## NORTH TEXAS FARM & RANCH

## December 2023

matican

# Rodeo Reacy Charlie Snow, Bayler Smith

QUALITY

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## **Bobby Norris**

- Regional Director/Agent, Licensed in TX
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#### MEGARGEL, TX

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## MEGARGEL, TX

Furnished 3,360sf not including spacious upstairs foamed loft storage. 3 bed 2 bath office, gym, game room, open kitchen & island laundry room. built in storm shelter.3 car covered drive thru parking.2,400 sft foamed equipment building & 600 sft cabin with full bath kitchen, laundry room with washer/dryer hookup, pipe cattle pens, head shutte, cattle guards, loafing sheds. Master, his/her walk-in closets. Powered custom blinds, vaulted ceilings. Easy access to covered parking. Heated bath floor dual shower heads,6x6 shower, drop-in bathtub. Kohler fixtures sealed natural concrete, mood lighting. Kitchen, Viking

48 in side-by-side fridge, 36 in Tuscany Range dual fuel custom soft close cabinets, crown molding,7x4 island, granite countertops. Foamed all areas of home, equipment building barn, loft. Spacious Gameroom. Custom Crown molding. Fireplace. Lennox Heat pumps. Private gates, custom work stone entrance 3 tanks. Automatic Non freeze waterer. Bobby Norris- \$2,995,000



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### **CLEBURNE, TX**

A must see property not even a quarter mile from I-35. Property backs up to a new commercial business park. Huge commercial development potential within the Burleson city limits. A tremendous buy and hold property or get started right away. With rolling terrain and elevations this property is filled with hardwoods as well. Location at its best!! Bobby Norris - \$2,250,000

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## TBD DIXIE SCHOOL RD NOCONA, TX

This 31 plus or minus acre tract is located only minutes from downtown Nocona! Fantastic location for building your barndominum or forever home. Great hunting opportunities for whitetail. turkey, and hogs.



## 3576 GRAY ROAD - NOCONA, TEXAS

104 plus or minus acres located near the Red River northwest of Nocona. Property already has a water well, septic, and electric on-site. Good perimeter fencing as well as crossed fenced. The property has 2 large ponds.



## TBD N2710 - WAURIKA, OKLAHOMA

80 acres sitting in Jefferson County right along the Red River. Fantastic hunting opportunities on this tract of land for whitetail deer, turkey, hogs and ducks. This place on the river makes for a hunters paradise!



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# **NORTH TEXAS FARM & RANCH**

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## **ON THE COVER**

On the cover are Junior World Finals athletes Bayler Smith and Charli Snow. (Photo by Dani Blackburn)



## letter from the editor

Hello readers. and welcome to the December issue of North Texas Farm & Ranch magazine.

Christmas has arrived and I can't help but falling in love with all the season brings. I enjoy the colorful decorations lining the streets, the joyful tunes on the radio, and, of course, the delicious food. But most importantly,



I love the reminder to slow down and count my blessings. This season gives us the opportunity to pause and be thankful for the important people in our lives.

Also happening this month, all eyes turn towards Vegas as rodeo's favorite time of year kicks off. In addition, the best of young athletes also get ready to show off their skills at the Junior World Finals. Read about two local athletes, Charli Snow and Bayler Smith, who will be a part of this year's finals.

Meanwhile, read about what is occurring in agriculture up north in Ag Elsewhere, find the perfect recipe for the holiday season, discover what to expect this month on the ranch, and so much more.

To subscribe by mail call 940-872-5922. Make sure to like our Facebook page and follow us on Instagram and Twitter. Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas!

Dani Blackburn

Dani Blackburn, Editor editor@ntfronline.com

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*Texas sleepydaisy* has a beautiful flower but is of limited value for grazing or wildlife. Pollinators do frequent it.







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#### NEW ARM BED F-350 2015 Ford 4x4. turbo automatic, A/C.

diesel, #A12980.....



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turbo diesel, auto, leather, all equipment. #114227.....\$85.995



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2022 Chevrolet 2500, 6.6 V8 gas, automatic, A/C, power seats, windows and locks. #124015.....\$52,995



NEW ARM BED Chevrolet 3500, 6.6

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## 7.3 V8 GAS

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Hank the Cowdog has jumped off the pages of John R. Erickson's highly successful book series and found a new home in Lubbock on a half-acre site at the National Ranching Heritage Center (NRHC) at Texas Tech University.

READ MORE: https://ntfronline.com/.../national-ranching-heritage.../



## TWITTER FEED

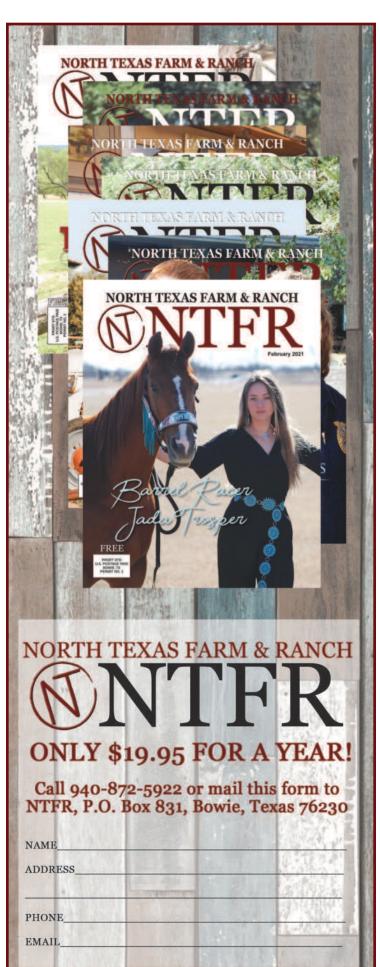
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Every little kid, growing up watching rodeo, dreams of one day competing at the Super Bowl of rodeo, the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo. One young cowboy from Decatur, Texas, is well on his way. ntfronline.com/2023/10/one-to...



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Feel free to drop us a line at editor@ntfronline.com or share your comments on our social media pages. You might even see your name in the next issue!



## MEANWHILE BACK AT THE RANCH

By Rayford Pullen | rcpullen@yahoo.com

We are definitely in the season of holidays, family and being appreciative of what we have. While our ventures can be enduring and rewarding at the same time, the real question I ask myself is, "Who are we doing this for?" While most of the time it is for ourselves because we love what we do, in the long term, we probably do this for our families, our hired hands and the ones that put as much towards our success as we do. Our circle is our community and while we certainly want to do good in life it also gives us as much or more pride to see others do good themselves.

Winter officially begins this month and with that comes the feed and hay bills. This year was really tough on our native forages due to the drought and heat combination. Our pastures haven't been this bad in 20-plus years. We normally don't overgraze our pastures, but it is obvious now that we did this year while not noticing we were doing so. The moisture we did receive did not keep our forages growing because, in my opinion, the extreme heat shut the plants down. So, the normal \$400 to \$500 winter feed bills for 120 days of feeding are going to increase. As I mentioned in earlier articles, we did double our winter forage planting this year so hopefully we will see some relief from store-bought protein supplements.

The current cattle market, while still wonderful, has backed up a bit from the highs this summer. That along with the current world instability has given us all pause as to what the future holds. I have attended several gatherings the past few weeks and the folks that keep an eye on the industry from a dollars and cents perspective expect another two to three



Here's hoping you and your family have a wonderful time this holiday season. (Courtesy photo)

years of good prices. Low cattle numbers, high prices and continued drought have seen heifer retention remain extremely low. While our overhead keeps soaring, the prices we are receiving still results in good return on our investments. Keeping only productive animals, the ones having and raising the high dollar calves, is the key to good profits. If that cow isn't bred and doesn't wean a good calf, we are still going to have \$700-plus tied up in her and the only way to cover this dead expense is from the sale of other calves from our productive cows. If you sell a 90 percent calf crop, which is above average, and have 100 cows, that's \$7,000 (at least) down the drain. If calves are making us \$500 profit, this means we are only realizing a profit from about 75 cows. I would rather have high operating expense in this high cattle market than vice versus. Times are a changing and we are gonna change with them. That is how it has always worked.

Here's hoping you and your family have a wonderful time this holiday season. Merry Christmas from our outfit to yours.

It's a wonderful time to be in the cattle business.  $\langle v \rangle$ 

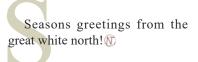




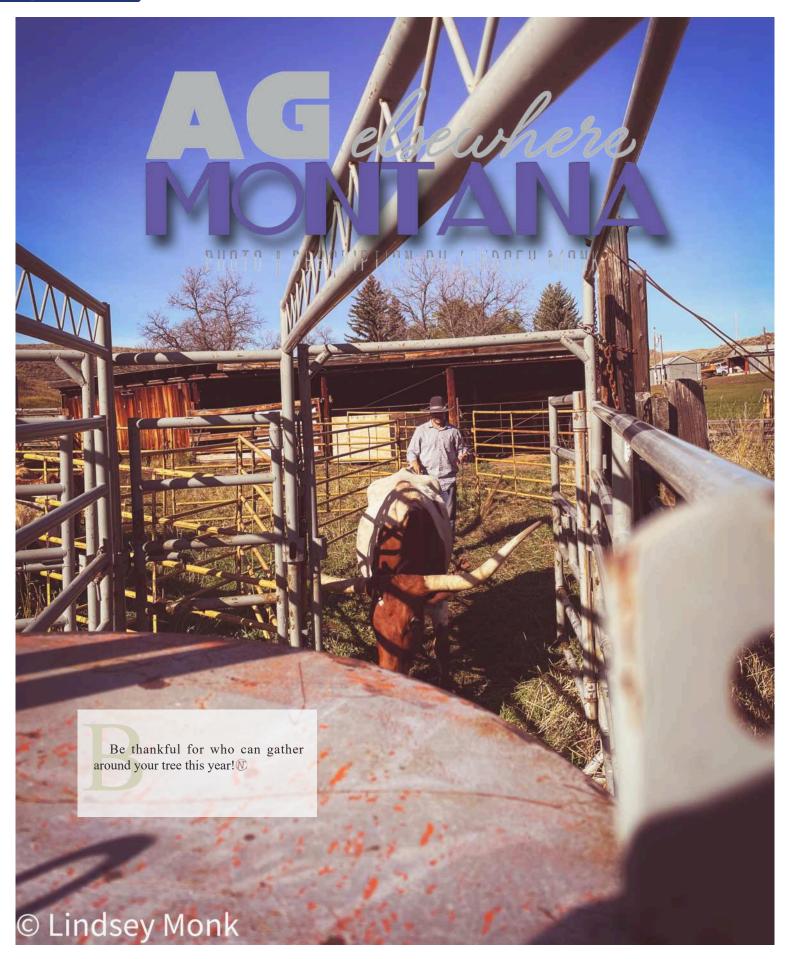
















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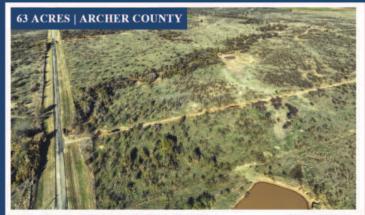
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#### HOLLIDAY CREEK RANCH

## \$3,500/Ac

This is a diverse ranch that offers amenities that appeal to all types of buyers. From recreation to agricultural, build a full-time residence, weekend getaway and all uses in between. The land is primarily level to slightly sloping towards a seasonal creek. The seasonal creek traverses the center of the property. The areas around the creek are heavily wooded, the remainder has moderate to heavy coverage of mesquites. Electricity is available and public water is available just north of the property.



