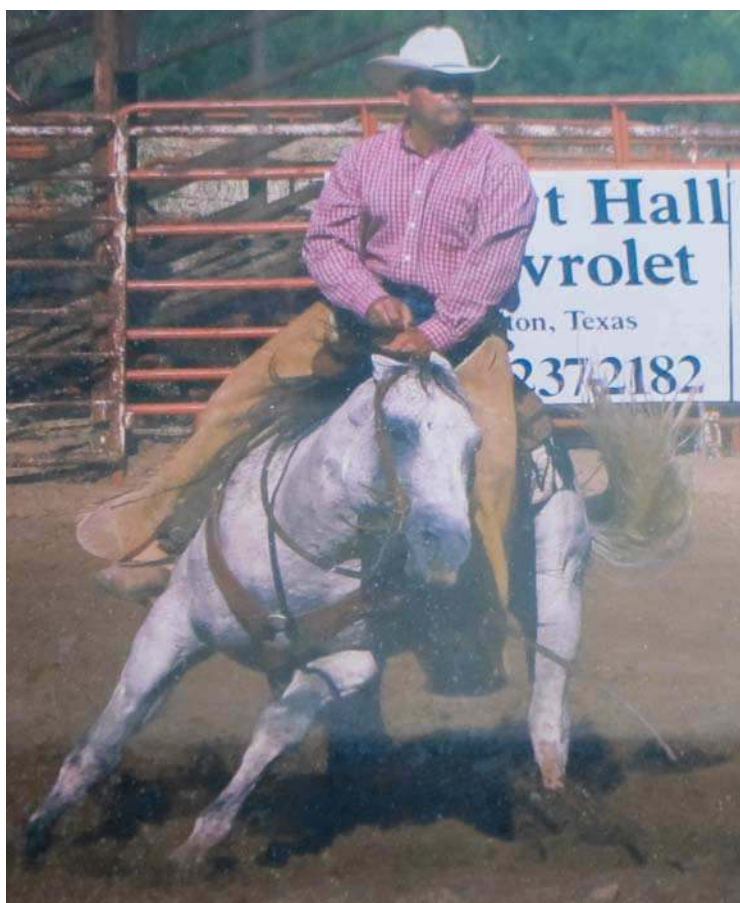
“Wagon boss is an old ranch term for foreman. He’s in charge of getting the cattle worked. When the wagon is out, that is what he was the boss of, moving those wagons and working the branding and shipping company. I was so excited to be back. It is home and the ranch is owned by the best people in the world. It had good horses and big pastures and wild cattle. We stayed out at that ol’ wagon and worked and man we cleaned those pastures in that old cedar break country, that big, rough country. We would rope seven, eight-year-old maverick bulls and cows. It was pretty wild, and it was dang sure western,” James said.

The ranch used the old ways combined with a modern touch as helicopters would fly overhead to help gather the cattle. The helicopter couldn’t do it by itself, and the country was so rough there was no way for trucks and trailers to get in.

“We would just have to go back in there the old way and just rope them and tie them, then haul them out. To compare them to today, I don’t think it is anywhere near the same. They still run cattle, and they still do it horseback, but not many of them really run the wagon. They might take it out and eat there or something, but we pulled them with horses or mules and left the pickups and trailers at home,” James recalled.

The cowboys would move the horses around, leaving out in the morning in one spot. If they finished up working that country, they would move the wagon and drive the horses over to the next place and work that country, all while dealing with some pretty wild horses.

“The biggest difference from



James Gholson has received titles in the Ranch Horse Association of America, Working Ranch Cowboys Association, Ranch Cutting Horse Association and the American Quarter Horse Association Versatility Ranch Horse events. (Courtesy photo)

back then is there were always some horses that I wouldn’t say were outlaws, but they were pretty good to teach an old button lessons. They didn’t mind getting you bucked off and jammed up, but the insurance and stuff has gotten to where you can’t have those kind of horses around,” James explained.

James experienced his own share of injuries, as his wife laughed that she was practically a nurse by the time it was all said and done.

“I’ve had lots of stuff broke and banged up, but nothing that ever made me want to quit,” James said.

The former wagon boss recalled attempting to rope an eight-year-old steer with a big set of horns, but just as he was gaining on the steer and about to stand up

to swing his rope, the steer went over some old washed out trails and fell. His horse ran over the top of the steer and flipped over.

“I remember hitting the ground and looking up. The back of my head was bent back, and I saw that saddle coming and I thought, ‘Lord, I’m going to die right here.’ He rolled over on top of me and kind of mashed me. I was going to lay there and kind of whimper a minute, but I opened my eyes and me and that old steer were eyeball to eyeball. He came up and blowed snot as we were both getting up, and kind of took after, I stepped in a cedar to get away from him. I didn’t even have time to lay there and whimper, I had to get up and run,” James laughed.

However, not all are funny memories. One of the worst occurred when at the age of 61,

shortly before Gholson’s retirement, a two-year-old knocked the cowboy off in an alley, causing James to break five ribs, puncture his lung and mess up his pelvis. It made him a bit more wary of riding two-year-olds after that point, but as his wife pointed out, it didn’t mean he stopped.

“We had a lot of fun. it was hard work, but man I wouldn’t take nothing for it,” James said.

One of the favorite parts of the job for James was showing horses, and it was a part of the job he became very successful at.

“I guess the Lord blessed me with good hands and I was able to get along with those horses. I loved them and I still do. I was blessed to really ride some great, great horses,” James said.

James has received titles in the Ranch Horse Association of America, Working Ranch Cowboys Association, Ranch Cutting Horse Association and the American Quarter Horse Association Versatility Ranch Horse events, just to name a few. In 2004, he exhibited a horse at the Fort Worth Ranch Horse Show and Sale that received a record \$44,000 bid for reserve champion. The gelding was purchased by Craig Casner of California, who still owns the horse. Gholson explained he had the opportunity to work alongside some of the greatest horsemen, such as Pat Parelli, Mike Bridges, Chris Cox and Craig Cameron.

“People will say something about being a horseman, but I say I am a student of horsemanship. I don’t think you ever can get finished. You are always learning something. I think the Lord blessed me with that gift of getting along with horses and the talent to read them and try to understand them. I am very grateful for that. I guess it’s always been easy and natural, and I have gotten to be around some awfully great horses. Back in the day, those old men on those ranches, that was what got

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WAGON BOSS

James Gholson

Continued from page 45

my attention. Those guys who had the best horses were the best hands. They had the best and they had more respect. They were up here and that's where I wanted to be, so I watched them and I tried to mimic what they did," James said.

There is a time and a season for everything, and retirement from the role of wagon boss came in 2015 after 17 years at the Pitchfork Ranch.

The start down the road to retirement came in the form of a wreck that was a wake-up call for the longtime cowboy.

It was early one morning on the ranch and workers were preparing to ship out some cattle when a semi-truck hit James on the driver's side door of his vehicle.

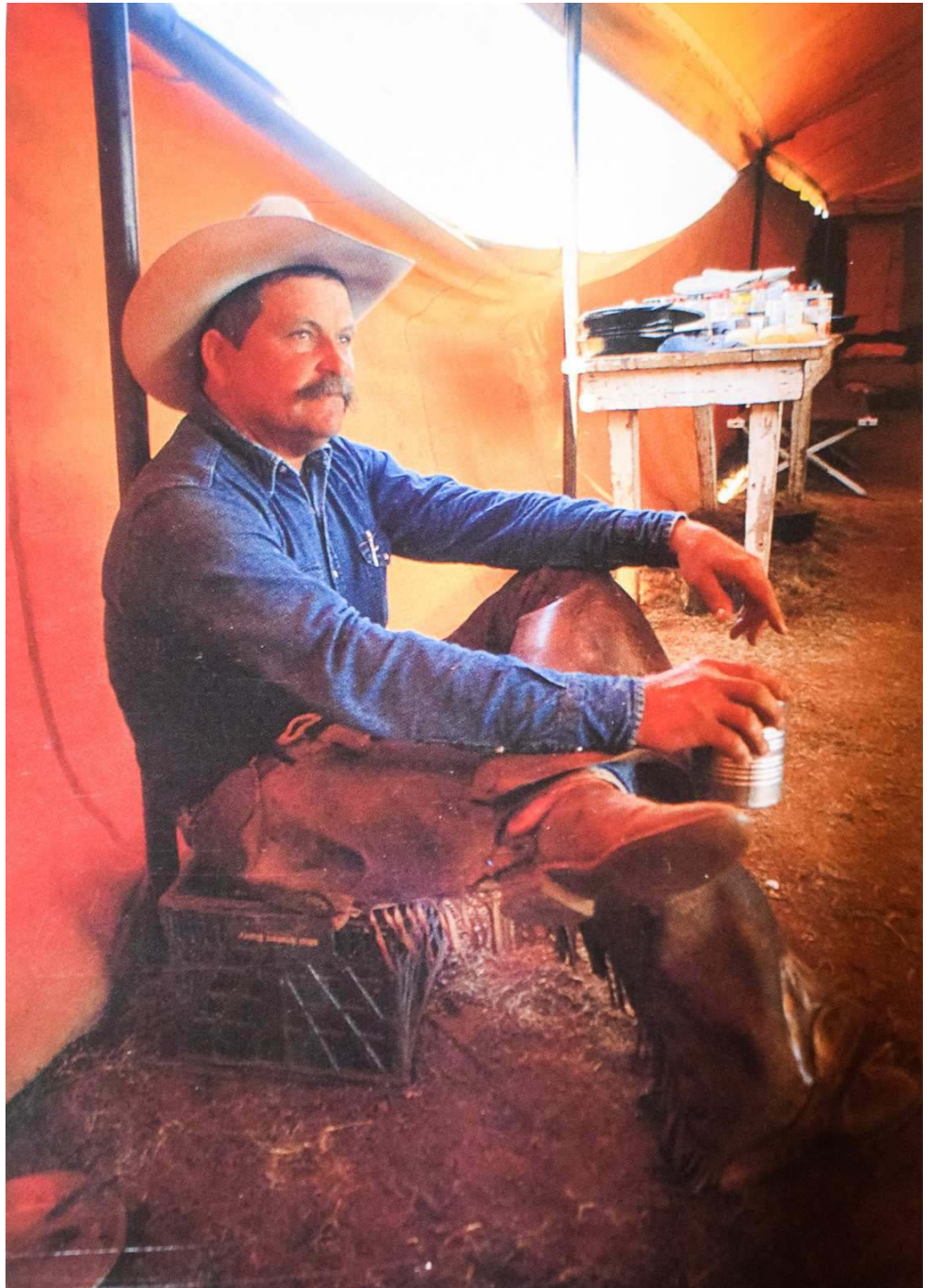
"The wreck kind of messed up my ol' head a little bit," James admitted. "After that, I just couldn't stand the old hard jerks, and it kind of makes me sad. That wreck kind of took the zap out of me, and I had to start slowing down. It was a blessing, because I needed a wake-up call. I wasn't quite living the way I needed to, and it was a wakeup call of 'Hey, buddy, you need to kind of think about this stuff, you know.' I kind of quit drinking and quit cussing and tried to be a little better, then some other things happened, and he said, 'No, I need more.'"

