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Stuart of the Land

Terry Stuart Forst

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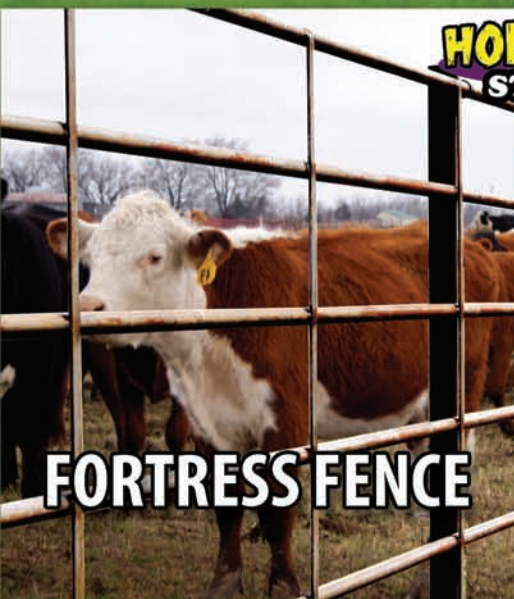


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STAFF & CONTRIBUTORS

PUBLISHER

J. M. Winter

EDITOR

Laci Jones | editor@okfronline.com

MANAGING EDITOR

Jessica Crabtree | editor@ntfronline.com

ART DIRECTOR

Kayla Jean Woods | kayla@post oakmedia.net

ADVERTISING EXECUTIVES

Susan Stewart | susan@post oakmedia.net

Kathy Miller | kathy@post oakmedia.net

Jelly Cocanougher | jelly@post oakmedia.net

Lana Hamblin | lana@post oakmedia.net

Rosemary Stephens | rosemary@post oakmedia.net

BUSINESS MANAGER

Brenda Bingham | accounting@post oakmedia.net

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Marnie Brown | subscriptions@post oakmedia.net

COPY EDITOR

Judy Wade

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Everett Brazil, III

Ralph Chain

Josh Gaskamp

Russell Graves

Ddee Haynes

Jessica Kader

Dr. Lauren Lamb

Krista Lucas

Lanna Mills

Lacey Newlin

Rhonda Shephard

Jan Sikes

Judy Wade

Beth Watkins

Barry Whitworth

CONTACT US

OKLAHOMA FARM & RANCH

OKFR

200 Walnut St., Bowie, TX 76230

940-872-2076,

www.okfronline.com

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Thoughts and Prayers...

Hello OKFR readers, and welcome to the May issue of the Oklahoma Farm & Ranch magazine. In early March, wildfires engulfed hundreds of thousands of acres across Beaver, Ellis, Harper and Woodward Counties, impacting many Oklahoma farmers and ranchers. On behalf of OKFR, our thoughts and prayers are with those affected by the recent wildfires.

This OKFR issue is full of great content. We are pleased to announce the addition of two new contributing writers—Beth Watkins and Everett Brazil, III. First, read about how sugarcane aphid (SCA), an insect that has damaged sorghum crops across the state in the Farm & Ranch section.

Next, read about Phil Haugen in the Equine section. A native of North Dakota, Haugen is a horse trainer who has competed in more than 1,000 rodeos and trained more than 2,000 horses. Today, he and his family reside in Weatherford, Okla., and has developed a unique training style. Learn more about Haugen in “Training through Understanding.”

Beth Watkins is the new OKFR humor columnist. Hailing from Indianola, Okla., she and her husband G.W. live on 120 acres and have a small herd of cattle. While she was not raised in the country, she said she has been baptized in it. Her first article in the “Where the Paved Road Ends” column celebrates motherhood.

This month, I traveled to the oldest ranch in the state of Oklahoma to meet with Stuart Ranch manager, Terry Stuart Forst. Stuart Ranch began when Robert Clay Freeny settled 14 miles west of Atoka, Okla., in Boggy Depot in 1868. Nearly 150 years later, Stuart Ranch has continued to evolve. Forst is a fifth-generation rancher who has spent more than 40 years in the industry. Read about Forst and Stuart Ranch in “Stuart of the Land.”

The Gene Autry Oklahoma Museum is hosting a three-day festival featuring music, movies, poetry and celebrity appearances. The Cowboy Way Fest on May 5-7 will celebrate the cowboy code. Learn more in “The Cowboy Way Fest” in the Attractions section.

Finally, we recommend visiting a state park to celebrate 80 years of Oklahoma State Parks. Located in northeast Oklahoma near Muskogee, Sequoyah State Park showcases its Native American heritage through tours and other programs. Learn more in the Outdoors section.

If you have an event, photo or topic idea that you would like to see in Oklahoma Farm & Ranch, email editor@okfronline.com. Keep up with new OKFR updates on our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages. For more information or subscription information, visit our website www.OKFRonline.com.

Until next month,



ON THE COVER

Fifth-generation rancher, Terry Stuart Forst has more than 40 years of experience in the industry. As ranch manager of the oldest ranch in Oklahoma, Forst has tried to prepare the next generation, Robert and Clay, to take over the operation. The ranch manager of Stuart Ranch has made it her mission to advance the ranch operation. Today, she resides on the ranch east of Waurika, Okla. (Photo by Laci Jones)

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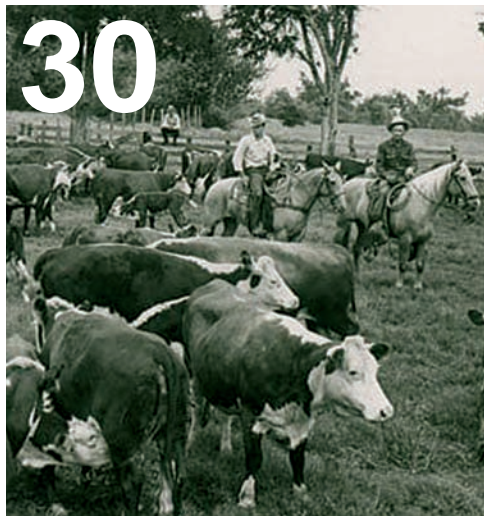
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Terry Stuart Forst

Terry Forst's great-great grandfather started the ranch 150 years ago.

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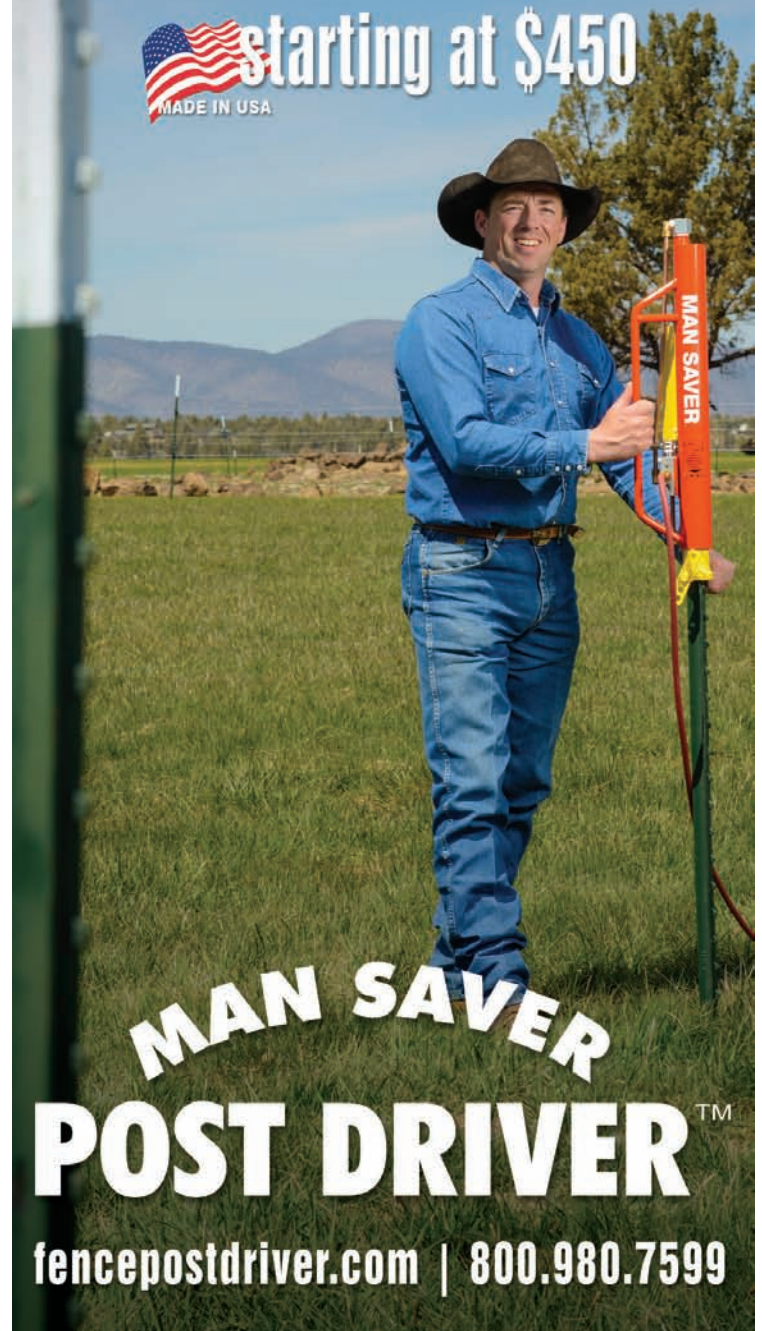
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Oklahoma Farm & Ranch
Published by Hootsuite [?] · Yesterday at 3:00pm ·

Many backyard producers may not be aware of a disease that might threaten their chickens. Marek's disease was the most common disease diagnosed in chickens in 2015-2016.

<http://ow.ly/tdGm30aMdPi>



Like Comment Share

Shiloh Shores

Oklahoma Farm & Ranch
Published by Hootsuite [?] · April 10 at 3:00pm ·

Can you guess what #Oklahoma restaurant we visited? Hint: the restaurant is known for their great steaks and pies!

<http://ow.ly/GUSn30aJKqx>



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Hank Cadillac Newlin and Shiloh Shores

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Jan Sikes @rjanjks
@JRichardsBand is featured in @OKFRMagazine this month! okfronline.com/2017/04/jamie-...

INSTAGRAM POSTS

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okfr_magazine A large mountain lion observed killing livestock near a family home in western Cimarron County was killed by an Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food & Forestry Wildlife Services officer.

<http://ow.ly/clfs30aAEdm>

APRIL 5

OKFR welcomes letters to the editor for its Socializing page, but some rules apply. They include:

1. 125-word limit.
2. Deadline for submission is the first Wednesday of the month.
3. Only one letter per writer per issue.
4. All letters must include a name, address and phone number. Only the name and city of residence will be published.
5. All letters will be verified by the news staff by a phone call prior to publication. If the news staff is unable to contact the writer of a letter, the letter will be held until such times as contact is made.
6. Letters containing libelous statements or those intended as advertising will not be published.
7. Letters that target previous letter writers will be edited to remove the name of such letter writers who are non-candidates or non-public figures. Letters critical of previously published guest columns may identify the writer only once, and then only to make it clear which column they are writing about.
8. OKFR reserves the right to edit or reject any letters.
9. Letters must be mailed to OKFR Letter to the Editor, P.O. Box 831, Bowie, TX 76230 or emailed to editor@okfronline.com.

AVIAN INFLUENZA

By Barry Whitworth, DVM

On March 5, 2017, the United States Department of Agriculture Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS) announced that a commercial chicken breeder flock in Lincoln County, Tennessee, was infected with Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). This flock was located in the Mississippi fly zone.

Based on genetic testing, the virus was the North American wild bird lineage H7N9. On March 16, a second flock located three kilometers (1.86 miles) away was also infected with the virus. All flocks were depopulated. A handful of states have found Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI) in commercial and backyard flocks.

All these flocks were depopulated. When HPAI is detected in a flock, the United States is required to notify the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and other trading partners. Hopefully, the impact on export of poultry products will be minimal. An investigation is underway to determine the source of the infection.

Avian influenza is a viral disease that primarily causes problems in domestic poultry. It is extremely rare that humans ever get Avian Influenza. The disease, originally known as “the fowl plague,” was first seen in Italy around 1878. The U.S. outbreak that began in the winter of 2014 and ended in the summer 2015 resulted in 50 million birds destroyed.

This outbreak was estimated to cost \$1.6 billion in direct losses of turkeys and egg laying hens. However, when accounting for all factors associated with the poultry



Avian influenza is a viral disease that primarily causes problems in domestic poultry. (Photo by Laci Jones)

industry, the estimated impact on the U.S. economy was \$3.3 billion. This was the most costly animal disease outbreak in the history of the United States. One major lesson learned was biosecurity must be improved. This lesson should not be taken lightly for backyard poultry enthusiasts.