## **BRIXEY RANCH**

#### \$5.450/Ac

Located southwest corner of Brixey and Whitaker Rd. 2,820' frontage on Brixey Rd, 1,600' Whitaker Rd. This would be a great tract to subdivide. Open pasture with scattered mesquites, rolling topo, impressive views, one stock pond, livestock barn, corrals, electricity is available, one water well. There are two pumpjacks on the property, but do not appear to be active. The seller may consider sub-dividing on a case by case basis, owner finance available. Contact Listing Agent Jon Moss – 940-867-6743.



#### **SIMS FARM**

#### \$2,8914/Ac

Located west of Burkburnett and north of Iowa Park on the south and east side of FM 368. The property consists of approximately 145 acres of farmland with the balance being native mesquite pasture. The topography is level to sloping southeast. Amenities includes a stock pond and barbed wire perimeter fence. No minerals are owned.

176.71 ACRES – WICHITA COUNTY

## **REILLY FARM**

#### \$3,250/Ac

This is a well-located productive farm located between Wichita Falls and Iowa Park. It has frontage on the southside of Reilly Road and the west side of Rifle Range Road. There is approximately 125 acres of tillable farmland, with the balance being moderate to heavily wooded mesquite pasture. Level to sloping terrain, two stock ponds, terraced, grass water ways and the entire boundary is fenced. Electricity and Wichita Valley Water is available.



## **ALEXANDER RANCH**

#### \$4,200/Ac

Nice all around property located 15 minutes from Wichita Falls. Ideal for running cattle, hunting, or building a home. Moderate mesquite coverage, above average grasses, rolling topography with tremendous views, 2 seasonal creeks, 3 stock ponds, completely fenced and cross fenced, livestock pens, electricity available, water available. Light oil production isolated to the southeast corner, minerals are negotiable with an acceptable contract.

## TURNER COUNTRY PROPERTIES AVAILABLE LISTINGS

Miller Ranch – 245.3 Acres – Wilbarger Co - \$5,500/Acre Holter Farm – 179.92 Acres – Wichita Co - \$2,250/Acre Highway 79 Homesite – 23.93 Acres – Archer Co - \$9,750/Acre L.A. Hill – 63.87 Acres – Archer Co - \$8,875/Acre Decker Farms – 5.03 Acres – Archer Co - \$89,500 171 Homesite – 4.28 Acre – Clay Co - \$40,000 Thornberry Lots – 4.5 Acres – Wichita Co - \$45,000 Thornberry Homesite – 2.14 Acre – Clay Co - \$27,500 MORE DETAILS AVAILABLE AT TURNERCOUNTRYPROPERTIES.COM

## Land Market Report OCTOBER LAND SALES

The rural land market in our six-county area of Collin, Cooke, Denton, Grayson, Montague and Wise Counties held steady in October, with an overall average price of \$30,101 per acre as compared to \$25,674 per acre in October of 2022, however the average number of days on the market has increased somewhat from 109 days to 165 days.

Higher interest rates have had some affect on the land transactions, but there is still a lot of cash out there that is looking for land to park on. Folks with 1031 like-kind exchange money that have a limited amount of time to get that money reinvested are leading the pack of cash buyers.

We are seeing more reductions in list prices as time passes, as many sellers were pricing their properties at prices that were months ahead of their current market price. Those sellers have realized today's market is not increasing as rapidly and need to get their listing prices back down closer to today's actual value.

The recent rainfall has been a much welcomed and needed benefit to all our lands, and just in time for our winter wheat, oats and cover crops. Be thankful for the rain and for all of our many blessings as we celebrate the holidays.

Remember, the best time to plant a tree or buy land was 20 years ago. The second best time is today. By Jared Groce

	E.			
	En l	COOKE COUNTY		
CITY	ACRES	\$ / ACRE	ASK/SELL RATIO	DOM
ERA	29.290	\$19,973.00	93.60	269
VALLEY VIEW	15.800	\$37,342.00	94.40	81
SAINT JO	39.010	\$16,662.00	100.00	363
GAINESVILLE	83.440	\$20,220.00	86.10	10
VALLEY VIEW	183.850	\$18,186.00	90.90	127
AVG	70.280	\$22,477.00	93.00	170
	S. 16	DENTON COUNTY		
CITY	ACRES	\$ / ACRE	ASK/SELL RATIO	DOM
SANGER	10.19	\$43,180	97.8	57
PILOT POINT	46.5	\$44,657	94.4	336
AUBREY	24.79	\$132,329	86.8	21
DENTON	60.99	\$54,927	98.5	526
SANGER	10.190	\$43,180.00	97.80	57
AVG	26.650	\$49,205.00	87.40	9
	М	ONTAGUE COUNT	Y	
	ACRES	\$ / ACRE	ASK/SELL RATIO	DOM
FORESTBURG	17.120	\$12,704.00	96.70	131
NOCONA	53.660	\$5,125.00	97.60	147
MONTAGUE	58.260	\$8,239.00	100.00	30
AVG	43.010	\$8,689.00	98.10	103
		WISE COUNTY		
	ACRES	\$ / ACRE	ASK/SELL RATIO	DOM
DECATUR	10.560	\$26,052.00	96.50	28
DECATUR	10.020	\$29,441.00	99.70	44
DECATUR	10.320	\$29,064.00	96.80	104
PARADISE	24.220	\$15,895.00	97.50	28
POOLVILLE	96.920	\$9,802.00	95.20	297
AVG	30.410	\$22,051.00	97.10	100
WHITESBORO	48.000	\$38,000.00	91.4	445
WHITEWRIGHT	127.280	\$16,000.00	69.00	244
WHITEWRIGHT	139.910	\$17,918.00	68.7	244
HOWE	88.910	\$34,000.00	89.5	256
AVG	45.520	\$25,732.00	90.1	167
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## Avian Influenza Update

By Barry Whitworth, DVM

High Path Avian Influenza continues to be a problem in commercial and backyard poultry in the Unites States with more than 60 million birds affected. Since the start of the outbreak in 2022, 879 flocks (347 commercial and 532 backyard flocks) have been confirmed with HPAI in the U.S.

Many wild birds and mammals have been affected as well. The latest was detected in a backyard flock in Carter County in Oklahoma on Oct.16, 2023. For a complete listing of domestic birds, wild birds, and mammals affected by HPAI visit 2022-2023 Detection of High Path Avian Influenza website at https://www.aphis.usda. gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/ animal-disease-information/avian/ avian-influenza/2022-hpai.

Avian influenza is a highly contagious viral disease. The virus is classified as either Low Path Avian Influenza or HPAI depending on the virulence. This virus infects many food producing birds such as chickens and turkeys while it commonly resides in migratory waterfowl and many other wild birds. Most often ducks, geese, and wild birds harbor the virus in the intestinal tract without having any clinical signs of the disease.

The virus is shed in the feces and respiratory secretions from infected birds. Poultry can be infected with the virus when they come in direct contact with infected birds or consume feed that is contaminated with the virus. The virus can be spread indirectly through objects like shoes, clothes, or equipment contaminated with the virus.

Clinical signs of the disease vary depending on the severity of the virus and the organ system affected. LPAI usually results in no clinical signs or only mild problems. However, HPAI has many



Clinical signs of Avian Influenza vary depending on the severity of the virus and the organ system affected. (Courtesy photo)

different clinical signs. Death with no symptoms is a common finding.

Respiratory problems such as coughing, sneezing, watery eyes, and nasal discharges may be seen. Depression resulting in loss of appetite and decrease consumption of water may occur. Egg production may be impacted with a decrease in production and/or softshell or misshapen eggs. A bird's comb, wattle, head, eyelids, and hocks may swell. Combs and wattles may turn purple. Nervous system disorders including tremors, incoordination, and unusual positions of the head may be seen. Diarrhea has been reported in some cases. For more information about clinical signs visit Defend the Flock-Signs of Illness at https://www.aphis.usda. gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/ animal-disease-information/avian/defend-the-flock-program/ outbreak-illness/outbreak-illness.

For commercial and backyard poultry flocks, the best defense against HPAI is a sound biosecurity program. Biosecurity is the development and implementation of management procedures intended to reduce or prevent unwanted threats from entering a flock. The protocol is designed to reduce or prevent the spread of unwanted threats through the flock and eliminate any unwanted pathogens that may enter the flock. Lastly, a biosecurity plan is designed to prevent threats from infecting neighboring poultry operations. Biosecurity can be broken down into four basic areas which include traffic, isolation, sanitation, and husbandry.

The first line of defense should be limiting the traffic that enters the area. Poultry operations should have a perimeter buffer area. For



backyard poultry operations, this could be a fence. In commercial operations this may be a fence or road that surrounds the facility. All entry points need to be clearly marked with, "Do Not Enter" signs. In a study by United States Department of Agriculture evaluating factors associated with introduction of HPAI in layer farms in the U.S., the presence of a gate was found to be protective against the introduction of the virus. Gates with signage may encourage people to follow biosecurity protocols.

Inside the PBA, a line of separation needs to be established. The LOS isolates the birds from possible sources of infections. The LOS is usually the walls of the poultry building plus the entry point. No person should cross this line without following proper biosecurity protocols. Producers should provide visitors with clean coveralls and disposable shoe covers. Visitors should wash their

hands before and after visiting the facility. All visitors should dip their shoes in a disinfectant solution when entering and exiting the facility. Also, no other animals, wild or domestic should cross the LOS.

Sanitation is one of the most important parts of a biosecurity plan. All equipment, feeders, waterers, and buildings need to be cleaned and disinfected regularly. First, all fecal material and dirt should be physically removed. Next, disinfectants must be applied and allowed sufficient contact time to work properly. Foot baths need to be properly maintained. The property outside the poultry house should be kept mowed and cleaned. Failure to keep the grass cut and/or to promptly clean up feed spills is associated with HPAI.

Poultry producers must also practice good animal husbandry. Flocks need to be observed several times per day. Producers need to

collect and dispose of dead birds frequently. Producer should know the clinical signs of a sick bird. Any unusual increases in sick or dead birds should be reported to proper authorities. Backyard producers have several options. They can contact their veterinarian or local extension office.