However, the adventures were far from over. James and June spend their time fixing up their ranch, which includes the green grass and water they had to do without most of their life as they grew up and worked the old, tough country, as James refers to it.

The owners of Pitchfork thought so highly of James they purchased 10,000 acres close to James' home, allowing him to run the horse program from there until he made the decision to fully retire after 20 total years with the Pitchfork Ranch.

There is now more time for their three children, Carl, April and Jay, and their seven grandkids.

"That is one of the things I am thankful for. I didn't get to spend much time with my grandads. I remember them, and our children—neither side - got to be around their grandads any, so I am very thankful I get to spend time with my grandkids and make so many good




James Gholson said he knows the Lord made him a cowboy. (Photo courtesy Bob Moorhouse)

memories," James said.

His evenings are spent roping, and he can often be found doing just that with one of his grandkids.

Several inherited their grandfather's talent

with horses and love for the cowboy way of life.

"Our faith holds us together," James said. "The Lord has blessed me beyond measure, and I know He made me a cowboy." 

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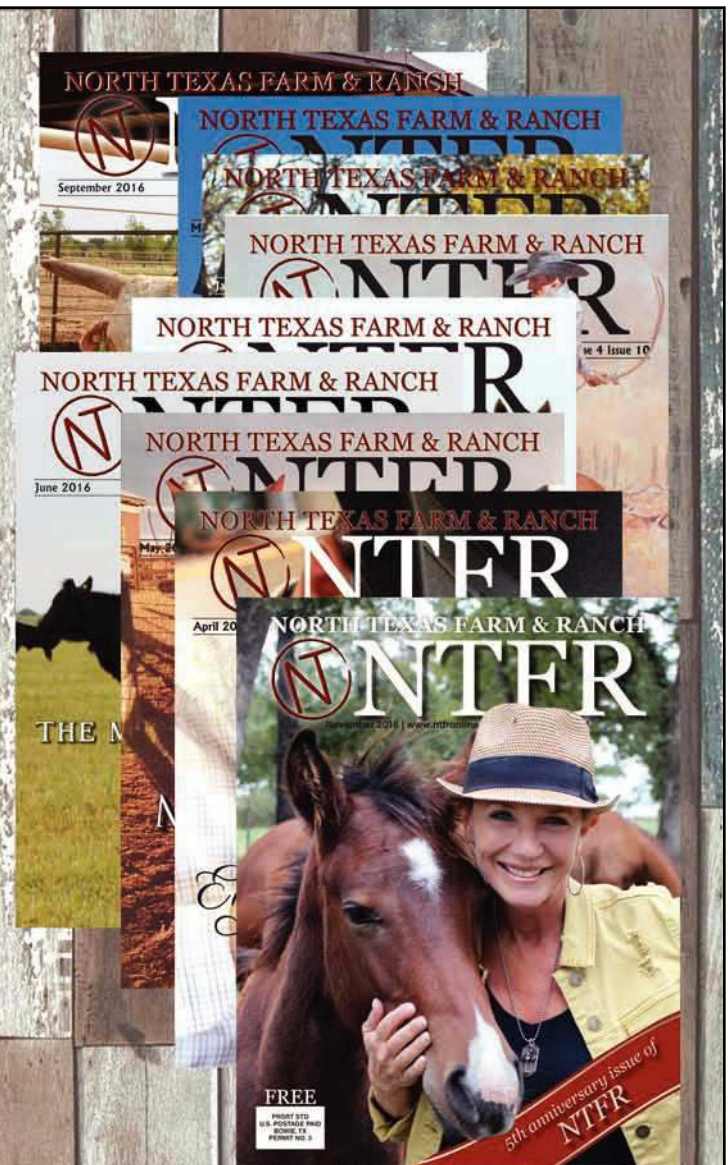
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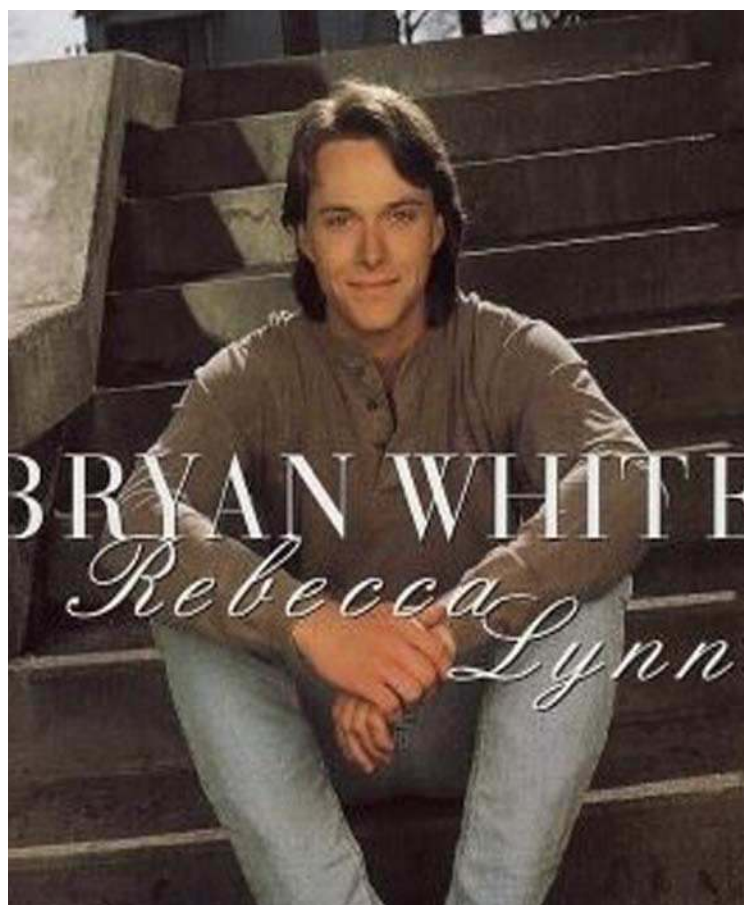
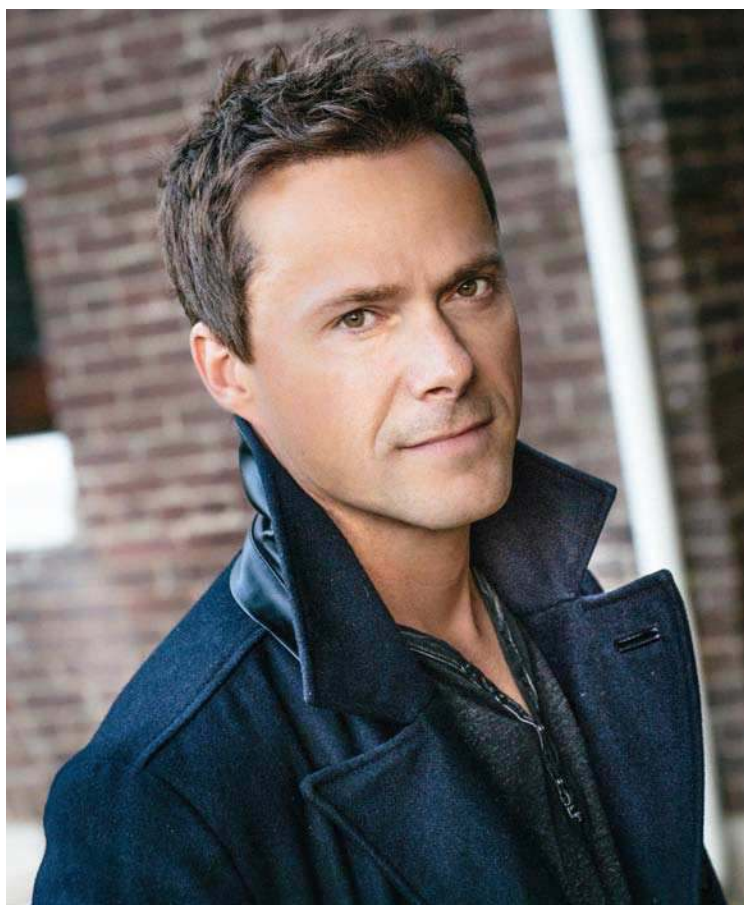
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On the Road

WITH DAVE ALEXANDER



Howdy North Texas music fans.

I'm happy to announce a very popular country music star is headed to North Texas this month.

My friend, Bryan White, is an award-winning country music singer and songwriter. Throughout his prolific recording career, he has charted 19 singles, including six No. 1s.

