## OKLAHOMA FARM & RANCH

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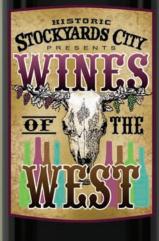
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### **STAFF & CONTRIBUTORS**

**PUBLISHER** J. M. Winter

EDITOR Laci Jones | editor@okfronline.com

MANAGING EDITOR Jessica Crabtree | editor@ntfronline.com

ART DIRECTOR Kayla Jean Woods | kayla@postoakmedia.net

### **ADVERTISING EXECUTIVES**

Susan Stewart | susan@postoakmedia.net Kathy Miller | kathy@postoakmedia.net Rosemary Stephens | rosemary@postoakmedia.net Shannon Gray | shannon@postoakmedia.net Gena McPhail | gena@postoakmedia.net

### **BUSINESS MANAGER**

Brenda Bingham | accounting@postoakmedia.net

### **CIRCULATION MANAGER**

Marnie Brown | subscriptions@postoakmedia.net

COPY EDITORS Judy Wade Krista Lucas

### **CONTRIBUTING WRITERS**

Sarah Blaney Everett Brazil, III Ralph Chain Kristi Hawks Ddee Haynes Jessica Kader Dr. Lauren Lamb Lanna Mills Lacey Newlin Mike Proctor Jan Sikes Judy Wade Beth Watkins Barry Whitworth

CONTACT US OKLAHOMA FARM & RANCH OKFRO

200 Walnut St., Bowie, TX 76230 940-872-2076, www.okfronline.com

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## As the Smoke Clears

Hello OKFR readers, and welcome to the June issue of the Oklahoma Farm & Ranch magazine. At the time I was drafting this letter, the Oklahoma State Cooperative Extension Service estimated the Rhea Fire in April scorched more than 348,000 acres of western Oklahoma, causing ranchers to lose more than \$26 million. Our thoughts are with those who were affected. Thank you to those who risked their lives to control the wildfire. This issue is dedicated to the Rhea Fire.

Chain Ranch was one of the many ranches affected by these wildfires.



Owner of Chain Ranch, Ralph Chain has lived through several fires on the ranch including the Rhea Fire. The photo above is courtesy of the Chain Ranch. Read about the events leading up to the fire and the aftermath in "The Fire" in the Farm & Ranch section.

It is always amazing to see how the community comes together during and after tragedies like the Rhea Fire. Hundreds of firefighters and volunteers fought to control the fires that burned for more than a week. Communities and organizations have donated everything from shelter to hay. Learn more in "The Fired Raged On" in the Farm & Ranch section.

This month I traveled to the Dean Lively Gallery in Edmond, Okla., to meet with a western artist and star of "Art of a Cowboy." A Kansas native, Steve Boaldin's background working on ranches and in feedlots helped him become the artist he is today. With co-creator Saraa Kami, Boaldin started a television series on Oklahoma Education Television Authority called "Art of a Cowboy." In this series, Boaldin visits ranches across the United States and tells their stories through his art. Learn about Boaldin, his art and the show in "Cowboys on Canvas."

On a lighter note, summer is in full swing. Read about summer break as time slows down in "Where the Paved Road Ends." Beth Watkins tells a few stories from her childhood and her husband GW. Growing up in opposite backgrounds, their childhoods were different, yet both managed to keep it simple. Learn more in "Summer, Unplugged."

Speaking of summer, the month of June is filled with all kinds of events throughout the state. Be sure to check out our calendar of events for ideas for you and your family this summer.

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. Subscribe to the digital version of OKFR on our website: www.OKFRonline.com.

Until next month,

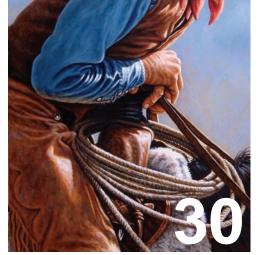
Laci S. Jones

### **ON THE COVER**

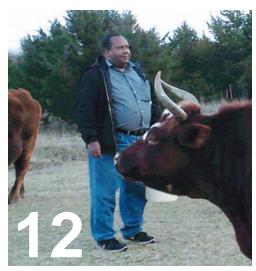
Raised on a ranch in Elkhart, Kan., Steve Boaldin began drawing at a young age with his family's encouragement. After marrying his high school sweetheart, he and Donna moved to Texas, where Boaldin made a living working in feedlots and ranches while honing his art skills. With the vision of sharing rancher's stories on canvas and on television, the artist and co-creator Saraa Kami recently launched a television series called "Art of a Cowboy" on OETA. Featured on the cover is Boaldin's artwork titled "All in a Days Work." Learn more in "Cowboys on Canvas." (Art courtesy of Steve Boaldin)

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encouraged his art by giving him his first paint set. Today, he is the star of "Art of a Cowboy."

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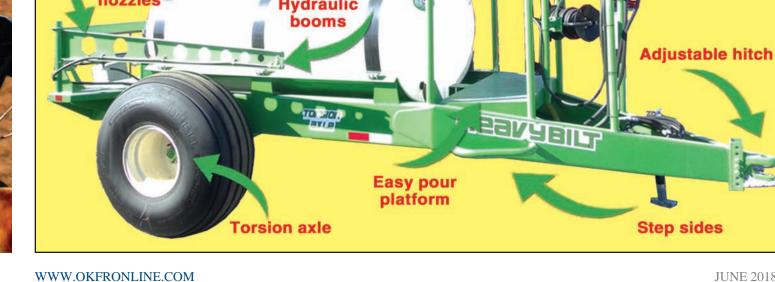
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Born in Phoenix, Ariz., country music artist Jody Miller was raised in Blanchard, Okla. She signed with Capitol Records in 1963.

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### SOCIALIZING

### FACEBOOK WALL



**Oklahoma Farm & Ranch** Posted by Laci Jones 3 hrs · 🕄

Which breed are you?

### YOUR BIRTH MONTH DETERMINES WHAT PIG BREED YOU ARE





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MARCH

APRIL MANGALITSA

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hances are that livestock producers at some time or another will be affected by a disaster such as a flood, tornado, drought or wildfire. Whatever the disaster, the challenge of any producer is to take care of their animals. Unlike small animals, farm animals tend to be large and require special needs in an emergency. For this reason, it is important to take the time to prepare a "Disaster Preparedness Plan."

The plan will hopefully create a step-by-step set of guidelines to follow during a chaotic situation that will keep both animals and humans safe. In any disaster situation, the most important thing for a producer is to ensure above all else that his/her family and life come first. A producer should never attempt to risk his/her life or a member of their family's life to save the life of an animal.

The start of a good disaster preparedness plan begins with evaluating what are the most likely disasters that a ranch or farm might face. For example, a ranch in the far eastern part of the state may not spend as much time with drought preparation as a ranch in the western part of the state. All producers should take the time to research history and look at weather patterns to understand the most likely disasters they could face.

Next, the producer should evaluate their premises to determine the potential risk to the animals. For example, the producer may want to remove the animals from any area that falls in a flood plain during certain times of the year or have an evacuation plan ready in case of an emergency. One should By Barry Whitworth, DVM



A good disaster preparedness plan includes understanding the most likely disasters a farmer or rancher may face. (Courtesy photo)

also evaluate the structures on the property. Are the barns or sheds able to withstand strong winds or not? The answer to that question will determine if the animals will be kept in a barn or turned out in a pasture during a storm.

Stacks of lumber and/or tin should be tied down. This will prevent the material from being blown around and possibly injuring an animal. Areas around a barn should be kept mowed and free of dead debris. This will help reduce risk where there is potential for a wildfire.

These questions and more need to be addressed in preparing the plan.

A disaster preparedness plan should also include animal identification. All animals need some form of identification. Brands, microchips and tattoos make excellent identifications since they are more permanent than other forms. Pictures will help identify animals. The producer should have records of ownership in case animals are lost or die in the disaster. This will be important if the producer is receiving insurance or indemnity payments.

It is important to remember that during a disaster, power and utilities may be lost. A livestock owner who relies on electricity for his/her animals will need to have a backup source of power. A seven to 10-day supply of feed and water should be kept on hand. Producers may want to prepare an emergency kit. Items that might be included in the kit are halters, ropes, feed buckets, medications, first aid supplies, cleaning supplies, flashlights, batteries, cell phone, radio, feed, hay, water and a generator. These are just a few things that a producer might need in an emergency.

An evacuation may need to be part of a producer's disaster preparedness plan. Moving large herds of animals is probably not feasible. However, producers may wish to evacuate a small number of animals that have exceptional genetics. If evacuation is an option, producers will need to prearrange for an evacuation site. They will need to establish a route.

The truck should be full of gas and the trailer hitched during unfavorable conditions. Producers need to leave early. A producer should keep in mind that traffic may be increased during a disaster.

The last thing a livestock owner needs is to be caught in a disaster stuck on a highway.

The producers will need to take feed and hay or prearrange for delivery to the evacuation site. If the animals are to remain on the farm, the producer will need to establish an area that he/she feels is safest depending on what the disaster is.

For example, a pasture with no trees would be safer than a pasture with a few trees that animals would congregate under during a severe storm.

Once the crisis is over, the owner should be prepared to handle injuries and dead animals. Producers need to have a carcass disposal plan ready in advance. Producers need to check with the local and state officials about the laws for disposing of animals. Producers need to realize that some animals may need to be



A producer may want to remove the animals from any area that falls in a flood plain during certain times of the year. (Courtesy photo)

euthanized. Owners need to be prepared to euthanize or contact a veterinarian to this job.

Planning how to deal with a disaster is like writing a will. Most

of us think that we have plenty of time to get it done later. Unfortunately, later usually comes earlier than we like, and we get caught in an emergency with no plan. If a producer would like more information about planning for a disaster, they should go to www. prep4agthreats.org or contact their local county educator.





SOME LIMITATIONS APPLY, CALL OR GO ONLINE FOR DETAILS.

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### CONSERVATION & AGRICULTURE REACH EVERYONE By Sarah Blaney

klahoma is home to more than 18,000 Native American, African-American, Hispanic-American and Asian-American farmers and ranchers. The majority of the minority producers in Oklahoma are Native-American and African-American, but there is a growing number of Hispanic agriculture producers. These individuals operate 12 percent of Oklahoma's farms and ranches.

The land and people of Oklahoma hold a unique spot in American history that resulted in a significant population of Native American and African-American agriculture producers. What we now call "Oklahoma" was the location of the forced resettlement of Native Americans from 1803 to 1834.

During this time period, the focus of the United States government was to remove Native Americans from the eastern part of the United States. During the Civil War, the Five Civilized Tribes (Choctaws, Chickasaws, Cherokee, Creek (Muscogee), and Seminole) fought mainly with the Confederacy. This decision would shape Oklahoma's farming and ranching history.

Following the Civil War, the focus of the U.S. government switched from removal to assimilation. In very general terms, this meant that tribes went from being seen as semi-independent and self-governed to being governed through the laws and statues of the United States.

The land mass of the Five



Emery Fox was able to access a Farm Service Agency Beginning Farmers Loan to start her own ranching operation. (Photo courtesy of Sarah Blaney)

Civilized Tribes was reduced and slavery was abolished. As a result, the newly freed slaves of the tribes began forming their own communities. Following the Civil War, African Americans came to Oklahoma to establish their own communities alongside those of the freedmen.

A significant number of African Americans participated in the land run of 1889, also establishing farms. From 1865 to 1920 more than 50 all-black communities were established. In 1910, there were more than 13,000 farms operated by African-Americans in Oklahoma.

Native Americans and African Americans have strong roots in farming/ranching in Oklahoma because of this history. However, the experience of these farmers and ranchers is a reflection of the African American and Native American experience in the United States.

That history and experience is filled with discrimination that was supported by policies of the U.S. government, which made the difficult job of farming even more cumbersome for these communities.