The National Poultry Improvement Plan has guidelines for a biosecurity protocol. Commercial and backyard poultry producers should examine the NPIP 14 standards of the biosecurity protocol. Any areas that do not meet the standards need to be addressed. The NPIP biosecurity audit form can be found at http://www.poultryimprovement.org/documents/ AuditForm-2018BiosecurityPrinciples.pdf. Additional sources for backyard poultry producers can be found at the USDA Defend the Flock website at healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov, Protect Your Poultry From Avian Influenza at https://www.aphis.usda.gov/

publications/animal health/broprotect-poultry-from-ai.pdf.

Avian Influenza is a major threat to the U.S. and the area's poultry industry. It is the responsibility of all commercial and backyard poultry producers to do everything in their power to protect this industry.

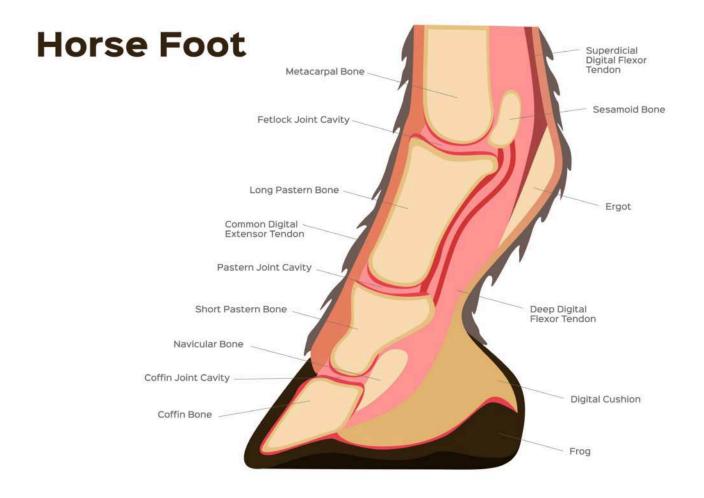
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2022: a case-control study. Frontiers in veterinary science. 10, 1229008.





Horses with lameness due to navicular syndrome commonly have a short strided, choppy gate, often land toe-heel rather than heel-toe and majority worsen when trotted in circles towards the lame limb. (Courtesy photo)

## Navicular Syndrome in Horses

By Dr. Garrett Metcalf

The nomenclature surrounding navicular conditions in horses has undergone changes over the past 10 years with the advent of new diagnostic tools to further explore the causes of lameness that encompasses the navicular bone.

The current terminology shifts the sole blame of the cause of lameness in horses away from the navicular bone to include the surrounding soft tissues that make up the podotrochlear apparatus in the feet of horses. Hence, now calling horses diagnosed with navicular conditions, navicular syndrome or caudal heel pain, rather than navicular disease, which implies the primary structure that is the cause of the lameness is the navicular bone itself.

Regardless of the terminology to describe these navicular issues, navicular syndrome is still a major player in causing forelimb lameness in many horse breeds and disciplines.

Horses with lameness due to navicular syndrome commonly have a short strided, choppy gate, often land toe-heel rather than heel-toe and majority worsen when trotted in circles towards the lame limb. These horses often have pain response to hoof testers across the heels of the foot and often present with podiatry issues that are not being addressed properly. The onset of lameness can be slow insidious onset or acute sudden lameness after a specific event either while in work or in turn out.

The typical approach to examine a horse for forelimb lameness suspected of having navicular syndrome is fairly straight forward. A complete history is often gathered from the owner or trainer who is riding the horse. A physical exam is then performed including palpation of the limb, examination of the feet and hoof testers used to complete the hoof exam.

The horse is then trotted in hand through a lameness pattern including straight lines and circles both directions. Flexion tests are also part of the examination process to gather more information and isolate areas of the limb that are causing the pain.

In order to more accurately narrow down the region of the limb causing the lameness, diagnostic regional nerve blocks or intraarticular (joint blocks) are performed with a short acting anesthetic to temporarily eliminate the pain and ultimately improve the horse's gait and lameness scores during repeat trotting through the lameness pattern. The threshold of improvement that is desired to be reached is approximately 70 to 80 percent improvement in the horse's lameness to comfortably diagnosis the source of the pain although not always achievable with certain causes of lameness or in cases of severely lame horses making that mark unachievable.

The majority of horses with navicular syndrome have significant improvement to a palmar digital nerve block, which is the lowest nerve block that can be performed to the digital nerves before they enter the foot, but some horses require additional nerve blocks to achieve satisfactory improvement in lameness. A palmar digital nerve block or PD nerve block desensitizes the navicular region, majority of the coffin joint, the sole of the foot and the skin over the heel bulbs encompassing major structures in the foot, hence requiring diagnostic imaging to make the final diagnosis of the cause of lameness.

The anatomy of the foot lends itself to diagnostic limitations with the common tools the veterinarians use to routinely image a lame horse. The density of the hoof capsule drastically limits ultrasound to be used to image the foot only through the frog and is rarely used to image the navicular bone and the deep digital flexor tendon.

The mainstay of initial imaging of horses with navicular syndrome is radiographs or xrays. Multiple views at different angles are required to perform a complete examination of the foot, navicular bone and other associated structures like the coffin joint. Radiographs also gather important information about the geometry, shape, angulations and overall balance of the foot that will greatly help in the treatment of the horse's lameness issues.

Although radiographs afford

abundant information about the bones in the foot, it, too, has its own limitations when it comes to seeing the soft tissue structures that are a very important part of the podotrochlear apparatus.

The next step in imaging and hence the change in nomenclature to navicular syndrome was brought about through MRI.

MRI, or Magnetic Resonance Imaging, has further expanded veterinarians' capability to research, diagnosis and treat horses with navicular syndrome.

Although the availability of MRI imaging is sometimes scarce, there are veterinary referral practices and university veterinary teaching hospitals with MRI capabilities designed to accommodate horses.

Before advance imaging is prescribed to horses, such as MRI, it is common to develop a treatment plan for horses using the tools available to the primary veterinarian. Treatment plan often requires a multimodal approach to address podiatry issues as well as the orthopedic or soft tissue causes of the lameness. The treatment plan is not always a simple cook book recipe that is applied to all causes of navicular syndrome cases. The treatment is often tailored to the specific horse's needs and/or cause of the lameness. Also some treatments are more invasive than others to provide the most relief to the horse's lameness, and sometimes in order to achieve satisfactory improvement surgery may be required.

Medical treatment of navicular syndrome is the typical first line of treatment to address the cause of lameness, especially if it is a new diagnosis compared to an old injury, but there are overlaps between cases that dictate the treatment protocol. Traditional medical treatments are geared towards managing pain, inflammation and improving the health of the podotrochlear apparatus, which greatly involves the coffin joint. Potent anti-inflammatory steroids and hyaluronic acid products are administered in the coffin joint or navicular bursa to control the inflammation and restore normal function.

Because of the close intimate anatomic relationship of the navicular apparatus and the coffin joint, the coffin joint is utilized to administer the medications. There is also often coinciding coffin joint inflammation or arthritis, making it a preferred delivery route of the medications.

In certain cases the navicular bursa is treated solely or in conjunction with coffin joint injections, but navicular bursas are reserved for difficult cases because it is more invasive requiring a long needle that penetrates the deep digital flexor tendon under radiographic guidance.

Concurrently with medical treatment, podiatry changes are often needed to have well-rounded treatment plan and longer lasting results. Common foot conformational challenges that navicular syndrome horse have is long toe-low heel conformation or contracted heels. The same shoe or method of application will not work on every horse or case of navicular syndrome, and there have been multiple different types of shoes and methods used to help these horses. The relationship and coordination between the farrier and the veterinarian is important to reach the best treatment plan, which does come with some degree of trial and error to get the best fit for the individual horse.

Alternative medical options are available to treat specific injuries to the podotrochlear apparatus that are often diagnosed with the help of MRI. One particular class of drug that is used and marketed to address navicular issues with is Bisphosphonates. The two drugs labeled for use in horses is Tildren and OsPhos. These drugs block the function of a cell line that is in all bones and is believed to play a major role in the degenerative process that occurs within the navicular bone. Other alternative therapies are in the category of regenerative therapies. These options include Platelet Rich Plasma, IRAP, Pro-Stride and Stem Cell Therapy. These therapies are reserved typically for difficult unresponsive cases in which a diagnosis is aided with the use of MRI. It should also be mentioned that daily or intermittent uses of NSAIDs such as phenylbutazone or firocoxib is a very helpful medical option to help control pain and inflammation. This practice of daily NSAID use is safer now with newer medications that are called selective Cox-2 inhibitors that have minimal side effects of the gastrointestinal tract.

Surgical treatment and therapies are also an important part of treating difficult unresponsive cases to traditional treatments. Surgical treatment plans are often developed specifically to the type of injury and often a MRI is required to diagnosis which region of the podotrochlear apparatus is affected or a more broadly applied surgical treatment is used to alleviate the pain by a neurectomy. Typically a neurectomy or nerving is reserved when other treatments have failed.

Other surgical treatment plans are minimally invasive because of the anatomical restrictions of the surgical approaches to the navicular region making minimally invasive techniques the only logical approaches.

Although navicular syndrome is a challenging and sometimes devastating disease that is progressive in nature, there are modern multimodal treatment options and diagnostic tools available. To achieve the best satisfactory outcome, veterinarians strive for early accurate diagnoses and treatments to address all aspects of navicular syndrome.

The latest developments in medical and surgical treatment options coupled with more advanced diagnostic tools make these goals more realistic.



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The inaugural Texan Barrel Race was conducted at Taylor Telecom Arena in Abilene, Texas, with Texas-sized payouts and Texas-size competition. (Courtesy photo)

## Everything's Bigger in Texas

By Krista Lucas Wynn

Each December, a major barrel race is conducted at The Orleans in Las Vegas. For 2023, the producers of the All In Barrel Race decided to add another stop to their schedule, Oct. 16-22.

The inaugural Texan Barrel Race was conducted at Taylor Telecom Arena in Abilene, Texas, with Texas-sized payouts and Texas-size competition.

With a guaranteed payout of more than \$850,000, the weeklong race drew barrel racers from near and far and of all different levels.

Contestants could choose from three different sections throughout the week, with two chances to run for a chance to win big money. When all was said and done, the 1D champion walked away with a \$100,000 check, along with many other awards.

There had already been six days of competition when Allie Murphy ran down the alley on her horse, Shawnee Ta Fame.

The Justiceburg, Texas, cowgirl was focused on making the smoothest run possible, and with a time of 14.41 seconds, she ended up being the fastest time of the week and the 1D champion.

"I was super excited, and most of all extremely grateful for my horse," Murphy said.