His hits include "God Gave Me You," "So Much for Pretending," "Sittin' on Go," "I'm Not Supposed to Love You Anymore," "Rebecca Lynn," "Someone Else's Star," and "From This Moment On" which he recorded with Shania Twain.

White has sold more than

4.5 million albums. His honors include a Grammy, CMA 1996 Horizon Award, ACM New Male Vocalist, five CMT Awards, and the Canadian Country Music Awards. In 1998, White was voted one of People magazines "50 Most Beautiful People." Currently, he hosts "The Bryan White Podcast" and recently released a new single, "It Must Be Love."

I'll be joining White in concert Saturday, April 18 in Gainesville at the First State Bank Performing Arts Center on the North Central Texas College campus. Tickets are available at www.lionoftexas.com or by calling 888-918-0601. Don't miss it.

Happy Trails.

DAVE'S UPCOMING SHOWS

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in concert with Bryan White, Gainesville, TX

May 23

in concert with Wade Hayes, Gainesville, TX

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Outdoor Art in April

By Mandi Dietz

It is National Poetry Month; World Autism Awareness Day, April 2; Easter, April 12; Earth Day, April 22; and also time for flowering, fragrant annuals, such as Sweet Peas; boat shows; and festivals celebrating art, music and food. Spring brings ideal weather with an enjoyable lull between winter fluctuations and scorching summer heat. Revel in it while you can, day and night.


Fort Worth's Water Lantern Festival, April 4, allows thousands of attendees to release

lit lanterns "carrying hope, love, happiness, healing, dreams, peace, and connection" out across the water into the evening, making a bright, unique and memorable family-friendly occasion.

The Main Street Arts Festival, April 16-19 in downtown Fort Worth offers nearly 50 musical performances including blues, hip-hop, jazz, Tejano, country, classical, polka, Americana, rock, and Latin. Plus creations ranging from ceramics, metalwork, jewelry, painting,

leather, sculpture, wood, and photography, and culinary crafts of more than 60 local artists.

Denton, "a community embracing and nurturing music, dance, choral, drama, and visual arts," hosts its signature event and one of the largest attractions in North Texas, the Denton Arts & Jazz Festival, a free event in Quakertown Park, April 24-26.

Many additional activities in April offer opportunities to bask in the glory of North Texas' outdoors before temperatures soar. 

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Muenster Antique Celebrates 20 Years

Dani Blackburn

The Muenster Antique Mall marks their 20-year journey of preserving timeless treasures and one-of-a-kind finds with a celebration on April 17-18.

Shoppers come from all over to get lost among the many pieces lining the halls, ceilings, floors, and shelves of the mall, but it is not just the shopping visitors come for, but the friendly, family-oriented atmosphere. Owners Harold and Jeannine Flusche truly know what family business is all about, a rare find in today's world where new and shiny often catches the eye.

Jeannine grew up in the charming town of Muenster, Texas. Her father worked at the local farmers' market in downtown Muenster and at the milk plant right next to it. In 1956, her father purchased the grocery store portion of the farmers' market, which became Hofbauer's Grocery and a staple of the town.

"It got to be time to enlarge and build a modern store," Jeannine explained.

In a smart move, her father chose a location along U.S. Highway 82. At the time, it seemed out of town, but now its location is the perfect high traffic area to attract customers from far and wide as they travel through Muenster.

Jeannine would grow up working in the store alongside her parents, learning the proper way to run a business and how to care for customers.

"I worked here after school and on Saturdays, all through high school. It was a lot of fun. I learned a lot from my dad, although my mother was the task master. She is the one who instilled in me that the customer is always right," Jeannine recalled. "My dad was the personality. He was the fun one who people came in to see."



The warm, fun environment that once welcomed customers to Hofbauer's Grocery still remains at Muenster Antique Mall.

At the age of 16 years old, Jeannine lost her beloved father, and she and her mother worked hard to keep the store open. After high school, Jeannine attended college where she earned a degree in nursing.

Jeannine met Harold as a junior in high school. Harold had just graduated, and five years later in 1967, the two were married. Harold also knew a thing or two about family business. After attending Arlington State, the couple returned home to Muenster, where Harold went to work in his family's business, the welding shop downtown.

"We moved back home after we got married because we wanted to raise our children in a small town," Jeannine said. "We bought the store around 1972 and ran it for another 20 years, then Walmart took its cut. Everything also needed to be replaced including the refrigeration, and there were a lot of total big expenses."

The Flusches made the very difficult decision to close. During that time, the couple was busy

raising their five children. Harold continued to work at his family's business while Jeannine focused on their kids and some PRN work on the side. As for the former grocery store, the building sat empty for a while, but was then rented to a restaurant. Unfortunately, the business struggled and closed six months later. It was next home to a chiropractor, who rented out the front portion of the building for a while before it became an empty space once again.

"Harold said, 'We can't have an empty building, let's get busy,'" Jeannine said. "And we did."

The couple decided upon an antique mall. For Harold, the inspiration came from his next-door neighbor growing up.

"She had an old Victrola and he loved it, and so he liked antiques," Jeannine said.

The couple also had some help from Jeannine's sister-in-law, Roberta Hofbauer, who became their partner.

"At the time she was steeped in antiques and had booths in the Dallas area, so she could guide

us," Jeannine said. "I hoped to open with 15 vendors, and that's exactly what we had."

Since that time, the store has grown by leaps and bounds, at one time operating with up to 50 vendors. Now, around 35 vendors offer a unique range with everything a shopper's heart could desire from jewelry, to rusted tools, to Hofbauer glass, and more. Most importantly, the warm, fun environment that once welcomed customers to Hofbauer's Grocery still remains.

"We have a lot of fun here, and we have a lot of fun with our customers," manager Debra Yardley said. Yardley has been involved with the store for 14 years.

The owners have fun interacting with customers, as well as visiting estate sales and other stores to see what they can dig up. However, it is more of a hobby for the couple to go treasure hunting, as their own vendors can be found carrying the items through the doors.

"Harold likes to say it's more of an entertainment place than a

business,” Jeannine said. “The customers are my favorite part, because they are just worldwide and they love to tell you their story, so that’s a lot of fun. When people come in here and walk through, they’re not expected to buy something. We just want them to come and look.”

Customers have traveled to the store from Duncan, Wichita Falls, Amarillo, Denton, Sherman, Durant, Gainesville, and more. The store has even had customers from Louisiana, who send them postcards each Christmas and come for a visit every year when Germanfest and Oktoberfest come to town. The events bring many travelers in the doors, as do the local meat markets and wineries.

While the business is fun, more importantly, the owners hope to encourage those who grace their doorstep to find the importance in making what is old new again.



Customers have traveled to the store from Duncan, Wichita Falls, Amarillo, Denton, Sherman, Durant, Gainesville and even Louisiana. (Photos by Dani Blackburn)


“It doesn’t feel like we have been in business 20 years, but it means so much to me. Every week, every day it is a new challenge. The antique business has changed tremendously in the last 20 years because I don’t think the younger people appreciate what

they have as much. The older people kept it for their whole life, and the younger people switch out,” Jeanine explained. “I’m not saying that’s wrong; it’s just how it is, but I hope they learn to value craftsmanship because we don’t see that now.”

However, customers who come in for a visit can see and come to appreciate the craftsmanship of the items carried in the stores.

“We had a person in just the other day who was saying, ‘Wow, look how well this is made. They don’t make stuff like this anymore,’” Yardley said.

To celebrate two decades of fun with their customers and preserving the craftsmanship of unique finds, the store will host a party on April 17-18 with all items 20 percent off with refreshments, games and prizes.

Regular business hours are 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and closed Sunday. The store is open the Sunday of Germanfest. For more information on the celebration and to see what Muenster Antique Mall has in store, visit <https://www.facebook.com/MuensterAntiqueMall/> 

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MARCH

March 22 - March 28

Denton County Youth Fair

North Texas Fair and Rodeo Grounds, 2217 N. Carroll Blvd., Denton, Texas 76209. Come out March 22-March 28 to observe local 4-H and FFA students as they exhibit their livestock. www.dentonyouthfair.com

MARCH 26

Lone Star Angus Spring Bull and Female Sale

Cooke County Fairgrounds, 1901 Justice Center Rd., Gainesville, TX, 76240. Selling 70 powerful, ranch-raised bulls ready to go to work. Also featuring the customer appreciation commercial female sale. Over 150 head of top quality replacements from quality Lone Star genetics. Video and EPD spreadsheet available online two weeks before the sale. www.LoneStarAngus.com or call 940-367-0064.

