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# A Season of Change...

Hello OKFR readers, and welcome to the September 2018. A season of change is on the horizon, the official start of autumn will be September 23. If the heat has you beat, more than likely you are ready for cooler temperatures, the changing colors of leaves and pumpkin-spice items to make their return.

While change can be unsettling, other times it can be a time for growth. This month we bid our former OKFR editor farewell, and send her off with well wishes to a bright and productive future. We want to make readers aware and up to date during this time of transition.

As Ralph Chain wrote in his Farm & Ranch column, "Time Changes Everything," in his years ranching in rural Oklahoma, he has seen much change, giving the example of Highway 51 evolving from the days of plowing it to a busy intersection.

This month we welcome two new writers to the Equine section. First Dr. Garrett Metcalf will be informing us on all things equine related. The equine veterinarian will tackle health topics, diseases, equine-related problems and much more. Summer McMillen introduces her new column called, "Western Housewives," as an insightful piece on day-to-day tasks as a wife and mother, supporting her ranching and rodeoing husband while living on the ranch in rural Oklahoma.

Columnist Lanna Mills will be transitioning her column to a new topic, horses. Near and dear to the rancher's wife's heart, each month she will be featuring a new four-legged companion that embodies the true meaning of "a good horse, athlete and friend." If you have a horse feature-worthy, email her at lannacheyenne@hotmail.com.

The September 2018 profile is known to most simply as "The Mule Man." The Fittstown native lives with his wife and children and 40 to 50 mules on their 280-acre homestead. If ever there was a mule expert, John Logsdon comes close. The 34-year-old man has been riding mules since age 12 and gained much of his knowledge from his grandfather John T. who started the well-known mule sale in Ada, Okla. in 1993. Learn more about "The Mule Man's" childhood, knowledge of mules and the mule sale in the September 2018 profile feature article "The Mule Man."

As usual, if you have an article topic, photo or event you would like to submit to OKFR, email editor@OKFRonline.com. Follow OKFR on all social media platforms, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Visit www.OKFRonline.com to subscribe to the digital version of OKFR. Also, to subscribe to OKFR and receive a copy per month, call 940-872-2076.

*Jessica Crabtree, managing editor*

## ON THE COVER

John Logsdon of Fittstown, Okla. lives on his 280-acre homestead with his family and 40 to 50 mules. Gaining the reputation as "The Mule Man," Logsdon acquired much of his knowledge of mules from his grandfather John T. who formed the well-known mule sale in Ada, Okla. in 1993. (Photo by Rosemary Stevens)



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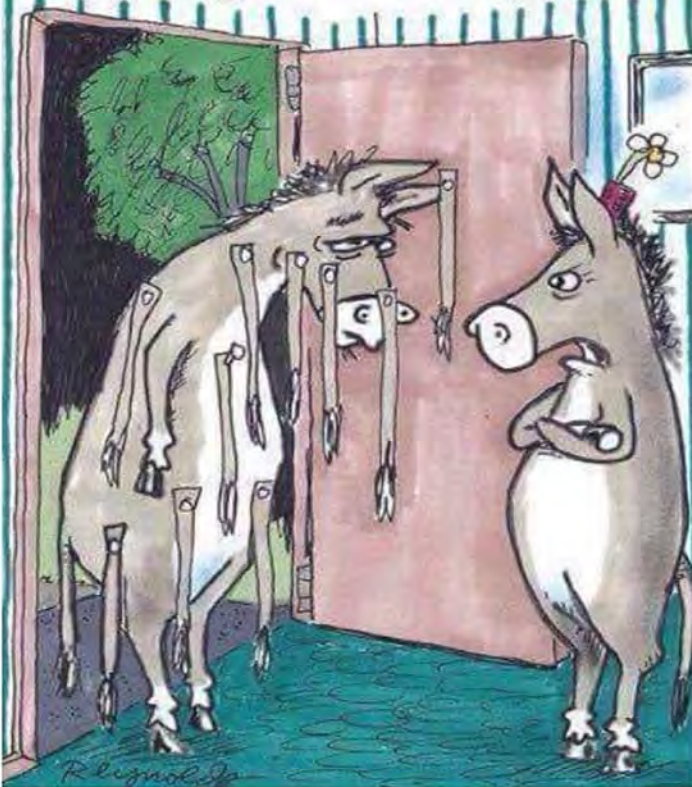
# SOCIALIZING

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Oklahoma Farm & Ranch shared The Woodson Inn's post.  
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## CORRECTION

In the August 2018 OKFR issue, article "Welcome to Sipokni West," the first movie filmed at the old west town was "Black Marshall." Which was based on the true story about Bass Reeves.

## Join in the conversation online!

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# NEOSPOROSIS IN CATTLE

By Barry Whitworth, DVM

The disease Neosporosis was first described in dogs in Norway. The infected dogs had a neuromuscular condition that resulted in hind limb paralysis. The protozoan that caused the disease was *Neospora caninum*. Since the initial discovery, the parasite has been a nemesis to cattle producers worldwide. It is one of the more common causes of abortion in cattle.

*N. caninum* is an intracellular protozoan. The definitive host is dogs or other canids such as coyotes or foxes. Canids are infected with the parasite by ingesting cysts from infected tissues such as an aborted fetus, placenta or

tissue from a dead cow or other intermediate host.

Once the parasite is ingested, the lifecycle begins. The completion of the lifecycle ends with the passing of oocysts (eggs) in the feces.

Cattle, which are an intermediate host of the parasite, may become infected in one of two ways. One way is by consuming feed or water that has been contaminated with feces from an infected dog or other canid. This type of transmission is referred to as “horizontal” transmission. The life cycle is not completed in the intermediate host.

The immune system will con-

tain the parasite in a cyst in tissues. For this reason, cattle do not shed oocysts (eggs), but they remain infected for life.

The second and most common way cattle are infected is by “vertical” transmission. “Vertical” transmission is the process of the infected cow passing the infection to her offspring in the uterus. As stated earlier, cattle are infected for life, which means they will pass the organism to their offspring with each pregnancy. This accounts for the organism remaining in the herd for long periods of time.

Neosporosis in cattle is a disease of the unborn calf. Adult

cattle do not show any signs of illness when infected. Clinical disease in the fetus depends on the stage of the pregnancy when infected. Fetuses infected in the first trimester are unlikely to survive. Second trimester pregnancy infections may result in a dead calf or a live calf. Most fetuses infected in the third stage of pregnancy will be born normally. In very rare instances, calves may be born with birth defects, neurological signs or be weak and unable to stand.

Diagnosing the cause of abortion is difficult. One clue that *N. caninum* is the cause of the abortion is the timing. It is common for cows to abort around the sixth



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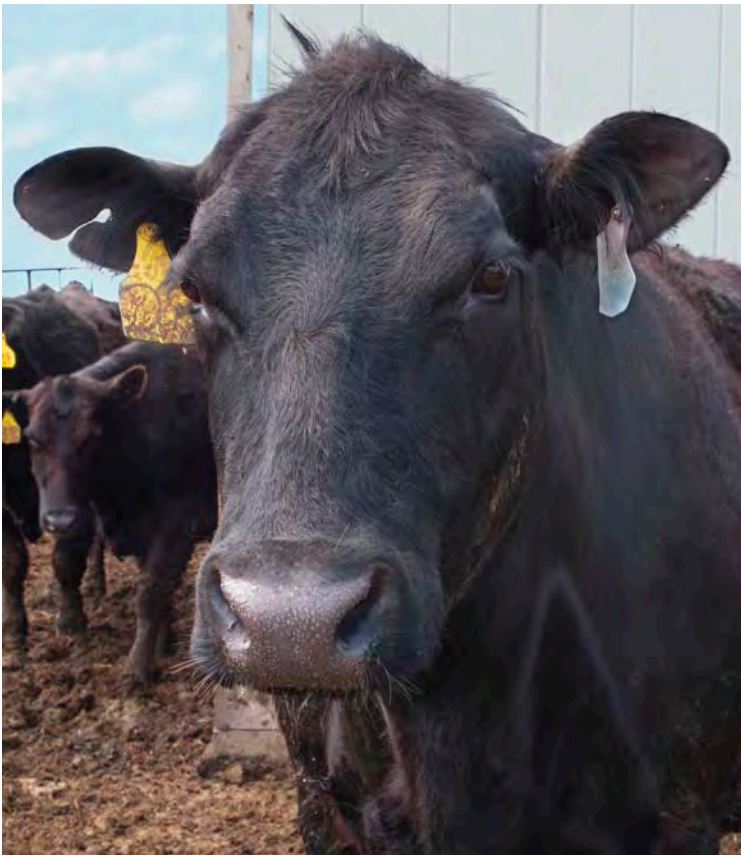
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Neosporosis is one of the more common causes of abortion in cattle. (Courtesy photo)

month of pregnancy with this infection. Most other causes of abortion in cattle occur earlier or later than this time.

Even with this clue, pathologist will need the aborted fetus, placenta and a blood sample from the dam to have any chance of finding the cause. The diagnosis will be confirmed if the pathologist can find the encysted parasite in the tissue of the fetus or placenta. This and the dam having a high titer for *N. caninum* will confirm the diagnosis.

As with many cattle diseases, neosporosis has no treatment. Producers must focus on prevention and control of the pathogen. Test and cull has been used to eliminate the parasite from the herd; however, this may not be cost effective in herds with high infection rates.

A less expensive solution is to sell all offspring from infected cows. This should eventually lead to a *N. caninum* free herd.

Producers may prevent the introduction of the parasite by testing to make sure all new purchased

cattle are negative before entering the herd.

In cows that are genetically valuable, embryo transfer is an option to prevent the offspring from becoming infected.

Sanitation is also very important in keeping the organism out of the herd. Feed and water supplies need to be kept free from contamination with canid feces. Any aborted fetuses, placentas, dead calves or dead cows should be disposed of properly.

Whatever method is chosen, the tissues must be kept away from canids.

Neosporosis is a frustrating disease for cattle producers. The disease is difficult to diagnose, and there are no good options to control the disease.

The best producers can do is practice good biosecurity and work with their veterinarian in finding the causes of abortions.