"Words can't describe how proud I was of the way he performed and how he handled running with the big dogs. After he clocked his time, I remember thinking how blessed I am to have him in my life and how I couldn't have done any of this without him." That horse she calls Chico, is an eight-year-old bay gelding that she has competed on for two years now.

He is by barrel sire Shawnee Bug Leo and was trained by Emily Efurd. The Murphys purchased him from fellow barrel racer Wyatt Grace Bean (Andrews).

"Winning wasn't necessarily on my mind," Murphy said. "I knew that if I honed in on having a calm and easy run, it would prevent me from pushing and overriding too much and just allow him to do his job. I had the feeling that if I focused on that, I could score myself a spot somewhere in the 1D."

Her game plan paid off in a big way. Murphy and Chico outran more than 1,500 contestants to take home the \$100,000 check. Murphy has juggled a busy college rodeo schedule at South Plains College in Levelland, Texas, but the Texan was one she could not miss.

"I had a great time competing at the Texan. It was an awesome and exciting race, with great ground and ran very smoothly without any hold ups," Murphy said. "They also provided a live feed which was really neat and helped me with my arrival time and kept me updated. Also, anyone can do it and be successful in it, even a small town girl like me."

The Texan event was wellreceived, and there was something for everyone at any level.

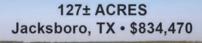
Barrel racers will be able to roll the dice at big money again in 2024, with new dates tentatively set for Oct. 14-20.

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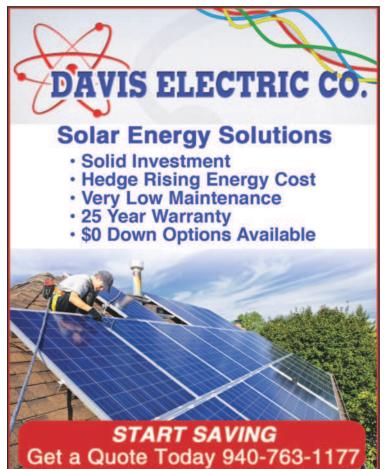
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## Rodeo Professionalism

Missouri Rodeo Cowboy Association closes out 2023 with as much gusto as any other rodeo association in America. The MRCA takes on the challenge of putting on a top-notch professional rodeo in the city of Springfield, Miss., regardless of challenges.

The month of October is the closeout for many rodeo associations around America. Understanding all the complexity of rodeo organizations around the country takes a little bit of in-depth knowledge of the sport of rodeo. Most all fans have a working knowledge of the Professional Rodeo Cowboy Association and its influence on the rodeo world. Stepping away from the PRCA there are numerous other rodeo organizations that promote and support rodeo athletes from coast to coast.

Many times, within the rodeo ranks these smaller organizations are often labeled as "amateur rodeo," but this is far from the truth. Yes, many of these rodeos lack the larger budget and venues the PRCA is blessed with, but that does not change the professional ability and resolve these associations display. Breaking it down, many of these small rodeo associations are just as professional as any.

While assessing the level of these smaller rodeos, it may be best to start with what quantifies as professional. Professional is defined as "a person engaged in a specified activity, especially a sport or branch of the performing arts, as a main paid occupation rather than as a pastime." Now it is true many of the smaller organizations do not have droves of athletes whose primary income is rodeo, yet they make money and generate revenue through the sport. When the rubber meets the road, they make profits by putting it on, competing in rodeos. The quantifiable point is revenue is generated through their execution.

With this understanding the emphasis on professional is epitomized in the Missouri Rodeo Cowboy Association. All summer long numerous small towns across the Midwest host rodeos sanctioned by the MRCA. These rodeos are not much different than the more famous PRCA other than breaking down a couple events in a range of ages versus just having everyone compete against each other. An example of this is the 40 and over tie-down roping. By Phillip Kitts



Missouri Rodeo Cowboy Association closes out 2023 with as much gusto as any other rodeo association in America. (Photo courtesy Phillip Kitts, Avis Visual Imagery Rodeo Photography)

Throughout the year the MRCA proudly displays their dedication to the industry by co-sanctioning events with other state-based associations and provides cowboys and cowgirls with a place to be a part of their passion and display their skills. The MRCA displays cooperation and confidence in their program by working hard with other rodeo organizations for the betterment of the sport.

When October comes the top athletes in each event earn their way to the MRCA Finals. 2023 may have been the biggest year for the MRCA Finals. The Ozark Empire Fairground has recently built an entirely new building that will not only host things like the MRCA Finals, but this same building will host a spring PRCA event.

When the association converged on the Ozark Empire grounds for their year-end event

there were instant challenges. Construction on the new building was not complete, but not one bit of this challenge was going to deter the great committee from putting on a rodeo for all ages. Matched with other activities within the city of Springfield the MRCA had plenty to overcome as they executed a years' worth of planning.

Night one may have been a little thinner on crowd than some would like but the enthusiasm and energy put forth by both the producers and athletes was beyond measure. From the start of the grand entry to the last bull bucking, it was true professional rodeo at its best.

The last two performances did not fail to provide the same energy as the first, after two additional nights of rodeo, times and scores were matched with what could have been one of the most intense crowds any rodeo has seen. **Continued on page 28** 



#### Continued from page 27

Overall, the three performances of rodeo action entertained great crowds and proved the superior ability within the MRCA ranks.

The success and the professionalism that were displayed at the MRCA Finals are noteworthy for more than a story of another successful Midwest rodeo.

The MRCA was able to make great things happen in the reflection of challenges such as construction, the challenge of less budget and venue restrictions. It is a profound example and proof that there are more than just a few professional rodeo associations.

The Missouri Rodeo Cowboy Association is a spectacular example of smaller scale rodeo that exemplifies professionalism and ability. Next time you hear the term "amateur rodeo" ask yourself is this truly amateur, or is it rodeo that has been given a label that



that has been given a label that The Missouri Rodeo Cowboy Association is a spectacular example of smaller scale rodeo that exemplifies does not match who they truly are? professionalism and ability. (Photo courtesy Phillip Kitts, Avid Visual Imagery Rodeo Photography)







# WHENA CITY GIRL goes country By Annette Bridges Cattle Ranching as Seniors

As you can see in the featured photo, I am holding the welcome to Medicare book. The year 2023 is my 65th birthday. I received this lovely, and quite helpful, book in the mail on our daughter's 40th birthday, which is why I am dressed to party. We were on our way off the ranch to meet up with our only child to start her day of celebrating. Somehow it simply seemed like a "Kodak moment," a phrase I suspect only fellow seniors know the meaning of.

LIFESTYLE

My husband received his welcome to Medicare book two years earlier. This is certainly a season where we both raise questions we have never asked before.

These include questions about how much longer we will be able to continue our cattle ranching operation. We definitely feel like we have entered a new season of big changes. Yet, we are unsure, or dare I say we are not in agreement about, when some of the big changes should happen.

So we continue with our dayto-day responsibilities of caring for our cattle that honestly leaves little time to daydream about much else.

I suppose I could say neither of us want to be rushed or pressured into making dramatic changes to the life we have shared with each other for well over four decades. Yet life feels significantly shorter than it did when we first married. I cannot stop myself from wanting certain changes and experiences as soon as possible. Someday feels like it should be now or at least very soon.



Annette Bridges is determined to fill her life with joy, laughter, and sassiness. (Photo courtesy Annette Bridges)

Cattle ranching is not a profession that someone retires from suddenly one day. After all, this business involves more than our two lives.

We have a herd of beautiful bovines that have been born and raised here, and many here now

have been here for more than two decades. Certainly, if and when we reach the decision to retire from this lifestyle, great care and consideration will be given to our cattle.

I shared this special photograph on social media saying this is what happens when you have a daughter turning 40. I was almost 25 when she was born. I received many sweet comments complimenting my outfit.

My responses emphasized my belief that if I am going to be a senior, I am going to be a sassydressed senior.

When I struggle with the idea of entering my senior season, I reflect on my mamma's senior years. She was almost my age when she married for the fourth time to a man she would be married to for 30 years.

She did more traveling during these years than any other time in her younger life.

If I learned anything from my mamma's life, one important lesson must surely be that you do not stop living or enjoying life just because of your older age, or you may struggle with more health challenges than you did in your youth. She did not allow her aches and pains to slow her down much or for long.

Although we may be unsure about how much longer we will be cattle ranchers, I am determined that whatever I do with the rest of my life it will be with as much joy, laughter and sassiness as I can muster up, and I thank my mamma for showing me how.

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## **Raising Chickens for Beginners**

Raising chickens can be a rewarding and fulfilling experience, whether you're a homesteader looking to become more selfsufficient or a backyard enthusiast seeking fresh eggs for your family. Chickens are relatively low-maintenance animals, making them an excellent choice for beginners in the world of poultry farming. In this step-by-step guide, we will walk you through the essentials of raising chickens, from choosing the right breed to ensuring their health and happiness.

## Selecting the Right Breed

Before diving into chickenraising, it's crucial to choose the right breed that suits your goals and environment.

Different breeds have various characteristics, including egglaying capacity, temperament, and adaptability. Here are some popular options for beginners:

*Rhode Island Red*: Known for their excellent egg production and hardiness.

*Plymouth Rock*: Friendly birds that lay brown eggs and adapt well to various climates.

*Australorp*: Record-holders for egg-laying, known for their docile nature.

*Silkies*: Unique and fluffy birds often kept as pets; they lay smaller eggs but are adorable companions.

Research the specific breeds available in your area and consider factors like climate and available space when making your selection.

#### **Coop and Run Setup**

Before bringing your chickens home, you'll need to set up a safe and comfortable living space for them.

A coop and run are essential components of your chicken-keeping setup:

*Coop*: The coop is where your chickens will sleep at night and

By Savannah Magoteaux



Chickens are relatively low-maintenance animals, making them an excellent choice for beginners in the world of poultry farming.(Courtesy photo)

lay their eggs. It should be wellinsulated, predator-proof, and provide at least two to three square feet of space per chicken.

*Run*: The run is an outdoor area where your chickens can roam during the day. It should be fenced and covered to protect your birds from predators and provide shade.

Make sure to include roosting bars, nesting boxes, and adequate ventilation in your coop for a healthy environment.

#### **Feeding Your Chickens**

Chickens need a balanced diet to stay healthy and lay eggs regularly. You can feed them commercial chicken feed, which comes in various forms:

*Starter Feed:* For chicks up to six weeks old.

*Grower Feed:* For chicks aged six weeks to 20 weeks.

Layer Feed: For hens producing eggs.

Additionally, you can supplement their diet with kitchen

scraps, vegetables, and grains. Ensure they have access to clean, fresh water at all times.

#### Care and Health

Regular care and monitoring are essential to keeping your chickens healthy. Here are some key aspects of chicken care:

Regular Health Checks: Inspect your chickens for signs of illness or injury daily. Common issues include mites, respiratory infections, and injuries from pecking.

Disease Prevention: Vaccinate your chickens against common diseases to keep your flock healthy.