MARCH 26

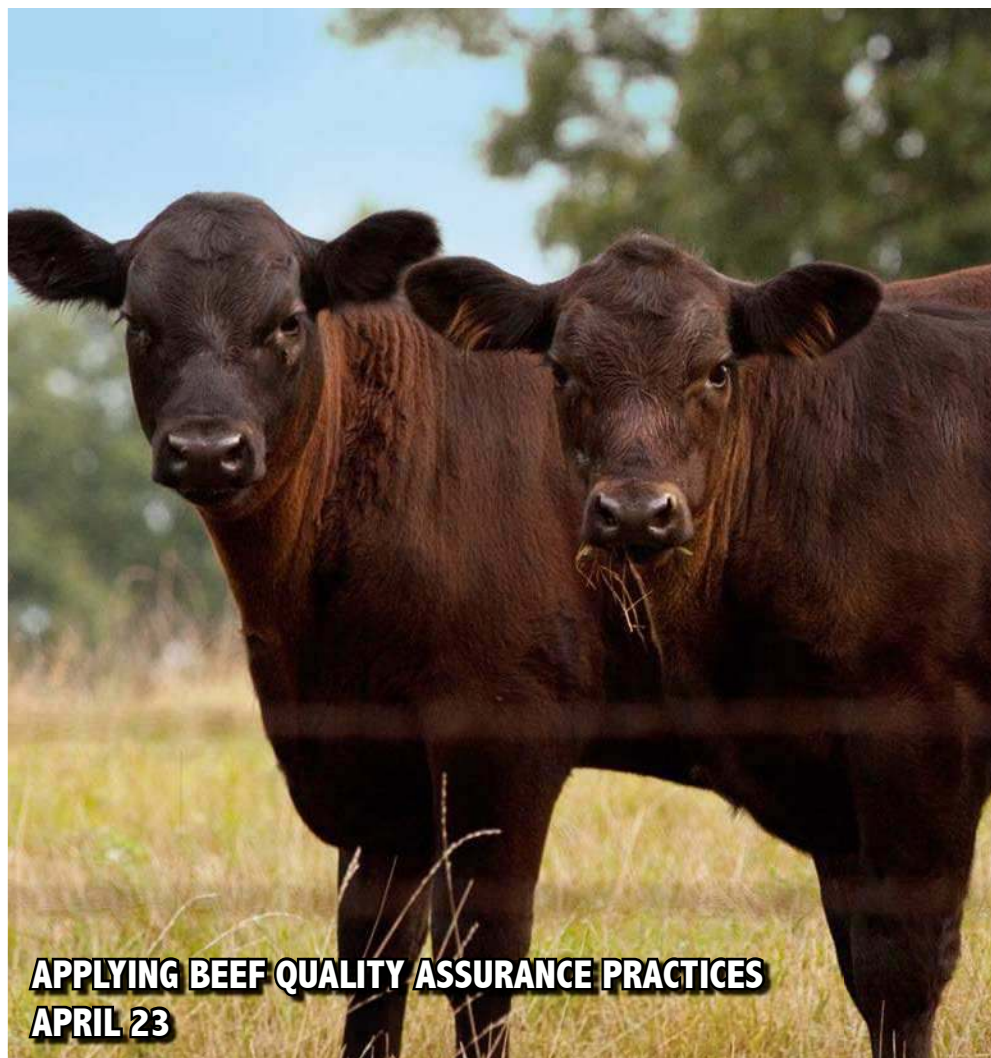
Managing Weeds and Insects in Your Pastures

Noble Research Institute, Entry 5, Kruse Auditorium, 2510 Sam Noble Parkway, Ardmore, OK 73401. There are many different approaches to pest management, and each producer must select the approach, or combination of approaches, that best align with his or her own philosophy. This course will focus on pest management following the integrated pest management principles and the responsible use of herbicides and insecticides. No registration fee, but please preregister. www.noble.org.

March 27 - March 29

Cattle Raisers Convention

Fort Worth Convention Center, 1201 Houston St., Fort Worth. Improve your ranch management skills, learn about state and national issues, enjoy live music and entertainment and shop the largest ranching expo in the region at the Cattle Raisers Convention March 27-29 at the Fort Worth Convention Center. Attendees at the 2020 Cattle Raisers Convention and Expo will hear a familiar voice at the annual event - that of President George W. Bush, who will address a group of cattle raisers in Fort Worth. Visit <http://cattleraisersconvention.com/>.



March 27-28

Cowboy True

The Forum, 2120 Speedway, Wichita Falls, TX 76301. The mission of Cowboy True is to educate the region about the honor, art and beauty of the cowboy's daily life. Cowboy True is a celebration to honor working cowboys and the artwork that comes from their daily lives. Cowboy True was originally inspired as an effort to raise awareness and funding for The Forum, which has a long association with the North Texas cattle industry. Categories include: bits, spurs, buckles, jewelry, gun/knife engraving, saddles, boots, trappings/gear, photography, paintings, drawings, sculptures, carving and cowboy cartoons. Friday night events include the artist's reception and opening, Saturday evening will consist of a night dinner, live auction and entertainments. 940-766-3347 or email cowboytrue@artscouncilwf.org.

MARCH 28

Equipment Auction

The E.W. Belcher Estate, Sanger, Texas. Farm and ranch equipment from the B-7 Ranch. Tractors, batwing mower, hay equipment, G/N stock trailer and much more. For complete listing and photos go to www.heugatterauctions.com.

APRIL

April 4

Deleu Ranch 1st Annual Open House and Private Treaty Sale

Deleu Ranch, 899 Patton Rd., Collinsville, TX, 76233. Join us for our first annual open house and private treaty bull and heifer sale at our ranch in Collinsville, Texas. For more information, contact Kevin Deleu at 903-651-1481, Carlos Deleu at 903-651-8329, or visit the website at www.DeleuRanch.com.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 4

Cowboys and Cobbler Throwdown

Chisholm Trail Heritage Center, 1000 Chisholm Trail Parkway, Duncan, OK. A new event 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cobbler contest, live music, longhorns on the property and a bit of cowboy poetry peppered throughout the day to keep things lively. This tasty fundraiser is open to all cowboys, cattle queens and of course, bakers, youth ages 10-17 and adults, 18 and older. Bakers must enter their own home-cooked cobbler. Bakers are limited to two different recipes. Dutch oven cobblers, large casserole and deep dish cobblers are all acceptable, but pies will not be accepted. There is no early entry fee with registration forms due by March 27. Non-monetary prizes to be awarded in four different categories, including a People's Choice award for both youth and adult divisions with the most tickets winning the People's Choice awards. There will be ice cream. Entertainment throughout the day will include cowboy performer Jay Snider of Cyril and emcee; flutist Duane Paul of Duncan, and Two Belles also of Duncan. A final two hour concert will feature Gary S. Pratt. A "Quickdraw Poetry Showcase" provides cowboy poets of all ages a chance to share their best or favorite poem. <https://onthechisholmtrail.com/> and 580- 252-6693.

April 4

Chisholm Trail Heritage Festival

Bowie Community Center, 413 Pelham St., Bowie, Texas 76230. Save the date for the Chisholm Trail Heritage Festival Cowboy Ball from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. on April 4 at the Bowie Community Center. KR Woods Productions and Camp Cookie Band. Saunders Costumes available Tuesday-Saturday. 940-872-1173

April 7

Managing Eastern Bluebirds

Noble Research Institute, Entry 2, Protected Ag Demo Area, 2510 Sam Noble Parkway, Ardmore, OK 73401. Come learn about eastern bluebirds, and other cavity-nesting songbirds, and how to build, place and manage their nest boxes. You will build a nest box that you can take home. You should also have the opportunity to view actual bluebird nesting activity in nest boxes. 4:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Visit www.noble.org for more information on registration.

April 18

Horseman's Paradise for Public Auction

Downunder Horsemanship Ranch. Horseman's paradise for public auction on April 18. 175' x 425' covered riding arena, 60'x150' office building and 1,824 sq. ft. Texas rock house. Don't miss out on a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Own this unparalleled horse training estate located in the heart of horse competition country. The Downunder Horsemanship Ranch was designed with every amenity a horse lover could ask for. You'll love the convenience and luxury this one-of-a-kind facility offers. 8 a.m. gates open, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Colt starting demo by Clinton Anderson and 1 p.m., auction starts. Auctioneer Bruce McCarty. Available as one property or in parcels.

April 15-18

Turkey Fest

Henrietta Courthouse Square, Henrietta, TX 76365. Turkey Fest is the spring family-oriented festival in North Texas. Turkey Fest attracted 6,000 festival goers in 2016. We love to see our fest grow. Our team of volunteers loves this annual event. We see the positive impact on our community, our economy and the Henrietta and Clay County Chamber. Turkey Fest is not just for hunters, it's for the whole family. We make sure we have activities for everyone and every budget. Plus, coming to the fest is free and there are plenty of free children's activities to keep the kids occupied. Don't miss this fun annual event on the courthouse square. Visit <https://www.facebook.com/claycountyturkeyfest/>.

April 17-18

Annual Wichita Falls PRCA Rodeo

Kay Yeager Coliseum, 1000 5th St., Wichita Falls, TX 76301. PRCA Rodeo returns to Wichita Falls. Rodeo starts at 7:30 p.m. nightly at the Kay Yeager Coliseum. Events include barrel racing, saddle bronc riding, bareback riding, steer wrestling, team roping, calf roping and bull riding. Entertainment by Whistlenut and Ole. Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association is a non-profit organization intending to preserve the heritage of rodeo while benefitting our area youth and community. Visit www.wichitafallsprca-rodeo.org.

April 21

Demonstrating Sprayers

Noble Research Institute, Entry 2, Protected Ag Demo Area, 2510 Sam Noble Parkway, Ardmore, OK 73401. Proper selection, calibration and use of sprayers are key to achieving your desired results in specialty crop production. During this field day, you will learn about the various types of sprayers available and have the opportunity to see some of them in operation. From 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. No registration fee, but please preregister. www.noble.org.

April 23

Applying Beef Quality Assurance

Noble Research Institute, Oswalt Ranch, 18414 Dixon Road, Marietta, OK. Beef Quality Assurance is going to the ranch. Beef producers looking to improve their best management practices and ensure quality beef products in the food chain should join us. During this workshop, you'll see various demonstrations and gain hands-on experience with practices vital to beef cattle production. From 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. \$25 registration fee, includes lunch. Fee goes up to \$35 for those who register within one week of the event. www.noble.org

April 24-26

Germanfest

Muenster, TX. Muenster throws one of the biggest parties in Texas, Germanfest, the last full weekend in April. This three-day festival attracts thousands to mouthwatering German sausage, scrumptious apple strudel, hearty cheese and homemade bread, cakes and pies. So, come to Muenster and let us be your host for food, fun and frlic. Be sure to bring a "guten appetit." <https://www.muenstergermanfest.com/>

April 30

Improving Your Pecan Pesticide Utilization

Noble Research Institute, Entry 5, Kruse Auditorium, 2510 Sam Noble Parkway, Ardmore, OK 73401. A major part of any pecan orchard management is the utilization of pesticides. The success of the orchard is dependent on the proper selection and application of pesticides. This includes your economic and efficacy considerations. This course will help you improve your pesticide management plan to increase the economic viability of your orchard. www.noble.org.