These policies resulted in significant amounts of land loss for African Americans and Native Americans.

Today, 1,900 farms are operated by African Americans and 14,000 operated by Native-Americans. In comparison, white producers operate more than 100,000 farms in Oklahoma.

For many Native American

and African American farmers, access to information and assistance was and, in some instances, still is a major challenge. In the early 1900s, limited civil rights contributed to a system that made it very difficult for minorities to reach beyond working as farm operators and almost impossible to realize opportunities to own land and operate independently.

President Lincoln established the United States Department of Agriculture in 1862 to serve as the "people's agency." However, for several decades the agency was no different from any other facet of American government, where overt and covert racism was prevalent.

A 2016 article published by "Yes! Magazine" pointed to the United States Commission on Civil Rights' discovery in 1965 that, "the USDA and its agencies excluded African Americans from programs that had raised the economic and educational levels of thousands of rural farmers."

In 1999, the USDA settled the largest civil rights settlement to date agreeing to pay \$2.3 billion to more than 13,000 African American farmers for admitted discriminatory practices.

During the last 18 years, the agency has made significant policy changes, outreach efforts and hiring practices to restore the trust of minority producers. In recent years, the agency has formed committees and advisory groups composed of minority farmers and ranchers to help understand how to better serve minority producers. The agency has invested significant amounts of money into programs earmarked specifically to increase the participation of minority producers with USDA programs.

One of the programs that USDA has established is through their office of Advocacy and Outreach and is called the "the Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Grant Program."

The goal of this program is to "increase equitable participation of socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers in USDA programs... in owning and operating profitable farms/ranches through agriculture programs and services provided by USDA."

In the fall of 2017, the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) received grant funding from this program. The CARE: Conservation and Agriculture Reach Everyone project is a partnership between the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts, the Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project, the South Caddo Conservation District, the North Caddo Conservation District, the West Caddo Conservation District, the Okfuskee County Conservation District, the Muskogee County Conservation District, the Wagoner County Conservation District and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Natural Resources Conservation District.

Our project purpose is to provide information and training to minority agriculture producers about USDA programs. Our project goals include improving communication and relationships between minority producers and the agency, increase participation of minority producers in USDA programs, educate non-minority producers about the experience of minority producers and to provide hands-on learning opportunities about both conservation and agriculture practices.

One of the highlights of the CARE project has been working with local communities to identify minority agriculture producer champions who have had success in utilizing USDA programs for their farming/ranching operations.

These champions serve as ambassadors to their local communities to help build understanding and trust between the community and USDA. Their stories help illuminate a path so that other producers know there is assistance available. These champions are helping to rebuild the trust of minority communities in their government.

That is no easy task. It will take decades of consistent access to information, programs and success stories to build a healthy relationship between minority farmers/ ranchers and the government.

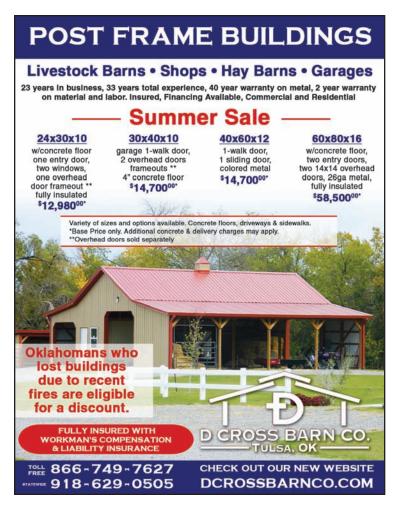
Our champions include eight individuals who are members of tribal nations or are African American. These individuals include folks like Ray Penn, whose great-grandfather came to Lincoln County, Okla., in 1920 to buy land.

Throughout the 20th century, Penn's family experienced discrimination when they attempted to access government programs, but they did not give up. In recent years, Penn has utilized the Natural Resources Conservation Service programs to build ponds, remove invasive species, establish improved grass and install cross fencing.

The champions also include young farmers and ranchers like Emery Fox, a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation from Okmulgee County, was able to access a Farm Service Agency Beginning Farmers Loan to start her own ranching operation.

The farming and ranching history of this land we call Oklahoma and its people is unique. The conservation districts of Oklahoma are committed to preserving the natural resources of our state for all people.

We are proud to be a small part of the story of minority farmers/ ranchers achieving their full potential through our participation in this project.









By Ralph Chain

Owner of Chain Ranch, Ralph Chain, expected to lose his home in Canton, Okla., in the Rhea Fire, but they fortunately did not. (Photo courtesy of Chain Ranch)

happened. To my amazement, he said that everything was still there. The fire went around us. It burned to the south, north, east and west, but our homes were all still there. That was the best news I have ever heard in my life.

While the nearby wheat fields helped the direction of the fire, the firefighters saved our homes. I cannot believe how many firefighters were there and how they risked their own lives to protect others. The firefighters came from many different states to help. When we got home, there were helicopters and airplanes dipping water out of the Canton Lake and one of our 30-acre lakes on the ranch.

Prairie fires are nothing new.

I remember my dad telling about how when they had prairie fires, his mother would take him out in the corn fields to keep them from getting burned up.

Back then there was nothing to stop a prairie fire. The fires took care of the cedar trees so they were not as abundant as they are now. When the country was settled, they put fences on 160-acre homesteads, and the cedar trees have flourished since then.

A big cedar tree will explode about like a can of gasoline. There is no way of putting them out. The only thing to do is get out of the way.

We lost about all of our Lenora ranch, but my grandson, Morey,

who manages that ranch, was able to save most of the cattle by putting them in a wheat field. We lost only a few head and several pastures.

It is amazing how you can lose everything that you have put together over a lifetime in a matter of five minutes with a prairie fire, tornado or other natural disaster.

How true the Bible is when it says that life is but a vapor; it appears for a little while and then vanishes away.

Fearing God and keeping His commandments is really what counts as we live here on earth. When we get to heaven, there will be no prairie fires or tornadoes. We all want to go to heaven.

have seen a lot of things happen in my lifetime. While most were good, I have seen some things that were not so good. One of those was the terrible fire that we just experienced in April.

I have seen fires before. Several years ago one of our ranches in Kansas burned. All we did that winter was build fence, since it was destroyed by the fire. A year ago, my son-in-law, Brad, lost most of his ranch in Major County to fire. It burned up 26 miles of fence on his ranch.

But this fire — I cannot believe how many homes were lost, how many head of livestock were lost and how much land was burned.

The night the fire was headed our direction burning everything in its path, we just knew we were going to lose everything. My daughter, Andrea, came flying down the driveway and said we have got to move or we are going to burn up. She put my wife, Darla, and I in her car and said we have got to hurry because the fire is upon us. She just wanted to get us out of danger.

My son, Monte, sent his wife, kids, and grandchildren to Okeene, Okla., to stay with his daughterin-law's parents. The rest of our family had other places to go. We headed east to get away from the fire, and we ended up 60 miles away in Enid, Okla. We knew when we left that we would never see our home or the other five homes on the ranch again.

We arrived in Enid about 1 a.m., got a motel room and tried to sleep, but there was no sleep. We kept worrying about things at home. About 5:30 a.m. I called my grandson, Newley, to see what had

## -Specialty Crops-

By Everett Brazil, III

klahoma has a variety of crops grown throughout the state, which includes cotton, corn, wheat, sorghum, soybeans and canola. They have long proven themselves as viable for production on the Southern Great Plains. Many other potential "specialty" crops can be grown, however, which could help producers diversify.

"A specialty crop is something that is outside the 'norm,' when we think of common crops," said Steve Upson, a senior horticulture consultant at the Noble Research Institute. "Specialty crops tend to be the vegetables, the fruit, nuts, turf, nurseries — crops that are very intensively managed, and labor would be higher."

While some operations tend toward monoculture, especially with cotton or wheat, some producers may be interested in adopting alternative, or specialty crops, due to how it could improve their operation.

"You get a little better return per acre," he said. "We find that a lot of people who do not have access to a large amount of land and are willing to sweat a little bit can make a supplemental income with specialty crops. In Oklahoma, a lot are sold locally, and that is a farm stand or a you-pick operation, and some have a prescription farm — consumers will pay up front for a share of the product; it takes the financial risk out for the grower."

The Noble Research Center as well as Oklahoma State University have experimented with specialty crops across the state to see what works well for different regions. Two crops potentially viable for Southwest Oklahoma, for instance, are sesame and guar, which have been studied at the Southwest Research and Extension Center, Altus. Gary Strickland is the Jackson County OSU Extension agriculture educator, Altus, Okla., and has been studying sesame for forage opportunities but also sees the potential for grain production.

"Sesame is one of those crops that is very drought tolerant — it doesn't require a lot of water to produce," Jackson said. "Once you get it established, it can do quite well in adverse conditions."

A second benefit, Jackson said, is that it also serves well as a rotation crop, including cotton, wheat and corn. It is also low-cost.

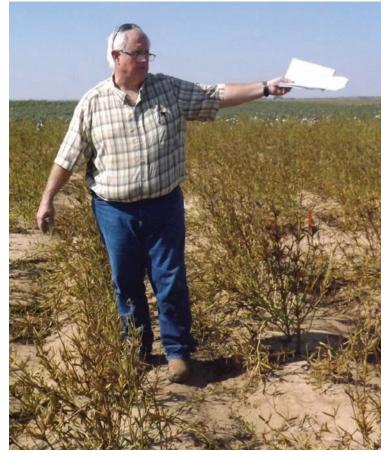
"It's a fairly cheap crop to grow, and so our production inputs can be kept lower," Jackson said. "Under limited irrigation, you gain average 800 to 1,200 pounds an acre."

Jackson has also looked at guar, which is a popular crop in Texas, and has recently made inroads into the Sooner State.

"It's done very well in the arid conditions," he said. "It's a drought-tolerant crop, and we're trying to find rotational dryland crops that could be produced in the area."

Producers wishing to adopt specialty crops should first consult with the OSU Extension Service as well as USDA-Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and they can find expertise as well as assistance and literature to aid in the adoption of specialty crops.

NRCS provides assistance



Jackson County Extension Agent, Gary Strickland discusses guar research at the Southwest Research and Extension Center in Altus, Okla., in October 2016. (Photo by Everett Brazil, III)

through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program, while FSA can provide some funding assistance.

Attending meetings is a way to gain experience, as it can allow producers a chance to talk to experts as well as fellow producers who have already adopted specialty crops.

"I would encourage people to attend as many workshops as they can," Upson said. "If they could work for a farm part time and learn by doing, whether it be an internship or paid employee, it would minimize the risk."

It is also important to have a plan before planting the crops, which includes determining what plants would be grown and the equipment needed to bring it to harvest.

"It takes a lot of planning," Upson said. "Producers don't take into account the resources involved, such as land, water and expertise, skill and knowledge of the crop and marketing — how to sell the crop."

One of the first types of equipment to consider is an irrigation system, as many crops need higher water compared to standard crops like wheat or sorghum.

Producers should also consider whether the crop needs a house, such as hoop house or greenhouse, or if the crop can survive in the open field. The crop itself will help determine which house is most beneficial.

Watermelons and cantaloupes should be grown in a field, as the vines are too large for a structure. Woody plants and tree fruit also do well in an open field. Many produce crops are much more sensitive, however, and should be grown indoors, such as peppers, squash, tomatoes, eggplant, cucumbers and winter-production crops, he said.

Producers also should determine how the crops will be marketed, such as through a private label, or through a farmers' market.