If producers would like more information about Neosporosis, they should contact their local veterinarian or local County Extension Educator. ☞

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# *Fighting* FERAL HOGS

By Chris Cox



**F**eral hogs are a problem in Oklahoma. They have been spotted in every county in the state, which means no matter where you go, feral hogs are not far away. While it's hard to put a total on the number of feral hogs in the state, (some estimates show it could be as high as two million) we do know the statewide monetary damage done by feral hogs is between \$100 million and \$200 million annually.

That does not consider all the time and labor that landowners or public officials spend trying to repair the damage done by hogs.

"We've had 50 acres destroyed at one time," Trey Lam, a farmer and rancher from Pauls Valley, Okla., and the Executive Director of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission said. "Sometimes the hogs will root up a certain distance on each row of corn and then move to a different row."

"So have these strips and angles across our field where we won't have any crop," Lam went on to say, "We've seen in beans and wheat where they've actually rooted up the ground to the point where they weren't just

getting the individual seed but created a wallow and moved the earth around."

One reason actual numbers of feral hogs are hard to pinpoint is the personality of the hogs. Feral hogs are migratory animals that can travel up to 19 miles a day.

Also, feral hogs are what the Noble Research Institute refers to as "opportunistic omnivores" meaning they will eat anything, anywhere.

The feral hog population is also tough to fight because they reproduce rapidly. Female feral hogs can produce two litters a year with up to 10 piglets per litter.

The Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry (ODAFF) estimates that 70 percent of the feral swine population must be eliminated each year just to maintain the current population numbers.

With those personality traits and the high reproduction rate, it's no wonder it can feel like Oklahoma is fighting a losing battle against feral hogs.

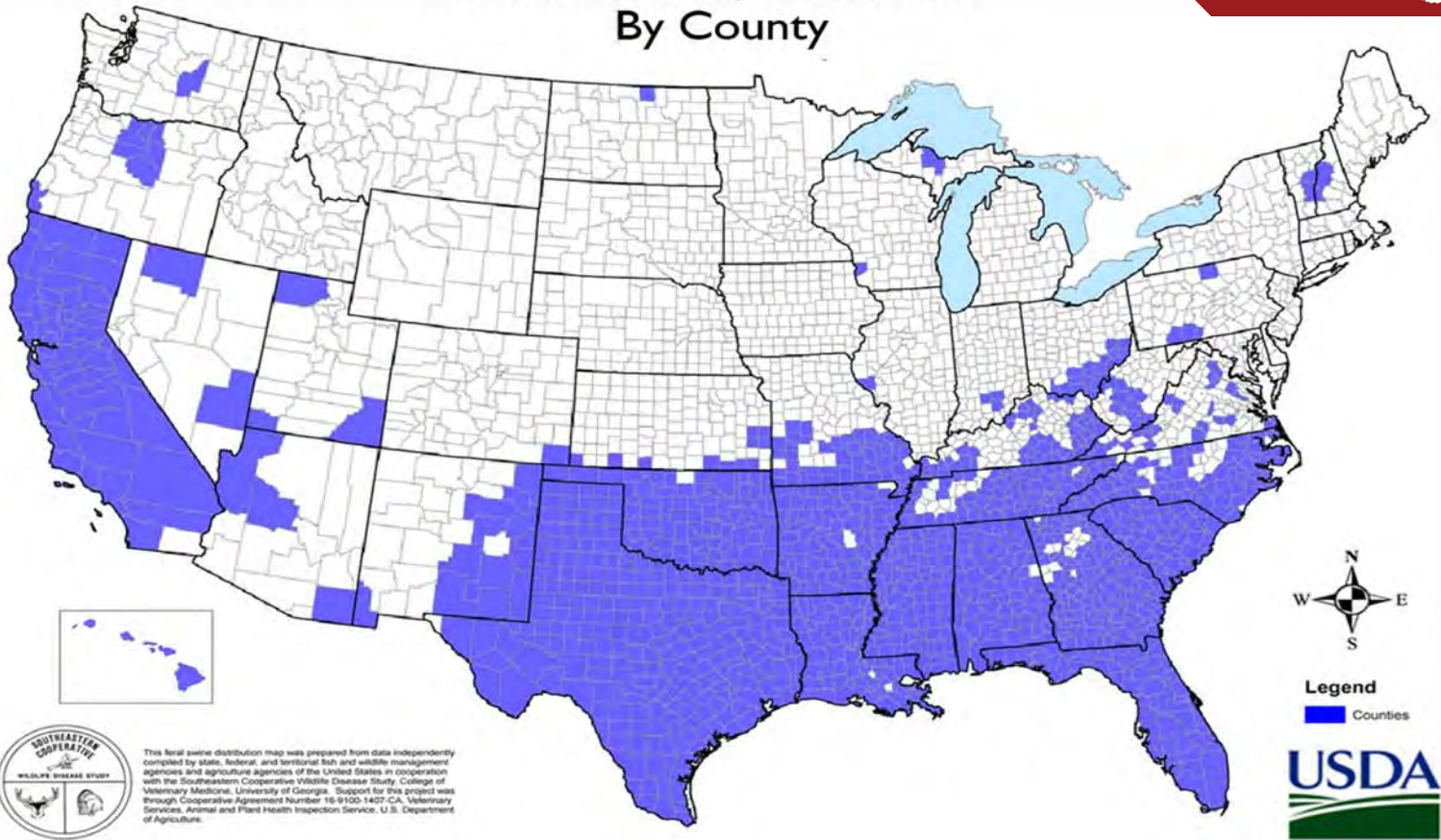
Oklahoma Agriculture Secretary Jim Reese wants Oklahomans to know Oklahoma is ac-

tually making strides in its fight against feral hogs. "We've eliminated a lot of hogs. We've gone from 2,000 in 2011 to 32,000 (in 2017) and, I think, we're expecting about 45,000 this year," Sec. Reese said. Oklahoma's effectiveness in fighting feral hogs has taken the state from having the third highest feral hog population in 2015 to now the sixth highest population in the nation. Sec. Reese continued, "We're doing great but we need the public out there helping us."

One way ODAFF has urged the public to help is by entering into an agreement with the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the local conservation districts to trap feral hogs. Conservation districts are local government entities that are responsible for the conservation of the renewable natural resources within their designated borders.

With feral hogs destroying soil and contaminating water and other natural resources, ODAFF felt the districts would be the best way to get traps into the hands of the public. ODAFF agreed to give each district a gate that **See FERAL HOGS page 14**

# Feral Swine Population 2017 By County



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# FERAL HOGS

Continued from page 12

was built by one of nine FFA chapters, while the Oklahoma Conservation Commission, with help from ODAFF, agreed to provide each district with \$500 to construct a pen-style trap. While these gates and traps are working, Sec. Reese would like to see more high-tech gates in the near future.

“We really want to provide the electronic streaming trigger for these traps because we want the public to be equipped with the best hog trapping tools we can provide.” Sec. Reese said traps are two to three times more effective with the electronic streaming triggers, and he would like to get them out to the districts, but that requires more funding from the state legislature. “I think the legislature is attune to the problem. I think they are very supportive in efforts that we are in engaged in.

“Up to this year our funding difficulties in the legislature have been across the board. So, it’s not like we’ve been mistreated. There just wasn’t a lot of money to go around. Hopefully, this past session we fixed some problems so that more resources can be targeted toward feral hogs,” Sec. Reese said.

Lam said trapping has proven to be the most effective form of eradication on his property, mainly because of the unknowns with hunting. “You have private hunters,” Lam said. “But you don’t always know what they are doing with the hogs. Also, if you’re hunting with dogs or

rifles you run into problems with driving hogs off or destroying crops by getting into the fields to actually do the hunting.”

For the districts’ part of this agreement, they agreed to host several feral hog outreach events across the state. Cotton County Conservation District Secretary Mari’a Simpson said she had a pretty good turnout for her feral hog event in Tulsa.

“We had a good response with 150 to 200 people there,” Simpson said. “They were able to take in some new information, and we had a positive, positive response.”

While the response to the meetings has been positive, Simpson said producers are still not working together to eliminate feral hogs. “This is a problem that won’t go away until the whole community comes together.” Simpson said anyone wanting a trap needs to visit their local conservation district to see if one is available.

While the task of fighting feral hogs seems daunting, Sec. Reese remains positive that the trapping being done through the districts is working. “I think we’re increasing our numbers faster than they [the hogs] are increasing production. So, I think we are getting close to catching up.”

For more information on the feral hog problem and to see if a hog trap is available, visit your local conservation district. ☞

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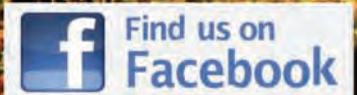
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# -Time Changes Things-

By Ralph Chain

**T**ime changes things, and I can not believe how things have changed in my life. I remember my dad grading Highway 51 with a walking plow and team of mules. Now you can hardly get out on Highway 51 because of the traffic.

Montie Lee, our accountant for nearly 50 years, came in our office one morning. It had not rained for I do not know how long. The dirt was blowing and I could hardly see him for the sand blowing in the air.

He was wiping sand out of his eyes and spitting sand out of his mouth. He asked me, "What did your granddad pay for this place?" I said, "A shotgun and \$50." Mon-

tie replied, "He got cheated."

Montie came back not too many years later, and saw the wind towers, the oil rigs and the sand we sell for fracking wells. He said, "Maybe your granddad didn't get cheated after all."

I do not play golf and I do not fish. My hobby is running bull dozers, clearing cedar trees and building ponds. I can not believe we sell water out of those ponds to oil companies, but that is another income. Water is more precious than oil. Now when I run my dozer, I am afraid I will hit a pipeline. There are pipelines going everywhere.

Time marches on, but where are we marching to? ☹



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# AG *elsewhere* CALIFORNIA

PHOTO | DESCRIPTION BY LAINEY SMITH

A small hay farm located in the Central Valley of California. (Photo by Lainey Smith)

## The Importance of "Advocacy"

With the summer coming to an end, California ranchers look ahead to what the new season brings. Fall gives agriculturalists a chance to breathe, with harvest complete and calves on the ground.