Avian influenza (AI) resides in migratory waterfowl. Ducks, geese, and other wild birds harbor the virus in the intestinal tract without having any clinical signs of the disease. If the virus is introduced into domestic poultry, such as what happened in Tennessee, large numbers of birds may become ill or die.

Clinical signs of the disease vary depending on the severity of the virus and the organ system affected. The virus is classified as

either LPAI or HPAI. LPAI usually results in no clinical signs or only mild problems. HPAI has many 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 decreased 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 include tremors, incoordination, and unusual positions of the head. Diarrhea has been reported on occasions.

For the backyard poultry enthu-

siast, practicing biosecurity is the best and cheapest way to prevent the introduction of avian influenza virus and any other poultry disease into the flock.

Basic biosecurity includes sanitation, isolation, and basic knowledge of clinical signs of the disease. Sanitation involves keeping pens, cages, feed bowls, and water bowls clean. Dead birds should be disposed of properly by rendering, burying, burning or composting.

A person should never enter an area where poultry are housed unless they are wearing clean clothes and shoes. Avoid borrowing or loaning tools, equipment or cages with other poultry producers. Keep poultry isolated from visitors.

See **INFLUENZA** page 11

INFLUENZA

When returning home from a show or sale, producer should quarantine birds for 30 days and clean all transporting cages and vehicles with a disinfectant. Protect domestic poultry from being exposed to wild birds and their droppings by keeping poultry pens covered, by keeping them away from ponds and by keeping them away from wild bird feeders.

New birds should be quarantined for 30 days before being introduced into an existing flock. Once together, closely observe the flock for any unusual signs that may be early clues to the start of an infection.

For producers who would like more information on poultry biosecurity, the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service has a fact sheet ANSI-8301 Small Flock Bi-

osecurity for Prevention of Avian Influenza. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has a web site explaining biosecurity in greater detail at www.healthy-birds.aphis.usda.gov.

Hopefully, backyard poultry producers will not have to deal with avian influenza. However, if ever in question about a sudden death or if a large number of birds become sick, you should contact your local veterinarian, extension educator, state veterinarian, or the USDA at 1-866-536-7593. The USDA's number is available 24 hours a day.

References

Final Report for the 2014-2015 Outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in the United States, Revised August 11, 2016, USDA Animal Plant Health



Practicing biosecurity is the best and cheapest way to prevent the introduction of avian influenza virus. (Photo by Laci Jones)

Inspection Service, Veterinary Service, National Preparedness and Incident Coordination Swayne, D.E. and Halvorson, D.A. 2003 *Influenza*. In Y. M. Saif (ed.). *Diseases of Poultry, 11th ed.* Iowa State Press: Ames, Iowa, 135-160. ☒

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RANCHING IN *Spring*

By Ralph Chain



The Chain Ranch Red Angus Sale was held on March 25. (Courtesy of Chain Ranch)

We cannot believe how busy we have been this spring. It seems like there is no rest what-so-ever if you are farming and ranching. We were lucky to finally get through calving our first-calf heifers, with a 90 plus percent live calf rate, which is not too bad for first-calf heifers. We were also lucky to have good weather in Oklahoma and Kansas when our commercial cows calved.

There are two things I dread in the spring, tornadoes and prairie fires. We are so thankful that the terrible fires that were out west of us missed our Medicine Lodge Ranch by one mile. Everything that you spent your lifetime accumulating can be destroyed in

about five minutes in a tornado or fire. It goes to show you how uncertain life is.

We have experienced some prairie fires on our ranches. Several years back we lost 26 miles of fence in one fire. In another fire in Kansas, it burnt up all our fence. All we did that winter was build fence. Fortunately we didn't lose any cattle.

When this article was written in early April, we were taking yearling cattle off wheat pasture the last two or three weeks. We try to get them off the wheat by the March 15. That takes us almost a month to do this.

The heavy cattle (750 pounds to 850 pounds) go to the Cattleman's Choice Feedyard in Gage,

Okla. Our lighter cattle are sent to our Kansas Flint Hills Ranch at Augusta, Kan.

They spend about 100 days there to put on another 200 pounds, making them weigh around 800 pounds or more, and then they go to the feedyard.

Then we go through our heifers, selecting around 500 head off the top end for replacement heifers. The balance goes to the feedyard if they are heavy or to grass if they are light. We were really fortunate, with the Lord's help, our cattle did really well on wheat pasture this year.

We work all day long, go to bed at night, figuring on a good night's rest, the Sheriff's office or the Highway Patrol call at 3

a.m. saying we have cattle out on Highway 270, one of the busiest highways in Oklahoma. We get on the phone, call all the help, and go to get the cattle off the highway.

We drive up and down the highway and the only cattle we find is a 400-pound calf. It may be the neighbor's cattle and it may be our ranch's, but you have to go look.

So we get out on this busy highway and try to slow traffic down, but instead, they speed up, thinking we are trying to hijack them or something.

One year we had our neighbor's horses get out. We called him and he come flying down Highway 270, and he hit and killed
See SPRING page 13

Spring

two of his own horses.

We had our Red Angus Sale on March 25. You cannot believe how much responsibility that is putting cattle information in catalogs and sorting them. We thank the Lord because we had a really good sale.

Besides that, we have been fertilizing all of our canola and wheat, and all the cattle we send to Cattleman's Choice Feedyard have to be tagged. We also have this year's calf crop to work on our various ranches, which will take another 30 days.

So you can see, there is no rest for the wicked or for the farmer and rancher. But the Lord helps us every day. Every morning at our office we have prayer and Bible reading; that's the only way to get through. ☞



Spring is a busy time for Chain Ranch. (Courtesy of Chain Ranch)

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SUGARCANE APHID

By Everett Brazil, III

The sugarcane aphid (SCA) has damaged grain sorghum crops across Oklahoma and Texas for the past few years, and in the process, many producers have seen severe crop damage and yield loss. But researchers at many universities, including Oklahoma State University have identified grain sorghum varieties that exhibit tolerance to the pest, which can help producers keep some yield as they try to control the SCA.

The SCA first appeared in Oklahoma in 2014, and quickly began damaging fields across the state.

“2014 was when we saw them in Oklahoma for the first time,” said Gary Strickland, OSU Cooperative Extension Agent for Jackson County, Altus. Strickland previously served as the OSU grain sorghum extension researcher, and continues to study the crop today. “2016 turned out to be better than expected.”

The SCA is a tiny insect that feeds off the nutrients of grain sorghum plants. Infestations can spread quickly.

“They have piercing, sucking mouthparts. They are eating on the juices of the plant, the sap in the plant,” Strickland said. “They then excrete ‘honeydo,’ and if you look at their colonies, you might have one or two, and the next day, you might have 50 or 60.”

Researchers have been looking for ways to control the insect, and found out that some grain sorghum varieties exhibit a natural tolerance to the SCA, which helps protect the plant by reducing the SCA’s ability to feed off it. How-

ever, there may still be a limited infestation in the field.

“The plant itself basically is tolerant, by the insect not piercing and sucking,” said Heath Sanders, OSU Southwest Area Agronomist, Duncan. “[The SCA] doesn’t necessarily like that variety. Even if you do have a tolerant variety, you might still have to spray. It’s not a cure-all.”

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program has identified 32 varieties tolerant to the SCA. The list can be located at www.sorghumcheckoff.com/newsroom/2016/03/28/sugarcane-aphid/.

OSU researchers have studied many of these varieties at research stations across the state, including Apache, Goodwell, Homestead, Keyes, Tipton and Tonkawa. Through that research, about 20 varieties have been identified as viable in Oklahoma’s climate. The list can be found in the OSU fact sheet, CR 21-62, “Grain Sorghum Performance Trials in Oklahoma, 2016.”

One of these varieties is Dekalb 3707, which has proven to be one of the most tolerant varieties available.

“[Dekalb] 3707 is kind of the standard. That is where they found the tolerance, and everything refers back to them,” Strickland said.

Strickland participated in the research, and identified several other viable tolerant varieties, especially for western Oklahoma. Those include Dekalb 4807, and Pioneer 86P20 and 83P17.

Planting dates also help, as earlier maturity helps lower SCA infestations as they have less of a



Planting early can help lower sugarcane aphid in grain sorghum (Courtesy photo)

chance to affect the crop.

“Planting dates are crucial for SCA management, so the earlier that you can get the crop planted, and have the emergence earlier in the year, you get the crop to maturity,” Sanders said. “They gradually come in later in the summer.”

Much grain sorghum research is looking at breeding the tolerant trait into the crop for more tolerant varieties.

“The breeders are now selecting for these varieties. Every

variety they research now, they are making sure it does have tolerance,” Sanders said.

It is unclear how much SCA pressure will be present. Researchers are now encouraging producers to plant tolerant varieties to protect against an infestation.

“Economically, the least sprays you have, the better,” said Jerry Goodson, Extension Assistant, Southwest Research and Extension Center, Altus. “Your bottom line is better if you have some help.”

Foal Diarrhea

What is the Cause?

By Lauren Lamb, DVM



This foal infected with Rotavirus is on an IV fluids. Foals with infectious diarrhea are usually depressed, not eating and spend most of the day lying down. (Courtesy of Lauren Lamb)

Your broodmare is due to foal any day. You have spent countless hours searching the internet for information regarding newborn foals (medical care, handling, etc.).

Finally, the foal arrives and the foaling process goes as planned.

You make sure the foal gets his colostrum within the first 12 hours of birth because that is what the internet says to do, and you dip his umbilical cord in betadine. The next morning you come out to check on the fragile precious package and all seems fine. Then it

happens, an owner's worst nightmare. At 36 hours of age, your foal has diarrhea, seems depressed and is not nursing.

The next thoughts going through your head will most likely include the following:

Do I call my veterinarian?

Is this life threatening?

Did I do something wrong?

What can possibly cause my precious foal to have diarrhea at this age?

Is this foal heat diarrhea?

The list of questions can go on

See FOAL page 17

Foal

and on when your foal has diarrhea. In this article we will discuss the main causes for foal diarrhea, clinical signs of infectious diarrhea, help differentiate between infectious and foal heat diarrhea and list some of the treatment and preventative measures for foal diarrhea.

Foal diarrhea can be broken down into infectious and non-infectious diarrhea. Non-Infectious diarrhea is caused by changes in the gastrointestinal tract's normal flora. Flora is another name for the good bacteria living inside the intestine. Foal heat diarrhea is the most common cause of non-infectious diarrhea.

Foal heat diarrhea is seen in foals between the ages of five to 14 days. The thought that foal heat diarrhea is secondary to changes in the mare's milk is an old wives' tale.

The true cause of foal heat diarrhea stems from the foal exploring its surrounding environment. Similar to a human baby, foals will put anything and everything in their mouth as they begin to explore the world around them. During this time, they will also practice coprophagy (eating feces), which may sound nasty, but it is how the foal establishes a normal bacterial flora population in its gastrointestinal tract.

A foal with non-infectious diarrhea will usually be bright, alert, active and nurse normally. They rarely have a fever greater than 102 degrees Fahrenheit. Most non-infectious diarrhea will resolve without therapy in two to three days. The foal's temperature should be taken twice a day until the diarrhea resolves. You should contact your veterinarian if the foal's diarrhea does not resolve in three days or if they become depressed, stop eating or develop a fever.

Foals with infectious diarrhea

can go from being active and nursing to death's door step in a matter of hours. Infectious diarrhea can be due to a viral or bacterial infection in the gastrointestinal tract. Common bacterial causes include *Salmonella Spp.*, *Clostridium perfringens*, *Clostridium difficile* and/or *Escherichia Coli* (E. Coli). Rotavirus is the most common cause of viral infectious diarrhea.

Rotavirus will affect foals between the ages of five to 35 days of age. This is a highly contagious virus that will spread through a farm at a rapid rate. The virus is spread from foal to foal by direct ingestion of the virus.

Foals will have profuse watery diarrhea that is yellow to orange in color. Foals that are infected at a younger age become more ill compared to foals that are infected three to four weeks after birth. Foals that develop diarrhea during an outbreak scenario need to be moved to an isolated area of the farm to prevent further spread of the virus to healthy foals.

Therapy for foals infected with rotavirus is mainly supportive. They are placed on IV fluids, probiotics, Bio-sponge and possible antibiotics if their white cell count is low. It can take five to 14 days for a foal to recover completely from a rotavirus infection. Once they have recovered, they have a good prognosis to make a full recovery.

Clostridium Spp. can cause diarrhea in a foal from birth to 10 days of age. The *Clostridium* bacteria is in the environment and the foals contract this bacteria by ingestion. Diarrhea caused by *Clostridium Spp.* is brown to reddish in color. This dark color is secondary to blood in the feces, which is caused by damage to the colon wall.

If the foal has consumed an adequate amount of colostrum, they may not develop diarrhea



Picture of a 48-hour-old foal with yellow diarrhea. The diarrhea is secondary to Rotavirus. This diarrhea is similar in appearance to the type of diarrhea seen with foal heat. (Courtesy of Lauren Lamb)

or develop less severe clinical signs.