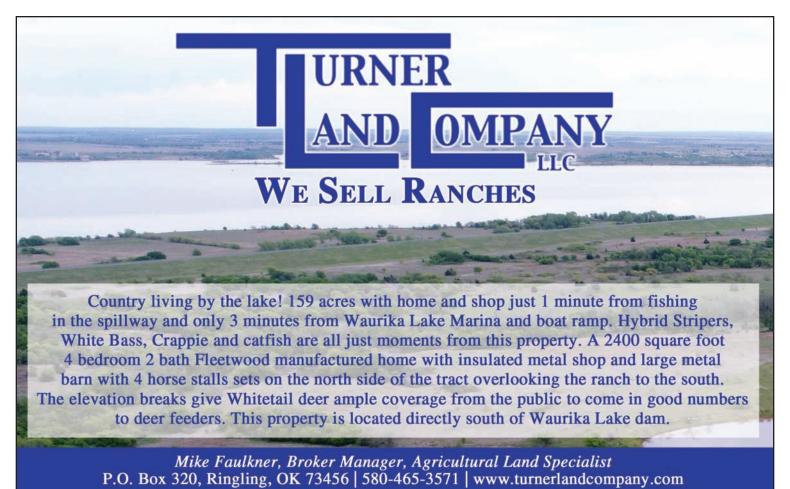
"Some folks who don't really

do well around people and just want to sell it, they're going to sell to the middlemen, but by doing that, they don't make as much of a profit," Upson said. "There's more profit to be made when sold directly to the consumer. Both methods of marketing have their advantages and disadvantages."

Many options are available through specialty crops, and growing them can bring much satisfaction to the operation, whether a small farm or as part of a larger operation, but those interested must be willing to put in the time and money to make it work.

"It's hard work, especially when it is 100 degrees Fahrenheit and the humidity is 60 percent. In the reality, when the bugs and the weeds are coming up, and you're sweating, is it worth it?" he said. "I'd like to see them get started a year ahead of time. You have to think through things and do a lot of reading."





## THE FIRES RAGED ON

By Ddee Haynes



The Rhea Fire killed thousands of cattle and destroyed homes, barns, equipment and the livelihood of many hard-working farmers and ranchers and residents. (Photo courtesy of the Powders family)

T had been more than two months since any moisture fell in western Oklahoma. The winds were fierce for weeks and the lack of moisture caused the grass and forage to become crunchy. A high fire alert and a burn ban were in affect for the majority of western Oklahoma.

I do not believe anyone knows for sure what, or who, started the first spark that set the wild fires full blaze. If it was an accident or intentionally set is still a mystery that may never be solved. Only one small spark is all it took to set a fire that claimed two lives, burned more than 365,000 acres, thousands of head of cattle, hundreds of horses and other livestock not to mention homes, barns, equipment and the livelihood of many hard-working farmers and ranchers and residents. The fire showed no mercy. The fire was like an out of control monster eating everything in its path and often moving and burning at the rate of 50 feet or more in less than 15 seconds. The winds continued to blow with gusts up to 45 mph, making the fire even harder to contain.

Just when it seemed some headway had been made, a flare up from a hot spot or a flying ember would reignite or start another fire.

Hundreds of firefighters and volunteers like rancher Joe Powders, who knows all too well the loss caused by wildfires, worked fiercely and tirelessly battling the flames. In addition to the firetrucks, air tanks, water trucks, dozers and helicopters were brought in to try and contain **See FIRES on page19** 

### FIRES

Hundreds of miles away the smell of smoke and an eerie haze from the fires filled the air.

It seemed as if the world was on fire, and the end was nowhere in sight. But just like the story of David and Goliath, the giant was finally dead, and David prevailed. The unrelenting firefighters and volunteers had finally killed the giant.

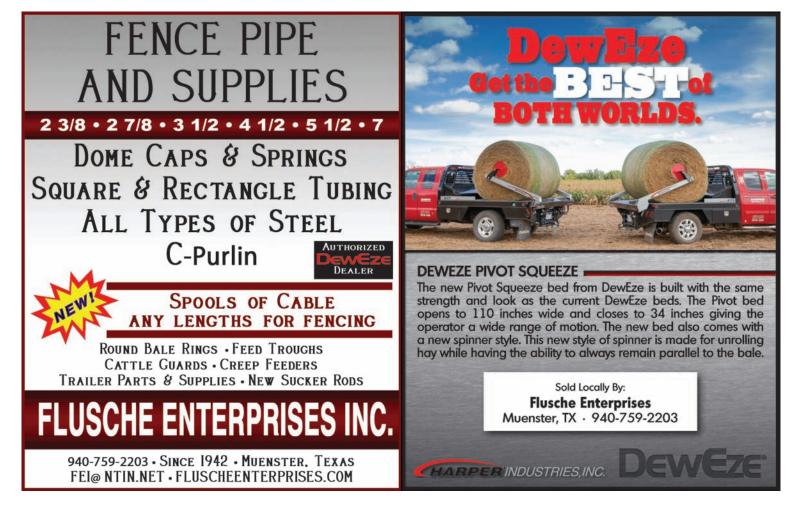
Almost a week after the first spark, the clouds opened, and the rain came down. The prayers for rain had finally been answered. The damage was unspeakable, and many Oklahomans' lives had been completely turned upside down or destroyed beyond repair. But in true Oklahoma fashion, those affected by the fires were not left to rebuild alone.

Before the fires had even been put out, fire relief funds had been set up all over the state. Donations of shelter, food, clothing and furniture began to pour in. Trucks and trailers hauling hay, fencing materials and anything else that might be needed to help rebuild could be seen coming from all directions. The unselfish giving to those affected by the fires was overwhelming. It was such a breath of fresh air to see and hear good news in the media instead of the normal violence and senseless ramble.

Through all the Oklahoma tragedies, there is one thing that remains the same: "No one fights alone, and no one is left behind." That is called Oklahoma strong, and I am proud to be an Okie!



Countless volunteers including rancher Joe Powders, battled the flames. (Photo courtesy of the Powders family)

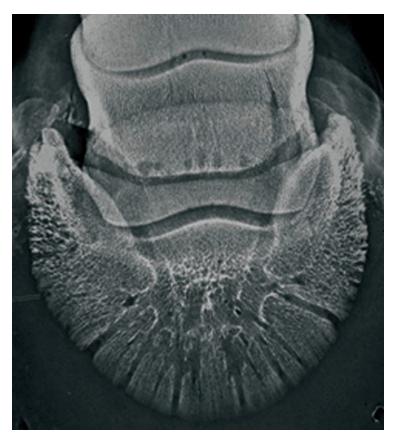


# NAVICULAR DISEASE

avicular 'disease' is a condition that affects the navicular bone, navicular bursa, deep digital flexor tendon and/or the associated ligaments attached to the navicular bone. Navicular disease, navicular syndrome, caudal heel pain syndrome in the horse, or insert some other name, are all terms used to describe the same condition, pain in the heel region of a horse. For the purposes of this article, navicular disease will be the term used to describe pain from the heel region of a horse. Navicular region will refer to the navicular bone, associated ligaments, navicular bursa and deep digital flexor tendon.

Before we can talk about navicular disease, we need to step back and review the normal anatomy. The navicular bone is located behind the coffin joint, within the hoof capsule. The navicular bone articulates (forms a joint) with the coffin bone and short pastern bone, which are located on the front side of the navicular bone.

The deep digital flexor tendon runs on the back side of the navicular bone. The navicular bursa lies between the navicular bone and the deep digital flexor tendon. The bursa is a fluid filled sac that functions as a shock absorber and a lubricant for the deep digital flexor as it passes around the navicular bone. Several other small ligaments help hold the navicular bone in place. These small ligaments are extremely important and frequently contribute By Lauren Lamb, DVM



This radiograph shows an enlarged vascular channels in the distal aspect of the navicular bone (lollipops). This radiographic change is seen with navicular disease. (Photo courtesy of the University of Pennsylvania)

to the horse's pain.

The exact cause of navicular disease is unknown. Several potential causes for the disease have been proposed. Each theory revolves around some sort of trauma to the navicular bone and its associated ligaments, tendons or bursa. Another common theory is interference with the blood supply to the navicular bone. Navicular disease rarely develops in the hind limbs. It is predominantly seen in the front feet of a horse seven to 14 years of age. Thoroughbreds, Quarter Horses and Warmbloods are more commonly affected than other breeds. However, any breed of horse can develop navicular disease.

Lameness is the primary clinical sign seen in a horse with navicular disease. Navicular disease usually affects both front feet, but typically a horse will be more lame in the left or right leg. The lameness may only be seen with the leg on the inside of a small circle or when exercising on hard ground. The lameness will get worse with exercise and improve with rest. Typically Phenylbutazone (Bute) will improve the lameness to some degree.

Diagnosis can be challenging for a horse with navicular disease. The process of isolating the lameness to the heel region of a horse is easy and straight forward. This can be done with a temporary nerve block that will desensitize the horse's heel. Once the lameness is localized to the heel, the real challenge of trying to identify the exact cause of heel pain begins.

Radiographs can be taken to evaluate the coffin joint, navicular bone and angles of the horse's foot. The radiograph will provide little information regarding the soft tissue (ligaments and tendons) surrounding the navicular bone. Ultrasonography is typically used to image soft tissue structures in a horse; however, the location of the navicular bone within the hoof capsule makes ultrasound imaging challenging. The best way to image the navicular region is to use an MRI. The MRI provides the best quality imaging of both soft tissue and bone structures. The hoof wall does not influence the quality of image obtained with an MRI.

Navicular disease, if not chronic and severe, can be treated and managed with a great deal of success. A horse with minimal to no radiographic changes to the navicular bone can have the navicular bursa injected with medication. Another option is to perform an MRI to obtain an exact diagnosis (a strain, sprain or tear of a ligament or inflammation of the navicular bone or bursa, etc.). If an exact diagnosis can be achieved, then a specific therapy such as platelet rich plasma, stem cell, high level laser therapy, etc., can be formed on the injured structure.

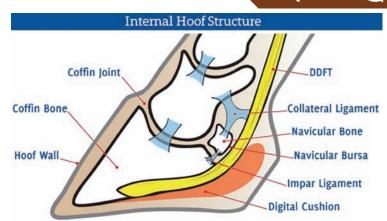
A few options are available for systemic therapy. One option is to administer Bute daily to help control the pain and inflammation. This is a good temporary solution, but not a good option for long term management. Another option is Equioxx. Equioxx is an anti-inflammatory similar to Bute, but without all the harmful side effects to the gastrointestinal tract and kidneys.

Osphos or Tildren are two

medications used to treat navicular disease in horses. These two medications will change the metabolism of the bone and decrease the pain and inflammation within the navicular bone. Frequently a horse with navicular disease will be managed with a combination of navicular bursa injections, Bute and Osphos.

Hoof care plays a big part in a horse developing or managing a horse with navicular disease. A horse with a long toe and/or low heel will experience more trauma to the navicular region. This trauma is caused by increase pressure being placed on the navicular bone by the deep digital flexor tendon. Ideally a horse will have an slightly elevated coffin bone heel and the break over should be 15 mm in front of the point of the frog.

A rocker toe shoe may be needed to help achieve a break over 15 mm in front of the frog.

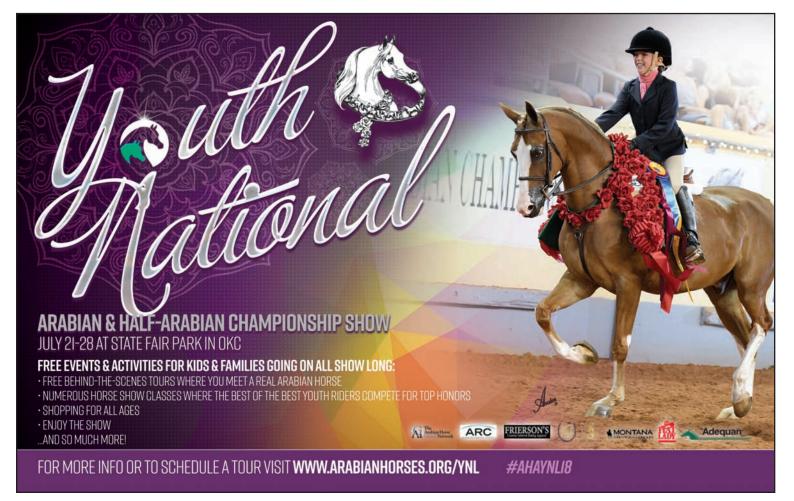


This schematic image of the horse's foot shows some, but not all, of the important structures within the foot. (Photo courtesy of the Horse Forum)

A horse with a low heel will may need a heel wedge or elevation. The heel wedge can be built into a shoe, or a pad with a wedge can be used. The goal is to get the heel of the coffin bone two to three degrees higher than the toe of the coffin bone.