However, this November, agriculture and politics mix once again, with a new round of propositions on the midterm ballot threatening farming practices.

Politics is a frequent hot topic for the state's farmers and ranchers. California is one of the top producing areas of the world for crops, but the majority of its population resides in large cities like San Francisco and Los Angeles. It is a problem when the majority of registered voters are not directly involved in or understand farming practices. Today, the average person is four generations removed from agriculture.

With positive changes in farm policy happening on a national level, California lags behind.

On its November ballot, Proposition 12 proposes to "ban the sale of meat and eggs from calves raised for veal, breeding pigs, and

egg-laying hens housed in confined areas." If passed, all eggs are required to meet "cage-free" standards by 2021, gestation crates for sows will be illegal by 2020, and veal industry will be outlawed all together.

National Pork Producers Council spokesperson Jim Monroe argues, "Livestock production practices should be left to those who are most informed about animal care—farmers—and not animal rights activists."

The problem is not that "non-farmers" are getting involved in farming regulations. Everyone who is affected by agriculture should take an interest in where their food comes from and how it is produced. The problem comes from the abundance of misinformation coming from animal activist and anti-agriculture groups.

Growing up in a small farming community, I was awestruck when I attended a junior college 30 minutes away and most of the students I talked to did not know anything about farming.

Rather than research what they heard from mainstream news outlets, they assumed it as

fact and felt that farmers were monsters.

It is the same reason Chipotle boosted sales from their commercials on "evil factory farms." If our industry does not make education their number one priority, the two percenters will be pushed out entirely.

Facing off with voters is nothing new. As a result of the last election, new restrictions have been placed on ranchers' access to antibiotics. Effective January 2018, a prescription is now required for medications like LA200 and Penicillin. Minimum wage will also increase to \$15 per hour by 2022.

On top of battling shortages in water, land and labor, farmers and ranchers are trying to survive a state well suited for farming but increasingly hostile toward business.

This midterm election does not look like it will be bringing any relief to the state's agriculture industry and many have started looking toward relocation.

Do not be surprised if the folks moving into your neighboring ranch hail from the state of California. ☞

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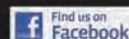
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# NAVICULAR SYNDROME: DIAGNOSIS TO TREATMENT

By Garrett Metcalf, DVM

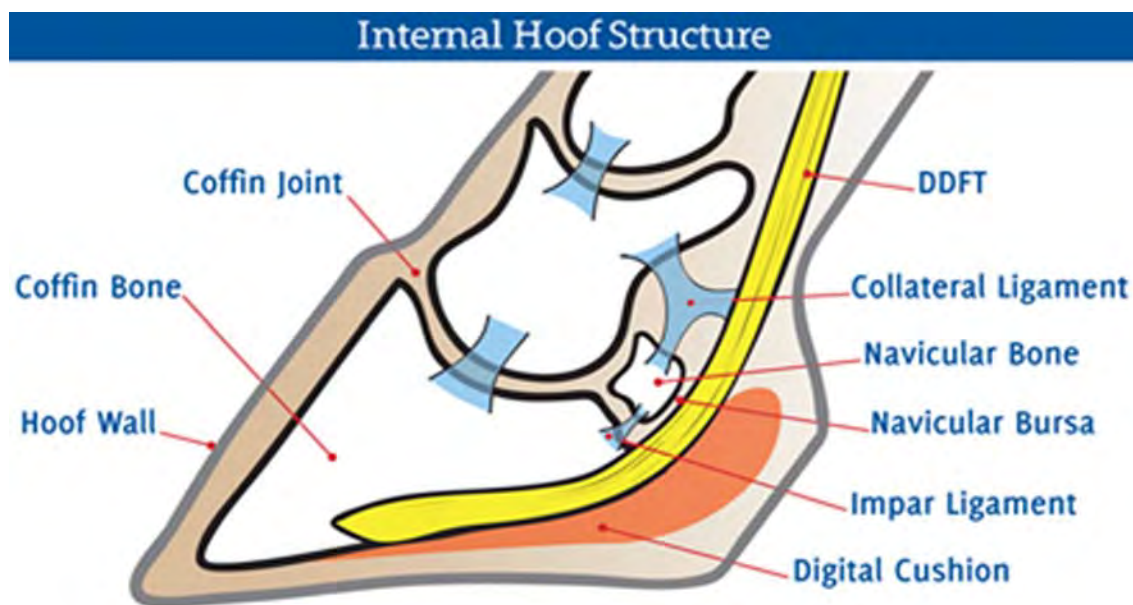
The nomenclature surrounding navicular conditions in horses has undergone changes over the past 10 years with the advent of new diagnostic tools to further explore the causes of lameness that encompasses the navicular bone in horses. The current terminology shifts the sole blame of the cause of lameness in horses away from the navicular bone to include the surrounding soft tissues that make up of the podotrochlear apparatus in the feet of horses.

Hence, calling horses diagnosed with navicular conditions, navicular syndrome or caudal heel pain, rather than navicular disease, which implies the primary structure that is the cause of the lameness is the navicular bone itself.

Regardless of the terminology to describe these navicular issues, navicular syndrome is still a major player in causing forelimb lameness in many horse breeds and disciplines. Horses with lameness due to navicular syndrome commonly have a short strided, choppy gate, often land toe-heel rather than heel-toe and majority worsen when trotted in circles towards the lame limb.

These horses often have pain response to hoof testers across the heels of the foot and often present with podiatry issues that are not being addressed properly. The onset of lameness can be slow, insidious onset or acute sudden lameness after a specific event either, while in work or in turn out.

The typical approach to examine a horse for forelimb lameness suspected of having navicular syndrome is fairly straight for-



ward. A complete history is often gathered from the owner or trainer who is riding the horse. A physical exam is then performed including palpation of the limb, examination of the feet and hoof testers are used to complete the hoof exam. The horse is then trotted in hand through a lameness pattern including straight lines and circles both directions. Flexion tests are also part of the examination process to gather more information and isolate areas of the limb that are causing the pain.

In order to more accurately narrow down the region of the limb causing the lameness, diagnostic regional nerve blocks or intra-articular (joint blocks) are performed with a short acting anesthetic to temporarily eliminate the pain and ultimately improve the horse's gait and lameness scores during repeat trotting through the lameness pattern. The threshold of improvement that is desired to be reached is approximately 70 to 80 percent improvement in the

horse's lameness to comfortably diagnose the source of the pain although not always achievable with certain causes of lameness or in cases of severely lame horses, making that mark unachievable.

The majority of horses with navicular syndrome have significant improvement to a palmar digital nerve block, which is the lowest nerve block that can be performed to the digital nerves before they enter the foot, but some horses require additional nerve blocks to achieve satisfactory improvement in lameness.

A palmar digital nerve block or PD nerve block desensitizes the navicular region, majority of the coffin joint, the sole of the foot and the skin over the heel bulbs encompassing major structures in the foot, hence requiring diagnostic imaging to make the final diagnosis of the cause of lameness.

The anatomy of the foot lends itself to diagnostic limitations with the common tools the veterinar-

ians use to routinely image a lame horse. The density of the hoof capsule drastically limits ultrasound to be used to image the foot only through the frog and is rarely used to image the navicular bone and the deep digital flexor tendon. The mainstay of initial imaging of horses with navicular syndrome is radiographs or x-rays.

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

Although radiographs afford abundant information about the bones in the foot, it too, has its own limitations when it comes to seeing the soft tissue structures that are a very important part of the podotrochlear apparatus. The next step in imaging and hence

the change in nomenclature to navicular syndrome was brought about through MRI. MRI, or Magnetic Resonance Imaging, has further expanded veterinarians' capability to research, diagnosis and treat horses with navicular syndrome. Although the availability of MRI imaging is sometimes scarce, there are veterinary referral practices and university veterinary teaching hospitals with MRI capabilities designed to accommodate horses.

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

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

joint, the coffin joint is utilized to administer the medications. There is also often coinciding coffin joint inflammation or arthritis, making it a preferred delivery route of the medications.

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

Concurrently with medical treatment, podiatry changes are often needed to have well rounded treatment plan and longer lasting results. Common foot conformational challenges that navicular syndrome horses have is long toe-low heel conformation or contracted heels.

The same shoe or method of application will not work on every horse or case of navicular syndrome, and there have been multiple different types of shoes and methods used to help these horses. The relationship and coordination between the farrier and the veterinarian is important to reach the best treatment plan, which does come with some degree of trial and error to get the best fit for the individual horse.

Alternative medical options are available to treat specific injuries to the podotrochlear apparatus that are often diagnosed with the help of MRI. One particular class of drug that is used and marketed to address navicular issues with is Bisphosphonates. The two drugs labeled for use in horses is Tildren and OsPhos. These drugs block the function of a cell line that is in all bones and is believed to play a major role in the degenerative process that occurs within the navicular bone. Other alternative therapies are in the category of regenerative therapies. These options include Platelet Rich Plasma, IRAP, Pro-Stride and Stem Cell

Therapy. These therapies are reserved typically for difficult unresponsive cases in which a diagnosis is aided with the use of MRI. It should also be mentioned that daily or intermittent uses of NSAIDs such as phenylbutazone or firocoxib is a very helpful medical option to help control pain and inflammation. This practice of daily NSAID use is safer now with newer medications that are called selective Cox-2 inhibitors that have minimal side effects of the gastrointestinal tract.

Surgical treatment and therapies are also an important part of treating difficult, unresponsive cases to traditional treatments. Surgical treatment plans are often developed specifically to the type of injury and often a MRI is required to diagnose which region of the podotrochlear apparatus is affected or a more broadly applied surgical treatment is used to al-

leviate the pain by a neurectomy. Typically a neurectomy or nerving is reserved when other treatments have failed. Other surgical treatment plans are minimally invasive because of the anatomical restrictions of the surgical approaches to the navicular region making minimally invasive techniques the only logical approaches.