Treatment for Clostridial diarrhea consists of supportive therapy, similar to rotavirus diarrhea, along with systemic antibiotics. There is a Clostridia vaccine that can be given to the mare prior to foaling. This vaccine will cause the mare to develop antibodies to the Clostridial bacterial. These antibodies enter the foal's system via the colostrum and help prevent a clinical infection.

Salmonella can cause diarrhea in a foal at any age. The *Salmonella* bacteria is found in the environment, but is frequently shed by the mare.

Foals with a *Salmonella Spp.* infection will usually have diarrhea that is similar in color to Clostridial diarrhea. Similar to

foals infected with *Clostridium*, if the foal receives an appropriate amount of colostrum at birth, they may not develop diarrhea or develop less severe clinical signs. Treatment for *Salmonella Spp* diarrhea is similar to treatment for Clostridial diarrhea.

In conclusion, foal diarrhea can be a significant problem that could result in expensive vet bills or possibly death of your foal. Foal heat diarrhea is not seen until the foal is five to 10 days of age.

If your foal develops diarrhea prior to five days, there is a good chance it is an infectious diarrhea. Foals with infectious diarrhea should be seen by a veterinarian as soon as possible. With proper therapy, most foals with infectious diarrhea have a good chance for survival. ☒

The Vanner Vision

By Krista Lucas



British Sterling is the sire of Dave and Sherri Alexander's line of Gypsy Vanner horses. (Courtesy Dave Alexander)

Strong, intelligent, docile, athletic and colorful describe a relatively new caravan breed of equine. The Gypsy Vanner may be a lesser-known breed, but its beauty and style leave a lasting impression on anybody who comes across one.

It all began back when gypsies wanted a proper horse to pull their colorful caravans. Originating in Great Britain, the breed was selectively bred over the course of a half-century by gypsies.

In 1996, the breed was brought over to the United States and eventually named Gypsy

Vanner in honor of their original use, with a play on the word caravan.

The Gypsy Vanners' ancestors include the Shire, Clydesdale and native British ponies, making them "people-sized" draft horses. They are average size, but possess draft-like qualities. A Gypsy Vanner will sport heavy bone and a broad body, while being 14 to 15 hands tall.

These come in a range of colors and also have thick, flowing manes, tails and feathering. There is also no other breed with more feathering than the Gypsy Vanner. Some even

grow mustaches!

Along with having a stunning physical appearance, the breed's temperament is engaging and friendly, well, making them a popular family horse. Gypsy Vanners can be seen pulling wagons, ridden in the dressage ring or as pleasure horses. They are also popular trail and therapy horses. These horses are known as the "golden retriever of horses" for their love of people and wanting to please.

Although this breed was very popular among the gypsies of Great Britain after World War **Continued on page 19**



Dave and Sherri Alexander with Sterling, their only Grand Vanner or Drum Horse. (Courtesy Dave Alexander)

II, it was not until two Americans, Dennis and Cindy Thompson, discovered the horses while on a trip to the England countryside, that the horses were established as a breed. They started what is known as the very first home of America's first Gypsy Vanner horses, Gypsy Gold Farm.

The couple eventually created the Gypsy Vanner Horse Society, the world's first registry recognizing a horse developed by bands of gypsies.

The society holds the breed

to a very high standard, and it is their goal to preserve and protect this unique breed by continuing to breed quality caravan horses and honoring what the gypsies originally created.

Perhaps the most famous of the Gypsy Vanners is the stallion "The Gypsy King." He was the second Gypsy Vanner stallion to arrive in North America. "The Gypsy King" was trained by renowned trainer Chris Cox and later by clinician Lynn Palm.

When 2008 Olympic rider Pam

Fowler Grace rode the great stallion, she said he was one of the most extraordinary horses of any breed she had ever ridden in her lifetime. "The Gypsy King" was even the inspiration for a Breyer model horse.

An online search will pull up many Gypsy Vanner farms from all across the country. Locals Dave and Sherri Alexander of Gainesville, Texas, have been raising Gypsy Vanners for seven years.

The sire of their line is British Sterling, their only Grand Vanner

or Drum Horse.

A Grand Vanner is 15.1 hands or taller, and the name Drum Horse came from the line of horses which the Queen of England would choose to carry drums in her parades.

As the founders of the Gypsy Vanner Society, Thompson and his late wife Cindy originally hoped the Vanner vision would continue to grow. Families like the Thompsons and the Alexanders continue to work hard and promote the regal Gypsy Vanners. ☞



Phil Haugen has trained more than 2,000 horses in his career. (Courtesy of the Haugen family)

TRAINING THROUGH UNDERSTANDING

By Ddee Haynes

Close your eyes and picture a tall, slim cowboy with kind eyes, a wide smile, strong weathered hands, a quiet yet firm mannerism and a worn out straw hat on his head.

You have just met Phil Haugen. Haugen, a native of northwest North Dakota, now resides in Weatherford, Okla., with his beautiful wife and partner Bridget. He and Bridget have one daughter Hannah, 23 and one son, Wade, 19.

Haugen grew up knowing the value of a well-trained horse and the importance of creating a relationship with that horse based on trust and respect, from both the rider and the horse.

Having ridden/trained more than 2,000 horses and competed in 1,000 plus rodeos during the course of his rodeo career, Haugen qualified for both the Badlands Circuit Finals and the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association Prairie Circuit Finals.

During his rodeo career Haugen competed in team roping, calf roping and saddle bronc riding. In 1989 Haugen was awarded the coveted Linderman Award. The Linderman Award, created in 1966 by Rodeo News editor

George Williams, is a memorial reward that is presented yearly to the leading cowboy with minimum earnings of \$1,000 in three events; rough stock and timed events must both be represented.

Through his experience, Haugen has developed a unique training style based on his experiences in and out of the competition arena. His training program focuses on the horse's thinking side of the brain and the reaction side of the brain, thus Haugen's saying "When you train a horse to think, its body will follow."

Knowing that each horse is different and will progress differently, Haugen uses a simple common sense approach, "training through understanding."

Simple fundamentals combined with effective and proven techniques enable the horse to better understand the response their rider is asking for, therefore allowing the horse to be and feel successful and confident. Horses are pleasers by nature, so good communication between the horse and rider is the key.

A harsh reality that many horse owners do not realize is that a horse is a reflection of his owner's experience, knowledge and the

amount of time spent with that animal.

Haugen emphasizes to be realistic with expectations, be consistent, work smarter not harder and to set a goal to be 1 percent better each day. By striving to be 1 percent better each day, by day 100 your horse will be 100 percent better. A minor change can often make a huge difference.

When looking for a good horse Haugen looks for eye appeal, disposition, athletic ability, and a confirmation with the hocks underneath and balanced on the hind quarters.

When training a horse, Haugen will show the horse four to five different events. The event they progress the quickest in will normally be the event that animal will excel in. A horse, much like a human, will perform better when put into a position where they can reach their best potential.

When I asked Haugen one of his goals for the future, he smiled and said to be an "aspiring horseman," continuing to get better at what he loves to do, developing each horse to its fullest potential.

For more information www.philhaugen-horsemanship.com. ☞



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AQHA

YOUNG HORSE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

By Laci Jones and Oaklie Howard

The American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) is dedicated to helping youth further their horsemanship skills through the Young Horse Development Program. The program helps youth become more engaged in the horse industry at a fundamental level that's both fun and educational. While it is designed to expand horsemanship knowledge and abilities, youth participants also have the chance to earn scholarships and prizes.

"Conceptualized as a way to provide youth with quality weanlings from AQHA Ranching Heritage Breeders, the program continues to be greatly supported by weanling donations," said Jacy Hammer, AQHA manager of Youth Development & AQHYA.

Jim Hunt, chairman of the AQHA Ranching Committee, and his wife Joni recognized the challenges young people have purchasing a quality ranch-bred horse and young families have of entering a relatively expensive industry. This conversation, which took place in 2010, led to the establishment of the AQHA Young Horse Development program in 2011.

In an effort to reach out to those who had an interest in the horse industry, the Hunts started giving at least six quality weanlings a year to teenagers who showed an interest in horses. The young adults eventually started showing the horses in AQHA and other horse competitions.

This generous donation inspired other Ranching Heritage Breeders to get involved in the movement. More than 55 horses



The AQHA Young Horse Development Program has taught Oaklie Howard patience and responsibility. (Courtesy of Oaklie Howard)

were donated by breeders across the nation in 2016, and the number of participants and donated horses has doubled in the 2017 program, she added.

"This year, we have almost 60 participants from across the United States," Hammer added. "AQHA youth staff has recently taken steps to further develop this program's outreach and educational value."

The program requires participants to complete several requirements from Jan. 1 through Sept. 30. Youth from ages 12 to 18 are eligible for the nine-month program. One of those participants is 18-year-old, Oaklie Howard from Morrison, Okla.

"I actually found out about the program by chance," Howard said. "I was looking up information for my grandma on the AQHA website when I found out about the program three days before the deadline."

Once accepted, the participants are assigned a Ranching Heritage Breeder who donates horses for the program. Howard said once she contacted her breeder from New Mexico, she had a choice between three fillies—two red roan and one chestnut. When selecting her horse, Howard said she looked for a balance between breeding and conformation. Howard chose one of the red roan fillies.

When she picked her horse,

Howard met the breeder in Amarillo, Texas, to begin training. Howard said the trailer ride home was "a breeze," and she immediately began working with her. While she trains her horse, Lyric, herself, the young horse trainer has support along the way from family, friends and other mentors.

"You have people who help you throughout the program," she added. "Through AQHA, you have a professional horseman to help. We have to get in contact with them and have mentoring sessions."

Howard said training a young horse has given her responsibility and a sense of accomplishment. **See HORSE page 23**

HORSE

While she is currently in the middle of the program, Howard said the program has taught her patience and how to be a better horseman.

“Youth learn, in a world of fast-paced, instant things, that it just takes time,” said Maggie Gilmore, Howard’s grandmother. “Horses make a difference with kids.”

She has used training techniques from different trainers including Clinton Anderson to train her horse. The program requires participants to watch several webinars on managing expenses and horse nutrition.


“You also have to keep track of your horse’s growth and the expense and income you get,” she added.

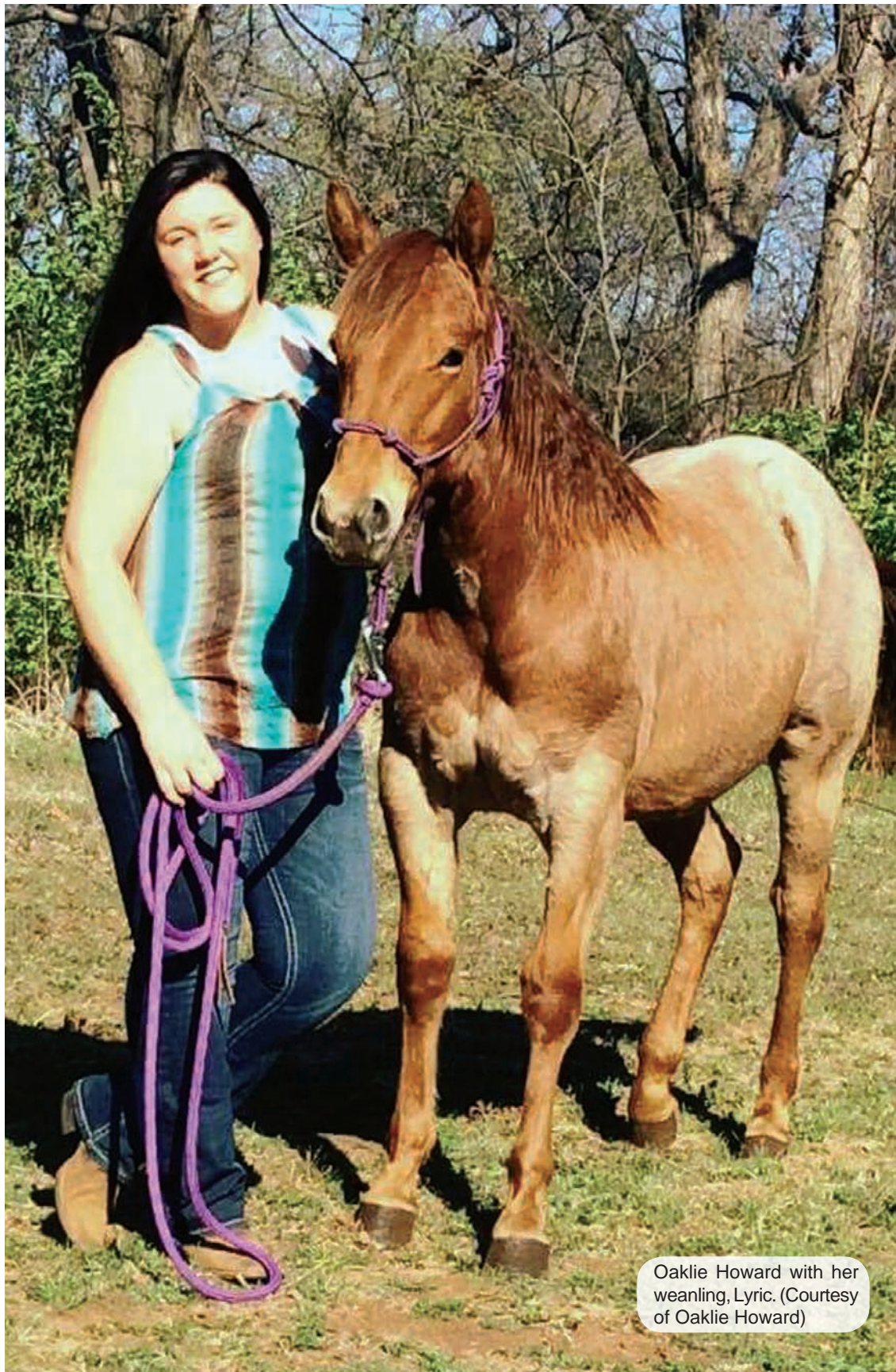
Participants are required to send monthly reports including a photo of their weanling, a horsemanship report and a one to two-page progress report. The progress report should document the participant’s horsemanship goals and achievements.