In conclusion, navicular disease is a common disease seen in performance horses. With proper diagnosis, therapy and hoof care, most horse with navicular disease can continue to perform at a high level for several years. Significant damage to the navicular bone, seen on radiographs, would be a poor prognostic indicator for long term soundness. Consulting with your veterinarian on which therapeutic plan best fits your horse is highly recommended.

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## LIFESTYLE Fred Morris TRANSPORTATION By Judy Wade

n the 1950s, transportation was not just a means of going places. It was the name Lof what is perhaps the greatest greyhound racing dog to ever come out of Oklahoma. Fred Morris' "Transportation" was named Outstanding Sire in the greyhound world in 1956 to 1957. He and his offspring were "going places" in the greyhound racing world, with his pups making him a symbol of speed and potency.

Born in 1887 in San Saba County, Texas, Morris moved to Cornish, Indian Territory, when he was five. He married Orela Baucom, and they had three children.

Beginning with working for his father in J.H. Morris and Sons Grocery and Market in Ringling, Okla., Morris himself was a businessman for 42 years before going into ranching and dog racing. He operated Morris Meat Market on Main Street where most of his family worked.

Daughter Bernie became a teacher and married Delbert Brazeal, who eventually bought out the meat market and started Delbert's Grocery in several surrounding towns. His Ringling store became Syble's.

Son H.L. became a businessman in Ardmore, Okla., owning a furniture store and other enterprises.

Daughter Oneta married E.C. (Dick) Dillon and opened a successful ladies' clothing store in Ringling. Dillon went into the greyhound business with his father-in-law.

Morris and Dillon maintained a state-ofthe-art kennel behind the family home on the east side of Ringling. Morris' grandson Guy Dillon recalled the routine each morning and night. The kennel housed more than 100 dogs and had double-decked cages for feeding. Each dog was fed twice daily and had a special ration made of ground meat, cracklings and dog food mixed by Dick Dillon on-site. Each dog's food was weighed. One group of dogs was turned out at a time, and each dog soon learned where his cage was and jumped right in and the door was shut. When those were finished, they were turned out and the process was repeated until



This old photo shows Morris with some of Transportation's offspring. (Courtesy of Guy Dillon)

all were fed.

"We kept milk cows, and as soon as the puppies could get around, they were fed a mixture of cow's milk and dog food in addition to their mothers' milk," Dillon added. "Lonnie Allen was responsible for the cows and the milking."

Young dogs were kept in pairs in runs under long sheds, allowing them to exercise and develop. A straight training track was built northwest of Ringling where the young dogs began their lessons, chasing a rabbit that ran to the end of the track and escaped into a pen to be used again. A modern oval training track in Cornish provided the next step. Muzzles kept the dogs from fighting each other and biting the lure that became standard use instead of a live rabbit, Guy continued.

The dogs that showed promise were sent to trainer Skinny Beckner to finish them for the real races at the tracks, beginning with matched races to determine their speed index before entering the major races.

Breeding was another big part of the business for Morris.

"Granddad studied the bloodlines and figured out which crosses would produce the best dogs," Guy explained. "People from all over bred their females to Transportation. All his pups had "Trans" as part of their name. Some dogs would arrive by train in crates, and we would pick them up, breed them and ship them home. Others people hauled their dogs in trailers and stayed with us. The breeding fee was \$250, big money back then."

"These dogs were hot blooded; they were not pets," Dillon continued.

Morris' reputation was such that some people bought dogs from him without having See MORRIS page 29



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Additionally, as the founder of the Center for the Study of Self-Discipline (CSSD), his insights on improving selfdiscipline, overcoming procrastination and enhancing productivity have been featured on Fox and Friends, Oprah radio, CNN and in Fast Company, Forbes and Success Magazine.

His first book "Take the Stairs" was #1 on the Wall St Journal Best Seller lists and #2 on the New York Times. His newest book "Procrastinate on Purpose: 5 Permissions to Multiply Your Time" recently released and also became an instant National Bestseller.







### Continued from page 26

## Morris

seen them. A newspaper article in 1949 proclaimed, "Fred Morris has gone to the dogs." Purina Dog Chow even featured the kennel in a full page ad in several magazines in March 1955. It showed a picture of one of Transportation's pups, Dick mixing feed and a group of dogs ready for training

Morris's yellow Lincoln and streamlined dog trailer were familiar sights in Ringling. He owned several different cars over the years, always yellow Lincolns. One story said Morris drove his Lincoln into a filling station for gas, and the attendant noticed Transportation in the back seat clawing at the upholstery.

"Hey, Fred, this dog is tearing up your back seat," he said.

"That's okay. He paid for it," Morris replied.

Pari-mutuel betting made Florida the most popular racing state, followed by Kansas. Morris kept kennels of about 60 dogs each in Portland, Ore., and Miami and Jacksonville, Fla., and although he raced all over the



This photo shows Morris' Lincoln and dog trailer in front of the family home. (Courtesy of Guy Dillon)

country, Florida was the main place Morris ran his dogs.

Morris' racing career spanned many years and saw many wins. An article in "The Daily Ardmoreite" in 1951 read, "Morris' kennel is down to 103 dogs. His greyhounds earned \$7,000 in the first 50 days of racing in Florida this year."

Again, that was big money back then.

Although still popular in places today, greyhound racing has seen a decline after reaching its peak in the early '90s with attendance topping 3.5 million annually at the 50 racetracks still operating then.

According to Guy, when syndicates began taking over race tracks, Morris refused to join, preferring to remain independent. That eventually prevented him from being able to enter the big money races, so he sold out and retired.

Upon his death in 1960 at age 14, Transportation was buried in front of the family home in Ringling where four generations have lived. He got his own tombstone, a testament to the impact he had on the lives of the Morris family.

Morris passed away in 1968, but not before he had made a big paw print on greyhound racing nationwide.  $\mathbb{Q}$ .



# COWBOYS ON CANVAS

e never dreamed he would be on television. The humble artist with a kind smile expressed his vision to tell the stories of cowboys through his art, but God had other plans for the artist. Through his new television series titled "Art of a Cowboy," Steve Boaldin meets with different cowboys and ranchers across the Midwest to share their stories on the screen as well as on canvas.

A cowboy himself, Boaldin's own story began on a ranch in Elkhart, Kan., in 1962. The most enjoyable part of his childhood was working cattle as a family.

"I was very fortunate that God allowed me to be born and raised on a ranch or none of this would've happened," the cowboy explained. "We were big farmers and ranchers, but my particular interest was ranching."

His father made sure all five of his children knew how to ride horses. They attended many rodeos throughout the years, a sport that Boaldin picked up on. His parents did not want him riding rough stock because of the danger involved, but the 10-year-old cowboy had other plans.

"I had three buddies who had already been riding steers for a couple of years, and I wanted to do it so bad," he added. "One of my teachers secretly entered me in a steer riding contest in Clayton, N.M. I told my parents I was just going to go and watch the other guys."

The young steer rider placed fourth in the rodeo and won a belt buckle.

"I had to hide that buckle for a couple of weeks because I did not know how to tell my parents," he added.

Boaldin finally told his parents the truth. While he was in trouble for deceiving them, they decided to give him another chance at the sport. He went on to win first place in the next three rodeos. He started riding bareback broncs and continued to rope calves, but bull riding was his best sport.

"Cowboys are a symbol of rugged, tough Americans," he said. "Cowboys will always be something that's bigger than life to me."

The cowboy lifestyle would become the focal point of his art, which started at three years old. Boaldin told funny stories with his little cartoons.

His family fostered his passion for drawing by keeping his artwork. His grandmother, who was also a good artist, noticed the young artist's talent. She gave him Walter Foster art books that helped young artists learn how to draw. She also encouraged him by providing him with his first paint set. A self-described "average student," Boaldin did not attend a formal college after graduating high school but worked on the family ranch instead.

"I had no plans to go to school because I was just young and did not know what I wanted to do," he added.

The year before he got married, some locals met a traveling art teacher named George "Dord" Fitz and took a few classes. The locals told the artist about Boaldin's abilities and suggested he help the young artist.

"His first thoughts were 'There is no way an 18-year-old was going to be serious about art," Boaldin explained. "He was in his 70s at that time, but we just clicked when we met."

Fitz was generous and allowed the Kansas native to take two classes for the price of one for two years. Before, he had worked primarily with black and white, but he began to learn to understand color theory and how to apply paint from Fitz. He described the experience as "a whole new world."

"It was a big change for me because not only do you have to pay attention to the values, but you have to pay attention to hues," the artist explained.

At the end of those two years, Boaldin married his high school sweetheart in 1981, and he quit taking classes to focus on providing for his family.

In 1982, he decided to get serious about his art and moved to Amarillo, Texas, where Fitz had a gallery. He picked back up on taking lessons from him while working full-time in feedlots. Boaldin lost many hours of sleep, but his hard work paid off when his mentor began selling his pieces.

"Even at that age, he was very encouraging," he explained. "He would tell people 'Someday this guy is going to be famous, and you need to get in on his early work.""

While he almost expected to be famous, Boaldin said it did not work quite that way.

"I heard this guy say it takes thousands of miles of canvas to improve," the artist said. "That is basically what I've found to be true. We want to throw some stuff away, but at the same time, it's good to see where you come from."

In 1985, the Boaldins moved to Elkhart, Kan., where he started working in feedlots and with his dad on the ranch. However, it did **Continued on page 32** 



### **Continued from page 30**

not take the artist long to realize he could not support his family there, but he wanted to stay in the industry.

"I couldn't get the cowboy stuff out of my blood," the cowboy explained.

Throughout the next few years, he worked on various feedlots in Texas, but he found he enjoyed the ranch life better. He took a job in Miami, Texas, managing 19-sectioned pastures. They ran 1,200 head of yearlings and farmed 600 acres of wheat.

"It was 10 days a week," Boaldin joked. "It was one of those deals where I really had to grow up really fast. I knew that was not a place where I was going to end up, but I'm thankful for the experiences. I know what it takes when I do a painting because I've been there."

The experiences on ranches and feedlots gave him a subject for his art, but his wife Donna was credited for pushing the artist to pursue his passion. She knew he wanted to be an artist, and she suggested Boaldin get a commercial art degree.

"I knew I would never be able to work 60, 70 or 80 hours a week on a farm and be an artist," he explained. "Realistically, I needed to get in the field in some way."

They relocated to Edmond, Okla., where he was able to get a grant to further his education. The Kansas native enrolled in production art at Platt College.

Boaldin was later hired by "The Oklahoman" in their advertising department, but he became an editorial artist within six months. The artist honed his skills drawing illustrations, which he said helped his art grow.

"I've always studied the illustrators of the '70s," Boaldin added. "Those guys got to paint and draw every day. By the time computers started coming in, the artists didn't have to do as many illustrations."

The artist was fortunate to have several opportunities to work on illustrations. He also learned how to work quickly, a skill that benefited him later. He was a commercial artist for "The Oklahoman" for a total of 24 years. When he was laid off in October 2016, he did not know what God had in store for the next chapter of his life.