Rodeo Returns to Wichita Falls

Dani Blackburn

Many of professional rodeo's top contestants, entertainment and stock will ride into Kay Yeager Coliseum on April 17-18 for the annual Wichita Falls Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association Rodeo.

The event is much more than just a rodeo as the Wichita Falls PRCA Rodeo Committee works diligently each year to bring a little bit of the glitz and glamour of the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas right here to North Texas for an experience many will not soon forget.

It has not always been smooth sailing for the Wichita Falls rodeo, which dates back to the 1950s. The annual rodeo drew thousands of fans until 2008, the year the Red River PRCA Rodeo conducted its last rodeo. However, a few local cowboys knew the community needed its rodeo and went to work in hopes of returning the sport to Wichita Falls.

"I do think we knew what we were getting into. Not only do we like a good challenge, but when people tell you that it can't be done it kind of gives you that little kick to get it done," Wichita Falls PRCA Rodeo Association vice president Sonny DeLuna said.

In 2011, the Wichita Falls PRCA Rodeo Association was formed and after much work, the PRCA granted permission for the committee to move forward as a sanctioned event.

"We spent that first year fundraising. The first year they wanted to make sure we had an excess of \$60,000, which is tough when you start from nothing," Wichita Falls PRCA Rodeo Association President Kurt Tucker explained.

Their hard work paid off when the committee achieved its goal, and the rodeo kicked off in 2013 at the J.S. Bridwell Ag Center.



This year's entertainment will be brought by the duo Whistle-Nut and Ole. (Courtesy photo)

It was a humble event in the first year with a small contractor and entertainment. In 2016, Hi Lo ProRodeo came on board and has remained the stock contractor for the event that has grown by leaps and bounds ever since.

"We have been very blessed with contestants. Every year we get at least 10 or 12 out of the top 15 who go to the National Finals Rodeo. When we go to the convention, the NFR people are asking how we are getting the contestants we get, and the answer is our stock contractor. He has a big following," Sonny said.

Kurt agreed, explaining when they took a different approach to both their stock contractor and en-

tertainment, it paid off big time.

"We had small contractor and act the first couple of years. We reached out to someone we knew had a name who might help draw," Kurt said. "On our acts, we started contacting guys who had been in the run for act of the year at some point in time or had been runner up."

The committee also moved the event from the end of May up to the third weekend in April, coming off all the major winter rodeos, which helped draw some big names.

"We are just trying to bring something to get people back interested in rodeo," Kurt said. "You don't get just the rodeo crowd; it

draws others, too."

The ideas worked, and entertainers such as Matt Tarr, Gizmo McCracken and Lecile Harris, along with contestants like Hunter Cure and Sage Kimzey, have graced the Wichita Falls PRCA Rodeo arena.

The event made the move to Kay Yeager Coliseum in 2018, a dream that was made a reality by those who first started the committee seven years prior.

"When we were doing it at the J.S. Bridwell Ag Center, you walked in and you're just putting on a rodeo. We were just happy to have it because it was a struggle to get there. I don't think it hit me until 2018 when we walked into the Coliseum and they were moving dirt in that I realized what we had gotten ourselves into," Kurt said.

In 2019, the Wichita Falls PRCA Rodeo broke the Coliseum's record for walk up ticket sales. The PRCA recognized the event as one of the top 20 fastest growing rodeos in the country, and the stock contractor, Hi Lo ProRodeo, was recognized by the PRCA as the fastest growing stock contractor in the United States. The event also was the second largest rodeo in its market size in the Lone Star State.

This year the event is back and bigger and better than ever before with the entertaining semantics of the duo Whistle-Nut (aka Jason Dent, a house guest on season 19 of Big Brother) and Ole. Whistle-Nut is an entertainer, barrel man, clown and stunt man who offers comedy, stunts and personal interactions with the crowd. His sidekick, Ole, is a trained bull who Whistle-Nut rides like a horse. During his down time, the calm, well-mannered bull visits nursing homes to put a smile on residents'

faces.

“What we have done over the last three or four years now, it is still a good rodeo, but to make it more of a show or event, we bring a little bit of that glitz and a little bit of that glamour from Vegas and reach different people,” Kurt said.

The action-packed rodeo fun begins at 7:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday night, April 17 and 18. General admission is \$15 and box seats are \$25. Friday night is family night with general admission prices \$10 and box seats \$25. Youngsters will enjoy the new “little cowboy and cowgirl” calf scramble.

Rodeos are a place where the National Anthem is played and the American flag flies, and that includes at the Wichita Falls PRCA Rodeo. Saturday night is Military Appreciation Night with free entry for all active duty, National Guard, and Reserve service members. Four hundred airmen in training from Sheppard Air Force Base will be attending as guests and 20 to 25 men and women will take the oath of enlistment to enter all four military branches. New this year is Fort Sill’s Field Artillery Half Section, a mounted calvary unit recreating the World War I use of horse-drawn artillery. The half section includes a six-horse team. The horsemen and gunners ride into the arena and demonstrate the firing of a cannon, much to the delight of audiences. A music major from Midwestern State University also will be on hand both nights to sing the national anthem, and the Sheppard Air Force Base Honor Guard will present the colors.

“Sheppard Air Force Base is such a big part of our community. The personnel and economic impact is really huge, and this is a way for us to give back to them and show our appreciation,” said Aaron Sanders, a rodeo committee member and the association’s military liaison. “We try to involve as many service members



(Top) The Wichita Falls PRCA Rodeo committee, including: Chuck Cox, Kathy Dickey, Sonny DeLuna, Belen Cox, Blake Gulley, Aaron Sanders, Jan DeLuna, Jeremy Calvert, Marla Tucker, Kurt Tucker. Not pictured: Cristi Wisch, Brittany Franklin, Shayne Owen, Cori Gulley, Bob Mayfield, Brenda Mayfield. (Left) Wichita Falls PRCA Rodeo Committee Vice President Sonny DeLuna, Secretary/Treasurer Jan DeLuna and President Kurt Tucker. The three, along with Shayne Owens, were the original board members. (Photos by Dani Blackburn)

as possible.”

Meanwhile, as the military is being honored, the fans are being entertained and the contestants are competing, the committee is working hard behind the scenes to ensure the other athletes – the livestock – are receiving top notch care as well.

“The livestock is very important, and the animal athletes are

just as well taken care of as the cowboys and cowgirls, whether it be the calves, roping team horses, saddle broncs, bulls, all of the animals,” Sonny explained.

The rodeo vet is on site around the clock to ensure the animals are ready and healthy in order to perform. The rodeo animals are cared for by Simmons and Harlan of Wichita Falls, and any time the

doors are open, a vet is there.

“We have to have a vet there. The livestock are one of our biggest concerns, and any time there is anything going on with the rodeo the vet is on site,” Sunny said.

The committee has a livestock specialist, Shayne Owen, who also organizes the local 4-H and FFA

Continued from 59

students. The event also has been able to provide more than \$40,000 worth of scholarships during the past few years to local 4-H and FFA students and will continue that tradition in 2020.

“We give to the community throughout the year, not just at rodeo time,” Wichita Falls PRCA Rodeo Secretary/Treasurer Jan DeLuna explained.

The committee, a 501(c)(3) organization, consists of 12 members and helps others throughout the year by raising money for scholarships, sponsoring baseball teams and so much more.

It takes a lot of work and many volunteer hours to pour the spirit of the rodeo out into the community of Wichita Falls. The event itself is planned around the clock, 365-days a year.

“It’s a labor of love,” Kurt explained.

Preparations for the rodeo are in full swing this time of year. The planning and logistics that occur behind the scenes are incredibly extensive and consume much of the committee member’s spare time outside of their normal 9 to 5 jobs. There’s always another detail at the Kay Yeager Coliseum that needs attention, a sponsorship that needs obtained, or an event that needs more coordination. As the dirt starts being hauled into the coliseum on the week of the rodeo, and the arena and rodeo stock start showing up on semi-trucks, most committee members will take leave from their day jobs to put everything together. After the event, there is cleanup and loading of stock on Sunday. Committee members might take a breather on Monday, then on Tuesday, they go right back to planning for the next event.

“Outside of my family, this rodeo is my biggest passion. Anyone who knows me will tell you I will go to hell and back for this rodeo. That’s what it means for me,” Sonny said.



Hi Lo ProRodeo stock at the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas, Nev. (Courtesy photo)

What makes it all worth it in the end? Their love of rodeo.

“It gets intense sometimes, but I think it’s their passion for rodeo that keeps them going year to year,” Jan said.

It all pays off when those lights go down and the action begins.

“When it gets to the actual performance time, there’s no better feeling. When you’re there before it starts and you see things

come together and the lights go down and you hear the crowd, and to know what you’ve done, that you’ve brought that to Wichita Falls, for me that is the excitement, to know that I’ve had a hand in putting it together. I don’t do near what Sonny and Kurt do, but just that feeling on those two days keeps you going,” Jan said.

Her committee president can’t help but agree.

“When those spotlights come on and you see those world champions out there, you’re thinking ‘This is it. This is the real deal,’” Kurt said.

For more information on this year’s event, or if you are interested in helping continue the tradition of rodeo in your community, visit www.wichitafallsprcarodeo.org and make sure to follow the event on Facebook.