They are also required to compete in one halter class or showmanship class at an AQHA, 4-H, FFA or other local show.

After the program, participants can keep their free weanlings. Howard plans to keep training her horse, Lyric, for different events including reined cow horse and possibly cutting. She also plans to get more involved in AQHA events, and hopes more Oklahoma youth will get involved in the program next year.

“This being a horse state, I hope there will be a lot more people involved,” Howard added. “It’s a great program. If you have someone like me who enjoys working with younger horses or wants to train their own for the first time, it’s a great opportunity.”

To get involved in the AQHA Young Horse Development Program, visit www.aqha.com. 



Oaklie Howard with her weanling, Lyric. (Courtesy of Oaklie Howard)



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LACEY'S PANTRY

By Lacey Newlin



STROMBOLI

Serves: 6-8 Servings

Total Time: 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS

½-pound pizza dough
 ½ cup pizza sauce
 1 ½ cups grated mozzarella cheese
 10 slices salami
 8 slices deli honey ham
 1 egg, beaten
 Dried parsley & Parmesan cheese
 Extra pizza sauce

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 500 degrees Fahrenheit. Line large rimmed cookie sheet with parchment or spray lightly with non-stick cooking spray. Spread pizza out on baking sheet to be approximately 10X16. Spread pizza sauce over 2/3 of the dough lengthwise, leaving a 3X16 rectangle of plain dough along one of the edges. Top sauce with half the grated cheese, salami and ham. Top with remaining cheese. Brush the plain strip of dough with the egg. Fold in the sides about an inch and brush

them with egg.

Roll up like a jelly roll lengthwise, starting along the long edge of dough topped with all the fillings and ending with the plain strip of dough on the bottom of the roll. Tuck the ends of the dough under to seal them.

Brush the entire Stromboli with egg and gently cut slats in the top of the dough every 1 to 2 inches. Sprinkle parsley and cheese over top and bake 8 to 10 minutes or until bubbly and golden. Remove from oven, cool 5 minutes and slice in pieces. Serve with more pizza sauce. ☞



Life of a Ranch Wife

By Lanna Mills

Recently we traveled across the state line into Texas for a ranch rodeo that my husband Gary and some of his cowboy buddies were participating in. This particular event was a benefit ranch rodeo along with an open ranch bronc riding, an auction and a dance. The proceeds were given to the families of the young people who tragically lost their lives in the wildfires that swept through the Texas Panhandle while trying to save their cattle.

It was said that more than \$15,000 was raised at this event alone. It is wonderful to see cowboys and ranchers come together to help each other in a time of crisis, knowing that it could have very well been themselves who were struck by this horrific disaster.

Ranch rodeos are unlike ordinary rodeos. The events are based off of the duties of cowboys on real working ranches. They promote ranching heritage and western lifestyle. Ranch rodeos are probably the only time you will see someone pay to do what they do all day for a living. It gives them the opportunity to compete against others and showcase their skills. If they are lucky they may even collect some prize money and belt buckles.

Each ranch rodeo is different and offers an assortment of events including sorting, doctoring, branding, trailer loading, stray gathering, wild cow milking or ranch bronc riding. Rules will vary rodeo to rodeo. Events may vary on time limits, loop limits on certain events and some may allow cowboys to tie their ropes on while others will not.

Before the rodeo begins, there will be a “grand entry.” This is where the teams will ride into the



Sorting is an event where the cattle are held in a certain area of the arena marked with a line. (Photo by Lanna Mills)

arena and will be introduced by the announcer. Someone will ride in carrying the American Flag. The teams will line up and the cowboys will remove their hats. At every rodeo, someone will sing the national anthem and another will say a prayer. It makes one feel patriotic to see the red, white and blue flag representing our great nation blow in the breeze.

Sorting

Sorting is an event where the cattle are held in a certain area of the arena marked with a line. The cattle are numbered and the team will be drawn a designated number.

One cowboy will sort out the team’s designated number, and push them across the line. The other cowboys will hold the line and try to turn back any unwanted cattle from crossing. If any unwanted cattle cross the line the team will be given a “no time.”

The objective is to get your cattle across the line in the least amount of time. There is usually a time limit on this event of about

two minutes, and if the team exceeds the time limit it will result in a “no time.” On the ranch, cowboys may be required to sort calves off the cows when time to wean or sort cattle to be sold or moved to another pasture.

Doctoring

Similar to sorting, doctoring is where one calf is sorted from the herd. When the calf crosses the line, the cowboys head and heel and mark it with chalk or paint stick. This event is also based on fastest time and will usually have a time limit and possibly a rope limit-meaning that the cowboys may only throw their ropes a certain number of times. If the cowboys exceed the time or rope limit, the team will be given a “no time.”

On the ranch at times it is necessary for the cowboys to rope a sick wheat pasture calf or a cow with hoof rot and give him or her a shot.

Branding

Branding consists of calves placed in a designated area of the

arena. Sometimes there will be cows with the calves. One member of the team will be horseback, while two will flank and one will brand. Members of other teams will hold the line and not allow the calves to scatter. The man horseback will ride into the herd, rope and drag a calf out.

Once the calf is received by the flankers, he will ride back in to catch his next calf. Rules usually state that the man horseback is not allowed to lope in the herd. Some events insist on only legal catch being two back feet while others will allow you to catch the calf by the neck or a single back foot.

Branding is a regular occurrence on the ranch. Branding allows ranchers to keep track of their cattle and deter potential thieves as well as administer proper vaccinations and cut any bull calves. Long ago, when cattle from many ranches grazed together, the cattle were branded so at roundup, ranchers knew which cattle belonged to which.

See WIFE page 29



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Wife

Trailer Loading

Trailer loading is made up of an empty trailer placed in the arena. A yearling is turned out and the team must rope it and drag it into the trailer.

Once the yearling is shut in the front of the trailer and the rope has been removed, the cowboys must load one of their horses in the back and shut and latch the trailer gate. After cowboys must hurry to the hood of the pickup or get in the truck, which so ever the rules read. This event is also based on the fastest time and may have a time or loop limit.

Like other events, cowboys use this technique on the ranch. Sometimes cattle cannot be penned or one may get on the neighbor's and cowboys must rope it in the pasture and transport it to the appropriate location whether it be

a set of pens, to the sale barn or turned back out to pasture.

Stray Gathering

Stray gathering is where the team is on one end of the arena. Two head of cattle are turned out, and the cowboys must rope and tie down both head. Once again the fastest time is the objective, and there is most often a limit on loops thrown and time.

Stray gathering and trailer loading go hand in hand on the ranch. Cattle must be roped and tied town until someone can bring the truck and trailer to load them.

Wild Cow Milking

Wild cow milking is probably the most exciting event and is a real thrill to watch. One cow is turned out and one cowboy is to rope her. The other team members are a-foot and run to her once she is roped and begin to try to milk

her. Usually one cowboy will get her by the head and one by the tail and try to hold her still while the other collects the milk in a bottle. One team member then runs the milk to the judge where he makes sure the milk was, in fact, collected.

Like other events, wild cow milking usually has a time limit and a loop limit and fastest time wins. This event can get chaotic, as the momma cows doesn't take to kindly to being roped and milked.

It is unlikely that you will see this exact thing happening on the ranch. However, sometimes a cow's teats will be too large for a newborn calf to suck, and she will have to be milked so that the calf can latch on.

Ranch Bronc Riding

Ranch bronc riding is similar

to saddle bronc riding but the cowboy uses his everyday ranch saddle. The chute opens and the cowboy must stay on for eight seconds, and will receive a "no time" if he is bucked off before. Some ranch rodeos allow the cowboy to use a night latch, allowing the cowboy to hold on with his free hand.

The cowboy is given a score based on how well he rides. This event represents working ranch cowboys breaking colts. When in the pasture a horse may start bucking and the cowboy must try his hardest to stay on. If he is bucked off he may have a long walk back to the house or pickup.

Watching the cowboys compete in a ranch rodeo is extremely entertaining and you will gain a great respect for just how hard these cowboys work. ☞

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Terry Stu



Forst leading her horse, Gypsy out of the barn at the ranch. (Photo by Laci Jones)

the Land

Stuart Forst



Stuart of the Land

Terry Stuart Forst

Fire engulfed thousands of acres of land across Colorado, Kansas, Texas and Oklahoma in early March. Ranchers risked everything to try to save their animals as their livelihoods went up in flames.

Terry Stuart Forst, a fifth-generation rancher, just returned from helping with the relief efforts in Kansas when she sat down at the Stuart Ranch Headquarters. Forst, who was full of laughter on that spring day, but quiet when she spoke of the recent wildfires.

“It’s devastating,” Forst explained. “It’s us. I know it is hard for people who don’t make their living off the cows and grass to totally understand. For those of us who do, we are right there with them.”

The recent devastation hit home for Forst as she has spent more than 40 years in the industry, nurturing the land her ancestors bestowed to her.

History of Stuart Ranch

For nearly 150 years, Stuart Ranch has faced droughts, flooding, tornadoes and have persevered. The ranch was founded by Forst’s great-great grandfather, Robert Clay Freeny. In 1838, Robert Freeny traveled to Choctaw Nation, Indian Territory and married Sarah “Sallie” Ellis.

The couple, along with their 13-year-old son, Robert “Clay” Freeny, Jr., settled 14 miles west of Atoka in Boggy Depot in 1868. During that time, the family raised cotton, oats and corn.

“Cotton was huge back in that area across the Highway 70 corridor,” Forst said. “I had always been told they traded a lot of horses and mules to the U.S.

Army.”

Before her death in 1868, Sarah Ellis Freeny gave birth to 12 children. That same year, Robert Freeny moved the family to Caddo before relocating north of what was once known as the Redlands in Blue County, Choctaw Nation, Indian Territory. Clay Freeny took over the operation after Robert Freeny died in 1878.

Clay Freeny, also known as Judge Freeny, continued to farm as well as raise cattle, horses and mules. He was named the County and Probate Judge of Blue County, Choctaw Nation, Indian Territory. After the death of his wife, Mary Beck in 1894, he married Josephine Baxter.

“To know you are able to carry on a legacy that started 150 years ago, and know that you have been entrusted to make sure you hold it together, I don’t take that lightly.”

-Terry

At the turn of the century, Carrie “Ida” Freeny was born to Judge Freeny and Baxter. She attended the Tuskahoma Choctaw School for Girls and later married Robert Terry Stuart, the son of a cattle rancher, in 1931.

After working with the Pacific Mutual Insurance Company and the American Home Life Insurance Company in Fort Worth, R.T. Stuart purchased the Mid-Continent Insurance Company in Muskogee, Okla., in 1916. He relocated the company to Oklahoma City, where he and Ida

Freeny Stuart resided and operated the ranch.

R.T. Stuart focused on improving the cattle operation, introducing Hereford cattle to the ranch. Two years after they were married, Robert Terry “Bob” Stuart, Jr., was born. Bob Stuart later took over the operation in 1950, where he focused on improving the horse operation by purchasing the ranch’s first Quarter Horse in the ‘40s.

Bob Stuart purchased a stallion named Big Shot Dun from 3-D Stock Farm, a part of the Waggoner Ranch, in 1949. Progeny bred to Son O Leo, purchased in 1961, proved to be a successful match.

The Terry Stuart Forst Era

Forst was born in Oklahoma City in 1954. Forst inherited her father’s passion for horses, riding every chance she could get. While Bob Stuart was supportive of his daughter’s passion for showing horses, he pushed her to find her own path. Forst showed in the American Quarter Horse Association Youth classes.