"I do believe in God," he began. "I believe in his timing. He always kind of pushes me to the last second."

His next chapter began when the owner of the Dean Lively Gallery in Edmond, Okla., Elaine Dean, hosted an opening night for the artist. Saraa Kami left her card with his wife



Steve Boaldin's studio is located in Edmond, Okla. (Photo courtesy of Steve Boaldin)

#### Donna.

At the urging of his wife, the husband-wife duo met with Kami the following day. The artist told her about visiting with a client, who happened to be a Drummond, at the Tallgrass Art Gallery in Pawhuska, Okla., earlier that year.

"I wanted to get some different cowboys and go to a different ranch," Boaldin recalled.

He visited their ranch in Hominy, Okla., in spring 2017, where he took approximately 1,200 pictures of the cowboys, animals and scenery. He then used the material to create more art for his collection.

"I said this is something that just really hit me," he recalled. "I would love to go to ranches all across the United States and tell their stories."

When he told her this, Kami knew how to tell their stories to the masses. She envisioned a television series centered around the idea of visiting ranches and telling their story on canvas as well as on screen. Ralph and Helen Mason sponsored their new endeavor.

"Within five days of conception of the idea, we were on my family's ranch filming the first episode," the artist recalled. "It was that quick, and believe me, I was a deer in the headlights."

They had enough footage to create a trailer for "Art of a Cowboy," which Kami sent to Oklahoma Education Television Authority. OETA bought the idea from that trailer, listing Kami and Boaldin as co-creators of the show.

"I knew we had to get to work," he ex-

plained. "We had all the footage from my family's ranch, but that wasn't enough to make a show."

They then started filming their pilot episode at the Cross 3 Ranch in McLean, Texas, where he met cowboy preacher and owner of the Cross 3 Ranch, Ronnie Ferguson, and his family. The family shared their ranching practices and discussed the devastation of the 2017 wildfires.

David Canavesio filmed and produced the first three episodes of "Art of a Cowboy," capturing the Kami and Boaldin's vision on camera.

"Due to some changes in David's life at the time I needed to find some people who could do the show on a higher demanding deadline situation," he added. "My new producers, filmers and editors are Chris Hanna, and Nina Hedburg, and various people that have really helped on set. They have caught that vision as well and are working hard to make the show better and better."

Still filming their first season, Boaldin is getting familiar with being on camera.

"It's gotten more interesting and fun," Boaldin explained. "I'm starting to relax, and I get to make new friends every time I go somewhere."

After filming on-site, Boaldin creates five pieces of art, telling a story of the ranch. He decides what elements, whether it be a person or the ranch, he wants to showcase.

"It's hard to align to what would be the most touching part of a show," he added. "When **Continued on page 34** 



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### **Continued from page 32**

audiences get to meet these people on film and then paint a picture that looks like them or has an aspect of what they saw, it makes a difference."

It is important to note that the success of "Art of a Cowboy" is a group effort, Boaldin explained. Vice president of OETA, Bill Perry's constructive influence has added to the show's creativity. The show's producer, Elle Jewell, has been with the show since the first day and Marilyn Ratzlaff has done research for Boaldin, both have contributed to the success of the show.

With the additional help of the show's sponsors, producers, and film crew, "Art of a Cowboy" is nominated for a 2018 Emmy Award.

"I would also like the thank the Legacy Planning Partners group here in Oklahoma City who have and are still helping in so many ways to keep this vision alive," Boaldin explained. "Their vision is also the same as mine, and I believe that God has put us all together as a team as the project evolves to the next level."

That next level is promoting "Art of a Cowboy" on a national stage. With the support of Chris Hanna and Nina Hedburg, the show was recently picked up by The Cowboy Channel. Boaldin said they hope to add more sponsors to be able to share more stories of United States ranchers.

"That's what is fun for me is being able to tell the true story," he explained. "The show is educational to the western life and world of cowboys. They are still out there, producing your food."

The stories are not only shared on film, but they are also available at Dean Lively Gallery in Edmond, Okla., the Frame Masters Gallery in Edmond, Okla. and the Adobe Western Art Gallery in Fort Worth.

For many years, Boaldin studied styles of other artists, trying to emulate their style. He realized God provided each artist with a gift of seeing the world differently, and each expresses them differently on canvas. Today, the Kansas native has settled into his own style.

"I'm finally settling into who I am and trying to improve and be confident in this ability that God has given me," he added.

Like many artists, he can be his own worst critic. The artist does not sign his name on each piece until he is happy with the outcome.

While he has signed his name on many pieces of art, his favorite is always the one he is currently working on. While he has experience using various mediums including watercolors, charcoal and colored pencils, his favorite medium is oils.

"They have a richness that you can't quite get with other mediums," the artist added. "You don't put them behind glass. They demand a higher price because they are the ultimate art."

Boaldin owed his success as an artist and television star to many people. However, none of it was possible without the support of his wife of almost 37 years, Donna, and their children — Lacey, Clayton and Tanner.

Art of a Cowboy starring Steve Boaldin will air on OETA and The Cowboy Channel. To see the program's schedule, visit www. ArtofaCowboy.com. 🕵



### **PHOTO DETAILS**

(Top to bottom) This painting is one of the pieces from his pilot episode of "Art of a Cowboy" on the Cross 3 Ranch. It is titled "The Empty Saddle." This oil painting titled "Sunrise on 3 Point Ranch" took the artist a couple weeks to create. (Art courtesv of Steve Boaldin)



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- 2015 Mare by Metallic Cat out of a daughter of Dual Pep
- 2014 Stallion by Dual Rey out of a money earning daughter of High Brow Hickory who also produced 6 NCHA money earners of over \$125,000. great prospect
- 2014 Blue Roan daughter of A Streak of Fling an absolute doll to be around, trained on barrels in foal to Metallic Gray 2015 Stallion by Hydrive Cat out of a granddaughter of Docs Hickory super disposition broke to ride
- 2006 Bay Stallion by Paddys Irish Whiskey out of a granddaughter of Doc Tari
- 2017 Stallion by Smooth As A Cat out of a daughter of Hes A
- Peptospoonful 2012 Gelding by Doc Tivio Goldseeker big nice gelding used for all phases of ranchwork, - gather, sort, ship or brand. Been there – done that kind of horse. Anyone can ride
- 2016 Gelding by Doc Tivio Goldseeker out of a granddaughter of Mr Gun Smoke - lots of color
- 2015 Gelding by Smart N Pepto out of a daughter of Two ID Sweet Jack with over 400 AQHA roping points.
- 2016 Gelding by Cat Ichi out of a daughter of Herman Goldseeker
- 2016 Brown Gelding by Once In A Blu Boon out of a daughter of High Brow • Cat
- 2016 Palomino Gelding by Hydrive Cat out of granddaughter of Smart Little Lena - smaller type horse
- 2016 Sorrel Gelding by Show Me A Song Joes out of a daughter of • Sensation Cash
- 2016 Gelding by Bay John Goldseeker out of a daughter of CD Olena
- 4 geldings by World Champion Show Me A Song Joes out of daughters of Mr Baron Red & Two Eyed Red Buck
- 2016 Stallion by Hydrive Cat out of a daughter of Royal Fletch rides nice .
- 2016 Bay Roan Gelding by Joe Jack Red out of a daughter of The Denver Bartender
- 2016 Bay Roan Gelding by Rhinestone Bartender out of a granddaughter of Leo Goldseeker HPI Eligible
- Compete dispersal of long time Liberal, Kansas breeders Darrel and Georgia Taylor, own son of Paddys Irish Whiskey, broodmares, 2 yr olds, and vearlings
- 2016 Buckskin Gelding by Mr Tyree Drifter out of a daughter of Zan Juan Buck
- 2015 Roan stallion by Royal Blue Quixote out of a daughter of Zans Diamond Shine - great disposition
- 2016 Sorrel Gelding by Corona Caliente out of a daughter of Mr Baron Red - HPI Eligible
- 2016 Buckskin daughter of Herman Goldseeker out of Audacious To A Te mare
- 2016 Bay Roan mare by Rhinestone Bartender out of a daughter of Smart Aristocrat - HPI Eligible 2016 Bay Roan mare by Rhinestone Bartender out of a daughter of Bay .
- Starlight HPI Eligible 2016 Buckskin mare by Roosters Wrangler and out of a daughter of High
- Brow Cat
- 2016 Once In A Blu Boon mare out of a daughter of Smart Mate 2016 Bay Roan mare by Rhinestone Bartender out of a daughter of King W Goldseeker HPI Eligible 2016 Palomino daughter of Two ID Sweet Jack out of a daughter of Poco
- Dot Lena HPI Eligible 2016 Buckskin daughter of Reds Diamond Jack out of a daughter of Two Eyed Red Buck – HPI Eligible
- 2016 Palomino daughter of Reds Diamond Jack out of a daughter of Two Eyed Red Buck - HPI Eligible
- 2017 Brown filly by Hickory Holly Time out of a daughter of Metallic Cat (Carrera Cat) AQHA Superior Heeling mare
- 2015 Stallion by Kit Kat Sugar LTE \$240,900 and out of a daughter of Dual Pep LTE \$63,819 who has also produced earners of \$248,633
- 2016 Red Roan Mare by Bet Hesa Cat out of a granddaughter of Freckles Playboy
- 2014 Palomino Gelding by Fuel N Shine out of daughter of Leo Malbec broke nice
- A nice selection of broke ponies

LIFESTYLE



## Country Crème Brûlée

Servings: 4 Total Time: 1 hour

### Ingredients

cup heavy cream
cup milk
tup vanilla bean (split)
egg yolks
whole egg
tup sugar
Brown sugar
Optional: fresh fruit as garnish

### Directions

Combine heavy cream, milk and vanilla bean. Heat to boil. Remove from heat and steep 10 minutes with vanilla bean. Scrape bean seeds into the milk mixture. With an electric mixer, combine eggs and sugar. Add the milk mixture in a steady stream. Strain mixture through a fine strainer. Skim foam.

Divide into four small ramekins (about 4-ounces each), place in baking dish and pour enough hot water around ramekins to come 1/2 way up the sides. Place in 325 degrees Fahrenheit oven for approximately 25 to 30 minutes, until just set. Cover top with brown sugar. Caramelize the tops with a kitchen torch.



"This fancy French dessert may seem daunting, but it is really a very simple dessert that does not take much skill to create. The custard has a rich vanilla flavor, but my favorite part is the crunch texture of the brûléed sugar on top. If you don't already have kitchen torch this recipe will give you a reason to buy one!"

-Lacey

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# WHERE THE PAVED ROAD ENDS

hen we were kids, our most anticipated time of the year was summer. Summer break was meant to be a time to let our brains have a vacation from our studies, a time for Dick and Jane to run and play, barefoot outside with Spot.

I'm pretty sure our summer breaks, here in Oklahoma, were scheduled around the heat indices. We started school after Labor Day, when the temperatures began cooling off, and we got out of school in May, when the temperatures began heating up.

Our schools did not have any air conditioning. Can you imagine today's little tykes, Braxlee and Rivers having to go to school without any air conditioning?

My husband, G.W., remembered helping in the hay fields when he was 10 years old. He was in charge of bringing water and tools out to the guys working in the hay meadow. He wasn't big enough to push the starter button Back then, it was in the floorboard of the truck.

With the truck in gear, he would get down to push in the starter, and then he would jump back up in the seat to steer it out to the pasture. He played out of the way and stayed near the truck listening for his daddy to whistle for him to come out to them.

He entertained himself without an iPad or cell phone. Can you imagine today's kids entertaining themselves while keeping an ear open for instruction in the hot Oklahoma sun without sunscreen?