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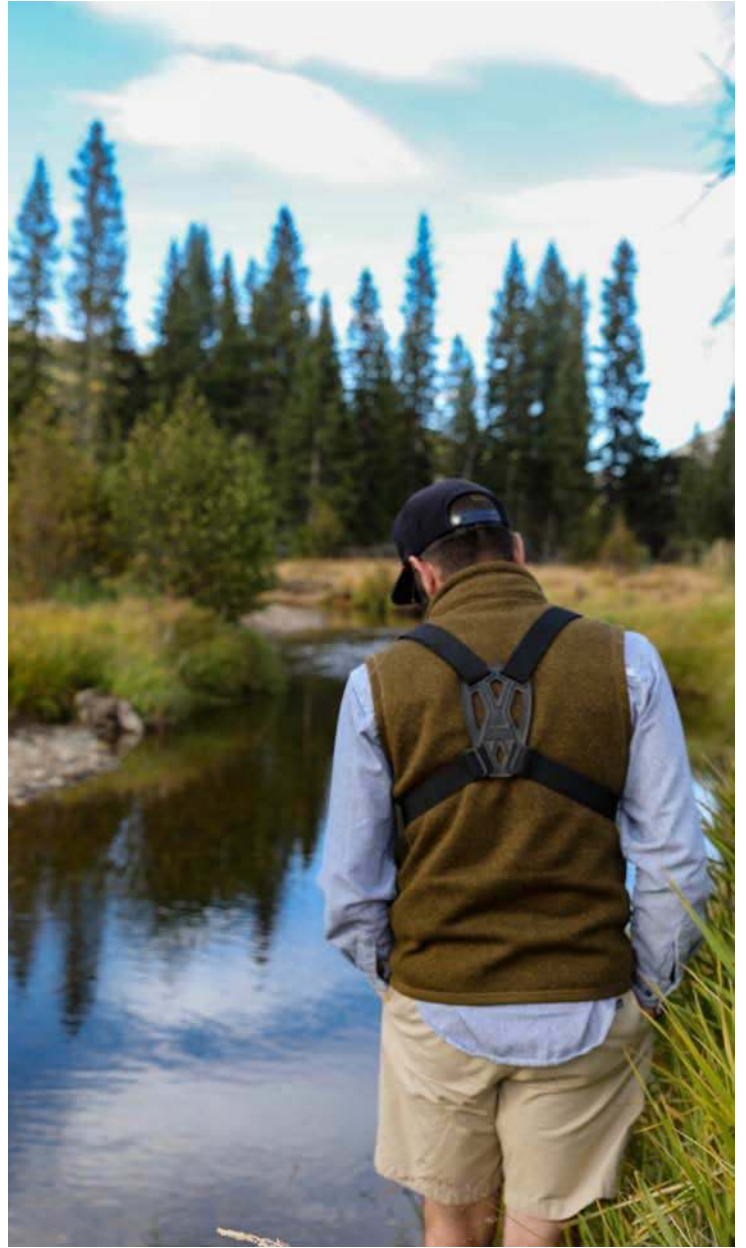
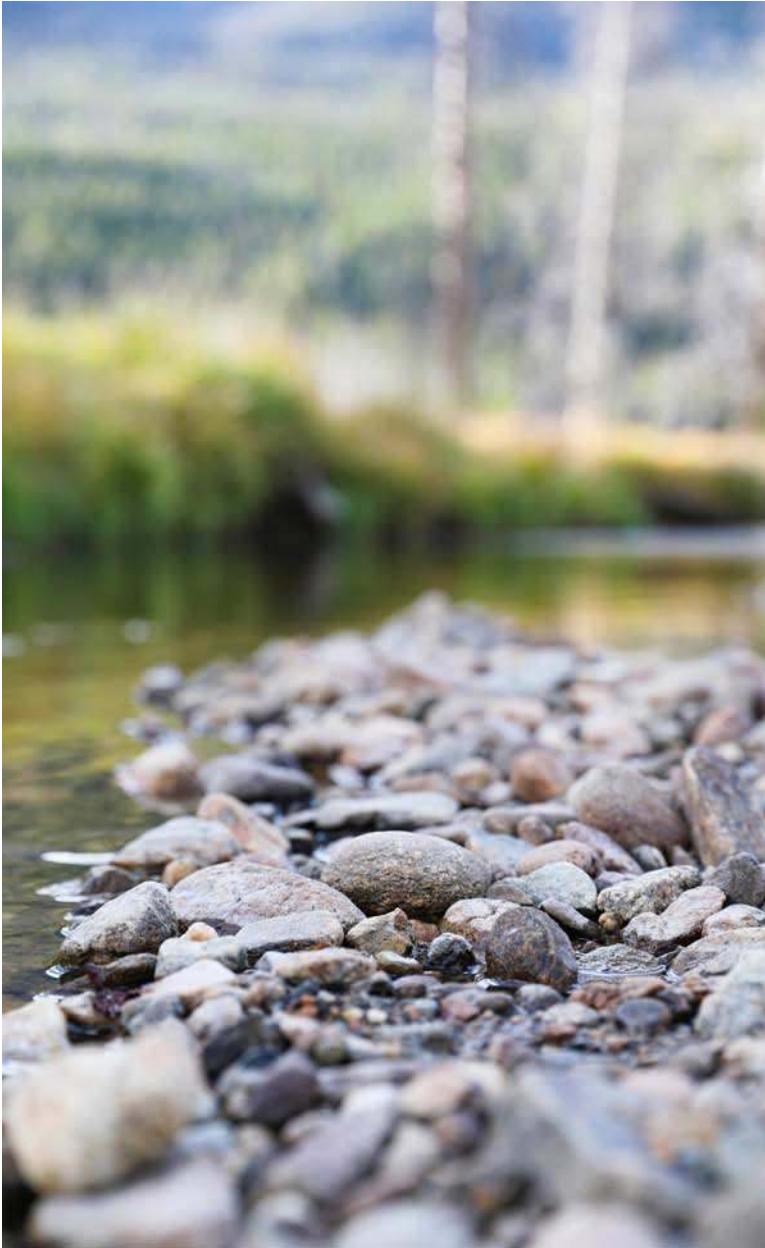
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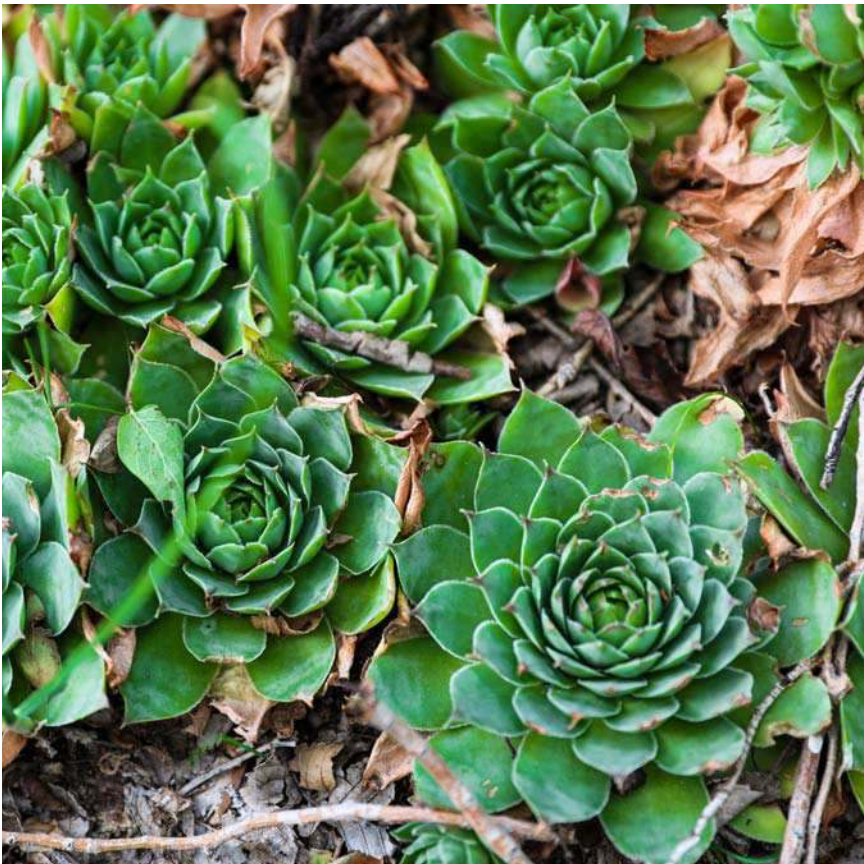


THE ROAD GOES ON *Forever* BY JELLY COCANOUGH

On a treasured journey across the southwest to the rocky mountains, the scenery was beyond what you would imagine when you think of heaven mixed in with a little bit of hippiness and nature. Paint the famous Cadillac's at the Cadillac Ranch in Amarillo as a stop from north Texas to the border of the sandy state of New Mexico and southern Colorado.

Wind pushes you towards the bottom of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to showcase fossils that have been buried by hundreds of thousands of years of sand that now form the mystical dunes. Waterfalls trickle as the view overlooks a light pollution-free zone with a chance of aliens.

As the journey continues, so does the mystery. As the road less traveled, we are intrigued by the personification of the range of what the earth made millions of years ago. It is a piercing feeling knowing that the earth will never be fully traveled, at least by one person in one lifetime. Until then, embrace the photographs of the visions that our earth made in all its glory. 



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Noble Learning:

Seeing Soil Health on the Ranch

By Jim Johnson, Senior Soils and Crops Consultant

Supplies: Shovel

Note: You will want to complete the following steps at least twice; once in a field or pasture and once in a nearby fencerow. Compare the soil in these two places. Typically, soil in the fence row has not been as disturbed by grazing, machinery and tillage, and shows signs of greater health. This is why it makes a good benchmark to give you an idea of what your working soil could look like.

Directions

Step 1: Push the shovel into the ground at your evaluation site. As you do, feel for resistance. While resistance could be caused by roots or rock, it is often a sign of compaction. The shovel should go into the ground easily.

Step 2: Turn the shovel full of soil out and take a look at the color. In general, the darker the soil, the better. Color is an indication of soil organic matter.