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

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

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KYLE HUMPHREY

# A.K.A. Smiley Two-Hats

By Ddee Haynes

I met Kyle Humphrey three summers ago when he attended what became known as the “Old Pokes” reunion. The Old Pokes reunion was a fun-filled weekend at Lake Carl Blackwell, Stillwater, Okla. The Old Pokes are a group of friends who attended and graduated from the greatest university (at least in my opinion) on earth, Oklahoma State University.

My friend Darrell Burnett kept telling everyone he and Celeste would be bringing “Smiley Two-Hats.” Having known Darrell since big hair and Rocky Mountain jeans were in style, and being privy to Darrell’s antics, I had no idea if Smiley Two-Hats was a real person or if Darrell would be unloading a mule. I was pleasantly surprised when Darrell and Celeste rolled in and introduced Kyle, also known as Smiley Two-Hats, to the Old Pokes gang. Kyle’s big warm smile, sparkling brown eyes and tasseled black hair melted my heart. I immediately knew there was something special about this young man.

Before we move forward let’s back up to 2009. The Burnetts had been playing around with the idea of becoming involved in the Big Brother’s program. Celeste really liked the idea and suggested they join as a couple, known as a “Big Couple.” Kyle was nine years old at the time.

Between horse camps with Celeste as a volunteer, hunting trips with Darrell, family vacations and just spending time together, it wasn’t long before Kyle was soon considered part of the Burnett family.

In 2011 Kyle’s mom Lori was diagnosed with cancer. Lori overcame the cancer and went into remission for a couple of years. When the cancer returned it was more than Lori could fight and she lost her battle in 2016. Lori left behind 16-year-old Kyle along with his two older siblings, 20-year-old sister Tiffany and his 19-year-old brother Calvin. Darrell and Celeste had come to love Kyle as their own and did what their hearts told them to do. They stepped in and became Kyle’s legal guardians.

A year or so before they became his guardian, Celeste, Darrell and Kyle attended the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo. It was during



Kyle Humphrey riding a bareback horse. (Courtesy of the Burnett family)

the rodeo that Kyle told Darrell he thought it would be fun to ride bareback horses. About a year later Darrell and Kyle were headed to the Ward Rodeo Company, located in Coalgate, Okla., for two days of intense training on bareback horses.

The Ward Rodeo Company was started in 1949 by brothers J.C. and Bill Ward. Ward Rodeo Company earned their reputation by producing junior, open and sanctioned rodeos. Ward Company rodeos were the start for many professional rodeo cowboys such as the late Lane Frost, Justin McDaniel and brothers Cord and Jett McCoy. After the passing of J.C. in February 2013, brothers Cody, Terry and Wes took over the rodeo company. In addition to still putting on rodeos, the brothers also hold a rodeo school. The school was started by Cody, who today is the “stock guy.” Cody’s job is to put together the stock, while Terry is the bull riding instructor and Wes is the bareback and ranch bronc riding instructor. The school is for

kids from elementary age on up. The younger kids ride either calves or Shetland ponies, while the older students ride bulls and broncs.

After two days with the Wards and climbing on a half dozen broncs, Kyle was hooked. It wasn’t long before he and the Burnetts were traveling up and down the road to junior and open rodeos. Born with natural athletic ability and being smaller in stature, Kyle is perfect for bareback riding. With just two years under his belt, his success has been phenomenal.

This year Kyle qualified for the Heartland Youth Bareback Championship, finishing fourth. He also won the Oklahoma Junior Rodeo Association Year End Bareback Championship. Kyle became a member of the Oklahoma High School Rodeo Association half way through the season. With half as many rodeos as the other bareback riders, he still ended up the OHSRA Reserve Champion Bareback Rider.

The OHSRA Reserve Champion quali-

fied Kyle to move onto the National High School Finals in Rock Springs, WY, in July. The week before he was headed to Rock Springs for the finals, Kyle was entered in the world's richest youth rodeo the International Finals Youth Rodeo each year in Shawnee, Okla. The cards were not in his favor. On his first horse of the week, he drew a big stout Frontier colt. He rode him for a few jumps until he was thrown. When he landed, he broke his thumb on his riding hand.

Kyle's week at the IFYR did not end well and neither did the National High School Finals. Kyle tried to ride his second horse at the IFYR, as well as his two horses at the National High School Finals. His broken thumb on his riding hand just didn't allow the strength needed to make the eight second qualified rides .

While most would have left the arena downcast, Kyle always had his signature big smile on his face. The words his mom Lori told him are always with him, "Keep



Celeste, Kyle and Darrell at Kyle's high school graduation. (Courtesy of the Burnett family)

your head high, never let anything get you down and put it in God's hands."

Kyle graduated this May from Sherman, Texas, on the A Honor Roll and in the top seven of his class of 450. Additionally, he was a member of the High School Honor Society, the National Honor Society, National Technical Honor Society and a member of PALS, which is a club that mentors elementary aged children.

This fall Kyle will attend Oklahoma State University with a rodeo scholarship. He will major in bio systems and agriculture engineering. I know the future will be bright for this smiling young man, and I cannot wait to see his accomplishments. On a side note, of how the name "Smiley Two-Hats" came to be. Smiley of course is self-explanatory.

The two hats is because Kyle wears his good hat to the rodeo then rides in one of Darrell's old felt hats, thus the name Smiley Two-Hats!

Until next time... 🤠

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# WESTERN HOUSEWIVES

BY SUMMER MCMILLEN

Hi there, and welcome to "Western Housewives," a place where the ranch, the road and a cowboy family call home. My name is Summer McMillen, and I'll be your host for the next 15 minutes. So sit back, grab something loaded with caffeine and get ready to enjoy yourselves.

I was born in the Panhandle of Texas to a hard-working father and an equally hard-working mother. Daddy owned and operated a pre-conditioning feedlot, and my mama kept him in line.

All of us kids grew up working right alongside them. This is the reason I can see a sick calf from a mile away, and my blackberry cobbler is top-notch. Over many years and seasons, I have eventually found myself living in the beautiful, tree-filled and pond-rich state of Oklahoma. I emphasize "tree-filled" and "pond-rich" because growing up in Earth, Texas, we didn't even know what ponds and trees were until the fourth grade.

I am married to a ranchin' and rodeoin' man and we have a spicy little cowgirl who never gets far out of our sight. This brings me to the grand conclusion that yes, I am a ranch wife and proud to be one.

The fact that you are reading this column tells me you are a ranch wife, too, or maybe you just have aspirations of being one or maybe you are just bored. Either way, I don't care. I am just glad you are here.

As you may know, along with being a ranch wife comes many ranch wife duties such as folding laundry, for example. Yes, I know that is not your typical to-do list item when you think of the daily tasks of a hardy, adventurous ranch wife. Here, however, it is a fact of life that cannot be avoided no matter how many ways I have tried. For the first year of our marriage I did laundry down at the big house. My husband and I lived in a tiny little bunk house where we didn't have room for a washer and a dryer. I made laundry trips in the infamous Oklahoma humidity, the treacherous Oklahoma ice storms and, yes, even in nice weather, too. I prefer to be dramatic about this situation. It gets my point across better, which is laundry is the spawn of Satan.



Summer with her little cowgirl, Senora. (Photo courtesy of Summer McMillen)

You can actually find this truth mentioned in the "Ranch Wife How-To Manual." This is the imaginary, unwritten conduct book we all go by. Find "Laundry" on page 120. "Ranch gal marries ranch man and becomes ranch wife. Ranch babies are soon to follow, along with several loads of laundry per day. Brace yourselves."

"Brace yourselves." It says it in the imaginary handbook, ladies! Fast forward a few years and I now have my own washer and dryer, but that doesn't mean that I don't try to avoid this chore daily. I would much rather go check on cows, feed the horses or get run over by a tractor than do laundry every day.

Along with my loads of laundry per day, I also enjoy chasing my little cowgirl all over the corral while my boss man works cattle. Just because I am a certified stay-at-home-mom does not mean that I get to skip out on working cattle. My boss man makes sure that our little cowgirl and I have firsthand knowledge on what it means to give a shot with a baby on your hip. Little cowgirl loves it, mama gets a good ab workout and the boss man gets a good laugh. Everybody wins.

Just the other day we were casting roping steers. This process ensures that their horns are not broken while they are being roped. I personally hate casting steers with every

fiber of my being. The boss man never fails to pick the absolute hottest part of the day to do this, along with the meanest roping steers he can find. I hate it so much that when we had our first child we made an agreement that I would never have to cast steers again as long as he didn't have to change diapers. I was very pleased with this agreement. That is until I started feeling sorry for the poor guy. So, I went down to the corral to give him some water. As we were standing there watching, the chute didn't close fast enough and one of the roping steers got out. Where do you think the first place he headed for was? That's right! The frail, short woman with the baby! I don't have much experience being a roping steer, but if I did I would probably pick myself as a prime target, too. Thankfully I am quick footed and witty and out smarted the steer.

Ok, just kidding. I am very slow. My boss man ran around the corner and saved the day like he always does. God bless him for taking care of his girls, and God bless us for dealing with his roping steers.

If that sounds like a little too much ranch action for you, then maybe you would prefer the life of a rodeo wife, which I also happen to be. To the same husband of course. Not only do we rodeo through the Professional Rodeo Cowboy Association, we also compete in Working Ranch Cowboy Association ranch rodeos. Being a rodeo wife comes with its own complications, but don't worry. We have a manual for rodeo wives too.

Being a ranch and rodeo wife is hard, time consuming and so worth it. Every bit of it. Even though it is not for the faint of heart, there is never a moment I wish I was doing something else. From working cattle to driving 12 hours straight through the night, I live for it all.

So come on this ride with me. Be a passenger alongside me. It is bound to be a wild ride full of laughs, laundry, and casting steers. There might even be some tears, and undoubtedly there will be lots of love. Alas, it will all be worth it. Welcome to my Oklahoma cowgirls, and welcome to Western Housewives.

PSA: No roping steers or laundry baskets were harmed in the making of this column. ☞

# THE REVOLUTION

By Krista Lucas

Western sports are continuously growing and expanding, whether it is rodeo, cutting, working cow horse or barrel racing. The most recent association to form out of the barrel racing world is Revolution Barrel Racing.