Before he was old enough to help in the hayfield, he hung



Three-year-old G.W. Watkins spent quite a bit of time on his "horse.' (Photos courtesy of Beth Watkins)

around the house with his mom. He was around the age of five when the neighbors brought him a Ginny. As the stock trailer was backing in, the little cowboy, with gun and holster on his hips, was standing off to the side with his daddy, and the donkey began braying. With raw excitement he squealed, "Do you hear my horse, Daddy?" That summer, the little cowboy and his horse had many adventures.

One special activity was prospecting for gold. G.W. would lead his "horse" to the front porch where he could get on her, then ride out to the garden where he would pick the ripe cantaloupe or as little George would call them, "gold nuggets."

One day his momma was at the kitchen window watching her baby boy ride his "horse." When they were approaching the gate, the tiny cowboy hollered, "Whoa," but the stubborn Ginny hesitated to respond to the order. When she finally did, G.W. went flying forward and hit the ground.

He picked himself up, dusted himself off, put his little cowboy hat back on his head, walked straight up to the culprit, grabbed her halter and punched her square in the nose and said, "I said woah, you son of a 'biscuit.'"

One of G.W.'s favorite summer memories is from when he was 12 years old. It was the year he and his buddies used his dad's chainsaw to build a treehouse down by the creek.

I cannot imagine today's children enjoying that free spirit of adventure and surviving. Sure it sounds a little on the dangerous side, but in those days, children learned responsibility early on. Also, in those days, we didn't have dangerous things like Tide Pods lying around the house.

When I was a little girl, we lived in a trailer house that was parked in the front corner of the owner's 10 acres in west Tulsa.

We did not have any air conditioning, but we did have handheld games like a View Master, and an Etch A Sketch.

We also found hours of entertainment standing in front of an elm tree poking yellow worms with a stick. Our yard was fenced in by barbed wire. We had a metal swing set and a big wooden spool. We rode our bikes on a gravel driveway and drank water from a garden hose.

With our imagination, we could turn our yard into an amusement park. Each ride cost two tickets, which we had made ourselves.

I pushed our customers on the swing set or moved a rope, so they could take a trip down the slide. The wooden spool ride was the most dangerous. You could only ride that one when you were sure Mama was not watching.

I helped them stand on it and then roll it as they walked on it. You could win a stuffed animal if you could toss a dry cow patty across a line. Riding the pretend bull on the propane tank was the most popular ride.

My sister, brother and I could play outside all day long. We did not have to walk barefoot in the snow uphill both ways to get to school, like our parents did, but we did have to walk across a scary cattle guard and cross an old twolane road to stand in a ditch to wait for the school bus.

I know as a parent I would like to bubble wrap my babies to keep them safe. But truthfully, our kids get just one childhood. This summer, help them unplug and encourage them to explore and use their imagination.







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# Life of a Ranch Wife

hen you think of cowboys what comes to mind? Is it the big black hat? Perhaps their boots and spurs? How about the horses that they are mounted on? All in all, a cowboy cannot do much cowboyin' without a good ranch horse under him.

Some ranches have done away with horses completely and use modern conveniences such as four wheelers, calf tables and dart guns to get done what needs to be done on the ranch.

Others choose to stick with what they know and trust, and that is working horseback. Horses are used in almost every aspect of ranch work — gathering cattle and driving them to new pasture or to the pen to be worked. They are used to ride fence and check for areas that are in need of repair and roping and dragging calves to the branding fire.

A horse can take you a lot of places you cannot get to in a vehicle. A horse can break through brush after a runaway yearling. Canyons or creeks can be ridden where a truck or four wheeler would never make it down an old cow trail.

The neighbor has some cattle that he can't pen with his four wheeler and needs them taken to the sale barn. He often calls the cowboy who saddles ol' bay, loads him in the trailer and heads to the pasture down the road.

He and his buddy unload and drive the cattle to the pen, or they catch them in the pasture, drag them in the trailer, and haul them out. All this could not have been done without a horse.

What makes a good ranch horse? We have all heard the old saying "practice makes perfect." Well, that goes for horses too. Long miles and wet saddle blankets, the more they are used and the more experience they get, the better they become.

A cowboy depends on his horse so he has to be able to trust and count on him. The days are long and the work is hard so the horse has to be able to hold up. A ranch horse listens to his cowboy and does as he is instructed. When sorting cattle, the horse has to be agile and be



Horses are used in nearly every area of ranching including working cattle in the pen. (Photo by Lanna Mills)

able to quickly cut the cow out of the herd. When tying down cattle, the horse must keep the rope tight for the cowboy. When a cowboy dismounts, the horse must stand and wait for the cowboy. You sure don't want a horse running off and leaving you to walk two miles back to the truck.

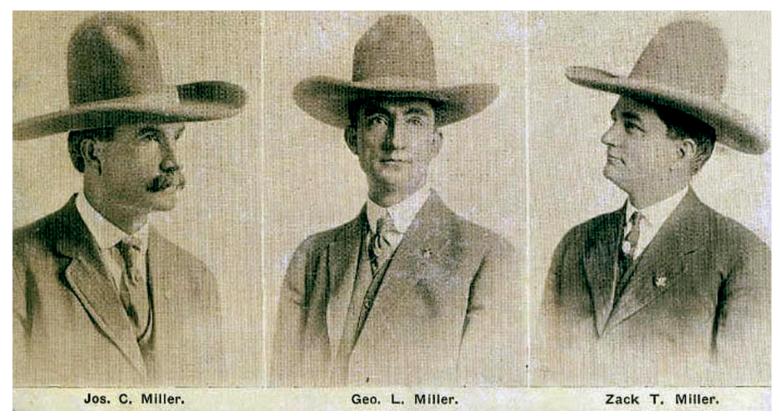
For those little cowpokes just starting out, trustworthiness is the most important quality to look for in a horse for them. Old ranch horses make very good starter horses. Our little boy loves to ride and though he is not even three years old yet, he thinks he is just as much a cowboy as any of the guys around. He is eager to learn, and we trust our horses to keep him safe while he learns and builds his confidence.

As the world evolves, we find that many things are being replaced by modern technology and instruments.

For many ranchers, tradition is key and we are holding on to the way we know and love. It has worked for as long as we can recall. I do not know a cowboy around who would willingly give up being able to saddle up their cowpony and put in a day's work.

## **101 Ranch** <u>BEGINNING OF THE END</u>

By Laci Jones



Joe Miller died from carbon monoxide poisoning, and George Miller died in car accident. Zack Miller took over the 101 Ranch operations following their deaths in the late '20s. (Courtesy photo)

fter the height of the 101 Ranch, the days of the Miller empire were numbered. The success of the 101 Ranch came at a price as all three Miller brothers eventually became bachelors.

After Joe and Lizzie Miller's separation, Joe went back on the road to manage the great 101 Ranch Wild West Show in 1916 to 1918. He returned when his mother Mary Miller became ill. She was diagnosed with cancer. She later died on July 28, 1918, on the ranch surrounded by family.

Still, the ranch, along with the shows and movies, continued to

thrive throughout the early '20s. However, the nearby Salt Fork River flooded the area in 1923 and again in 1926.

Then, the ranch succumbed to the Oklahoma drought following the 1926 floods, which caused crops like corn to fail. The Millers developed a new variety of corn to withstand Mother Nature's wrath, and they continued on.

By the mid-'20s, the 101 Ranch Wild West Show began to lose money despite the brother's best efforts. In 1926 the traveling wild west show lost a staggering \$119,970, according to Michael Wallis, author of "Real Wild West."

During this time, 58-year-old Joe Miller married a woman half his age in Chicago. A Michigan native, Mary Verlin met the eldest Miller brother while visiting her aunt and uncle. After they were married, they traveled to the next performance on the road. They celebrated their new union on the road with a grand party with more than 700 guests, according to Wallis.

They returned in the spring 1927, where a Ponca Indian celebration took place recognizing the marriage of Mary Verlin and Joe Miller. Their son, Will Brooks Miller, was born in May that same year. However, the lavish parties and celebrations could not mask the fact the 101 Ranch was struggling across different fronts.

In October, Joe Miller was found dead in his garage. It became apparent the cause of his death was carbon monoxide poisoning. The funeral took place on October 24, and family and friends including the Ponca Indians mourned the death of Joe Miller. He was buried by his mother who died almost 10 years prior.

"The show will go out as usual – that is what Joe wanted," said George Miller in the famous 101 Ranch white house after his death.

The show did go on in the spring 1928 with George and Zack Miller taking the reins in management. However, the bills kept piling up at the ranch. George, who was known as the Miller brother who controlled the financial aspects of the 101 Ranch, zeroed in on the oil business by heavily mortgaging the family's holdings, according to Wallis.

The brothers then attempted to sell the Wild West show. Upon viewing the contract between the Millers and the American Circus Corporation, George discovered a clause that gave the corporation the right to use the Miller name, and he refused to sign the contract. The deal ultimately fell through, and the show went on the road again in January 1929.

In February after a trip to Texas, George went to Ponca City Arcade Hotel to play cards with "a few cronies," according to Wallis. The weather turned sour, and roads were unsuitable for travel.

Despite efforts to keep George at the hotel for the night, he bet that he could make it home in record time and took off in the middle of the night in his Lincoln roadster, which overturned on a curved road around 2 a.m. At the age of 47, George died in a car accident on Highway 77.

His funeral was held in Ponca City, and he and was buried next to his mother and brother. All that was left to run the massive empire the Miller family built was Zack Miller. While he had help from other family members including nephews, Zack could not save the 101 Ranch.

Read the final article about the 101 Ranch in the next issue of OKFR. Q

References:

Wallis, Michael. Real Wild West.

Collings, Ellsworth, Miller England, Alma. The 101 Ranch.



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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### Magnolia Festival of Oklahoma

#### MAY 31-JUNE 2 • DURANT

Choctaw Event Center. Durant, OK 74701. Honoring the heritage of Durant, also known as the "Magnolia Capital of Oklahoma," theMagnoliaFestivalofOklahoma will feature games and festivities perfect for a fun-filled family weekend. Festivities kick off on Memorial Day Weekend with the 77th annual Durant Riding Club Magnolia Rodeo. Festivities continue May 31 to June 2 with a variety of activities including a parade, 5K Fun Run, a bike tour, traditional Choctaw dancers and the Choctaw Princess Pageant. See www.magnoliafestival.com for details.

#### Redbud Spectacular Horse Show

MAY 31-JUNE 2 • OKC

Oklahoma State Fairgrounds. Oklahoma City, OK 73107. The Oklahoma Ouarter Horse Association hosts the annual Redbud Spectacular at the Oklahoma State Fair Park. Come and cheer on competitors as they show their skills in roping, Western riding, speed events, reining, barrel racing and more from all different classes at this 11-day equestrian show. It is an American Quarter Horse Association sanctioned event, and riders who successfully compete in their category can move on to the AQHA World Championship Show. Visit www.okgha.com for additional information.

#### **Route 66 Days**

#### JUNE 1-3 • ELK CITY

Ackley Park & Retail District. Elk City, OK 73644. Route 66 Days in Elk City features fun and excitement for the whole family. Shop 'til you drop in beautiful downtown at Route 66 Days as over 40 retail merchants roll out the savings for the once a year sale. There will also be a youth basketball tournament as well as a golf tournament for sports lovers and a citywide garage sale, assuring there is something for everyone at Route 66 Days.

#### SOLA Sale

#### JUNE 6 • ADA

Sola Livestock Market. Ada, OK 74821. Come on out every Wednesday at 9 a.m., where we will be selling calves, yearlings, bulls, pairs and cows. For additional information, visit www.solallc.com or call 580-436-5033.

#### Enlow Ranch Auction

#### JUNE 6 • TULSA

*Enlow Ranch. Tulsa, OK 74131.* Come on out to our monthly auction. Enlow auction service has more than 50 years of experience. Call **918-224-7676** for more information.