Step 3: While looking at the color, do a further check for compacted layers. One way to notice compaction is to look at the roots. Are they growing sideways, or in a “J” formation — in which they grow down to the resistance layer then turn 90 degrees because they can’t penetrate it? You want the roots to grow downwards, deep into the ground.

Step 4: Look for biological activity. Are there a lot of living roots or channels where roots have grown? Are there earthworms and other critters, like dung beetles, or evidence of them? These are all signs your soil is alive and healthy.

Step 5: Smell the soil. It should have a good earthy smell, like a freshly tilled garden or a root cellar. It should not smell like vinegar, a swamp, a rock from the creek, or rotten eggs. Smell can be difficult to gauge at first, but remember to compare the soil in your field to the soil in the fence row. No smell equals no life.



Step 6: Take a look at the structure. Soil should crumble easily, like cottage cheese or chocolate cake. It should have big pieces and small pieces. If your soil is like a massive dirt clod, you probably have a compaction issue. If it sifts right through your fingers you don’t have healthy structure.

Step 7: If your soil looks good, keep doing what you’re doing. If the soil in the field is much lighter in color or has a lot less biological activity or a compacted layer, talk to an agronomist or a soil health expert at your local Natural Resources Conservation Service office or at Noble Research Institute. They can help you determine the cause and build an action plan to address it.

For more information on the five soil health indicators you can see (and smell) in the field, go to www.noble.org/soil-health-indicators.

Shovels of Steel

Jim Johnson says any shovel will do, but he prefers one that is completely made from steel. That’s because digging in the field tends to break shovel handles. He notes if you have a lot of difficulty digging, that may be your first sign of a compaction (and soil health) problem.

Jim Johnson, soils and crops consultant, has more than 20 years of experience working in plant and soil sciences across the Great Plains and Midwest. His areas of interest include no-till, cover crops and soil health. He and his family run a small cow-calf operation in south-central Oklahoma.

Grazing North Texas

By Tony Dean

Texas Yellow Star

Ranchers might be surprised by how many native forbs from Texas grazing lands are highly preferred for growing in home flowerbeds and gardens. Texas yellow star is one of them.

This early growing annual can germinate in the fall, grow slowly as a winter rosette, and then jump into rapid growth as soon as weather begins to warm. Texas yellow star can begin flowering as small as two inches tall if conditions are right and continue flowering until about June 1 as it grows in height.

The size of the plant varies from six inches to 24 inches, depending upon soil and growing conditions.

Texas star is widely branched, and there are one to several flower clusters at the end of each stem. Each flower head is from one to two inches across, and can have from three to six ray flowers, but normally five. The five bright yellow ray flowers are said to correspond with the five points on the Texas state star, thus the name Texas Yellow Star.

One interesting fact about Texas star is the lower leaves are alternate and coarsely toothed, while the upper leaves are opposite and smooth on the edges.

Texas star grows in Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Arkansas and can also survive in Mexico. It can grow in full sun and can prosper in a variety of soils. This forb does well in garden settings as well as on grazing lands and will reseed itself.

Texas yellow star (*Lindheimera texana*) was identified by Ferdinand Lindheimer (1801-1879), who is considered the father of Texas Botany because of his work as the first permanent-resident plant collector of Texas. He lived in south Texas and is credited with identification of several hundred-plant species.

As far as grazing value for cattle, Texas yellow star is just another pretty face on the



The five bright yellow ray flowers on Texas yellow star are said to correspond with the five points on the Texas state star. (Photo courtesy Tony Dean)



Grazing Value of This Plant

Texas Yellow Star

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Texas yellow star is of very limited grazing value to cattle, but is utilized some by goats, sheep, deer and antelope.

range and not of much value. It is, however, utilized to some extent when young, by goats, sheep, deer, and antelope. It also serves as a pollinator plant.

The Indians used many plants for medicinal purposes or for a food source but apparently

did not use Texas yellow star for anything. I do suspect, though, an Indian paused on a warm spring morning to take in the pleasant sight of some bright yellow Texas stars, and we might do the same today if we take time to appreciate God's work.®



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Archer County



Bic Ranch-201 Acres

Just minute or 2 from Archer City, TX 76351. The BIC Ranch is located just down River Rd off Hwy 25. The BIC has approx. 201 acres including 2 hay barns one with 4 horse runs, circle pen, working pens, an additional loafing shed with 2 runs, a shipping container with overhang for additional storage, practice arena and much more.

1580 Acres Young County



HDH Ranch

Located on S Furr Rd in Young County near Newcastle, TX 76370, this 1580 ranch is perfect for cattle and outfitting operations. Two ponds stocked with bass, crappie and catfish. The hunting possibilities are exceptional with whitetail deer, hogs, assorted varmints and more. Many improvements including single family residence as well as hunting lodge.

327 acres-Archer County



This property is mixed use and can be residential, commercial, recreational, hunting, farm land, ranch land. Gently rolling, with a perfectly balanced pasture to cultivated. Approx. 95 acres of cultivated the remainder is good native pasture with just enough good timber for hunting and wildlife habitat. The ranch has been groomed very well. FANTASTIC DOVE HUNTING!

New Listing



Kickapoo Creek Ranch 161 acres

Combination of heavy mesquite, hardwoods along Kickapoo Creek, as well as an ideal 50 acre wheat field located perfectly on the ranch. Whitetail deer, turkey, hogs, waterfowl, dove, and quail are commonplace. The property also offers 2 watershed ponds as well as Kickapoo Creek that meanders on much of the property. Access is off Posey Rd and it is a county maintained road.

Archer County



Harmel Ranch-633 acres

Grazing, good hunting, Kickapoo Creek, a 2 acre lake, additional ponds and approx 233 acres cultivation. Rural water access on south side and east side of ranch, electricity to property. Located in Archer County just north of Megargel, TX 76370, this mixed use recreational, farm, ranch and possible residential land is located close to FM 210 and Hwy 114.

Other Properties

NEW LISTING Archer Co- 200 ares w/pens, barns, great hunting or building site
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473 ACRES | CLAY COUNTY



MESQUITE HILL RANCH

\$2,450/Ac

This is a prime turn-key hunting and fishing property located in Clay County, northwest of Petrolia. Its 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.

475.03 ACRES | WICHITA COUNTY



PRICE REDUCED

DUCK BILL RIVER FARM

\$1,950/Ac

Duck Bill River Farm, nice farm with irrigation capabilities, 3 miles of Wichita river frontage, located 15 minutes west of Wichita Falls, 328 acres of improved Coastal, Bermuda and Klein grass fields, the balance 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 metal livestock corrals. This is a productive farm with lots potential.

67 ACRES | JACK COUNTY



NEW LISTING

SMALL RANCH

\$3,950/Ac

The Small Ranch is half open pasture and half wooded with oaks and mesquites, 20 acres of cultivation, level to rolling terrain with scenic views and several ideal home sites, one pond, easily access off Hwy 281 onto Groveland Rd which extends across its entire north boundary. Electricity is available on the property. There is not an existing water well, but water should not be difficult to locate. No minerals available and there is no existing production on the property.

1,319 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.

3,206 ACRES | CLAY COUNTY



NORTH DEAN RANCH

\$1,600/Ac

This ranch consists of 3,206.82 acres north of Dean in Clay County. The land has level to rolling terrain with huge bluffs across the central portion. The Wichita River serves as the north boundary. The ranch has moderate coverage of mesquites with hardwoods along the river. Site characteristics include 9 pastures, 21 stock ponds, brick ranch house, pens, barn, scale house with living quarters, average fencing, good interior road system, Dean Dale Water.

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- Byers Farm - 316 Acres - Clay Co - \$2,350/Acre
- Farr Ranch - 326 Acre - Baylor Co - \$1,750/Acre
- Hammon River Ranch - 1,909 Acres - Clay Co - \$2,723/Acre
- Hofacket Ranch - 205 Acres - Wichita Co - \$1,875/Acre
- Everett Farm - 260 Acres - Wichita Co - \$1,750/Acre
- Kincaid Hunting Farm - 250.72 Acres - \$1,975/Acre

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Confessions of a HUNTER

By Andy Anderson

The Cowboy Turkey Call

Spring turkey season is a time that signals the end of the hunting season. One last hunt for a bird that is sometimes smart, and sometimes, just plain weird.

One thing about turkey hunting is I've never been on one that's been the same as the last. There's always a challenge of some sort that tries the patience of even the most seasoned outdoorsman. It's the time of the year that starts with cool frosty mornings, and by noon you're in a short-sleeved T-shirt.

Turkey hunting is extremely challenging, from finding the birds to perfecting the calling that works for that particular day. There are several ways to call: mouth diaphragms, slate calls, squeakers, and now electronic.

I had a pocket full of everything you could imagine, camo covered every square inch of my body, my face left only my eyes exposed to be seen. I perfected brushing in, blending in with my surroundings and setting up for the perfect ambush.

I started out early one cool spring morning to an area I knew was used for roosting. I settled on the edge of the path to wait for nature's alarm clock to wake the birds and get a bead on their location.

Sitting on a small foam pad with my back against an old live oak tree, I was sipping some coffee, my hands wrapped around the cup for warmth, watching my frosted breath as I exhaled fade into the darkness.

Just as the night faded away, a pink hue revealing the underbrush and tree canopy, cardinals begin chirping and the faint sounds of turkey coming off the roost could be heard in the distance.

Knowing I was close, I started to gather my things, secured the thermos of coffee and



Turkey hunting is extremely challenging, from finding the birds to perfecting the calling that works for that particular day. (Courtesy photo)

Continued from page 69

started to stand up when I heard hens clucking and calling, from what I thought was right in front of me. As the hens got more active, the others I heard in the distance got even more active.