“I struggled, fumbled and showed up,” Forst explained. “I learned a lot the hard way, and I certainly wasn’t going to quit.”

Forst continued to show horses

in the AQHA shows after she turned 18, enrolling at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Okla., bringing horses along. Forst pursued a bachelor’s degree in animal science.

The university helped Forst develop relationships that have lasted for decades. After graduating in 1976, she returned to the ranch and helped her father with the horse program. The OSU alumna said she had the intention of returning to the ranch after graduation. Her goal was to prepare herself for her role on the ranch.

“That is all I ever wanted,” she explained. “I never wanted to go anywhere else, but I wanted to do a good job for him. That was important to me.”

When asked what her father taught her, she laughed and said her dad “threw me to the wolves,” but in a good way.

“I learned a lot on my own, but I learned things because of either questions he would ask or questions I would have about the way he was doing things,” the rancher said.

After returning to the ranch, the father-daughter duo enhanced the horse program, later earning the AQHA Best of Remuda award in 1995. Due to conflicting visions for the ranch, Forst left Stuart Ranch in 1989 and worked for a real estate broker.

“I really wasn’t sure if I would go back to the ranch, but I wanted to stay in agriculture and in this business.”

With two young boys to raise, Forst was accepted in the Texas Christian University’s ranch management program. The program

Continued on page 34



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Stuart

Continued from page 32



(Left to right) Robert Clay Freeny founded the ranch in 1868. Clay Freeny received the nickname Judge Freeny after being named “County and Probate Judge” of Blue County, Choctaw Nation, Indian Territory. (Courtesy of Stuart Ranch)

was a stepping stone for Forst. She had her real estate license and wanted to become a rural appraiser.

Forst was preparing to start her own business when her father called and asked her to take a look at a piece of property.

The property was one of the few contiguous operations in Oklahoma, which peaked Bob Stuart’s interest. She visited the property and prepared a management plan. When she presented the plan to him, he asked her to execute the plan.

“We made a deal where I had to get him profitable within a certain period of time, or I was going to leave,” Forst explained. “I had a job and if I couldn’t do it, then I wasn’t the one he needed.”

They purchased the 11,000 acres east of Waurika, Okla., in 1992. She hired her TCU col-

league, Jay Adcock as the cow boss. While it was a monumental task, Forst followed the management plan and succeeded while she and her family were still living in Caddo, Okla.

Soon after, Forst moved the family to Waurika, Okla., and took over the operation as ranch manager. The ranch manager said when she took over, she had goals for the ranch and a deadline to reach them.

Preparing for the Worst

Forst continued to learn through reading literature and exposing herself to new ideas in ranching. To this day, the ranch manager considers herself “a sponge” when it comes to range management. She has worked with her crew to understand more about grazing within the last five years.

“There’s always been a limiting factor—water,” Forst ex-

plained. “There is no groundwater here, only surface water. When you are surface water dependent, it changes the dynamic of a lot of things.”

While the ranch always prepares for the worst, the drought of 2011 was monumental. From one extreme to another, she said 2014 and 2015 saw massive amounts of rain. The ranch has faced weather challenges throughout the past few years, but Forst said those are situations they must manage.

Allocating money each year toward water development is an integral part of the budget because they understand how critical it is. This year, she plans to increase distribution to become more efficient. Forst has worked with her crew in implementing these changes.

“In order to be real effective, you have to surround yourself with

people who are better than you,” she said. “We all need to strive to be the best we can be.”

Future Generations

“A family operation is one of the most difficult operations to be a part of, but it is also the most rewarding,” Forst explained. “To know you are able to carry on a legacy that started 150 years ago, and know that you have been entrusted to make sure you hold it together, I don’t take that lightly.”

While the responsibility can be daunting at times, Forst has tried to prepare the next generation to take the reins. The mother of two has turned many sections of the operation over to the next generation, her sons Robert and Clay Forst.

“I think it is more advantageous for them to make mistakes while I can help them through it,” she



Continued from page 34

added. “They have done a wonderful job and have worked hard their whole lives.”

Both Robert and Clay understand learning is an ongoing process. Forst said ranching will only continue to get more difficult as society finds themselves further removed from agriculture. The rancher said a rancher needs to be resilient, dedicated and have faith to be successful.

“I think you have to have a tremendous faith in God,” the rancher stated. “We are just stewards.”

Stuart Ranch by the Numbers

Knowing if the ranch does not move forward, it will move backwards, Forst has made it her mission to evolve. Today, the ranch consists of 45,000 acres of land.

“Our pastures are in good shape,” Forst explained. “This year’s prescribed burn was the best in 30 years.”

The ranch incorporated a no-till method in their operation. Thinking long-term, Forst said she hopes to increase soil fertility and cease using fertilizer 15 years from now.

Forst’s grandfather, R.T. Stuart, started with Herefords, but today they have Hereford and Angus cattle. The black baldie is their super cow—making up about 60 percent of the herd. While the cow herd number is down to 1,600 head, they plan to build their numbers this year.

“A goal for us is to be better next year than we were this year,” she added. “We sold heifers when the market was good, so now is when we want to start building the herd more than anything.”

Selling many of their replacement heifers has helped the rancher focus on improving herd genetics by developing an efficient and productive cow. Along with their cow/calf herd, the ranch also specializes in stocker cattle. The



At 29 years old, R.T. Stuart was the president of American Home Life Insurance Company. (Courtesy of Stuart Ranch)

steers do well in the feedlot, according to Forst.

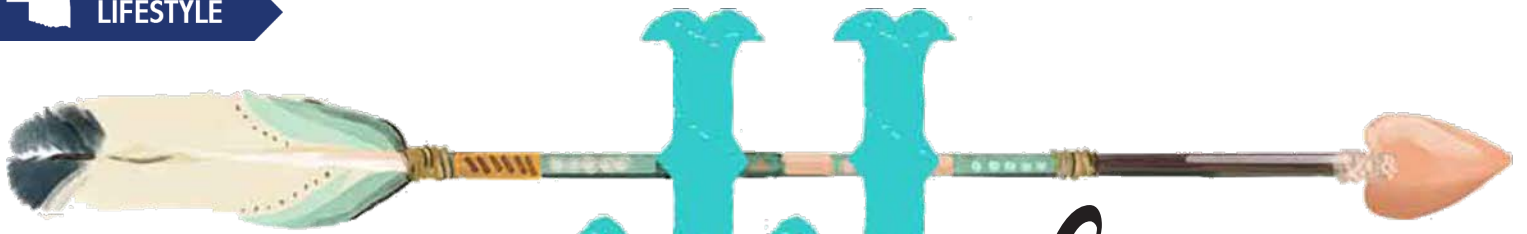
The Stuart Ranch horse operation has expanded to include 50 broodmares. Horses are used every day on the ranch. Training horses for the show pen, they compete in the National Reined Cow Horse Association events. The ranch participates each year in the Snaffle Bit Futurity in October. Forst said they are excited the futurity is moving from Reno, Nev., to Ft. Worth, Texas because of the closer proximity to the ranch.

Being progressive, Forst is always thinking outside the box in all operations. In the future, Forst hopes new additions will set the ranch up for success for the next 150 years, she added.

“We have diversified and evolved from our roots and traditions,” Forst explained. “Those things are important to us and we highly value our legacy and what we have been entrusted with and hope to continue in a profitable fashion.”



Forst is the fifth-generation rancher of Stuart Ranch, taking over in 1992. (Photo by Laci Jones)



Jesses Jewelz

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This last month or two has been one many farmers and ranchers may never forget. My heart continues to ache for the tremendous losses from the wildfires across the Texas panhandle as well as surrounding states that suffered. I am such a fan of the rancher, and it has proven to be such a tight knit community as others have offered so much help to those who were affected. Therefore, I proudly sport this #Ranchin tshirt, because as you can see, ranchers will push through and continue the pursuit. I paired this t-shirt with a super cute duster vest to add a little flair, my favorite pair of Levi's, and accessorized with my favorite buckstitch belt and vintage snake skin boots. I love mixing old with new and making a statement! Find this look at www.jessesjewelz.com. Long live ranchers! 🤠

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Jessica Kader
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DILLARD RANCHES

Part 2

Jerry Dillard

By Judy Wade

“My Senior Trip was an ocean cruise to Okinawa on a warship,” Jerry Dillard laughed. “I was drafted out of Ringling High School in 1945 and after basic training at Fort Hood, Texas, shipped out to the Pacific.”

The war was soon over, and Dillard and his unit were assigned to guard Japanese war criminals, including Emperor Hirohito and Tokyo Rose and the stables housing Hirohito’s famous stallion, White Snow.

A member of the 1st Cavalry, Dillard received an Overseas Service Bar, an Army of Occupation Ribbon, an Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Ribbon and a Victory Ribbon. He served with Ringling friend, Don Howard for six months.

“I couldn’t wait to get back home and start my ranch,” Dillard said.

That is exactly what Dillard did. Finishing his high school education, he began to put together a herd of Herefords on the 1,980 acres south of Ringling left to him by his late father, using the Rocking Diamond brand.

“The Rocking Diamond was one of two brands my grandfather, Lute Jackson, used,” Dillard explained. “I found one of his old branding irons hanging in the barn and registered it and have been using it ever since.”

He and Lavonia “Monie” Faulkner were married in 1948.

“The first time I ever saw her she was getting out of the car



Dillard, right, with Tom Thumb, the Grand Champion Steer at the Oklahoma State Fair. (Courtesy of Jerry Dillard)

with her parents, Claude and Ada Faulkner, in front of Tucker’s Drug Store, where Moore’s is now,” he added. “I thought she just glowed in the dark! I think I whistled at her.”

They moved into an old house on the ranch and built a new ranch house soon after. She continued to be his helpmate until her death in November 2016, after 68 years of marriage. They had two children, son Jerry Hamilton Dillard II, known as “Jetty” and daughter Donna Dillard Butler. Jetty died in an automobile accident in 1977.

Dillard and his daughter laughed about a time Monie saw

a heifer trying to calve and went out in her yellow house coat, got the pullers attached and had to run all over the pen when the heifer decided to take off. But she got the job done. “Monie smoothed out the rough spots, and she was my rodeo cheerleader,” he said.

Born in 1926, Dillard was the second of two sons born to Josiah “Foot” Dillard and Vida Jackson Dillard. Only a year old when his father died, he was raised by his widowed mother with the help of grandfather Lute Jackson, and grew up with a love for cattle and rodeoing.

He exhibited the Grand Cham-

pion Steer, a Hereford named Tom Thumb, at the Oklahoma State Fair when he was a teenager.

“I played football in high school, but I loved riding bulls. I would sneak off to rodeo, telling everyone, ‘Don’t tell Vida,’” he laughed. “I rode in the old Hardy Murphy Coliseum in Ardmore, Okla., before it had a roof. At the Fort Worth Stock Show, I placed sixth and I thought I might be getting in over my head.”

“I rode my first saddle bronc in Muenster, Texas. I also started steer wrestling,” he related. “His dogging horse was a mare named See DILLARD page 39

Maggie. “I rode her and others borrowed her. She was the mother to Cherokee Maiden, the first paint horse registered by the American Paint Horse Association. Cherokee Maiden’s sire was Osage Dan.”

The Dillard family built an arena on the ranch and hosted rodeos for many years. They also built two large barns, one where herdsman Dale Rich outfitted bulls for the truckload shows in places like Denver and Fort Worth.

Each year Dillard invited area 4-H and FFA members to come down and use the cattle in these barns to practice judging, showing and grooming. They also hosted a Junior Hereford Association Field Day each year as well as American Hereford Association tours.

“At one point I got out of the show end of it but got back in for my daughter and grandchildren,” he explained. “When we began to have some problems with Herefords, I began to transition to other breeds. I now have about 525 mother cows, mostly Black Angus, and I have expanded my original holdings to about 6,500 acres, including some lease land.”

Oldest grandson, Ty Hammons, started working on the ranch right out of high school. With the passing of herdsman Rich and Dillard’s failing eyesight, he began to help oversee operations and be the “straw boss and range boss.”

“[Dillard] still calls the shots and has the final say,” Hammons said.

Dillard replied, “If I could see, I’d still be running everything.”

Daughter Donna Butler serves as bookkeeper, and other grandchildren Trey and Trent Hammons are the go-to guys for electrical and water well problems. Grandson Barrett Butler, a recent Oklahoma State University graduate,

worked on the ranch during the summer and Baylee Butler (the only granddaughter, who has a master’s degree in political science) “tells us who to vote for,” her mother said. Dillard also has three great-grandchildren.

He’s been inducted into the American Breeders Hall of Fame, is a member of the Oklahoma Cattle Raisers Association and the Hereford Association as well as a life member of the American Quarter Horse Association, the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

At 90 years of age, Dillard is still active, and a regular member of the coffee drinkers at R.J.’s in Ringling, referred to as “The Office.”