*Egg Collection*: Collect eggs daily to ensure they remain clean and prevent hens from brooding.

*Clean Coop*: Regularly clean the coop to prevent the buildup of waste and odors, which can attract pests.

## Handling and Socializing

Chickens can be friendly and

enjoy human interaction when handled gently. Spend time with your chickens, hand-feeding them treats to build trust.

Avoid sudden movements or loud noises, which can startle them.

## **Understanding Egg Production**

Egg production varies by breed and age. Hens typically start laying eggs at around five to six months old. The amount of daylight, diet, and stress can affect egg production. You can use artificial lighting to simulate longer daylight hours, which can encourage consistent egg-laying.

#### **Dealing with Challenges**

Chickens, like any animal, come with their challenges. Here are a few common issues and how to address them:

*Predators*: Invest in a secure coop and run, and consider adding motion-activated lights or alarms to deter nighttime predators.

*Broodiness:* Some hens may become broody and stop laying eggs. You can break this behavior by isolating them in a separate enclosure or providing them with dummy eggs to sit on.

*Feather Pecking*: Chickens can sometimes develop a habit of pecking at each other's feathers. Ensure they have enough space and distractions to prevent this behavior.

Raising chickens can be a delightful and educational journey. By selecting the right breed, setting up a proper coop and run, providing a balanced diet, and offering care and attention, you can enjoy the rewards of fresh eggs and the companionship of these feathered friends. Remember that every chicken has its unique personality, so get ready to be charmed by your new flock as you embark on this fulfilling adventure in poultry farming. (V)



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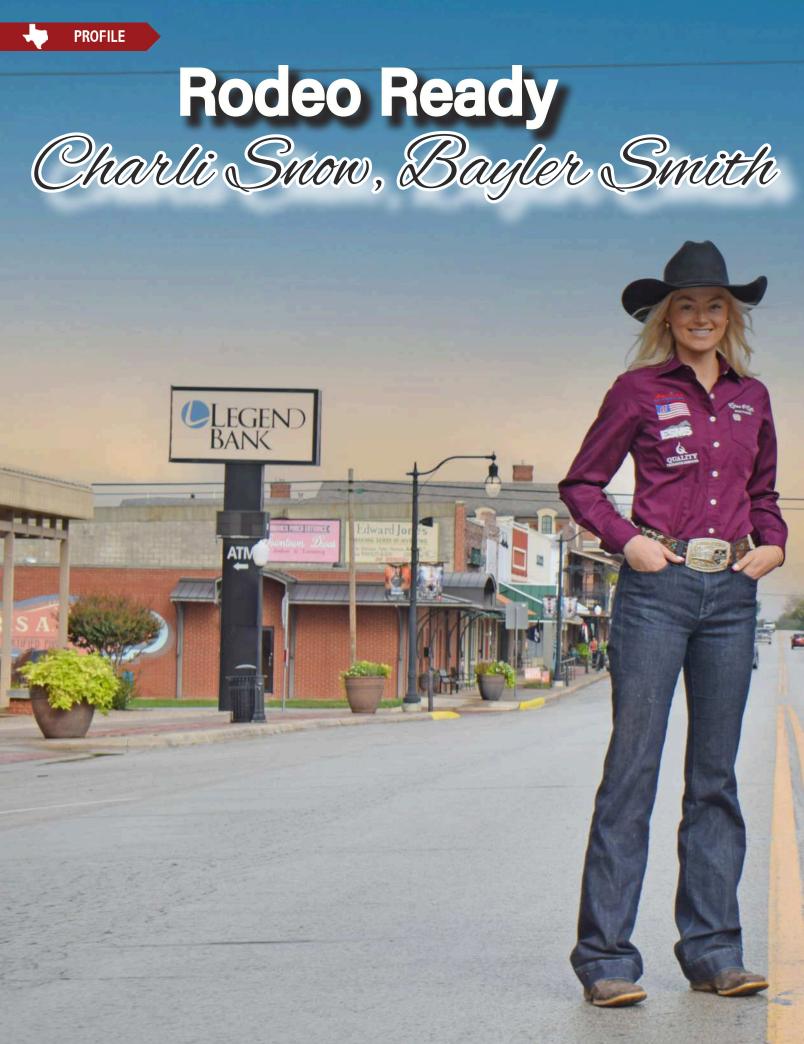
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North Texas has much to be proud of in the next generation of rodeo athletes destined for greatness. Two of those athletes are barrel racers Charli Snow and Bayler Smith of Nocona, who are headed to the Junior World Finals in Las Vegas this month.

111

PROFILE

With a drive for success, a passion for their horses, and a dedication to the sport, the teens are not only a force to be reckoned with inside the arena, but great representatives of rodeo outside the arena. Continued on page 38



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*"If it weren't for rodeo, I wouldn't have my character or any of the life lessons I have learned."* 

QUALITY

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#### Continued from page 35

Charli Snow is the daughter of Jennifer and Dale Snow. She has grown up in the North Texas town of Nocona and is a sixthgeneration farmer and rancher.

The high school senior stays busy with rodeo and school. She has competed in poles and breakaway roping in the past, but this year, her sole focus is on barrel racing.

Charli qualified for this year's Junior World Finals at the KK Run for Vegas in Waco. It is the third year for her to do so, despite struggling at times, but the journey has been rewarding in the life lessons it has taught.

"The past two years was kind of a deep slump," Charli recalled. "It was the toughest thing to get into a slump with my best horse and struggle to fix it. He got hurt, and had to take off for surgery. I didn't really have a number one horse that would win like he would. I had to learn how to be grateful for what I have, and not be so obsessed with winning. I had to learn to enjoy it again and how to overcome obstacles mentally. Once I did that, before I knew it, that good horse was coming back and I was mentally and physically ready."

The seven-year-old black horse is a Valiant Hero named Sudden Hero, going by Hero. She also has a four-year-old by First To Shine, a gray horse, Louie, by Dash Ta Fame, and a sorrel horse by the name of Racer.

Charli explained the almost two-year time period without Hero forced her to grow her horsemanship ability, and she came out on the other side better for it.

"Not having a really good horse who I knew could just win anything if I threw him in there really made me have to make the best with what I had. I was forced to ride some colts, I had to take a green horse and season her and make her into what she became, which is a really consistent 2D mare. It made my horsemanship



Charli Snow with her horse, Hero. (Photo courtesy Charli Snow)

flip. It has rocketed through the roof from what it was before those two years. I have overcome some of the hardest mental battles the past couple of years. I now know how to handle myself better, and I am better prepared. My family is, too. We approach things a lot differently in every single situation. Looking back, I wouldn't change that deep rut for anything because it bettered me. I would do it all over again," Charli said. "If it weren't for rodeo. I wouldn't have my character or any of the life lessons I have learned."

As Charli made her way

through those trials, she learned to pick out the small things that did go well in each moment. It taught her to focus on the good, not the bad. It is a strategy Charli has taken with her moving forward in her career.

"Even if it is the worst run ever, you just have to pick out the smallest thing that might be a positive. That's what helps me get through it and push through to the next great thing," Charli said.

The trip to Las Vegas has a deeper meaning for her due to the qualifying run at Waco being only the second run back for Hero after his time off from surgery. Charli will also compete in the all-in and the futurity this December.

"I have high hopes for my futurity horse. He is coming along nicely," Charli said.

As far as her goals for Las Vegas, her focus is on making clean runs and staying consistent.

"I would like to just have two clean runs. I don't want to go in there and try to win the first and second run. I just want to make clean runs. If I do, my horses are going to clock naturally. Hopefully from there I will make it back for the short go and see where it goes from there," Charli predicted.

As she prepares, her days are busy with school and many trips to Stephenville where she works with trainer Laura Schumann, also a 2023 Texas Hall of Fame inductee.

"I have known her for six months and she has taught me things I have never even thought about and no one has even mentioned to me. The tips she has given me make so much sense. I think she is going to be someone who is one of the last puzzle pieces of people to help get me where I want to be," Charli predicted.

Charli is aware of the blessings she has in the support around her, including her parents. She also is thankful for Dr. Hand at ESMS for always taking extra good care of her horses, and admits she would be nowhere without Dean and Jessie Domann, who she has had in her corner most of her life. She is grateful for their support.

The journey to Las Vegas and the ups and downs of rodeo life has been made more joyful with Bayler by her side. The pair have grown up together, and with no siblings, Charli said she had to get the person who was like a little sister to her on board to barrel race. She admires the way Bayler conducts herself, and also looks up to several professionals, including Gayle Jones, Mary Walker, and Hailey Kinsel.

"The way Hailey handles her-



Charli Snow and her horse, Hero, are ready to head to Las Vegas for the Junior World Finals. (Photo courtesy Pixle Works)

self and presents herself is the way to be," Charli said.

Charli heads to Tarleton State University after graduating Nocona High School, where she will major in business and with a goal of making the rodeo team.

"I am excited and hopefully I get to rodeo for Tarleton," Charli said. "It is where I have always wanted to go. It is Stephenville. Everything I need for rodeo is right there. I don't have to drive, and the greats are there, too."

As she prepares to advance her career, Charli's advice to the younger generation is to stay humble.

"Don't get too big for your

britches," Charli advised. "If you do, you'll turn around and that'll be biting you in the butt. You'll get humbled real quick. You have to work hard. Try to outwork everyone else, even if you do not think you are getting rewarded every time."

Something else Charli has been pushing herself to learn recently is how to break out of her shell, saying it is something her dad harps on her about.

"I like to stay quiet and stay reserved. Keep to myself," Charli admitted. "But seeing how athletes I look up to speak to others opened my eyes. This past weekend, we were at the Texan. I have always looked up to Wenda Johnson. I saw her but didn't speak to her at first, she spoke to me first. The way these pro athletes present themselves is what I need to keep in mind and work on. It inspires us young kids seeing these older athletes who we look up to have those accomplishments but they also can make time to go out of their way to have a conversation with us, compliment us, or say, 'Hey, that horse is nice,' or 'I like the way you did this.' It really gives us a lot of confidence and a big boost," Charli said.

And in the end, finding joy in what you do is the most important part of it all.

"When you go through obstacles it makes you appreciate everything so much more," Charli explained. "Like with my black horse, there is not a single run I don't come out teary eyed. I can hit a barrel, but I still have tears in my eyes from joy because during those two years of me not running that horse, I craved running him. I missed it. Whenever you want something for so long and you finally get whatever it is, it feels like a dream. But it is reality, so you have to accept it and really appreciate it. Thank God because you could turn around and it could all be gone."