Toms were gobbling all around me, and I had no idea what I had just snuck into, but I felt surrounded. Some would say that's a good thing, but I was in a bad place. I was exposed and feared getting busted by birds moving around that I didn't know where they were.

I slowly moved to nearby brush, got settled in and waited for some more light. Until then, I was confined to listening to the neighborhood disturbance all around me.

Within about 30 minutes I had good light. I could see well out to 100 yards or more, good enough to work some birds with my slate call.

The slate call is my favorite as it's easy to use, somewhat forgiving and I was just more confident with it. I started calling, softly with just a few chirps, nothing too aggressive.

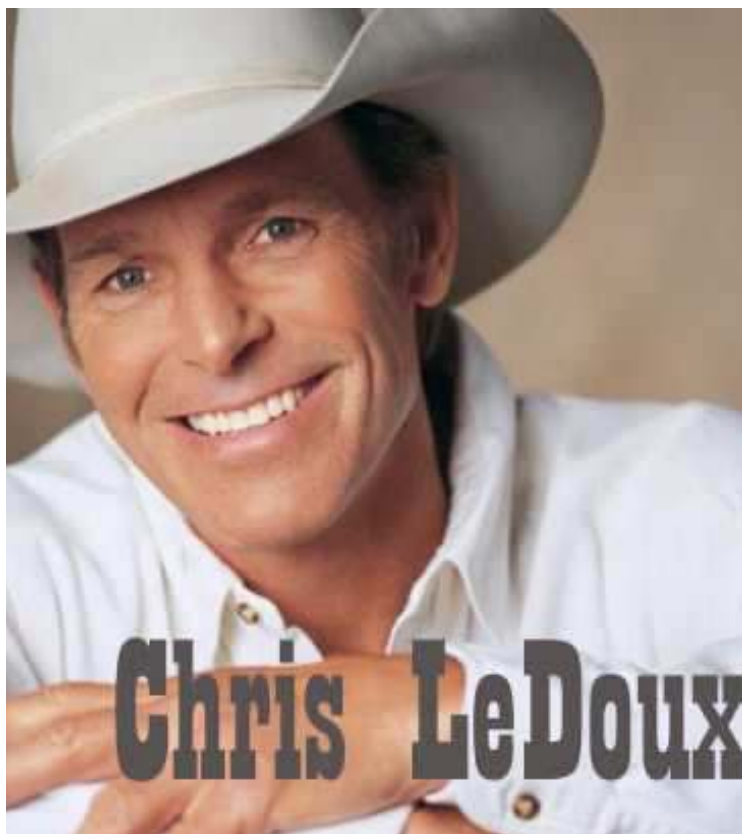
Boom, there he was, a loud gobble just about 150 yards or so right in front of me.

I waited patiently, calling back just a little at a time, watching and listening for changes in direction, judging distance and such with each gobble back.

It seemed like two maybe three hours of this cadence back and forth without much change in his distance from me.

I assumed he was hung up on some hens he didn't want to leave. I decided I would try to stalk up closer to him and try again. I took a quick look around to see if anything was around me that would alert the woods to my presence; all clear. I put all my gear up, stood up for a minute to let the blood get back into my legs and started to walk out of the brush.

Just as I stepped into the trail,



Andy Anderson discovered on a recent hunting trip that Chris LeDoux is good at calling in a turkey. (Courtesy photo)

I looked to the left and there, in the middle of the trail were two big toms strutting around and drumming.

I dared not move as they were only about 40 yards from me. It was a foolish gamble as I was busted within seconds. Those toms figured me out and hit the brush quick, disappearing as suddenly as they appeared.

The remainder of the day I stalked those toms, using every call, every calling method I could. By now it was late in the day, I was hungry and just exhausted. I retreated to a nearby creek bed to seek some shade, shed some clothes and take a break.

I opened my lunch, set it out and started into my sandwich. I had consumed quite a bit of water and needed to relieve myself. As I stood about 20 feet from my gear, my cell phone that I forgot to silence began to ring.

My ring tone was a Chris LeDoux song, "Look at You Girl,"

the song my wife and I danced to at our wedding. Not too concerned with the call, as I was a little busy, I took my time to answer it; actually, I was letting it go to voicemail. Just as I finished up, a tom gobbled about 50 yards from me.

I grabbed my shotgun and slate call, leaving everything else where it was to head quickly for cover.

Just as I sat down, there he was, strutting right to me, not a care in the world. As I waited, I didn't bother to call as he was still working in my direction.

I just never could get a good bead on him. He stayed just out of range or was behind a tree, some brush, always something. I was getting frustrated and so was he.

That tom started to move away so I decided to call a little, just enough to get his attention. Nothing, he just kept walking away. I sat back on my knees, set my shotgun down and just took a moment out of frustration to calm myself, think things through and

try again. Nothing was working, and I really didn't know what to do other than try to sneak up and ambush the tom.

Then, my phone rang again. I rolled my eyes at myself, got up quickly and rushed to shut my phone off.

Just as I grabbed my phone to silence it, I look up to see not one, but three birds quick stepping right to me. It hit me, they liked my ringtone, but now I found myself away without my shotgun.

All I could do was get down and let them pass. Within 10 minutes they were right on top of me, I mean five yards away. Just to add insult to injury, they knew I was there, and kept strutting around in front of me, drumming and gobbling, taunting me with their antics.


I really wanted to try and just sprint out to try to grab one. They finally gave up and worked their way around me and out of sight.

I gathered my stuff up, grabbed my shotgun and headed out their direction. I found a small clearing and got set up, grabbed my phone and let LeDoux serenade those bad boys back to me.

LeDoux has just started singing when I could hear a gobble, then another and then two at the same time. I was blown away at how good LeDoux was at calling turkeys.

Only this time they got smart and circled around me to come in behind me where I couldn't get a shot, and eventually got busted. They took off and wouldn't have any part of LeDoux or me, but that was a fun hunt.

I didn't know it at the time, but that was my last time to go turkey hunting that year.

Work got in the way of LeDoux and me getting back in the woods, but a friend of mine who I told about it had success calling in his tom turkey using his favorite song by LeDoux, "Bareback Jack." Who knew LeDoux was so good at calling in a turkey. 

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By Norman Winter | Horticulturist, Author, Speaker

Unplugged So Blue Salvia

Picture Perfection for Any Style of Garden

One of The Garden Guy's favorite new plants making its debut in 2020 has a name so unusual I had to look up the definition and give it a little thought. It is called Unplugged. Did you know we have a National Day of Unplugging?

You can probably guess what that might mean. Getting away from digital for a day, go natural, nourishing your mind and spirit. Certainly, when you are out and among flowers, butterflies and nature you have a transformation. That is why we garden.

As the owner of a North Texas farm or ranch you probably already feel quite at home with nature and that is great, but I assure you that sitting on the porch, patio or deck and seeing spikes of blue flowers teeming with bees, butterflies and hummingbirds will put a special spring in your step.

The name Unplugged So Blue is absolutely as trendy as it gets, but this salvia with a trendy name is so much more.

As a North Texas farmer or rancher, you'll appreciate knowing this *Salvia farinacea* has DNA coming from Texas, New Mexico and south of the border. This speaks volumes to its tough and rugged nature.

Its history in the world of gardening is legendary with countless varieties having won awards over the years including those that have received the coveted All-American Selections honor.

Continued on page 74



Unplugged So Blue salvia looks riveting when grown with the complementary color of yellow or orange. (Photo courtesy of Norman Winter)

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This most loved salvia in the garden with the not so marketable common name ‘mealy cup sage’ has a new variety in town called Unplugged So Blue coming from Proven Winners. Though it is making its debut in 2020, it has already won 25 awards in trials.

Last year I saw it in trials with dozens of other varieties which I have to admit is a sight to behold.

After all, spiky flowers create excitement on the garden, so standing alongside a thousand spikes of blue is exhilarating to say the least.

It was pretty easy to see that Unplugged So Blue was indeed special with multiple spikes rising up in the air and looking as if they were doing their part to promote this year’s Pantone Color of the Year “Classic Blue.”

Unplugged So Blue will reach 24 inches tall with a spread of 16 inches. Its attributes are many; blooms all summer, attracts bees, butterflies and hummingbirds, and is not on the deer menu.

It is the quintessential cottage garden flower yet is picturesque in containers and of course drop dead gorgeous in the backyard habitat.

Most will grow it as an annual yet in zones 8 and warmer there is a wonderful chance it will become a perennial. The key here is to make sure you soil drains freely.

To maximize your blooming potential, select a site in full sun. If you are working with tight clay, increase your fertility by incorporating three to four inches of organic matter like compost peat or humus.

These plants will reach from 18 to 36 inches in height depending on variety and length of the growing season. Their spread dictates spacing 12 to 15 inches apart.

Unplugged So Blue has the potential of putting on a dazzling show until frost arrives if the old




Unplugged So Blue attracts a host of pollinators, bees, hummingbirds and butterflies like this Monarch. (Photo courtesy Norman Winter)

flowers are kept removed. In late summer they can be cut back, which will enhance the bushiness and allow them to put on a show for fall.

To create the most attention-grabbing display in your landscape, choose their opposite or complementary color orange or yellow.

These play off each other in a resounding marriage of excitement. Rudbeckias, Luscious lantanas and the new Suncredible Yellow bush sunflower all make dazzling partners.

Another choice color to use is hot pink. Karalee Petite Pink gaura, Sunstar Pink pentas, or combine with Oso Easy landscape roses like Double Pink or Italian Ice, which would guarantee bringing out the cameras.

Blue is not only a treasured color in the garden, it is a celebrated color in 2020 and Unplugged So Blue salvia is the perfect choice for your garden party. Follow me on Facebook @NormanWinter-TheGardenGuy. 



Unplugged So Blue salvia debuts in 2020 having already won 25 awards. (Photo courtesy of Proven Winners)



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