Dillard is highly respected, not only in Ringling, but by cattle breeders across the state. Ringling rancher Sherle Lockwood has this to say about him: “Jerry Dillard is a good guy. He has helped more people than anyone will ever know.”

“When I was a kid, my dad, Dock Lockwood would go down and help Jerry work cattle, and I would go with him. One day he had just pulled a calf, and it had a broken leg. He said ‘I’m going to give you that calf, Sherle. You take it home and put a cast on that leg and feed it on a bottle.’ I did, but it died a few days later.”

“The next time we went to help him, he asked about the calf. When I told him it died, he said, ‘I’m going to give you one that won’t die,’ and he cut out one of his best Hereford steers. We loaded him, and Jerry said, ‘Wait a minute. I’m going to give you another one,’ and he loaded another good steer. He always checked on the steers and helped me get them ready for the shows. He’s a really good guy.”

Next month read Part III—James Dillard Ranches. ☞



(Top to bottom) The entrance to Jerry Dillard’s ranch. Dillard at his ranch south of Ringling. (Photos by Judy Wade)

WHERE THE PAVED ROAD ENDS

MOMMY LAUGHS LAST

BY BETH WATKINS

When my babies were little, my favorite way to celebrate Mother's Day was getting to sleep-in and being able to put on my make-up and use the restroom without an audience. Being a mom is hard work! But it's a very rewarding job if you put your heart into it. The best advice I can give a new mother is "Your children get one childhood; make it count."

Don't worry about dust on the furniture, socks that don't match or lost car keys! There will be plenty of time to get your ducks in a row when the kids are older. Life will always be a little scattered. Just like now, I know exactly where my keys are: locked in the truck!

It won't be long and you'll discover you've worked your way out of the daily grind of motherhood and have become a grandmother. Life has slowed way down, but I'm surrounded by mommas, a whole herd of mommas!

Last year I experienced my first calving season. I only ended up with one bottle baby, a boy, named "Cash #12." I've named all my momma's, and I name the little girls, but the boys all have the same name- "cash." I try not to get too attached. I really enjoy watching the herd go about their daily grazing.

Some have more personality than others. I don't know about you, but I've watched Charlotte's Web and I know these four-legged creatures communicate. I am the interpreter here at our operation. My new husband, who's grown up in this way of life, finds it amusing that our ladies have so much to say, and that I've been appointed



Watkins moved to the country two years ago. (Photo by Beth Watkins)

to convey their message to him. For instance, their immediate demands are they would like the buffet line to open at 4 p.m. I know this is unanimous because that's when they all start lining up.

This way of life is very new to me. Up until two years ago, the closest I had come to a herd of cattle was when I drove by them on the highway. I had experienced a few up close and personal moments at the fair and a few rodeos.

I've always thought calves are adorable, and believe it or not, I really like the smell. Of course, I like the smell even more now because I've learned that's the smell of money, but that's another story for another time.

Today I was reminiscing about a time in my early years of being a mother, when I had to rely heavily on creativity. In 1988 my little family moved from "in-town" to the "country." In reality, we

moved to a neighborhood that was about three miles out of the city limits. There were a few cows along our new road. My oldest daughter was three at the time, and she pleaded with us to let her have a cow. We tried to explain to her our Home Owners Association would not permit us to have a cow in our one-acre backyard.

She reasoned with us, "I'll keep it in my room!"

See MOTHERHOOD page 41

MOTHERHOOD

Continued from page 40

I explained to her it was hard enough to housebreak our Shih Tzu let alone attempt housebreaking a calf.

To show her that it would be more of a job than a paper towel could handle, we pulled over to study the animals a little closer. There were several cows and a bull within sight. As our little family sat studying these beautiful creatures, much to our surprise Big Daddy Bull put the move on his little lady. Our six-year-old son must have seen the panic on our faces as he yelled, "What is happening?" I looked at my husband who was looking at me with the "this was your idea, you answer him" look on his face.

So without blinking an eye I answered him, "Oh, that's nothing, that bull has an itchy belly and that's the only way he can scratch

it." This explanation satisfied the question. And to this day "itchy belly, itchy belly" is still a phrase used by my kids to describe the "love dance of the bovine."

I may not get an engraved award for "Mother of the Year" but that's okay. My reward is hearing my grown kids coming through the door with little munchkins running in yelling "Grammy!"

My youngest daughter and her baby girl were visiting us for a few days. As I was sitting at my vanity in my bathroom putting on my makeup, I couldn't help but smile at my daughter who was pulling her daughter out from under the sink for the second time, all the while, telling me how she never gets to go to the restroom alone anymore. I laughed as I welcomed her into Club Motherhood. ☞



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Jake's Rib

CHICKASHA, OKLA.

By Laci Jones

I am always a fan of road trips, whether it be across the country or across the state. I was looking for a restaurant I had never tried before when someone mentioned Jake's Ribs in Chickasha, Okla. Craving barbecue and a mini road trip, I made the two-hour drive to Jake's Rib.

The barbecue establishment opened its doors 29 years ago as a family owned and operated restaurant. The restaurant was cozy with a fireplace in the center. I was intrigued by Jake's Rib logo of an armadillo with a cactus. The restaurant incorporated armadillos in the restaurant decoration.

My date and I went to Jake's Rib for a weekday late lunch, but we missed the lunch crowd. I ordered the one-meat dinner and chose the shredded pork. Each dinner comes with two sides and I opted for the jalapeno cornbread "pepper puppies" and fried okra.

It seemed only fitting that one of us order the ribs. My date ordered the two-meat dinner, a large serving of ribs with smoked sausage. He chose the loaded baked potato and fried okra for his sides.

While waiting on our order, we noticed the table next to us ordered the curly fries and we regretted not ordering them. The curly fries were the size of a loaf of bread and took up the entire plate like the fries served at the Oklahoma State Fair.

We should have known the serving size of our entrees was going to be large. The slab of ribs was enough to feed a family of four. The beef ribs were large and had plenty of meat. The restaurant



Jake's Rib is located in Chickasha, Okla. (Photo by Laci Jones)

serves hot and mild barbecue sauce. The sauce was tangy and complimented the ribs nicely.

Like the ribs, the serving of shredded pork was large. The meat was juicy and seasoned mostly with pepper. The okra was crispy.

Pepper puppies were in the shape of sticks, and they had a hint of spice from the jalapeno. The baked potato was loaded with butter, sour cream, cheese, bacon and chives. We washed our barbecue down with large sweet teas.

While the food portions were large, I made a mental note to save room for dessert. Barbecue establishments usually have the best cobblers. They only had peach and apple cobbler available that day. I asked the waitress which cobbler was the most popular, but she said

they were equally popular.

Craving a summer dessert, I ordered the peach cobbler with ice cream. The menu said the cobbler is homemade, but the waitress said the ice cream was not. The cobbler was so warm the ice cream was melting when served. The cobbler was fresh with plenty of peaches. The crust was flaky with cinnamon-sugar topping. The dessert was the best way to end the meal, and I recommend trying a cobbler from Jake's Rib.

We left the restaurant with two to-go containers that barely closed. If you are looking to feed a large family, they also offer a house special for \$49.95. It comes with four meats, six side orders and four cobblers.

While the restaurant is known for its barbecue, the family-owned

restaurant also serves catfish and steaks.

If I did not have a mental plan of saving room for dessert, I would have ordered one of their many appetizers including corn nuggets, fried pickles, fried green beans and fried green tomatoes.

Maybe next time I will have a chance to order the large curly fries and an appetizer. All in all, if you are looking for a barbecue restaurant that serves enough food to feed a village, visit Jake's Rib in Chickasha, Okla.

Jake's Rib is located at 100 Ponderosa Dr., Chickasha, OK 73018. They are open 10:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday thru Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Sunday. Call 405-222-2825 for additional information. ☞



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MAY 5

OLD CHICKEN FARM VINTAGE BARN SALE, 12699 E Britton Rd. Jones, OK 73049. Oklahoma's most talented pickers and painters will gather to sell their wares at the Old Chicken Farm Vintage Barn Sale on May 5-6. Vintage furniture, decor, handmade treasures, repurposed possessions and other incredible items will all be up for grabs. Visit the Old Chicken Farm Vintage Barn Sale. For more information, visit www.theoldchickenfarm.com.

MAY 5

COWBOY WAY FEST, Gene Autry Oklahoma Museum. Gene Autry, OK 73436. Travel to Gene Autry in southern Oklahoma for a three-day event full of song, cinema, celebrity signings, poetry, storytelling, chuck wagon food and western vendors. Visit www.geneautryokmuseum.org for more information.



MAY 5

CHISHOLM TRAIL 150TH ANNIVERSARY EXHIBIT, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid, OK 73644. Celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Chisholm Trail with an exciting new exhibit at the Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center in Enid from May 5-Sept. 16. Guests can also immerse themselves in the stories of the Trail as they sit around the camp fire. Visit www.csrhc.org for more information.

MAY 5

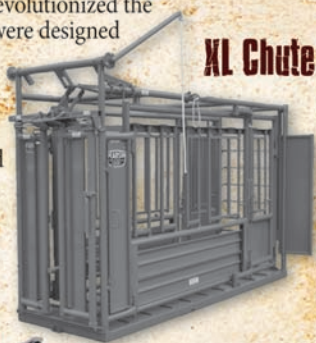
OKLAHOMA STEAM THRESHING & GAS ENGINE SHOW, Steam Engine Park, Pawnee, OK 74058. Step back in time at the 50th Annual Oklahoma Steam Threshing and Gas Engine Association Show on May 5-7. The event will feature all steel wheel tractors. Most of the featured tractors will be pre-1930, offering an exciting glimpse into the past at this annual Pawnee event. Visit www.oklahomathreshers.org for more information.



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- 87 Red Angus second and third calf bred fall calving cows safe to Angus bulls.
- 285 Angus second and third calf bred fall calving cows safe to Angus bulls.
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MAY 5

SMALLMOUTH RENDEZVOU & FLY TYING EXTRAVAGANZA, 201 Commercial Rd. Tahlequah, OK 74464. Get ready for a fun weekend covering all things fishing at the Smallmouth Rendezvous and Fly Tying Extravaganza in Tahlequah on May 5-6. This annual event features a potluck dinner, fly tying demonstrations, guest speakers, vendor booths, a raffle, silent auction, fly tying contests and more. For more information, call **918-360-2085**.

MAY 6

PRAGUE KOLACHE FESTIVAL, Main Street Prague. Prague, OK 74864. The annual Prague Kolache Festival celebrates the Czech heritage of Prague with polka music, dancing, food, Czech costumes, a parade, beer garden, wine tasting booths, made in Oklahoma foods, a carnival, pony rides, mechanical bull and free entertainment. Head to Prague this year for the 57th annual celebration of Czech heritage. For more information, call **405-567-4866**.

MAY 11

ROOSTER DAYS FESTIVAL, Central Park. Broken Arrow, OK 74012. Make your way to the annual Rooster Days Festival on May 11-14 in Broken Arrow, one of the oldest continually running festivals in Oklahoma, for a large carnival, a parade, live entertainment and more. Visit www.roosterdays.com for more info.

MAY 13

A-BAR RANCH SALE, A-Bar Ranch. Claremore, OK 74018. Come on out to the A-Bar Ranch Sale on Saturday, May 13 at noon where we will be selling 1,000 head of quality young pairs, young cows and bred heifers. For more information, call Mike Armitage at **918-625-5689**.

MAY 13

STILWELL STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL, Downtown Stilwell. Stilwell, OK 74960. Held since the 1940s to promote the strawberries grown in the area, the annual Strawberry Festival in Stilwell has become one of Oklahoma's most-loved hometown festivals. The Strawberry Festival attracts over 30,000 visitors each year to Stilwell, the "Strawberry Capital of the World," with games, live entertainment and free strawberries and ice cream. For more information call **918-696-7987**.

MAY 13

BREEDER'S INVITATIONAL, Tulsa Expo Square. Tulsa, OK 74114. The Breeder's Invitational at Tulsa Expo Square on May 13-27 is a can't miss event for equestrian lovers everywhere. During fifteen days of intense competition with high steaks, cowboys and cowgirls come together and give some of the best cutting performances in the country and take their abilities to the limit. For more information, visit www.breedersinvitational.com.

MAY 13

OKIE SAMPLER, 5201 Cimarron Rd. NW. Piedmont, OK 73078. Head to Piedmont for a sampling of what Oklahoma communities have to offer at Okie Sampler. Hosted by Chester's Party Barn & Farm, this event will showcase items from across the state. For more information, visit www.chesterspartybarn.com.

MAY 18

CANTON LAKE WALLEYE RODEO, Canton Lake. Canton, OK 73724. Come and enjoy the 50th annual Canton Lake Walleye Rodeo on May 18-21, Oklahoma's oldest and largest fishing tournament. Visit www.walleyerodeo.com for additional information on the rodeo.