**Continued on page 42** 







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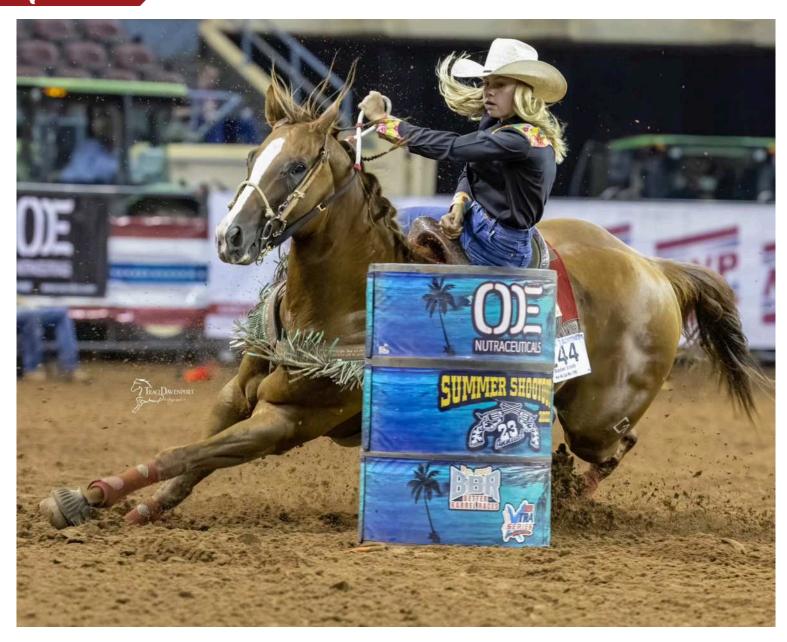
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Bayler Smith is a sixth-generation rancher. She has honed her skills riding on the ranch and working cattle, and quickly found a deep love for the sport of rodeo, particularly barrel racing.

#### **Continued from page 39**

Bayler is the daughter of Zac and Sommer Smith, and the youngest to one sister, Skyler. She has grown up in Nocona as a sixth-generation rancher.

Her family founded Dennis Cattle Company, one of the oldest family-owned ranches in Oklahoma.

It traces its roots back to 1889, when Oscar Seay, a prominent pioneer rancher, helped settle the land and established his family ranch in the southern Oklahoma town of Oscar.

Day-to-day operations of the ranch now belong to Bayler's grandmother, LaDonna Dennis Davis, and her sons, Tyler Phillps and Bayler's father. The ranch is diverse, raising prime cattle and exceptional horses, but also featuring aerial spraying of pastures and farmland as well as hunting adventures.

The ranch is where Bayler got her start in barrel racing eight years ago, along with the help of Charli. She has honed her skills riding on the ranch and working cattle. Bayler quickly found a deep love for the sport of rodeo and the life lessons it teaches.

"It is the highest of the highs and the lowest of the lows, but it is very rewarding," Bayler said.

This is the second year Smith has qualified for the Junior World Finals barrel racing. She earned her way to Vegas for 2023 by grabbing first place at the KK Run for Vegas in McAlester, Okla.

Smith also has the opportunity to compete in this year's Hooey Junior Patriot Rodeo in Fort Worth at the end of February, the host of America's richest combined equine events. Each year the event brings together the past, present and future of the most entertaining of competitive events.

It has not all been smooth sailing for the high school sophomore. She admits she had trouble finding a horse for a while, but finally found the right equine partner two years ago.

"We have struggled. We hit a lot of barrels, but we finally got it. We have been doing really well," Bayler said. "We earned a lot of points for our high school rodeo last year."

PROFILE

The main horse Bayler runs is Kiko by Eddie Stinson. Another horse she runs periodically is Georgie, a full cow bred.

"She's a lot of fun," Smith said.

Her pole horse also is a cow bred horse she trained with another local cowgirl, Cassidy Teague.

"Rodeo teaches you to be grateful for such a heavy animal," Bayler said. "You have to learn to trust them and be confident."

As Bayler and her horse have gone through the ups and downs that come with rodeo during the past few years, she has made it through it all by praying.

"A lot of praying," she said. "The toughest thing is when you continually hit barrels. Your horse loses confidence, so you have to gain all your confidence back and your horse's confidence, too."

As she heads to Las Vegas this month, Bayler's hope is simply for a clean run and not to hit a barrel. No matter the outcome, she has enjoyed going through the journey with Charli by her side.

"It is so much more exciting if you find a friend. It is very fun going through it together," Bayler said.

Charli is one of several rodeo athletes Bayler admires.

In addition, she looks up to Ashley Schafer, a Texas-based barrel horse trainer. She also respects Hailey Kinsel and Jackie Hobbs-Crawford. They are athletes who possess the quality Smith says is most important in a rodeo athlete, which is staying humble.

"You have to stay humble. You can't get too cocky, and you also have to be tough," Bayler explained. "And always thank God."

Bayler has a lot on her plate in addition to barrel racing. She plays basketball and runs cross country, with her team qualifying for the state meet for the second year in a row. Bayler was her team's top runner at the regional meet, helping push them into the top four to go on to state. In November, she found all three extracurriculars overlapping, waking up early for basketball practice before heading to cross country practice, then on to her rodeo responsibilities.

"It's a lot, but we get it done with my great parents," Smith said.

Her mother pondered the emotions parents of rodeo athletes face.

"It is not for the faint of heart for parents either," Sommer said. "There is a lot of heartbreak, but then God blesses you with something else and you see, 'Wow, you went through that to get to that.""



Bayler Smith competes with her main horse, Kiko. The pair is headed to Las Vegas for the Junior World Finals this month.



Bayler Smith also competes with her other horse, Georgie. (Photos courtesy Bayler Smith)

After her exciting high school rodeo, running, and basketball career wraps up, she hopes to further her rodeo experience at college. After finishing her degree, she plans to work on the ranch and train horses.

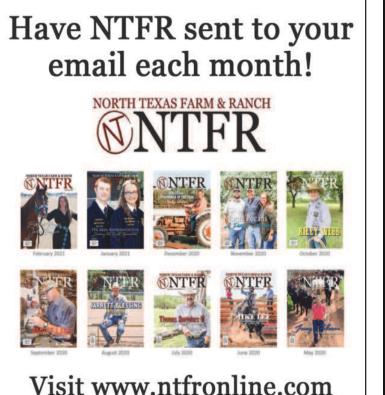
The rodeo athlete's advice for youngsters

just starting out can be wrapped up in just a few words: "Thank God and have fun." That's great advice for all.

To stay up to date with results from the Junior Finals, visit https://www.nfrexperience. com/juniorworldfinals.

#### By Jesse Kader

It's the month for red, but let's make it western. I love this combination of the plaid red button up layered under an adorable cowgirl, patch-knitted sweater. Show up to all the festivities in style this season. Hope you have a very ranchy Christmas and a happy moo year.



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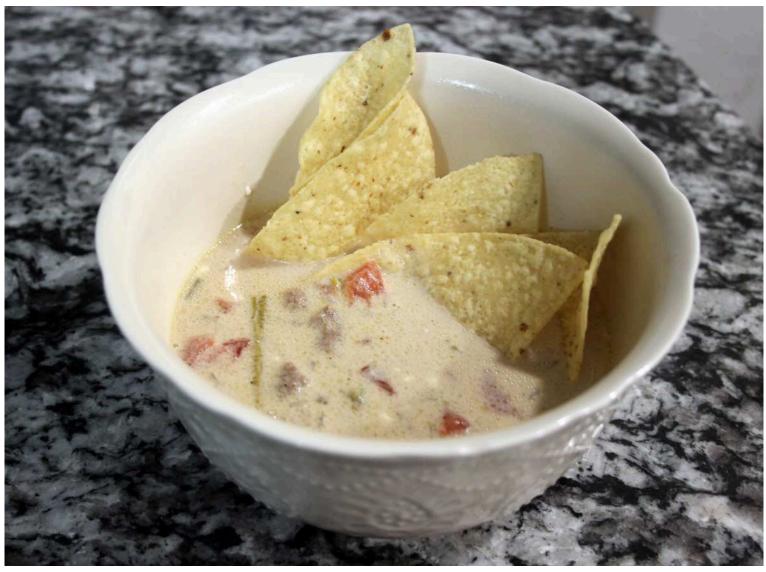
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 carton of beef broth
 green pepper
 small onion

Total Time: 1 Hour Serves: 6-10

#### **Directions:**

Brown hamburger meat, green pepper, and onion. Add remaining ingredients until cream cheese is melted. Serve with chips. 🕅

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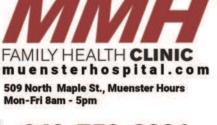
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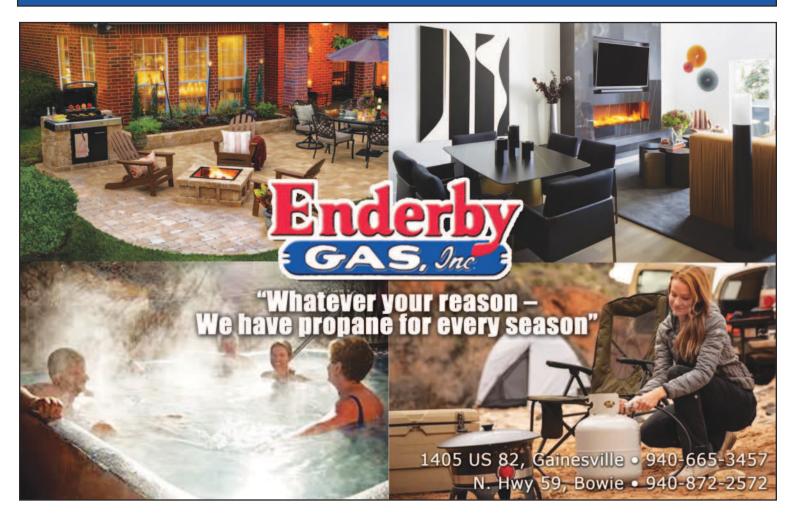


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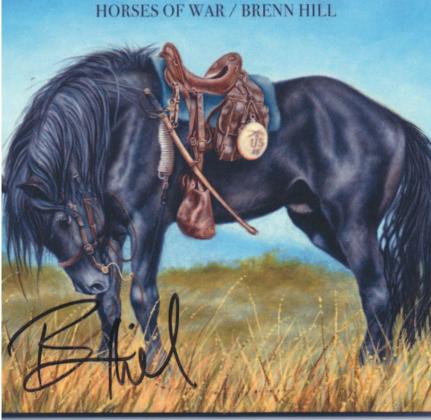
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## Howdy Texas Music Fans and Friends!





As many of you know, I am a big fan of cowboy music and musicians. Thanks to my many years on the road with the great Don Edwards and Red Steagall, I, like many find the true west is best defined by those who sing its praises.

My friend and fellow musician Brenn Hill is making his mark in the cowboy world by writing and singing real songs that describe the west and the cowboy way of life exquisitely. His latest CD "Horses Of War" is a prime example of what separates this Utah cowboy from the herd. After listening, it's easy to understand why the late Don Edwards described Brenn as a "Role model for the next generation of cowboy singer/songwriters." Enough said.