These new races have gotten off to a great start and will continue to bring a new format to the sport.

In 2017, barrel racer Stephanie Gilliam Ritchey had an idea to build a group of barrel races with higher fees and bigger payouts.

The races strive to provide excellent service to every contestant. The crew in charge is some of the best in the industry, with the goal of providing a safe but competitive atmosphere. The RBR website is easy to follow, making entering any event stress-free.

RBR offers a membership to allow contestants to compete in qualifying races, which are held at nine tour stops around Texas and Oklahoma. The finale has \$25,000 added and will be November 15 thru 18 in Glen Rose, Texas.

The races also have an open section with a lower fee at each event, along with a youth race, and are all Women's Professional Rodeo Association approved.

This format is similar to the style team ropings have adapted to in recent years. Numbered ropings have higher entry fees, with a bigger payback, and many are more than one round.

RBR events are multiple days with multiple chances to win big money. Ritchey, of Pilot Point, started RBR when she saw a huge opportunity to create something new and different for the sport.

"I had competed in every kind



of barrel race known to man since I started 36 years ago at the age of four years old," Ritchey said. "A few years back, I started producing a few medium sized races that were successful."

"Then I started having my children, and it got put on the back burner. This has been on my mind for a few years. Now is the right timing, in my opinion, for me and the sport."

Several years ago during a trip to Las Vegas, she listened to her husband talking to a friend who was roping in the World Series Team Roping at the South Point Arena. Ritchey's first thought was to produce a race in Las Vegas, but it was not until two years later, after reading Facebook comments about what people were wanting from a producer that would be new and different, that Revolution Barrel Racing was formed.

"A whole year was planned

within a two month period," Ritchey said. "This is my version of luck." The feedback during this first year of competition has been extremely positive, and overall everything has run smoothly.

"We have had a few bumps in the road, as well as a few experiences we've learned a great deal from this year," Ritchey said. "One being the program to run our races on and print checks. I wanted something that would be totally for Revolution Barrel Racing and our format. We used several and finally found the right one for us just recently."

There are more new people attending every race, and Ritchey hopes to continue to grow RBR. She has already figured RBR should see a 20 to 30 percent growth over the next five years and plans to expand the races to a few other states in the future.


"Not only do we have a great

team of people working together to make Revolution a success, we have one of the most successful western timed event producers in history as our mentor," Ritchey said. "Planning for our 2019 Tour is already in full swing."

Katelyn McLeod, daughter of multiple Wrangler National Finals Rodeo qualifier Michelle McLeod, likes the idea of smaller but richer races. The Whitesboro cowgirl has been the announcer for RBR, as well as interviewing the winners.

The payout is what has caught my eye," McLeod said, "and it doesn't matter if you have a 1D horse or a 4D horse, the payout makes it worth your time."

The RBR remaining schedule includes events at Glen Rose and Conroe, Texas.

For the latest race results from Alvarado, Texas visit [www.revolutionraces.com](http://www.revolutionraces.com). 



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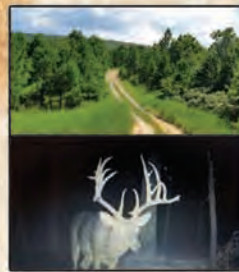
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# HORSEPOWER

By Lanna Mills

## “AUTO”

If you have been around horses much at all, I am sure you have noticed that not all of them are the same. They come in all sizes and colors. Like us, each has its own personality and temperament. While some are laid back and easy going, others are hyper and on edge. Horses are capable of great things and are quite versatile. With the proper training, there is no limit to what a horse can become.

Some horses are just extra special; they have a little something more. We have created this article to showcase these extraordinary equines. Each month we will be telling the story of a different horse and just what it is that makes it unique. I'd like to start by introducing you to one of our horses.

My husband purchased “Auto” from a friend about 15 years ago. He was just a three-year-old, which now makes him the ripe old age of 18. He wasn't much when my husband acquired him, just a colt that needed a job. He became quite the horse. He has to be to have managed to keep his place for that length of time.

Auto has been used on the ranch his entire life. There isn't a job that he can't do and do well. From dragging calves to the fire in the branding pen, doctoring sick calves, sorting calves off the cows or catching a runaway stray in the brush, this fella has done it all. He is the type of horse that is the same every day.

You can turn him out to pasture for months, and when you're ready for him again it's like he never missed a day. In addition to his ranch work, he has been



Auto has been used on the ranch his entire life. There isn't a job that he can't do. (Photo by Lanna Mills)

hailed to numerous ranch rodeos and ropings.

He is a big bay Quarter Horse, but don't let his size fool you. He is a gentle giant. He is one of the gentlest geldings you'll ever meet and has a great mind. He has been ridden by everyone. If there is a

child who wants to ride or even someone who has never swung a leg over a saddle before, he is the go-to horse. His name “Auto” holds true, he is an automatic. He can easily switch gears and go from flying out of the box in the arena to giving a youngster his

first ride. You don't have to know much to get along with him.

A few years ago he gave us quite the scare. He had eaten a good deal of mesquite beans and was colicking. We had tried everything. We walked him, given him medicine and taken him for a ride in the trailer, but nothing helped. It was late evening, and all the vet offices were closed. We were finally able to reach a vet on his cell phone. We hauled him the long 43 miles to their clinic where he was given amazing care. They worked with him late into the night. By the next day he was better and we were able to bring him home. This event, however, didn't change his love for mesquite beans. In the summer when the trees are loaded with beans, we have to keep an extra close eye on him and even have to pen him up so he doesn't overeat.

Now that he is getting up there in age, he has been retired from the hard work. He has put in his time and deserves to spend the rest of his life grazing and occasionally giving a ride to a young child just starting out. There are plenty of young horses that need the experience.

Auto is a great horse, and I know that there are tons more out there just like him.

Do you have a horse that is deserving of the spotlight? If so, I'd like to hear about them. If you have a horse that you think other readers would enjoy learning about please email me at [lannacheyenne@hotmail.com](mailto:lannacheyenne@hotmail.com). I am so excited about this new column and am eager to get to know outstanding horses and their owners. ☞



# THE MU



# MULE MAN

*John Logsdon*

"I don't really strive to be rich I just want to be comfortable and happy. I could care less about having big sums of money, but I do want to be comfortable and happy. I love where I live, I love my family and I like mules..."

***John Logsdon***

# THE MULE MAN

*John Logsdon*

By Rosemary Stephens

**J**ohn Logsdon doesn't view himself as an expert on mules...but he comes pretty close.

Logsdon, 34, has been riding and working with mules since 12 years of age when his grandpa, John T. bought him his first mule to train and sell.

Nestled in the rolling hills outside of Ada, Okla., in a small town called Fittstown, Logsdon and his wife Fredonia have anywhere from 40 to 50 head of mules grazing peacefully with a few always saddled ready to ride. With over 280 acres on their homestead, there is plenty of open space to ride.

"This is my grandparent's place and we grew up about two miles from here," Logsdon said.

Logsdon said he and his three siblings would spend entire summers walking, riding and going swimming on his grandparent's land, now his own.

"We were down here all the time, sneaking down here when we weren't supposed to be. I spent a whole lot of time here with my grandfather," Logsdon said as he sat petting his faithful companion, an American Border Collie named Patches.

Like Logsdon, two of his oldest children, John Evan, 10, and Lydea, seven, spend their summer days riding their favorite mules in the solitude of the rolling hills, drinking cool water from one of the 26 natural springs running through their property, making the same memories Logsdon holds so precious. His youngest son, Ian, not quite a year old, may not be riding on his own yet, but he can bray with the best of them.

Sitting under the shade trees, Logsdon laughed when asked if he ever thought he would be called the "Mule Man."

"I've heard people say it, the Mule Man, and I don't know where that came from, but maybe it's because I've had 40 to 50 head of mules on the place at one time, and we've been doing the sale now since 1993," Logsdon said as he chuckled, something he does quickly and often.

**Continued on page 34**





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# THE MULE MAN

## John Logsdon

Continued from page 32

Logsdon's grandfather, John T. started the mule sale when Logsdon was approximately 10 or 11 years old. His grandfather bought him his first mule, "and it has kind of grown from there."

"My grandfather was a rodeo clown back in the mid-70s and he used a mule in his act that did tricks and stuff, and he kind of built it around that," Logsdon recalled.

Logsdon's grandfather spent his life trading and moving around. He joined the military, where he met Logsdon's grandmother Margaret. They were married while he was stationed in California and later moved to Texas, had three kids over a period of time and then moved to old Mexico for a few years.

"He was having some financial troubles, and he went down there to get stabilized. He bought a place down there, a cattle ranch, but I think the mule sale all started with his act in the rodeo," Logsdon said as he continued to share memories of his grandpa.

"My grandpa said the mule was easy to train, though he did tell me the mule wouldn't perform sometimes and would leave him hanging out to dry."

Logsdon enjoys telling the story of his grandpa and his grandpa's best friend, Jim Ward, being rodeo clowns and their vast difference in height, with his grandpa being over six-foot tall and his friend Ward only being five-foot tall.

"My grandpa was the joke teller of the two of them," he said.

By the time Logsdon was born, his grandfather was a professional auctioneer, but never lost his love of mules.

Logsdon said he probably wouldn't have gotten into mules as much if his grandpa hadn't started the sale, an idea his grandpa came up with trying to figure out a way for Logsdon to earn some money during his teen years.

"I was riding horses for people and riding horses for him, but then he started buying mules for me to ride and then to make money on them. He would buy them, I would train them, and afterwards he would get his money



The Logsdon Family pictured left to right: Lydea Logsdon, seven, holding Ian Logsdon, one, John Evan, 10, Fredonia Logsdon and John "The Mule Man" Logsdon. (Photo by Rosemary Stevens)

back, and half of the profit from the sale and I would get the other half. That was our agreement. I was 12 years old, shook hands and it was a done deal," Logsdon said.

Logsdon played with the rodeo circuit for a while, but nothing really serious. When he began to train and breed mules, he would take some to ranch rodeos now and again.