CHISHOLM TRAIL 150TH ANNIVERSARY EXHIBIT

MAY 19

OKLAHOMA STATE COWBOY FAST DRAW SHOOTOUT CHAMPIONSHIP, Creek County Fairgrounds. Kellyville, OK 74039. Come see the fastest guns in the West at the Oklahoma State Cowboy Fast Draw Shootout Championship on May 19-21. Men, women and children of all ages will compete for trophies and prizes. Come out to the Creek County Fairgrounds in Kellyville to experience this one-of-a-kind event. For more information, call **918-688-6396**.

MAY 20

WOOLAROC SPRING TRAIL RIDE, Woolaroc Museum & Wildlife Preserve. Bartlesville, OK 74003. Watch for buffalo, elk, deer or longhorn cattle on this trail ride that covers approximately 15 miles of scenic terrain on the famous Woolaroc Ranch. Bring your own horse and join the group for a day-long ride over 3,700 acres of ranch land. Call **918-336-0307** for additional information.

MAY 26

PERUVIAN HORSE SHOW, Stephens County Fair and Expo Center. Dunan, OK 73533. Come to Dunan and witness as stately Peruvian steeds are put through their paces at the Peruvian Horse Show. This NAPHA sanctioned event spotlights the Peruvian horse's beauty, unusual gait and smooth ride. Competitions for the event include combination pole and egg stomp, champagne and costume class, musical performance pairs and a parade of stallions, all showcasing the unique nature of this breed. For more information, visit www.napha.net.

MAY 26

CROSS H AUCTION, 75649 Hwy 69. Wagoner, OK 74467. On May 26-27, come on out to the Horse & Tack Sale on May 26-27. Selling all types of horses: Quarter horses, paints, appaloosa, mules, draft, pony, crossbreed. For more information, visit www.crosshauction.com.

Agricultural ARCHITECTURE

By Rhonda Shephard



A photo of the Enid Grain Elevator Historic District. (Courtesy photo)

Oklahoma boasts a diversity of history and architecture from the stellar Art Deco in Tulsa, Okla., to the Marlon Mansion castle in Ponca City, Okla., to the Victorian City of Guthrie, Okla.

Also rich in history are some things you may never have given much thought to including agricultural architecture. Before you blink, consider the grain elevators, skyscrapers of the plains, mills, agricultural industry buildings for the very uniqueness of form and function. Structures from a bygone era gave the landscape definition.

Where grain production ruled, these buildings stood as the most visible and impressive architecture visible. If you love farming and have an affinity for architecture, consider marrying the two interests.

The Elevator Historical District

Punctuating the Enid, Okla.,

skyline since the '20s, the concrete grain elevators span the horizon. The expansive size and volume, 75 million bushels, by 1962 provided Enid with the name "Grain Capitol of the World."

The complex consisting of seven separate elevators constructed in the '20s through the '50s is a national registry of historic places. The district is located between North 10th to North 16th and North Van Buren and Willow Streets. This historical district maybe the most unique one in the state and delivers an inspirational sight.

Wood Framed Elevators of Oklahoma Panhandle

In the Oklahoma Panhandle where grain fields stretched from horizon to horizon, the capture of the harvest was stored in wood framed structures. The following tells of three elevators, the last of their kind found in Beaver County.

Turpin Grain Elevator is one

of the only wood framed grain elevators in the Oklahoma Panhandle between 1902 to 1934, often found close to rail lines. The elevators followed a stud beam constructed of wood, covered by metal sheathing to protect the inner-workings.

The elevator, a national historic registry site is located on Route 64 in Turpin, Okla.

Knowles Grain Elevator is another wood framed structure sheathed in metal with a central elevator surrounded by bins. It is currently not in use. Knowles Oklahoma Grain elevator is on Route 64 that runs through the Oklahoma Panhandle.

Floris Grain Elevator, a wood framed elevator was built in 1926. Built by the Farmers Union Equity, it is a wooden stud construction sheathed in corrugated tin. The elevator is located in Floris, an unincorporated community. A larger, modern elevator has replaced this old relic.

Clay Tile Elevators of Northwest Oklahoma

The county named for the famous former Oklahoma Governor "Alfalfa" Bill Murray is Oklahoma's second largest producing county of winter wheat. Located just south of the Kansas border in Northwestern Oklahoma, with Cherokee the county seat, it has some of the most unique and beautiful elevator structures in Oklahoma.

Farmers Elevator Exchange is located on Highway 45 in Goltry, Okla. The elevator is a red clay tile structure that bridged the transition between wood framed and concrete elevators. The use of five inch hollow red clay tiles provided greater strength than previous structures. There was no standard design for the structures, which left room for builder's interpretation.

Farmers' Federation Elevator still stands on corner of Ohio and See ARCHITECTURE page 49

Architecture

4th Street in Cherokee, Okla. It is a multi-bin, red tile covered elevator.

Ingersoll Grain Elevator located in the unincorporated town of Ingersoll is perhaps the most beautiful elevator in the state. All the elevators are worth the drive to see.

Blaine County Central Oklahoma Agriculture

Blaine County is a jewel of Oklahoma history with a variety of agricultural related items. Check out Blaine County Oklahoma's National Historic Registry for several items of interest in the agricultural realm and other important history.

Okeene Flour Mill, built in the early part of the 20th century, consisted of two bins. Its importance

contributed to the growing milling business established in 1901. Much of the original facility has been demolished, but the original core is still functional

Sooner Coop Association Elevator (West) located at 302 F Street in Okeene, Okla., was built in 1939 as a 120-foot concrete construction. It was expanded to 10 bins, and stands as a symbol of a well-constructed concrete elevator still in use.

The Public Water Trough in Geary, Okla., is located at the junction of Main, Northeast Boulevard and Canadian. This is the last of four public troughs built in the town of Geary between 1899 to 1901. An indentation in the trough allowed teams of horses to be watered without unharnessing. Con-

crete troughs replaced the original ones, but they remained in use until just after World War II when the area showed a decline in horse and animal drawn vehicles.


Ellis County- Looking around Western Oklahoma

Ingle Brothers Corn Warehouse is found at 320 Northwest 1st in Shattuck, Okla. The warehouse, built in 1908, represented the industry in the early 20th century. The style was simple with little exterior decoration. It is one of the only broomcorn facilities remaining in the state.

The Davidson Silo is an especially unique silo as it is a wooden structure built with fourteen sides twenty miles south of Arnett, Okla. The exact location has only been established by GPS on the

internet.

The public Park in Shattuck, Okla., is a function following form with some of the most beautiful, fanciful wooden windmill structures. Found at 120 11th Street in Shattuck, it is a sight to behold. Fifty-one windmills give a great view of what were some of the most beautiful structures to appear on a farm. There is also a sod dugout that will give a true view of how our early ancestors lived.

These are just the start of the agricultural architectural wonders around the states. For more historical agricultural architecture, visit the List of National Historic Registry. Next time you see an agricultural building deteriorating, look again at a true gem of architecture. 



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COWBOY WAY FEST

By Laci Jones

To celebrate the cowboy way, the Gene Autry Oklahoma Museum is hosting the Cowboy Way Fest on May 5-7. The three-day festival features music, movies, poetry and celebrity appearances.

"The cowboy culture is the backbone of our society," said Leslei Fisher, executive director of the Gene Autry Oklahoma Museum. "Everybody wants to be an American cowboy. The cowboys of yesterdays that we saw on screen were the penultimate, the essential cowboy."

Cowboys lived by a code, which was passed on to the next generation. Gene Autry Oklahoma Festival strives to keep that code alive through hosting a festival.

"We took all the different cowboy codes that we could find—20 of them, and merged them into one set," she added. "We called it the 'Cowboy Way,' which is why we named the festival the 'Cowboy Way.'"

The museum, which opened its doors in 1985, held a similar festival for 15 years celebrating Gene Autry's birthday. The festival was focused on films and music. The festival, originally held in September, ran from 1994 to 2009.

"From the moment I heard that there had been a festival, I was determined to do one," Fisher explained. "I think that it is an important tradition."

Fisher also said the museum is small and underfunded. The festival is an avenue for the museum to raise money while celebrating the cowboy way of life. The Cowboy Way Fest is focused on films and music, but Fisher said they

plan to expand upon the original festival.

"This year, we will have movies and episodes of television shows, as we get permission, to play in our senior citizen building, the Johnston Senior Center," she added. "We have our stage here in the auditorium where we will have music from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m."

The festival will also have tap dancers, baton twirlers and comedians between music acts. Celebrity signing tables and vendors will be located in the gymnasium, she said. The festival will have 20 to 25 one-of-a-kind vendors including homemade quilts, knitted or crocheted items, jewelry and coasters with "The Virginian" scenes.

The festival will have vendors bringing cowboy memorabilia, posters and other collectibles from the '30s to the '50s. A toy gun manufacturer, bronze sculptor, a Native American art dealer and a saddle maker will also be at the festival. A few western genre authors and the Western Music Association will have a table at the festival.

James Drury, who was an actor in "The Virginian," will make his only appearance for 2017 at the festival. Other celebrities to make an appearance are stunt doubles and those who worked with celebrities like John Wayne and James Arness.

"We will also have question and answer sessions," Fisher explained. "Charlie LeSueur, a leading expert on western genre history and associated with the western museum in Scottsdale, Ariz., will be leading our Q&A



Actor, James Drury will make his only appearance for 2017 at the festival. (Courtesy photo)

sessions with the celebrities."

Fisher said they will have two to three Q&A sessions each day of the festival. The master of ceremonies is Bob Terry, a western singer, songwriter, musician, actor and producer. Concert performances include musicians Sons of the Pioneers, Les Gilliam, Rex Allen Junior among others.

Three food vendors will be available for attendees to purchase including a barbecue food truck. The Mount Pleasant Baptist Church will provide concession stand food.

Gary Don Smith, a cast iron

cook from Ponca City, Okla., will also be cooking three meals a day throughout the festival.


"We're going to have beef stew or chili," she added. "It's going to be hearty. He also makes donuts, and I can't wait."

Fisher said she expects the festival to bring in 300 to 400 visitors. Visitors can pre-register by April 30 for a discount of \$25 per day and \$25 per evening concert, making it \$125 for a full weekend pass. After April 30, the price increases by \$10 per day and per evening concert, making it \$175 for a full
See FEST page 51

LEGEND

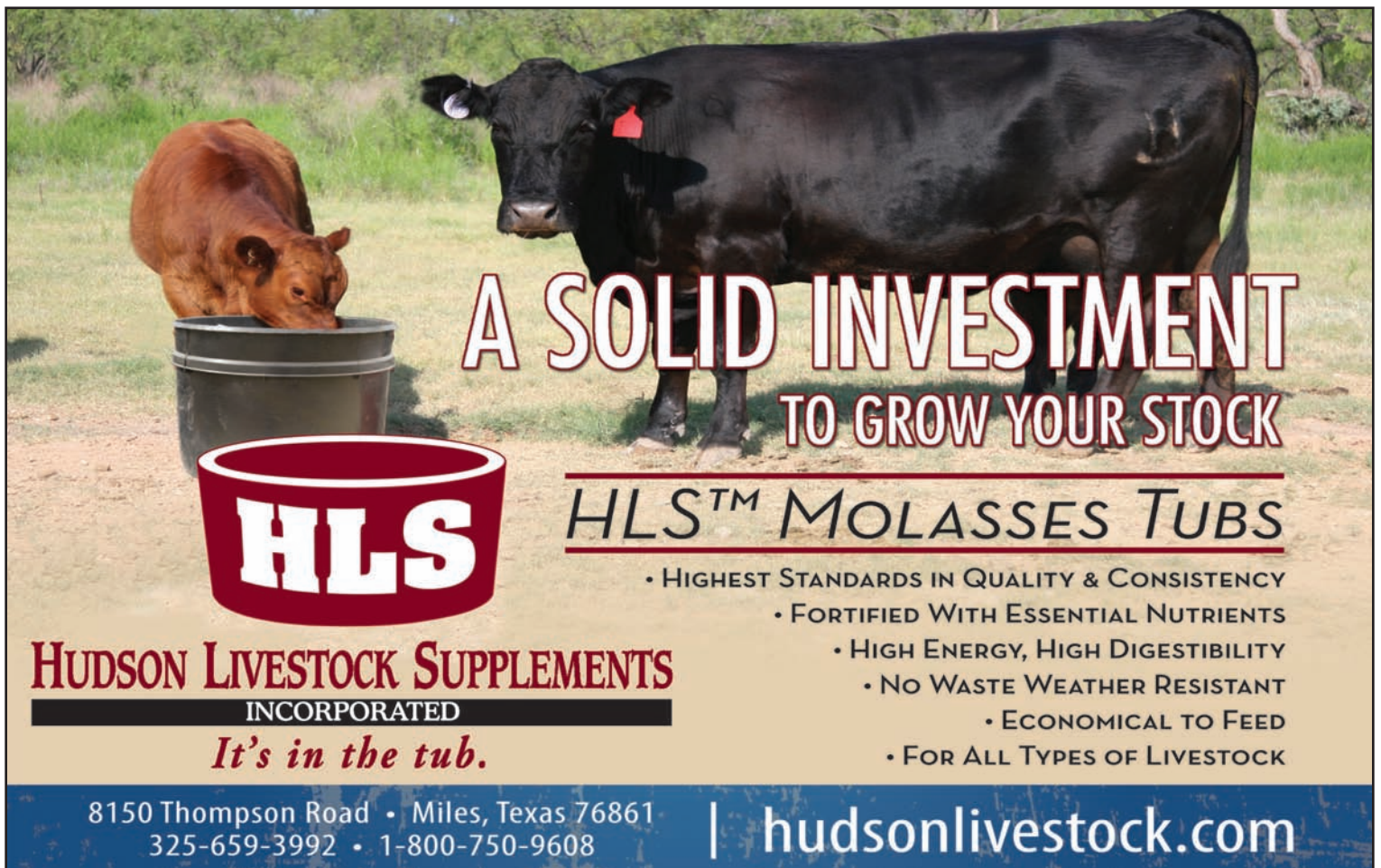
pass. The festival is open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday. The festival is sponsored by the Oklahoma Chapter of Western Music Association.