Get your hands on Brenn's latest CD by visiting www.brennhill.com. You'll be glad you did. Happy Trails.

Listen to Dave Alexander's Radio Show, Big Texas Country and Western Swing Show. davealexander.com. November dates: 11/3: Firelight Winery, Valley View 11/4: Memorial Auditorium, Wichita Falls 11/11: Firelight Winery, Valley View

## Simple and Effective Ways to Reduce Reliance on Public Utilities

ur reliance

In today's world, our reliance on public utilities such as electricity, water, and natural gas is undeniable.

LIFESTYLE

However, there is a growing movement towards greater selfsufficiency and sustainability. Many people are exploring ways to reduce their dependence on these public services, both to save money and to contribute to a more sustainable future. In this article, we'll discuss some simple yet effective ways to reduce reliance on public utilities.

## 1. Generate your own electricity.

Generating your own electricity is one of the most significant steps towards reducing reliance on public utilities. Here are some options to consider:

Solar Panels: Installing solar panels on your roof or property can harness the power of the sun to generate electricity. Solar energy systems can provide a significant portion of your electricity needs and often come with government incentives and tax benefits.

Wind Turbines: If you have a suitable location, small wind turbines can generate electricity from wind power. Wind energy can be an excellent complement to solar panels, especially in windy areas.

Backup Generators: While not a primary source of electricity, backup generators, such as those powered by propane or natural gas, can provide power during outages and reduce your reliance on the grid.

## 2. Use energy-efficient appliances.

Upgrading to energy-efficient appliances can significantly reduce your electricity consumption. Look for Energy Star-rated appliBy Savannah Magoteaux



There is a growing movement towards greater self-sufficiency and sustainability. (Courtesy photo)

ances, LED lighting, and smart thermostats that help you manage and reduce energy use.

## 3. Invest in insulation and weatherization.

Proper insulation and weatherization of your home can help maintain a comfortable temperature year-round, reducing the need for heating and cooling. Seal gaps and cracks in your home's structure, add insulation in attics and walls, and consider energyefficient windows and doors.

#### 4. Collect rainwater.

Installing a rainwater harvesting system allows you to collect and store rainwater for non-potable uses, such as watering your garden or flushing toilets. This reduces your reliance on municipal water supplies, especially during droughts.

## 5. Compost and reduce food waste.

Reducing food waste not only saves money but also reduces the energy and resources needed to produce and transport food.

Composting kitchen scraps and yard waste can help enrich your soil, reducing the need for chemical fertilizers while at the same time increasing your harvest.

#### 6. Install low-flow fixtures.

Low-flow showerheads, faucets, and toilets can significantly reduce water usage without sacrificing functionality. These fixtures reduce water bills and ease the demand on public water supplies.7. Practice off-peak energy use.

Many utility companies offer off-peak rates, where electricity is cheaper during specific hours. Shift energy-intensive tasks like laundry and dishwashing to these off-peak hours to save money.

## 8. Reduce water heater temperatures.

Lowering the temperature of your water heater can reduce energy consumption. Most households don't need scalding hot water, and a moderate temperature is often sufficient for daily use.

### 9. Switch to propane or natural gas.

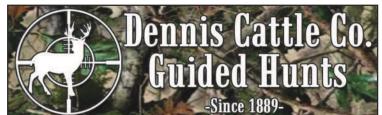
In some cases, switching to **Continued on page 53** 

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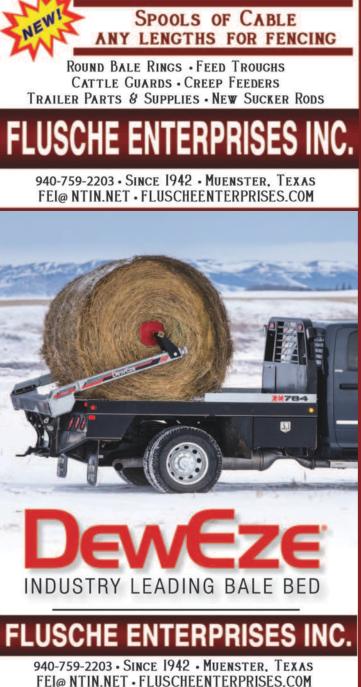
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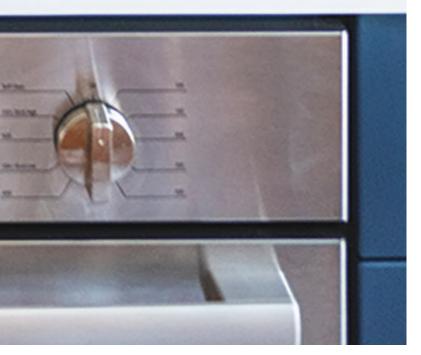


AUTHORIZED DEALER



Consider switching to energy-efficient appliances. (Courtesy photo)







#### **Continued from page 50**

propane or natural gas appliances can be more energy-efficient and cost-effective than electric alternatives. For example, propanepowered stoves and water heaters can provide efficient heating.

### 10. Install energy-efficient windows and doors.

When considering renovations, invest in energy-efficient windows and doors. These can better insulate your home, reducing the need for heating and cooling.

## 11. Create an energy-efficient landscape.

Planting trees and shrubs strategically around your home can provide shade in the summer and windbreaks in the winter, reducing the need for heating and cooling. **12. Learn basic home repairs.** 

Knowing how to perform basic home repairs can help you maintain your home's systems more efficiently. Simple tasks like fixing leaky faucets, insulating pipes, and sealing drafts can make a significant difference.

### 13. Consider alternative transportation.

Reducing your reliance on public utilities extends to your transportation choices. Consider walking, biking, carpooling, or using public transportation to reduce fuel consumption and emissions.

#### 14. Invest in energy storage.

Battery technology has advanced, making it possible to store excess electricity generated by solar panels or wind turbines. These batteries can provide power during outages or during peak demand times when electricity prices are high.

#### 15. Educate yourself.

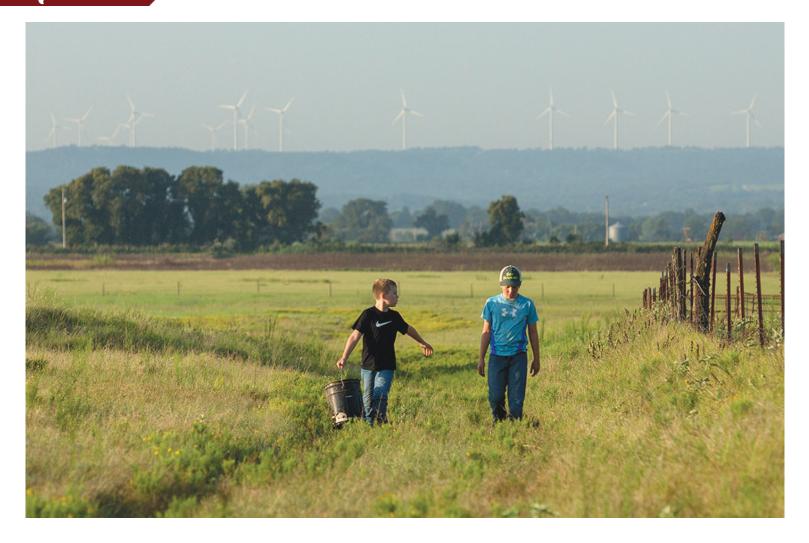
Staying informed about energy-efficient practices and technologies is essential. Consider taking courses, attending workshops, or reading books and articles on sustainability and self-sufficiency.

Reducing reliance on public utilities is a journey that involves a combination of lifestyle changes, home improvements, and technology adoption.

While it may not be feasible or practical for everyone to completely disconnect from public services, even small steps can lead to significant reductions in utility bills and environmental impact.

Whether you choose to generate your own electricity, conserve water, or practice energy-efficient habits, every effort contributes to a more self-reliant future.

Ultimately, these changes not only benefit your wallet but also help preserve our planet for future generations.



## Noble Research Institute: Values That Keep Farm Kids Safe

From the time I was six or eight, I was helping my dad out on our family's farm. We raised cattle and grew peanuts and wheat. My earliest jobs were helping my dad feed small square bales, hoeing peanuts and many other basic tasks related to operating a farm. Over time, I became more involved in every aspect of the operation.

Now, I raise a few cows on a small place in Leon, Okla., in addition to supervising equipment maintenance and repair at the Noble Research Institute.

Safety was something my dad hammered into me from an early age. I remember him pointing out different things on the farm, like a rotating PTO shaft on the tractor, and saying, "That'll kill you, son."

#### By Rodney Pierce

It's a blunt statement, but there's a lot on the farm – from equipment to animals – that could hurt an adult or child. Safety was part of our everyday life conversations; it was a mindset my dad learned from his dad.

Now that I have children who help me on the farm, I am constantly thinking about keeping them safe and passing that safety mindset on to them.

I want to share with you some of the farm safety values passed down in my family.

#### 1. Respect livestock.

Animals' size and weight can make them dangerous. It's important to give animals their space and to be extra cautious with males and mothers with offspring. Dad also taught me the importance of, "Always having a way out," in case an animal gets aggressive. That's something I'll teach my children as they get older and start working more closely with the cattle.

#### 2. Respect equipment.

Know what equipment is designed to do, and don't push it beyond those boundaries. This goes for both adults and children. As a grownup, it's neat to put your child in the tractor with you. But if you don't have a buddy seat, you shouldn't have a passenger. Another piece of equipment commonly misused is a side-by-side utility ATV. I teach my children that these vehicles are pieces of equipment designed to help us work. They aren't toys.

**3.** There's a lot of equipment you don't need to be close to if you're not using it. I tell my kids they should stay at least 60 feet



away from me if I'm using the lawnmower or weed-eater. They know not to come up to me from behind. If they need to get my attention, they can get my attention from a distance.

#### 4. If you don't know what something is, don't mess with it.

This knocks out a lot of hazards. My dad always told me, "If I haven't told you about it, it's not your business." I keep power tools and chemicals out of reach, when possible, but I also teach my children they shouldn't touch things if they don't know what they are or if they were told not to touch them. My dad's refrigerator to this day has a shelf in it for cattle vaccines. He made sure we knew from a young age what that shelf was for and not to touch it.

#### 5. If you can't see my eyes, I can't see you.

I watch for my kids constantly, but kids can come out from nowhere. If you're in a tractor, it would be very easy to not see or hear them come to the field. That's why I tell my kids to be sure I know if they're in the field and that I see them. If they can't see my eyes, then I can't see them either.



In 2017, Axel, 11, (light blue shirt), and Josh, nine, help their dad, Rodney Pierce, around the family farm while learning the same safety mindset Rodney learned from his father. (Photos courtesy Noble Research Institute)

LIFESTYLE



If an individual has real estate in multiple states, a trust might be a necessity.