"When I go places on a mule, people will throw little jokes and stuff, but when they see the mule perform at a ranch rodeo and I rope a calf off of it or something, they stop and say, 'hey, that's a good mule,'" he laughed.

Logsdon said there is very little difference between a mule and a horse, except their personalities, and they have a strong sense of self-preservation, which benefits the rider.

"The donkey in them gives them the self-preservation, which makes them safer on the trails and the sure footedness. They get all those traits from the donkey. The horse gives them the athletic ability and everything else," Logsdon said, explaining some differences between a mule and a horse.

"The donkey in them also makes them think through stuff. They aren't quite as quick to react. Now you have exceptions, but as a general rule they think through things better than a horse does; they don't react."

For example, he said, when a mule gets all tangled up in fencing, he will stand there until somebody comes and helps them out—they won't react.

Continued on page 36



(Clockwise) Left to right: Jim Ward and John T. Logsdon in Stratford, Okla. during the mid-'70s. Logsdon and Ward were rodeo clown partners on the rodeo circuit. (Courtesy photos) Fredonia Logsdon holds one-year-old Ian in her lap. Ian, though too young to ride on his own, can bray as well or better than his two older siblings. (Photo by Rosemary Stephens) John and Fredonia Logsdon were married July 23, 2006. Here they are pictured on their wedding day with John's grandpa, John T. and his grandma, Margaret. (Courtesy photo)

# THE MULE MAN

## John Logsdon

Continued from page 34

“They won’t go wild and crazy, like some horses would do. A horse will get excited about stuff, but a mule will think it all the way through,” he said.

Logsdon acknowledged some mules could be obnoxious about some things, giving an example of their mule named Ranger.

“Ranger, well, he obnoxiously wants to be in your business. He wants to be up, around it and into everything. The most unique thing about them [mules] is their personality and their charisma; they just carry themselves differently,” Logsdon said.

There was a time in history where a mule was kind of looked down upon and was labeled as being obstinate, hard-headed and not really considered a good ride.

“None of those things are true at all about mules. You just have to be smarter than a mule to ride or train a mule. It’s always a game to them and you always have to stay a step ahead of a mule. If you don’t, they are going to beat you, and if they ever beat you one time, it’s over with,” he said, comparing the mule to a little kid who needs to know what the boundaries are.

“So I would rather train a mule from weanling than to try to fix a mule that has issues, though I can fix those issues, but as soon as they go back home they’re smart enough to realize you’re not me and they are going to test those boundaries,” he said.

In October 2007, Logsdon’s grandpa passed away, his grandmother shortly after.

Logsdon and his wife Fredonia bought their homestead as their own and have continued in his

grandpa’s footsteps hosting two mule sales every spring and fall.

“The whole family helps out. My grandfather started the sale but then partnered with Johnny Kelso out of Murray, Ky., in 1995,” Logsdon said.

He said his grandpa knew the horse and cattle market, but the mule deal, as far as trying to sell them was new to him, so he partnered with Kelso, which remains today.

“We stayed partnered with the Kelso family, and we have the sale in Ada every April and every October, the Oklahoma Mule Sale. It’s usually the second weekend in April and the first weekend in October. We start with a tack sale and move right into the catalog mule sale, which our catalog mules are our premiere mules,” Logsdon said.

During the mule sale several thousand people are on the grounds, averaging approximately 200 total head of mules being sold.

“At one time back in the early 2000s, grandpa was running about 400 head, but the market, with the whole slaughter deal, hurt the market on everything, but we built it back up and are continuing to grow,” Logsdon said.

Though barriers still exist in the mindset of some rodeo cowboys, Logsdon believes it is opening up because he has seen the market for mules increase over the years.

“People have realized the good qualities of a mule, the sure footedness, the self-preservation side of it, and a lot of it is getting the stigma away from mules by getting out there and showing people the good qualities of a mule,” he



One of John Logsdon’s mules being ridden by his friend Rich at North Myrtle Beach, S.C. (Courtesy photo)



Thirty-four now, Logsdon has been riding since age 12 and typically has 40 to 50 mules around his place at all times. (Photo by Rosemary Stevens)

said.

Logsdon said he doesn’t go to mule shows, per se; however, he does ranch rodeos and does “cowboy” on them. “I’ll do anything on my mule that anyone will do on a horse. Some are better than others. Mules, as a general rule, are not bred like a horse is to cut a cow or do certain jobs on the ranch, but if

you breed a really good mare to a nice-minded jack, you will get one with the ability to do all the things a horse can do.”

If you find yourself in Ada, Okla., Oct. 6 and 7, take some time to check out the Oklahoma Mule Sale and see for yourself how special mules are as seen through the eyes of the Mule Man himself. ☞

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By Lacey Newlin



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**Serves:** 6

For Dressing:

- 5 limes
- 1 (8) ounce container light sour cream
- 1/2 cup adobo sauce for chipotle peppers
- 1/2 tsp Old Bay seasoning
- 1/4 tsp chili powder
- 1/4 tsp cumin

For Fish:

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 pound halibut or other firm white fish steaks or fillets
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 12 flour tortillas
- 3 cups shredded cabbage
- 2 ripe tomatoes, diced
- 1/2 cup chopped cilantro

### INSTRUCTIONS

**Make dressing:** Zest 3 limes, then juice 1 of them. Stir together sour cream and adobo sauce in a bowl. Stir in 2 tbsp lime juice, 2 tsp zest, old bay, chili powder and cumin. Cover and chill until ready to grill.

**Prepare fish:** Preheat an outdoor grill to high heat and lightly oil grate.

Brush oil on both sides of



fish, then sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Arrange fish on grate and grill, turning once, until it flakes

easily with a fork, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Cut into 12 pieces. Grill tortillas about 15 seconds per side. Arrange fish in center of tortillas;

top with cabbage, tomatoes and cilantro. Drizzle with dressing. Garnish with wedges cut from remaining limes. Enjoy! ☞



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# WHERE THE PAVED ROAD ENDS

## NO PLACE LIKE HOME

BY BETH WATKINS

The best way to appreciate the place you hang your hat is to take a vacation. There is a lot of world out there to explore, but my favorite place is home. When you live in the country, at the end of a dirt road, some might think we are living in the middle of nowhere, but they are wrong. We are really living in heaven on earth. My place of choice is where the cow population is greater than the people population.

This past summer, our granddaughter, Kenzie Beth, graduated from high school in Merrimack, N.H. The graduation took place in June, which easily translates to hay season here, so G.W. would have to start baling hay without me. My flight left from Tulsa early enough in the morning for him to drop me off and head back to McAlester just in time for work. The plan was for my youngest daughter to pick me up four days later at the Tulsa International Airport.

I was then going to go home with her and visit for a few days. I began my journey by checking a bag, and then with my purse on my shoulder and my passport and boarding pass in hand, G.W. kissed me goodbye at security and then waited for me to blow him a kiss from the other side before he walked away and left me to fly solo. I'll admit I was a little choked up walking alone to my gate. I prefer companionship, especially when outside of my comfort zone, my comfort zone being Pittsburg County. Yet, I was excited to see my little Okie transplants in New England.

Six hours later I picked up my bag at baggage claim in Manchester, N.H., and was hugging my daughter and grandsons. My son-in-law's grandparents had made the trip along with Kenzie's Oklahoma boyfriend. They had flown into Boston, which was an hour away. When we all finally got together, it was at an ice cream parlor. I immediately figured out that New Englanders don't see or hear groups of Okies shootin' the breeze very often. They were amused by our accents. I hated to tell them they were the ones who had accents.

Josh, my son-in-law, had rented a mini-van so we could all be chauffeured around together. He took us through the heart of Hampton

Beach. I don't have the words to describe the massive, picturesque beach homes or the crowds of people we saw. When tourists come to New England in the fall to see leaves, the locals call them "Leaf Peepers." I wonder what they call a minivan full of gawking Okie's.

It was bittersweet saying goodbye. As much as I love being with my kids, I was ready to get back home to God's country.

When my plane touched down in Chicago, I turned my phone back on and read a text. My flight had been cancelled due to air traffic control and rescheduled. Before I could exit the plane, that flight was cancelled, too. So I found customer service to see what to do next. While standing in a long line of unhappy travelers, I watched the interaction of the inconvenienced customers and the expressionless faces of the agents sitting behind the counter staring at their monitors and intermittently typing on their keyboards.

I feel like the more a person stood there and complained the longer the agent typed. I wondered if that was a method the airlines used to retaliate: "the longer you complain the longer this will take." It doesn't do anyone any good to take out frustrations on the agents at customer service whom you are relying on to help you get home. One older gentleman demanded to see someone in upper management because he was much too important to be detained in such a fashion. My thoughts were, if you were that important maybe you should have flown in your private jet.

Even though I was disappointed and feeling very alone, I entertained myself with people watching. In my head I gave out fashion citations, made up stories to go with the characters before me and avoided eye contact with what I imagined were serial killers or purse snatchers. After a long day of more delays, I was finally standing in line to board the 1:30 a.m. flight to Dallas, and my sweet man was napping in his truck at DFW, awaiting my arrival. My smile and my sunny disposition departed my body when the announcement came from the gate, "I'm sorry, ladies and gentleman; this flight to Dallas has just been cancelled."

The race to customer service was on like

Donkey Kong. You think people were angry at 2 p.m. in the afternoon, you should have heard them yelling almost 12 hours later. One well-dressed young man was losing his mind. He had paid \$3,000 for this trip to meet up with friends, sleeping in the airport was not acceptable and the airline needed to provide him with a room and transportation. The customer service agent was trying to calm him down and give him directions to a concourse where he could nap on a cot. He began speaking a foreign language. I'm assuming he was Swedish, but I don't know. What I did recognize was the universal gesture of unhappiness when security was escorting him away, but I guess others might have thought he was saying United was number one.

After I booked my 10 a.m. flight to Tulsa, I began roaming the airport with the other zombies who were stranded there. The only thing open in the airport was a McDonalds, and they were running out of food, so yet another "happy" place to be. I strolled to the concourse where cots were lining the walls, and clearly there should have been a no vacancy sign flashing.