The Gene Autry Oklahoma Museum has the world's largest collection of cowboys in entertainment memorabilia. The museum's mission is to nourish the history and timeless culture of the cowboy in entertainment, as exemplified by Gene Autry, Roy Rogers and others, for the enjoyment and education of all generations.

The museum is located at 47 Prairie Street, Gene Autry, OK 73436. To learn more about the museum or a schedule of events, visit www.geneautryokmuseum.org or call 580-768-5559. 

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Honoring a Music Legend

Tommy Overstreet

By Jan Sikes

Country hit-maker, Tommy Overstreet, was born in Oklahoma City on Sept. 10, 1937. He lived with his mom, dad and two sisters in the Capital Hill section of the city.

In his memoir, “A Road Less Traveled,” he recalled that they lived behind his grandmother’s house. He started school at Heronville Elementary.

It was a different way of life back then: a time when children walked to school and played with their neighborhood friends afterward, a time when \$2 would buy groceries for a family and gas was ten cents a gallon. Although work soon took the family to live in other states, Overstreet always referred to Oklahoma as home.

It was a long and often lonely road from Oklahoma City to Nashville, Tenn. Country music had an explosion of artists and it took a special sound to be noticed. But Overstreet often said that he was luckier than most trying to make it in the music business because of how he got his start.

You may have heard the name Gene Austin somewhere back in early record archives. Austin sold over 80 million records in 1925 with his first hit, “When My Sugar Walks Down the Street.” He was probably best known for another hit, “My Blue Heaven,” which was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame.

What does that have to do with Overstreet? Austin was Overstreet’s third cousin, although Overstreet fondly referred to him as his uncle. It was Austin who convinced Overstreet’s parents to let him quit school in 1957 and go on the road with him. That

changed the life of Overstreet forever. In his memoirs, Overstreet recounts many life-altering events during his travels with Austin, some of which were meeting the great Frank Sinatra, Perry Como, Actress Marlene Dietrich, Colonel Tom Parker and Mickey Rooney.

It didn’t take long for Overstreet to get established as a promising performer with his uncle’s mentoring.

By 1968, Overstreet was fully immersed in Nashville and country music. He holds the honor of releasing the first recording from the famous Bradley’s Barn in Nashville, and in 1971, Overstreet had his first hit record with “Gwen, Congratulations,” written by Jerry Gillespie. The famed drummer, D.J. Fontana (Elvis Presley’s drummer) played on the recording along with other heavy hitters in Nashville.

Between that time and 1982, Overstreet enjoyed seven number one hits. In addition to “Gwen, Congratulations,” he had “I Don’t Know You Anymore,” “I’ll Never Break These Chains,” “Heaven Is My Woman’s Love,” “Send Me No Roses,” “I’m A Believer,” and “Ann” (Don’t Go Runnin’).

He had many more that charted in the Top 10 and produced a total of 18 albums.

Overstreet performed on stages across the country and around the world including the Grand Ole Opry and made many guest appearances on the highly popular television show, “Hee Haw.”

Well-known in every music circle as an all-round nice guy, Overstreet went above and beyond when it came to a good cause.



Overstreet performed on stages around the world. (Courtesy photo)

In August 1977, he was made an honorary chief by the Choctaw Indian Nation. They gave him the name of Hatak Ya Achi A Ataloo and he performed in ceremonial full headdress. I tried to find a complete translation of the name but could not. Loosely translated, it means “man who is a bard or poet and performs.”

On a more personal note, Overstreet often sang at prisons and other institutions completely free of charge just to provide entertainment for those behind bars.

That was the case when he agreed to perform at Leavenworth Prison in 1981. Little did he know that he’d find an old friend and fellow performer there. As

a youngster attending college in Abilene, Texas, Overstreet often performed on Slim Willet’s Big State Jamboree show, where he met and became fast friends with my late husband, Rick Sikes.

They had lost touch over the years but he found Sikes doing time in Leavenworth Penitentiary.

He immediately went to work to hasten Sike’s release. He visited his old friend many times after his release and collaborated on writing songs and publishing music. This was the kind of man Overstreet was.

It did not matter where or what the circumstances were, when you See LEGEND page 53

Legend

met him, he was the same as every other day. He didn't wear a stage hat where he put on airs one time and a regular hat the next.

"If I could live my life over there would be few changes made," Overstreet said in his memoir. "I would do my best to be a better husband, father, brother and friend. I would try to care a little more for those less fortunate than I and love a little deeper those who gave me their love."

These are words of wisdom from this man who started his journey on this planet in Oklahoma City.

If you are not familiar with Overstreet's music, it is my hope that you will take a listen, or pick up his book, "A Road Less Traveled," and let him take you on the ride of your life. ☞



Overstreet was born in Oklahoma City. (Courtesy photo)

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OKLAHOMA STATE PARKS

Sequoyah State Park

By Laci Jones



Sequoyah State Park offers many recreational activities for visitors including a golf course. (Courtesy of Sequoyah State Park)

Located in Cherokee County, Sequoyah State Park showcases the history and heritage of the Cherokee Indian Nation. Sequoyah was a Cherokee Indian who invented the alphabet. Near Tahlequah and Muskogee, Sequoyah State Park celebrates its Indian heritage by educating the public through programs and tours of the lodge.

The dam for the lake was designed in the late 1940s. Grand River as well as several small creeks fed into the lake, according to Sequoyah State Park manager, Tony Presley. The lake is 19,900 acres and it can be seen from almost anywhere within the park.

About four years after the dam was built, the state park was established in 1953. The land for the state park was leased by the Corps of Engineers.

Two pieces of property are owned by the state—the land where the lodge sits and the entrance to the park, Presley ex-

plained.

“The park was built in a low economic area to help raise the economy of the area,” Presley added. “The park, the lodge and the golf course were built in the first 10 to 12 years.”

When the lodge was first built in 1956, it was named Sequoyah Lodge. The state later leased it out to Western Enterprises, changing the name of the lodge to Western Hills Lodge.

The name of the lodge did not fit the geographic location or theme of the lodge, Presley explained. Western Hills Lodge was changed back to Sequoyah Lodge after the lodge and other areas of the state park were remodeled two years ago.

The cottages at the state park were renovated first, followed by the swimming pool. The pool was originally a diving pool turned into a zero-entry pool with a splash pad, making it popular among families, according to Ann Skel-

ton, lodge manager at Sequoyah State Park.

“The next year of renovations were focused on the outside of the lodge,” she said. “We were still operational, which was a challenge.”

The wood was replaced and painted as well as electrical and mechanical maintenance. The following year focused on the inside of the lodge including the meeting rooms, guest rooms, kitchen and the common areas.

“They took it back as a design aesthetic,” Skelton added. “The building was mid-century modern. They gave it that feel of what it would have been like in 1956.”

They used original chairs from 1956 as well as original plans and old photographs for design inspiration. The lighting and décor transports visitors to the mid-century, she added. Visitors have access to a full-service restaurant for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The lodge reopened in February

2015.

The lodge also features a bunk house that sleeps 46 people. The bunk house is one building with 10 rooms and a general area to congregate, making it popular for family reunions or other large gatherings.

At 2,200 acres, Sequoyah State Park has five campgrounds; two are made for camping while the others are RV campgrounds. A couple of the RV campgrounds have been remodeled within the last five years, according to Presley. They also have a group camp with a large kitchen and bathroom that sleeps 153 people.

Throughout the years, the golf course has had minor renovations as far as design to combat flooding from storms. The nature center, Three Forks Nature Center, which has live animal exhibits, was opened 12 years ago. The marina at the state park is the largest marina on the lake with more than **See PARK page 55**



PARK

Continued from page 54

400 slips on it now along with boat rentals. The state park also has a fishing dock and three boat ramps in the park.

“We have a lease concessions including the Sequoyah Riding Stables,” Presley added. “We hope to add some more leases in the incoming years.”

The state park has about 165,000 visitors each year. Visitors can even check out one of the four cemeteries dating back to the 1800s. The state park offers visitors many recreational activities ranging from volleyball, basketball and hiking.

Sequoyah State Park has 12 miles of hiking and biking trails, he explained. Sequoyah State Park also has an 18-hole disc golf course. At more than 5,000 yards, it is the longest disk golf course in the United States, according to Presley.

“We provide recreational opportunity for any individual,” Presley explained. “We don’t specialize in one thing. That, to me, is the biggest attraction in that we have a great place where you can pick the pace.”

Most events are held at the lodge and are tied with different open and private groups. The most popular events are the music groups and festivals, Skelton said.

A bluegrass festival is held in January, followed by the State Fiddlers Organization in February and August. The Western Swing Association puts on a festival in November.

“We also have groups that do quilting weekends, storytelling weekends and square dance weekends,” Skelton added. “There are all different kinds of groups that come out. We have a lot of groups, conferences and families.”

For more information on Sequoyah State Park, call 918-772-2046. ☒



The lodge was renovated two years ago. (Courtesy of Sequoyah State Park)



Sequoyah State Park was established in 1953. (Courtesy of Sequoyah State Park)

Grazing Oklahoma

American basketflower (*Centaurea americana*)

(Top to bottom) Large pink flowers with cream-colored centers grow on American basketflowers. American basketflower is often mistaken for thistles. (Photos courtesy of the Noble Foundation)

Characteristics: American basketflower, also referred to as thornless thistle, is an annual cool-season forb native to the south-central United States.

It can reach more than four

feet tall and commonly grows in open native pastures that are not managed with herbicides. Basketflower is often mistaken for thistles and is therefore targeted for herbicide treatment. However, unlike thistles, basketflower lacks prickly characteristics on the stem and leaves. Basketflower stems are branched with lanceolate leaves. Large pink to purple flowers with cream-colored centers grow from stiff bracts (leaf-like structure) with interwoven spines. The common name comes from this interwoven pattern, which resembles a basket, on closed flowers. The flowers contain long, filamentous petals and are produced from May through June.

Area of Importance: American basketflower is found throughout Oklahoma on sandy or clay-loam soils. Overgrazed pastures or bare ground created by mechani-

cal disturbance, such as plowing or tilling, are good places to find basketflower. The plant prefers open sun.

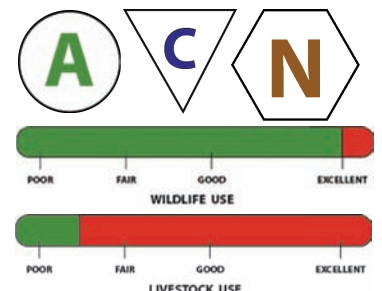
Attributes: American basketflower is extremely beneficial to pollinator species, especially native bees. Butterflies, moths and hummingbirds are attracted to the abundant nectar source. Bobwhite quail, doves and songbirds are attracted to the seeds, which resemble sunflowers and are available before many crotons, sunflowers or other game-bird seeds mature.

Basketflower is not typically grazed by livestock and wildlife, so plants will be abundant if adequate moisture is present. This makes basketflower a desirable ornamental plant. It can be grown for showy blooms and sweet honey fragrance to be used in cut flower arrangements. ☞



PLANT ID KEY

- A** = ANNUAL
- P** = PERENNIALS
- W** = WARM SEASON
- C** = COLD SEASON
- N** = NATIVE
- I** = INTRODUCED



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PARTING SHOT



The Earth Laughs in Flowers...

Kathie Freeman came across a field of flowers while visiting the Oklahoma City Zoo in late March. She admired these flowers in particular. The vibrant colors made her excited for spring. "I just loved how they turned out, almost like a painting." (Photo by Kathie Freeman)

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