## Should I Have a Trust?

After more than 20 years as an estate planning and administration attorney, probably the most asked question from a client is whether they need a trust or not.

As an attorney, this often seems like a loaded question because many people believe an

#### By Dal Houston

attorney will always tell them they need a trust, simply because the costs of creating a trust usually exceed the costs of preparing a will. With that said, while there are countless factors that play into the decision-making process, below are some factors which I would

strongly consider important in such a decision. The first factor I consider important in the necessity of a trust is if the client has real estate in multiple states. The reason is one of the primary purposes of probate is to change the title of real estate from a deceased person

to a living person. If a client has real estate in multiple states, then there will be multiple probates; one for each state in which the client owns property. I have often seen a client have their primary operations in one state, have some type of limited real estate holdings

LIFESTYLE **¬** 

in one or more other states and then have limited real estate they or their spouse inherited in yet another state. In such cases, there will usually need to be a probate for each state in which the client owns real estate.

The second factor I consider important is if there is some type of potential conflict between the intended beneficiaries. While a trust will not necessarily alleviate all the types of in-fighting between beneficiaries, a properly drafted trust will give the estate some degree of leverage to administer the estate that it would not otherwise have in a probate proceeding.

The third factor I consider important is if the client's operation is fluid, meaning there are always lots of major decisions to be made. If this is the case, a trust will normally allow for an immediate and ordered means of administering the estate to continue the on-going business of the client.

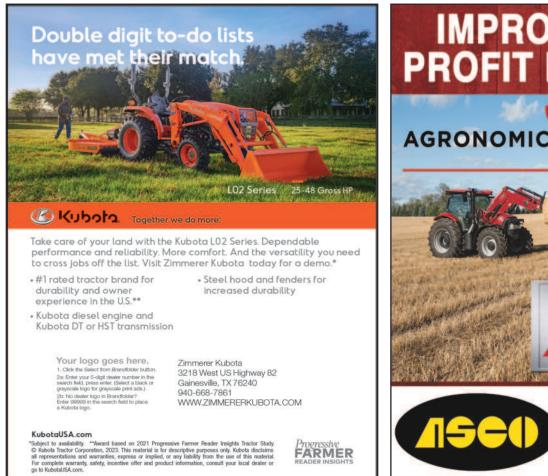


A trust can help protect assets and make them viable for generations to come. (Photos courtesy Metro Creative)

Lastly, the other factor I consider is if one or more of the beneficiaries has some type of liability. For example, perhaps the client has a child that is experiencing marital problems or creditor problems. The trust can take these issues into account and include provisions to protect the beneficiary from a loss. Please note, these provisions can be included in a will and ultimately addressed by the probate court; however, they are usually much easier to resolve in a trust.

In conclusion, I want to again make clear there can be numerous other reasons that a trust may make sense that I have not addressed, but these are some of the objective factors that usually dictate a client should consider a trust.

This article is not intended to be legal advice and is only designed and given as an explanation and provides consideration for estate planning purposes. As with any legal matter, you should also seek counsel.









The tiny seeds are of low value to birds, but deer will eat the leaves and flowers. The flowers of Texas sleepydaisy are visited by pollinators.

Texas sleepydaisy can grow in a variety of sites but prefers good drainage and full sun (Photos courtesy Tony Dean)

## Texas Sleepydaisy

By Tony Dean, tonydean.tx1@gmail.com

There are about 19 different varieties of flowering plants in this family, but our local variety, Texas Sleepydaisy, is the most common. It is native to North America, is considered a hardy annual, and grows from 12 to 20 inches tall.

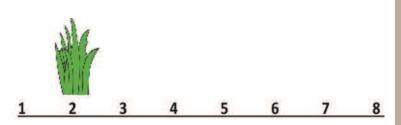
The attractive bright yellow flowers appear in summer and fall. They are up to 1.5 inches in diameter and usually have from 18 to 22 ray flowers. The flowers open during late morning and close during night.

Texas sleepydaisy has a beautiful flower but is of limited value for grazing or wildlife. The tiny seeds, about 1/10th of an inch diameter, are of low value to birds, but deer will eat the leaves and flowers. Pollinators frequent the flowers.

While Sleepydaisy has very low value for livestock, it is gaining popularity for use in flower gardens.

It requires full sun, good drainage, and needs a pH of about 6.5. If seeding outside, apply seed on fresh seedbed after last frost and space from four to 20 inches.

Plants in this family are not considered invasive. They are normally not highly fragrant. Water if necessary but do not water excessively.



## Texas sleepydaisy is an interesting plant but n value for livestock grazing.





By Norman Winter I Horticulturist, Author, Speaker

## Poinsettia Parnterships Will Make Your Holidays Beautiful

National Poinsettia Day is fast approaching, Dec. 12 to be exact. While I am sure the powers at be wanted a celebratory type of day, from what I have been seeing this year is this may be a deadline day. Have your poinsettias by Dec. 12 or you may not get any.

This most likely applies to poinsettia partners as well. If you are asking what a poinsettia partner is then put on your thinking cap and gather around.

Proven Winners got most of us to thinking partners when they introduced the concept of combining poinsettias with Diamond Frost euphorbias.

This is one of the best ideas ever and we now actually have three choices, Diamond Frost, Diamond Snow with double flowers and Diamond Mountain that is the taller of the three.

To a horticulturist like myself this combination is so special because both the Poinsettia and the Diamond Frost are Euphorbias. That is right, they are cousins.

Just like Christmas, families visiting and long-lost cousins getting together.

Of course, the main reason we like this idea is the red, pink, or variegated poinsettia looks incredible, it is as though it is sitting on a bed of snow or frost. I have found these to be more available at fine florists.

If you are going to create your own and go plant shopping then



Dec. 12, 2022, is National Poinsettia Day and to get the maximum enjoyment consider creating a mixed planter with the poinsettia's cousin, Diamond Frost euphorbia.

keep in mind some other options you might want to try. For instance, a couple of years ago Jenny Simpson of Creekside Nursery in Dallas, N.C. introduced us to not only using caladiums at Christmas but even in combinations with poinsettias.

She used the Heart to Heart White Snowdrift caladiums which turned out to be a perfect partner with red poinsettias.

My time as Executive Director at the Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens in Savannah, Ga., taught me there are opportunities for outside use with poinsettias, particularly if you are astute at long range weather forecasting.

First, consider Savannah is technically zone 8B with a proclivity to lean into zone 9. We used poinsettias in large planters surrounded by Silver Bullet Dusty Miller or artemisia.

A similar application gave me the opportunity of photographing pink poinsettias mass planted in an atrium-like setting and surrounded by gray leaved Icicles helichrysum.

The most obvious and perhaps easiest if you are getting a late start is to combine your poinsettias with another Christmas plant like cyclamen. White cyclamen around a red poinsettia can be simply breathtaking.

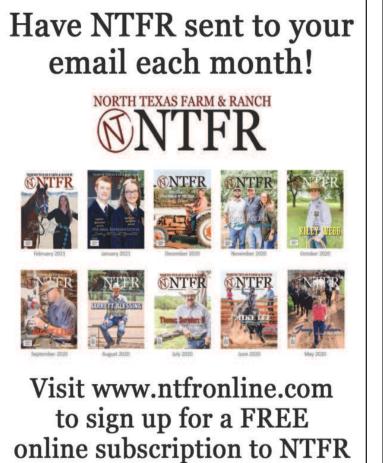
This year, I have also been watching what I call the professional garden club ladies walking out of both florists and floral departments with holly berries. We all think of hollies on swags above the fireplace or front door, but two or three preserved branches loaded with red berries stuck in a pot of white poinsettias is quick, easy and unbeatable.

Red berries for Christmas, landscape beauty and of course feeding the birds is a prime reason to grow winterberry hollies like the compact Berry Poppins. Consider also growing Berry Heavy Gold winterberry holly.

Cutting branches of the gold berries to be used with red poinsettias makes a stunning partnership. Go to Proven Winners site, Winterberry Holly: The Ultimate Guide to Getting Colorful Berries. If you do not have poinsettias yet, make today your shopping day. Follow me on Facebook @ NormanWinterTheGardenGuy for more photos and garden inspiration.



Cyclamen, another favorite Christmas plant, looks breathtaking when clustered around a poinsettia.(Photos courtesy Norman Winter)





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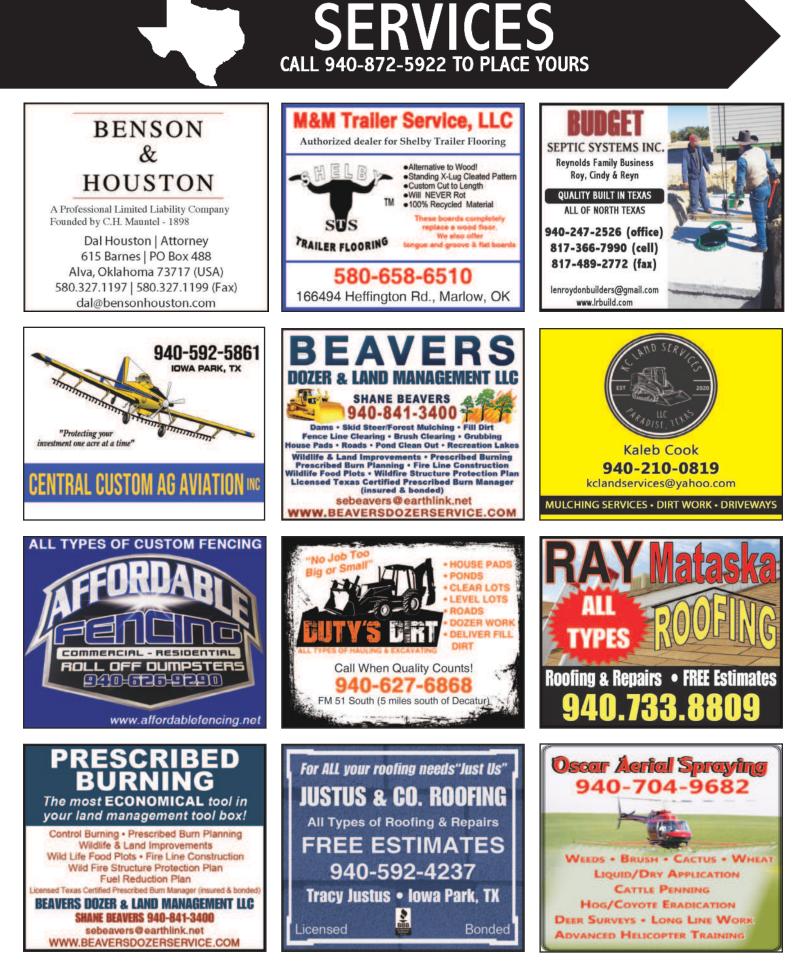


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