#### **Wild West Rodeo**

#### JUNE 7-9 • PONCA CITY

101 Rodeo Grounds. Ponca City, OK 74601. This year marks the 59th running of the 101 Wild West Rodeo, a PRCA rodeo that includes steer roping, team roping, bareback riding, saddle bronc, steer wrestling, bull riding and barrel racing. Each year's rodeo continues the tradition of the original 101 Ranch Rodeo, established more than 100 years ago by the Miller Brothers. Rodeo performances are held at 8 p.m. each night and include a free dance and concert immediately following that night's events. The 101 Wild West Rodeo will feature barbecue Thursday night

as well as the event's popular and much-anticipated rodeo parade on Saturday. A children's rodeo will immediately follow the parade and stick around to see the crowning of this year's rodeo queen and princess. Come to the 101 Wild West Rodeo for heartpumping rodeo action at its best.

#### Wines of the West

#### JUNE 9 • OKC

Stockyards City. Oklahoma City, OK 73108. Visit historic Stockyards City in Oklahoma City for Wines of the West Festival. Sample some of Oklahoma's finest wines and get your "wine passport" stamped for a chance to win prizes. Previous wineries that have participated in the event include the Canadian River Winery, Plain View Winery, The Range Winery, StableRidge Winery, Whirlwind Winery and Woods & Waters Winery. This event marks the fifth annual festival celebrating Oklahoma's wineries. A different wine will be provided in various Stockyards City businesses, which will also be offering discounts on their merchandise. Visit **www. stockyardscity.org** for more information.

#### **Red Earth Festival**

#### JUNE 8-10 • OKC

Cox Convention Center. Oklahoma City 73102. The Red Earth Parade is part of the larger Red Earth Native American Cultural Festival. This festival



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

features more than 1,200 American Indian artists and dancers from throughout North America gathering to celebrate the richness and diversity of their heritage with the world. For three exciting days, Oklahoma City will be at the center of Native American art and culture as more than 10,000 people gather to celebrate. Visit **www.redearth. org** for additional information.

#### Pinto World Championship Horse Show

#### JUNE 11-23 • TULSA

Tulsa Expo Square. Tulsa, OK 74114. Come to the Pinto World Championship Horse Show at Tulsa's Expo Square to witness the largest gathering of Pinto horses, ponies and miniatures on earth. Exhibitors will compete in a wide range of disciplines Western, including English, driving, pleasure, halter, roping, speed events and trial. Just for fun, guests can also enjoy a costume class, dog show, ice cream social and cookout. A large trade show will also be on the grounds featuring tack, gift items and more.

#### AQHA Zoetis Versatility Ranch Horse World Show

#### JUNE 13-17 • GUTHRIE

Lazy E Arena. Guthrie, OK 73044. The American Quarter Horse Association brings together four ranch-horse shows in one great competition at the 2018 Zoetis AQHA Versatility Ranch Horse World Championships, Zoetis AQHA Ranching Heritage Challenge Finals. For additional information, visit **www.AQHA. com**.

#### **American Heritage**

#### JUNE 14-16 • DUNCAN

Stephens County Fairgrounds. Duncan, OK 73533. Get ready for edge of your seat action at the American Heritage in Duncan. Held at the Stephens County Fairgrounds and hosted by American Bucking Bull Inc., this three-day event features yearling, junior, cowgirl, limited and open futurities. For additional information, visit www. americanbuckingbull.com.

#### **Pecan Festival**

#### JUNE 14-16 • OKMALGEE

*Downtown Okmulgee. Okmulgee, OK 74447.* Go nuts at the Pecan Festival in Okmulgee. This threeday event offers something for the entire family, with a carnival, turtle races and a pet parade, food vendors, arts and crafts vendors, a local barbecue competition, and musical entertainment.

#### Okie Noodling Tournament

#### JUNE 15-16 • PAULS VALLEY

*Pauls Valley, OK 73075.* Make your way to Pauls Valley for the 19th Annual Okie Noodling Tournament. This event features concerts, food and more! Be sure to visit **www.okienoodling.com** for additional information.

#### **Cattleman's Convention**

#### JUNE 16-17 • PAWHUSKA

Osage County Fairgrounds. Pawhuska, OK 74056. The annual Cattlemen's Convention showcases Oklahoma's unique Western heritage with numerous cowboy-themed events. Check out the Western trade show, street dance and demonstrations of steer roping. Call **918-287-4170** for more information.



#### Belle Starr Heritage Festival

#### JUNE 15-16 • WILBURTON

Wilburton Rodeo Arena. Wilburton, OK 74578. This twoday, family-friendly festival kicks off on Friday with a bank robbery at high noon, followed by a spectacular parade and rodeo. Launch your Saturday morning with a 5K, followed by a train robbery and jailbreak. Visit **www.wilburtonchamber.com** for more information.

#### Oklahoma Dressage Society Show

#### JUNE 16-17 • CLAREMORE

*Claremore Expo Center. Claremore, OK 74017.* Attend the Oklahoma Dressage Society Show at Claremore Expo Center for a pool of equestrian talent. See riders and horses compete for top marks in a series of difficult tests at this spring showcase. Visit **www.dressageoklahoma. org** for additional information.

#### State 4-H Horse Show

JUNE 21-23 • GUTHRIE

*Lazy E Arena. Guthrie, OK* 73044. Cheer on Oklahoma's 4-H members at the State 4-H Horse Show. Competitive events include barrel racing, showmanship, trail, flags, pole bending and more.

#### **NRHA Derby**

#### JUNE 23-JULY 1 • OKC

Oklahoma State Fair Park. Oklahoma City, OK 73107. Experience a Western riding competition, featuring riders guiding horses through a pattern spins, circles and toe-curling stops. Visit www.nrhaderby. com for more information.

#### Wagon Wheel Ranch Sale

JUNE 29-30 • LOMETA, TX

Wagon Wheel Ranch. Lometa, TX 76853. More than 260 head of stallions, broodmares and offspring will be for sale. Visit **www.wagonwheelranch.com** for more information.



## 

American culture are synonymous, especially during the 32nd annual Red Earth Festival on June 8 through the 10. This celebration is a unique opportunity for Oklahomans to experience the diversity of the Native American culture.

"When people come to Oklahoma, one of the things they have always heard about Oklahoma is cowboys and Indians," said Eric Oesch, deputy director of the Red Earth Festival. "They come to Red Earth because they want to experience something Native American."

Oklahoma is home to 39 tribal headquarters, which is more than any other state. With the need to have a big event in Oklahoma to showcase the heritage of these tribes, a festival was started in 1987.

"It started as a way for Native artists to have an outlet to sell their art to the public because there were many community leaders who realized Indian artists were having to go out of state to big events to sell their artwork," Oesch explained.

The three-day festival was featured by USA Today 10 Best Reader's Poll as one of the "Top Ten Art Festivals in America." The festival was also named "a Top 100 Event in North America" by the American Bus Association, which is featured with other events like the Indianapolis 500, Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade and the Calgary Stampede.

This year's award-winning festival kicks off with a grand parade at 10 a.m. on Friday. The streets are filled with color and By Laci Jones



The Red Earth Festival includes a grand parade, featuring tribal dignitaries, princesses, floats and other entries. (Photo courtesy of Eric Oesch)

excitement as parade participants, tribal dignitaries and floats make their way through downtown Oklahoma City.

"The parade circles the gardens and features princesses and tribal leaders on floats, and people ride on horseback and in antique cars, motorcycles and fire trucks," he added. "It's probably one of the most unique parades in America because where else are you going to have a big Native Americanthemed parade in the heart of a big metropolitan city?"

New to this year's festival is the expansion into the Myriad Botanical Gardens. Children's activities, entertainment and food vendors will be featured throughout the seven-acre gardens in Oklahoma City.

One of the main features of the Red Earth Festival is the Red Earth Art Market in the Cox Convention Center exhibition hall, which is open each day from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. This art market features artisans showcasing paintings, beadwork, jewelry, pottery and other Native art pieces.

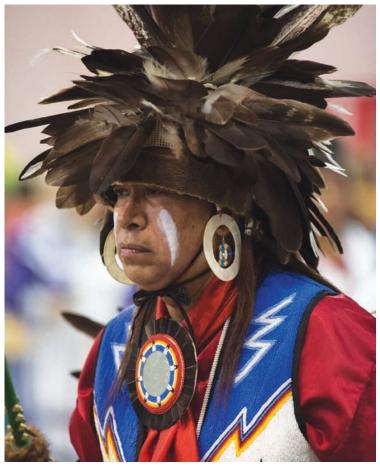
Hosted in the Cox Convention Center arena on Saturday and Sunday is the Red Earth PowWow. The powwows will feature the grand entry of dancers at noon on both days. Dressed in handmade, colorful regalia, the dancers will compete for money while showcasing the Native heritage. The guests will also witness accomplished Native drum group during the two-day celebration.

"It's great for those who have never had the opportunity to attend a powwow or seen Native American dancers up close and their beautiful handmade regalia," Oesch added. "One of the things that make the Red Earth Festival unique is the sharing of cultures. There is also an educational advantage because it lets people know that Native culture is a living culture and these people are proud of the tribe they represent."

During the "Ask the Expert" sessions, experts in Native American beadwork, basketry, pottery, jewelry, paintings, rugs, blankets and more will answer questions from the audience. They will also be available for private consultation.

"Our guest can bring up to three different items," Oesch explained. "It's free with your paid admission. They don't give a monetary value, but they will just tell you if it's authentic and if it's good quality."

This festival is sponsored by Red Earth, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting "the rich traditions of American Indian arts and cultures through education, a premier festival, a museum and fine art markets."



Oklahomans have the opportunity to experience Native heritage on June 8 through 10. (Photo courtesy of Eric Oesch)

"The Red Earth Festival is governed by a non-profit 501(c)3 organization called Red Earth, Inc.," he added. "We are governed by a volunteer board of directors."

Throughout the year, they operate the Red Earth Art Center in downtown Oklahoma City. The art center is home to 1,400 pieces of contemporary and traditional Native American art and historical artifacts.

The Red Earth Art Center began almost 40 years ago. The center was located in the Kirkpatrick Center, now known as the Science Museum, until 2010. Approximately 7,000 to 9,000 people visit the art center annually in its current location at 6 Santa Fe Plaza, Oklahoma City, OK 73102.

"We also have a little sales gallery where we provide Native artists a place to sell their artwork to the public," he added.

The Red Earth Art Center is open weekdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and is open to the public for free. This organization is an Allied Arts member agency, an Adventure Road Travel Partner and is funded in part by the Chickasaw Nation, Choctaw Nation, Oklahoma Arts Council, National Endowment for the Arts, Oklahoma City Convention & Visitors Bureau, and Oklahoma's News 4.

General admission day tickets are \$11 and include admission to the Red Earth Art Market, general admission seating to the Red Earth PowWow, and access to all events and performances scheduled throughout the weekend.

The \$16 per day ticket includes admission to the Red Earth Art Market, general admission seating to the Red Earth PowWow, and access to all events and performances scheduled throughout the weekend as well as reserved seating for the PowWow Saturday or Sunday. All children 18 and under are admitted free of charge with a paid adult.

To purchase tickets to the Red Earth Festival, visit www.redearth. org or call 405-427-5228.



ATTRACTIONS

# ELGERS DRIVE-IN - ADA, OKLA. By Kristi Hawk

I f you are traveling to Ada, near it or just want to have your own Backyard Bites adventure, I highly recommend stopping in for a burger at Folgers Drive-In in Ada, Okla. I was recommended by several people to try this small drive-in, and I wasn't disappointed. It's small but comfortable, with good food and fantastic service.

When you get to Ada, make sure to pay close attention driving through town because Folgers is a grey brick building tucked back on the north side of Main Street. It is hard to see at first, but a simple red Folgers neon light on one side of the door and a red neon open sign on the other side let me know I was at the right place. Parking is out front, and there is a drive thru on the west side of the building.