Luckily I had my phone charger and was able to visit with G.W. while he drove his three hour trip home. I'm sure there are worse stories than mine, "my 22-hour layover," but for this small town girl, it was hell.

The next morning as I was walking to my gate to board for Tulsa, I got another text from United. Before opening it I said a little prayer, and with a shaky finger I tapped on the text. It was informing me my gate had changed and my flight to Tulsa had a 30 minute delay. I called my daughter to let her know, and I sat down at my gate. I began to read my emails. There was one from United asking me to take a survey concerning my recent trip with them and could I share a few words. As I boarded the plane for Tulsa I pondered on the words that I would use to explain the last 22 hours. I will fly again because I want to see my family, but next time I fly, I hope I can find a nonstop flight.

I thank God every day for the peacefulness that surrounds me here at the end of this dirt road. After all, there is no place like home. ☺





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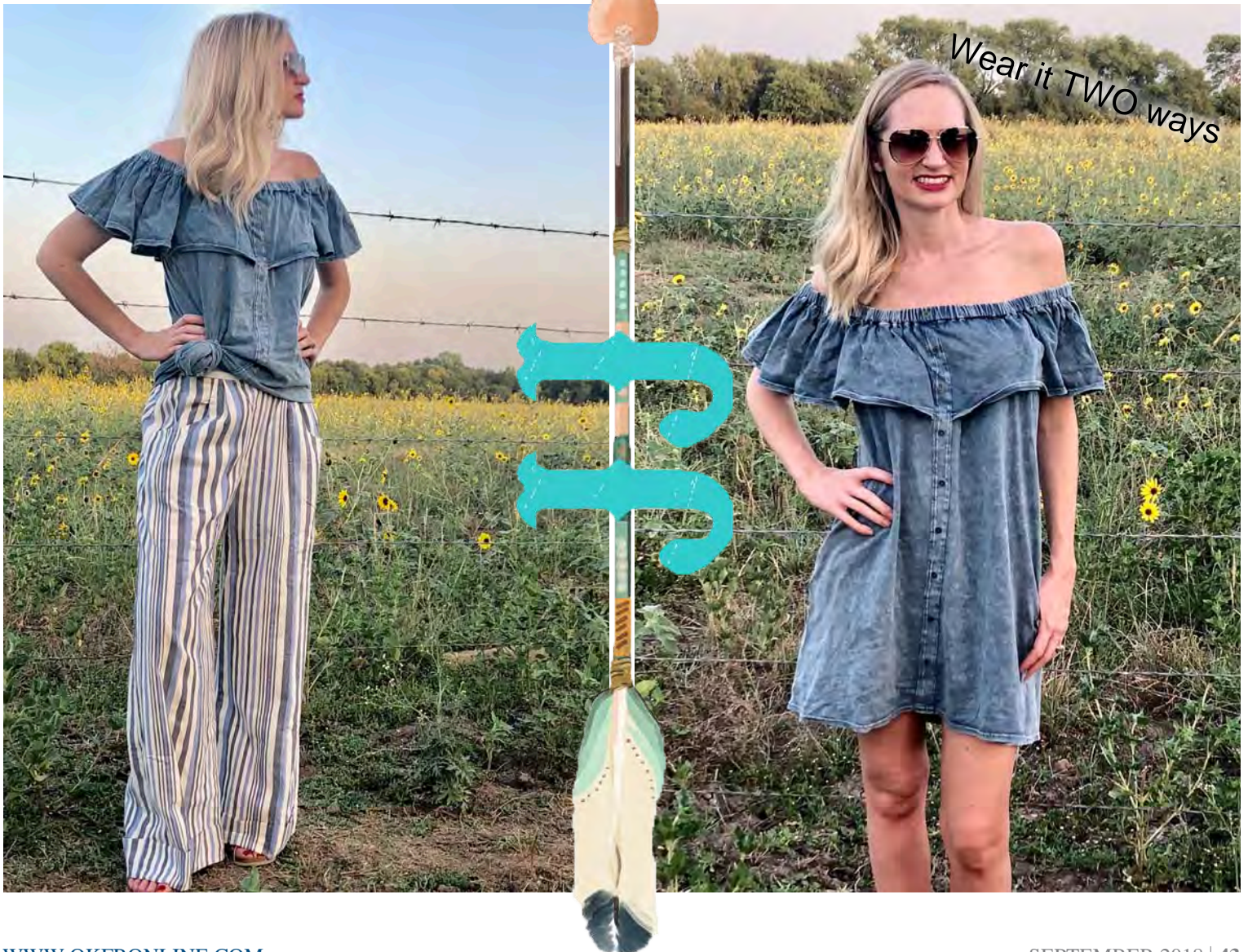
# JESSES JEWELZ

Well it's September and I hope you haven't completely melted away from this vicious heat we have had. It's time to think about transitional pieces for your wardrobe. This outfit is a great option because it's still light weight and cool but will take you into fall as well. Stripes are big this season and I fell in love with these wide leg cuffed linen trousers as soon as I saw them. I paired them with a denim color acid wash tunic, that can be worn long as a dress or tied in a knot as shown here and worn with shorts or pants. There are so many options with these two pieces of clothing. Find them and more at [www.jessesjewelz.com](http://www.jessesjewelz.com).

*Bring on fall!*

~JJ~

*Ephesians 3:20-21*



*Wear it TWO ways*

# Sugden *Once a thriving community*

By Judy Wade

**H**undreds of villages and small towns almost disappear each year. Some just fade away with little to mark their existence.

Others have left ghostly reminders, and a few cling tenaciously to life. Sugden, Okla., joined the list in the mid-70s. Like most of these communities, several factors were involved in its decline.

In Sugden's case, it failed to receive enough votes to become the county seat of Jefferson County, the town was often inaccessible when Beaver Creek was flooded and there was inadequate fresh water supply. The Great Depression and the drought were also contributing factors.

The story began in 1873 when brothers J.D. and Calvin Suggs came to the area and entered the cattle business on a large scale along Beaver Creek and Cow Creek, including the site of present-day Waurika and Sugden and the surrounding area. They ran as many as 40,000 head of cattle each year as well as large herds of horses.

The brothers built a double log house on what is now the south edge of Waurika to serve as headquarters for their spread. Homesteaders were attracted to the area, and a general store called "Sugg's Den" was built in the early 1890s. When a Post Office was built in 1893, the name of the community became Sugden. The town was located five miles south and one mile west of Waurika.

Businesses included a cotton gin, bank, hotel, a church that also served as the school, a blacksmith and two newspapers, the Sugden Leader and the Sugden Signal.

Two general stores served the needs of the people, one owned by R.P. (Bob) Grogan, who also operated a general store in Benvenue, Texas, just across the Red River to the east.

By 1910, there were 321 residents. Local farmers shipped cattle, hogs, wheat and cotton on the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad that passed through the community.

These people were true pioneers in a time when making a living was tough, and the law was made by those willing to defend their



The Sugden Cemetery. (Photo by Judy Wade)

rights.

The six-shooter was often the defender of law and order. It was told that J. D. Suggs shot three rustlers who were rounding up a bunch of his cattle one morning before breakfast.

The Suggs brothers leased a large amount of land from the Comanche Indians. Quanah Parker and some of his tribe would come to Sugden in the autumn and camp. Their teepees could be seen in every direction. The Indians gathered and sold pecans, and the Suggs brothers gave them beef.

One of the Suggs brothers' valued employees was Mort Mitchell, a well-respected African American man who herded cattle all over the region. He was a familiar figure in and around Waurika.

Calvin Suggs died in 1902. J.D. passed away in 1925. He was a multi-millionaire at the time of his death, having bought several other ranches.

By 1940, Sugden had only 171 residents. Because of the declining population, the Post Office was closed in 1955. The 2010 census showed 43 people still living in the commu-

nity.

Abandoned homes and barns can be seen scattered throughout the community, some reflecting an opulence of days gone by. Tombstones of former residents rest in the quiet shade of a well-tended cemetery. The story of Sugden is one of adventure, excitement and hardship. It is the history of a people who wrested a living from the land when the state of Oklahoma was developing. ☞

**Sources:**

*Oklahoma Historical Society*  
*Dyer, J.M., History of Jefferson County*

*Side note:*

*On the evening of August 7, two separate lightning strikes ignited fires that merged into one in the Sugden area. According to Cole Lockwood with the Ringling Volunteer Fire Department, the fire consumed pasture land and brush piles, but no homes or other structures were involved.*

*Units from Jefferson, Carter and Stevens Counties in Oklahoma and Clay County in Texas were able to extinguish the blaze.*



(Left to right) The hotel in early Sugden. (Photo courtesy of Oklahoma Historical Society). A once grand old house now abandoned in Sugden. (Photo by Judy Wade)



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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## Tulsa Reining Classic

AUG. 27-SEPT. 2 • TULSA

*Tulsa Expo Square, Tulsa, OK 74114.* The Tulsa Reining Classic is an action-packed display of equestrian skills at Tulsa Expo Square. Watch cowboys and cowgirls of all ages and abilities compete in a variety of challenging events that will keep you on the edge of your seat. See riders guide horses through precise patterns of circles, spins and stops at speeds alternating between a slow lope and a fast gallop. Cheer for your favorites as some of the most successful open riders to the tiniest young cowboys and cowgirls execute a variety of cantering and galloping feats in this thrilling show. Don't forget to check the on-site western trade show for some great deals when you need a break from all the thrilling competition. Visit [www.tulsareining.com](http://www.tulsareining.com) for more information about the Tulsa Reining Classic.

## 91st Annual McClain County Free Fair

SEPTEMBER 5-8 • PURCELL

*McClain County Expo Center, 1715 Hardcastle Blvd., Purcell, OK.* For more information call **405-205-4732**.

## American Miniature Registry National Show

SEPTEMBER 6-16 • TULSA

*Tulsa Expo Square, Tulsa, OK 74114.* The American Miniature Horse Registry and American Shetland Pony Club are bringing their National Show to Tulsa's Expo Square during a 10-day display of equestrian skills in different classes and categories. Don't miss out on miniature horses competing for awards in hunter, jumper, showmanship,

halter obstacle, obstacle driving, country pleasure driving, fancy turnout, roadster, roman chariot and much more at Tulsa's Expo Square. This prestigious event features more than 1,500 horses, making it the largest show of its kind in the world. For more information call **309-263-4044**.