The building looks like it's been there for quite a while. Most people from the area tell you it's been there since 1935, and it's a family favorite. In fact, it was easy to tell most of the people were either regulars or coming back for a nostalgia stop. The inside is small with one long row of countertop and round barstool seats. Four tables with two chairs each were placed along the door side. We managed to get a table right by the door to sit down and enjoy our cheeseburgers. Everyone from young kids to the elderly were there. They were all friendly, offering seats when they were done and moving so people could sit

together. I felt very at home there and was excited to try the food.

The menu is pretty straightforward: hamburger, cheeseburger, chili hamburger, chili cheeseburger, barbecue hamburger, barbecue cheeseburger, grilled cheese and hotdog and Coney dog. The burgers come with one patty, but there were options on the menu to order more meat. The coney dog is a hotdog with chili, onions and mustard on it. Order any of them as a basket to add fries to your burgers or dogs. The drinks are standard with some selection of pops and iced teas, and they do have crushed ice.

The hamburgers are served on a grilled bun and topped with mustard, lettuce, onion and tomato. The food was cooked in the kitchen area that could be seen by customers, a very efficient setup to get diners in and out quickly.

We both ordered cheeseburger baskets, which came on a basket of fries separated by a sheet of waxed paper. When our food came, I barely remembered to get a picture of the cheeseburger because it looked so good! I made the comment to my dining companion as we were eating that they really did not have a lot of dishes to do at the end of the day.

The town of Ada has a lot to offer, as well. Conveniently located on Main Street, Folgers T-shirts, hats and coffee mugs are sold next door. I would also recommend going a few doors



## **CHEESEBURGER BASKET**

down to the western store, tell the owner you ate at Folgers and ask about "Wolfy."

Folgers is open Monday 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Tuesday through Saturday 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. They are located at 406 E. Main Street, Ada, OK 74820. Customers can place an order over the phone at 580-332-9808. Find them on Facebook: Folgers Drive In. Bring your appetite because these burgers will fill you up. It was a juicy bite and had a great flavor. The fries were also crispy and not greasy at all. Go ahead and take a trip to Folgers and have a tasty burger in this quaint, quick and unique drive in. You will enjoy visiting with the person next to you, and it does remind you of a big, happy family get-together.



## JODY MILLER STILL QUEEN OF THE HOUSE By Jan Sikes press the records fast enough for

ber the hit song, "King of the Road?" While Roger Miller was the King of the Road, Jody Miller was the "Queen of the House."

Oklahoma recording artist, Jody Miller (no relation to Roger Miller), had a monster hit with the song "Queen of the House" in 1966, but that was not her first hit.

Discovered by the actor Dale Robertson in the early '60s, Miller signed with Capitol Records in 1963 as a folk singer.

"I went in and cut an album called Wednesday's Child, and I think it sold all of two copies and that's because my mother and dad bought them," she recalled. "Folk music was on its way out."

That was only the beginning.

"There was a gentleman who worked for Central Songs," Miller said. "Central Songs was headed by Cliffie Stone, which was a big name in the Country and Western field in Los Angeles. He had a man working for him by the name of Joe Allison, who was the top-notch song man. He was a songwriter, too. But Joe signed a 17-year-old girl, Diane Hildebrand, to his publishing company and she wrote the song, 'He Walks like a Man.' Joe brought it to me. He realized the company didn't know what to do with me because the folk songs didn't make it. So, we went into the studio to cut it, and I went from a three-piece folk group to a 22-piece band waiting to record this song. I was overwhelmed."

That song, "He Walks like a Man," shot up the charts making it Miller's first Billboard hit. It was a game-changer. On another



Jody Miller will perform at Blanchard's Independence Day Celebration on July 2. (Courtesy photo)

interesting note, they released the song on the same day of President Kennedy's assassination.

Miller was off and running. She worked up and down the West coast. Some say Miller was a pioneer paving the way for artists such as Linda Ronstadt and Anne Murray. She earned the distinction of being a crossover and versatile artist.

The next song to make a splash for Miller was "Queen of the House."

"That song was written by Mary Taylor," she said. "Roger Miller had the smash hit with "King of the Road," and she and Roger were friends. She called

Roger up one night and read him the lyrics. He told her it was a hit and she should cut it. But. she could not cut it because she already had a song on the charts. Back then you could not have multiple songs on the charts, except for The Beatles, of course."

So, through a roundabout way, it came to Miller to cut.

"I was over in Europe doing the San Remo song festival, and when I got back, I met with my producer at Capitol," Miller said. "He told me he had a hit record for me to cut, but we had to do it as quickly as possible. So, I went in, and in five days they had the record out. And, they could not

the demand."

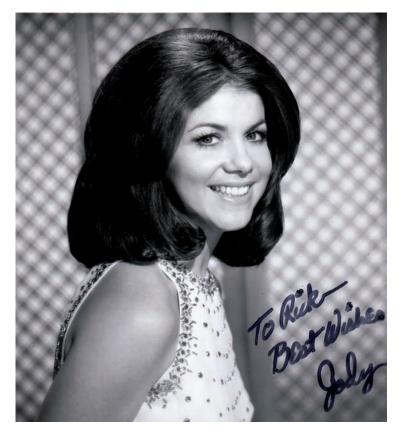
Now, that is a great situation for any artist to be in. That year, Miller was nominated for two Grammys, Best Artist and Best Female Country Vocal Performance. She walked away with the coveted award for Best Female Country Vocal Performance.

I asked her to share that experience.

"Jerry Lewis was the emcee that year, and the awards were held at the Beverly Hills Hotel in Los Angeles," she added. "My husband and I sat at the table with my producer, and when they called my name, I went up the steps to receive the award. Jerry Lewis handed it to me and asked if I wanted to say a few words. So, I said, 'I just want to thank everybody. You know who you are.' Jerry Lewis cracked up laughing and said he was going to remember that line and use it. So many people helped me, and I didn't want to leave anyone out. The whole thing was quite an experience."

Throughout the next two decades, Miller traveled around the world performing and recording. With nearly 30 Billboard charting singles to her credit, she appeared on numerous TV shows including "Hee Haw," "Pop Goes the Country" and "Nashville Now."

On a personal note, my late husband, Rick Sikes, owned Top Talent Booking Agency in Texas in the '60s and booked Miller on a show with other artists at the Soldier's and Sailor's Auditorium in Brownwood, Texas. She gave him an autographed black-and-white glossy which I am sharing with you today, and she recalled the



Jody Miller was discovered in the '60s. (Courtesy photo)

show, citing Ernest Tubb and Bobby Bare as fellow-performers.

Then there's that moment when you realize you simply need to go home. In the '80s, Miller took a break from touring to help her husband with a thriving quarter horse breeding and training business near Blanchard, Okla. During that time, she recorded a patriotic album that caught the attention of then-U.S. Presidential candidate. George H.W. Bush. He invited her to sing at his campaign stops and eventually his inaugural ball at the White House.

Jody Miller has done it all in her five-decade career. She continues to perform for enthusiastic audiences who flock to see a living legend in action. Family is still a big part of that.

"My daughter is a good singer and guitar player and has her own business as a vocal coach," Miller said. "She goes with me on dates and her son, my grandson, Montana, is a classical pianist and we do a show together called Jody Miller and the Three Generations."

How wonderful to see family talent carried on through the generations.

Baltimore Net Radio promotes Miller's high-quality body of work through a monthly on-line radio broadcast, "In the Spotlight with Jody Miller," for world-wide listeners. Both Universal Music Group and Sony Music have released well-received 21st century collections of Miller's Capital and Epic hits.

Recently, Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin, proclaimed July 29 as "Jody Miller Day" across the state. In celebration of that, the third annual Jody Miller Day show will be held July 28 at Pleasant Hills Baptist Church in Blanchard. Tickets are \$10 at the door.

You can hear Miller perform on July 2 at Blanchard's Independence Day Celebration, July 7 at the Grand Casino in Shawnee, Okla., as part of the "SHINE benefit," July 21 at Texas Troubadour Theater in Nashville or Nashville Cowboy Church on July 22.

She is truly an Oklahoma treasure and is still "Queen of the House."

For more information about this extraordinary entertainer, visit www.jodymillermusic.com.

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By Mike Proctor, Noble Research Institute research associate / mdproctor@noble.org

haracteristics: Cat's claw sensitive briar is a warm-season, native, perennial forb with bright pink flowers and recurved spines (like a cat's claw).

The leaves are bi-pinnately compound, having leaflets that split again into smaller leaflets. It grows as a sprawling vine up to several feet in length, but the stems die back to the crown each year. Schrankia uncinata and S. nuttallii are synonyms for this species. Pink Sparkles is another common name used in the horticultural trade. The tree commonly called "mimosa" is actually in a closely related genus, Albizia.

Area of Importance: Cat's claw can be found throughout Oklahoma on dry prairies, often on poorer sites. Having a prostrate growth form causes some problems around tall, dense vegetation, so growing on less productive sites reduces the likelihood of the plant being shaded out by competitors.

Attributes: Cat's claw sensitive briar is one of about 400 species in the genus Mimosa along with the common houseplant, Sensitive Plant. Most folks are familiar with the movement of plants in response to their environment, for example, growing toward the sun and out of the shade. This form of movement is called a tropism. Plants can exhibit phototropism in response to light or gravitropism in response to gravity, which is why stems grow up and roots grow down.

Other types of tropisms exist as well. Some members of the Mimosa genus exhibit a different form of movement called nastic. While still a movement in response to a stimuli, nastic movements happen rapidly. Venus flytrap is a good example of this movement type. Cat's claw sensitive briar is capable of this movement type as well. The leaves will fold up in response to touch.

Opinions vary as to how livestock utilize Cat's claw, but since I don't see much of it in overgrazed pastures, I suspect they do eat it, probably when the stems are still young and tender.

As is the case with many members in the legume family, Cat's claw forms root nodules where nitrogen-fixing bacteria convert atmospheric nitrogen into a form that can be used

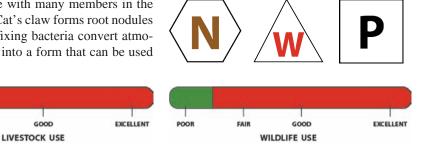
POOR

by the plant. This likely explains why the species is found on poorer soils; it has a nitrogen source that isn't available to other plants on those sites.

While not necessarily contributing much to grazing resources for livestock, it does contribute nitrogen and organic matter to soils that need those components the most. Reports of wildlife use are limited to seed use by a few species of birds, including bobwhite quail.

The spines are really hard on shoestrings and hands, so when you go out in a pasture with Cat's claw, you should probably wear boots and gloves.

For great videos on plant movements including Cat's claw, visit www.plantsinmotion. bio.indiana.edu.







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WAURIKA LIVESTOCK COMMISSION COMPANY-Cattle sale every Tuesday, 9 a.m. Waurika, OK. 940-631-6003

VERNON LIVESTOCK MARKET-Cattle sale Tuesdays at 11 a.m. www. vernonlivestockmarket.com. 940-552-6000.

**ENLOW TRACTOR AUCTION**-Auction first Wednesday of every month. Go to **Enlow66.com** for a list of equipment available.

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"I love spring weather and all the flowers blooming," said photographer, Janice Russell. "The flowering Crabapple Tree in my yard is blooming like crazy, a sure sign of spring! The cardinals and finches are enjoying sweet treats eating the flowers and buds." (Photograph by Janice Russell)

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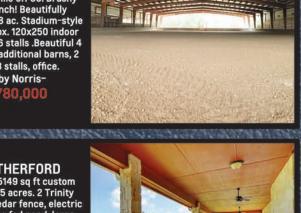
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