## Mustang Western Days

SEPTEMBER 7-8 • MUSTANG

*Wild Horse Park, 1201 N. Mustang Rd., Mustang, OK.* Come out and enjoy the Mustang Western Days kicking off Friday, Sept. 7 with an art show at the Mustang Town Center and stick around for the Chili Cook-off at 6 p.m. There will be the annual Mustang Roundup Club open rodeo, best-dressed cowboy/cowgirl, food vendors, Stampede Car Show and the Western Days Stampede 5K and Fun Run. For more information visit [www.mustangwesterndays.com](http://www.mustangwesterndays.com) or call **405-376-2758**

## Gatesway Balloon Festival

SEPT. 7-9 • BROKEN ARROW

*Broken Arrow Events Park, 21101 E. 101st St., Broken Arrow, OK.* In 1963, Helen Gates was notified by the school system that her son, Ronnie, who was 20 and had Down Syndrome, would have to be transferred to a state institution or geriatric nursing facility. At that time, the options for people in Oklahoma with intellectual disabilities were very limited. Believing that anyone, regardless of their disability, should be able to live and work in the community, Helen rented a farmhouse where Ronnie and five other individuals were able to live and thrive the "Gates way." Today, the Gatesway team is made up of more than 300 staff members and volunteers serving

approximately 400 individuals each year. For more information visit [www.gatesway.org](http://www.gatesway.org) or call **918-259-1479**.

## An Evening with Chad Prather

SEPT. 13 • DUNCAN

*Simmons Center Theatre, 800 Chisholm Trail, Duncan, OK.* Tickets are available at Crutcher's Western Wear. Show begins at 7:30 p.m.

## Oklahoma State Fair

SEPT. 13-23 • OKLAHOMA CITY

*Oklahoma State Fairgrounds, 3001 General Pershing Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73107.* For more information visit [www.okstatefair.com](http://www.okstatefair.com).

## 27th Annual Comanche Nation Fair / Powwow

SEPTEMBER 21-23 • LAWTON

*Comanche Nation Complex, 584 NW Bingo Rd., Lawton, OK 73507* The 27th Annual Comanche Nation Fair Powwow on Sept. 21 to 23 at the Comanche Nation Complex in Lawton, Okla. It is the largest event of the Comanche Nation. Comanche Nation Fair features an array of events and activities that include: a powwow, parade, free concert, games and an art show. Other activities include basketball and softball tournaments, a horseshoe tournament, quilt show, teen dance, fun run and spirit walk. Arts and craft vendors from around the country will be present, as

**Continued on page 48**



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## 27th Annual Comanche Nation Fair / Powwow

Continued from page 47

well as a variety of food vendors. A children's carnival featuring free rides will also be on-site. While the Comanche Nation Fair lasts all week; the Comanche Fair Powwow is the last three days of the fair on Friday thru Sunday. For more information visit [www.comanchenationfair.com](http://www.comanchenationfair.com)

## McAlester Union Stockyard Special Sale

SEPT. 22 • MCALESTER

McAlester Stockyards, 2515 Standard Rd., McAlester, OK. Mark your calendar for the McAlester Labor Day Weekend Sale Sept. 4, as well as the Special Cow & Bull Sale Sept. 22. Also, lkeep in mind the upcoming OQBN/Weaned Sale Nov. 13. The regular sale is every Tuesday at 10 a.m. for calves and yearlings with cows and bulls at 6 p.m. Cattle sold in McAlester consistently top the market reports week to week. For more info call **918-423-2834** and visit [www.mcalesterstockyardsss.com](http://www.mcalesterstockyardsss.com).

## Dewey's Western Heritage Weekend

SEPT. 22-23 • BARTLESVILLE

Downtown Bartlesville, OK. Attend Dewey's Western Heritage Weekend to celebrate Oklahoma's early beginnings with lots of activities including the Tom Mix Festival, a parade and a Wild West Show. Activities for this two-day event include live bands, trick roping, trick riding, skill shooting, western games for children and plenty of food vendors. Starting off the festival will be "Miles for Mammograms" 5K and fun run. For more information visit [www.visitbartlesville.com](http://www.visitbartlesville.com)

## The Arkoma Santa Gertrudis Sale at Tulsa

SEPT. 29 • TULSA

Tulsa, OK. Held in the Tulsa Stockyards, cattle viewing will be Friday from 3 to 6 p.m. and Saturday from 9 to 11 a.m. Join in for a pre-sale dinner on Friday evening at 6 p.m. at the Tulsa Stockyards. There will be bulls, pairs as wells as bred and open heifers sold. SG Open Show Sunday, Sept. 30. Sale Headquarters will be the Holiday Inn Express & Suites - Catoosa 18725 E. Admiral Place, Tulsa, OK. **918-266-4100**. For more information contact Arkoma President at **918-232-7870** or for a sales catalog call **918-698-5428**.

## Oklahoma Mule & Tack Sale

OCTOBER 5-7 • ADA

Ada, OK. This sale is the second weekend of April and the first weekend of October. For more information call John Logsdon **580-465-8727** or visit [www.logsdonmules.com](http://www.logsdonmules.com).

## BeefGene Bull Sale - Fall Edition

OCT. 6 • SULPHUR SPRINGS

Sulphur Springs Livestock Commission, Sulphur Springs, TX. Come out Saturday, Oct. 6 to the BeefGene Bull Sale - Fall Edition where 75 breeding age Charolais bulls will be sold. For a sale catalog and more information contact Dennis Charolais Farm at **940-841-2792** or email [edennis591@yahoo.com](mailto:edennis591@yahoo.com). Mark your calendars for the Spring BeefGene Bull Sale, Jan. 26, 2019.



(OCT. 5-7)

## OKLAHOMA MULE & TACK SALE

## 42nd Annual Watonga Cheese Festival

OCTOBER 12-13 • WATONGA

Downtown Watonga, OK 73772. Enjoy wine tasting at the Whirlwind Winery, take part in the Great Rat Race (10K 5K and Fun Run), Race the Rail (bicyclists), cheese food contest, cheese demonstrations, opening parade and much, much more. For parade information contact Dayla at **580-791-3330**. For more information visit [www.watongachamber.com](http://www.watongachamber.com).

## An Affair of the Heart

OCT. 19-21 • OKLAHOMA CITY

Oklahoma State Fair Park, 3001 General Pershing Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK. An Affair of the Heart provides shoppers with a unique opportunity to browse hundreds of retailers from across the nation selling unique, one-of-a-kind items celebrating the

craft, skill, art and style of the vendor. More than 550 vendors will fill the State Fair Park during the show selling everything from housewares and antiques to jewelry and home décor. Do not miss the opportunity to get a head start on Christmas shopping! For more information visit [www.aaoth.com](http://www.aaoth.com) or call **405-632-2652**

## Spur Ranch Cattle Sale

OCT. 26 • VINITA

The Spur Ranch, Vinita, OK. The Spur Ranch of Vinita, OK presents its Oct. 26 Fall Performance Herd of the Heartland Sale. That will include the sale of registered bulls, plus commercial females. Cattle that grow, gain and grade! For more information visit [spurranch.com](http://spurranch.com) or call ranch manager Jeff Owen at **918-244-2118**, Spur Ranch owner Clay Hartley at **918-633-2580** or the ranch office at **918-256-9910**.





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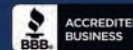
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# BACKROAD BITES

CATTLEMEN'S CAFE - OKC STOCKYARDS *By Kristi Hawks*

On a warm summer day I took off from my house to drive to Oklahoma City. The drive was great, sunny and it turned out to be a really hot day, one of the 111 days. I traveled up the backroads to the city to avoid the intense traffic on the Interstate.

Along my drive I could see the grass just burning up in the bar ditches and pastures, and all I could think of is that it's going to require quite a bit of hay to feed the cattle this winter if southern Oklahoma doesn't get rain in the near future.

I guess I'd better find some for my Belted Galloway cattle, which are bred and will calve after the first of the year.

After running a few necessary errands, I stopped at the Cattlemen's Cafe to enjoy a late lunch. You will drive directly through the stockyards to get to the café.

Parking shouldn't be a problem; there is generally plenty either on the streets or in back. When you walk in, the décor is what you'd expect from an older steakhouse, booths, tables and lots of pictures on the wall to explain the history of this place.

I've been here to eat many times, and so I knew the food was good. I wanted to stop and grab a steak lunch so I can document it for this issue of Backroads Bites.

Cattlemen's Café is generally busy, but I had no trouble getting in because it was mid-afternoon.



PAST



PRESENT

If there is a wait, I promise it's worth it.

When I got there, I got seated quickly and really had no trouble deciding my choices after a brief look at the menu. I started out with only water because I wanted to keep plenty of room for the steak. After all, that's the whole purpose of going there.

I selected the ribeye, baked potato and a salad. It didn't take any time for my food to arrive. I cut into the steak, and it was juicy and cooked to my liking.

This is by far the best steak I have eaten in all my travels in

Oklahoma, and I know it's only my opinion. It is the only reason I go to eat here and will probably always be my favorite.

There are numerous reviews for this restaurant on a national level, and they have received many awards. See their webpage at [cattlemensrestaurant.com](http://cattlemensrestaurant.com). I guess many others agree with me.

Cattlemen's Cafe is located at 1309 S. Agnew, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73108, and the phone number is 405-236-0416. The hours are Sunday thru Thursday 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Friday and Saturday

6 a.m. to 12 a.m. The menu has quite a variety of selections, but all the times I've eaten there I've only had the ribeye. I do plan to go some morning and try their breakfast selections though.

Make sure to browse on their website or Facebook page before you go to view all their options, and they do go into great detail explaining their steak selections.

If you are in the area of the Oklahoma City Stockyards, do yourself, and your stomach, a favor and go eat at the Cattlemen's Cafe. It is very much worth the trip. Enjoy. ☞

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sleep one night, so I started writing on the breakfast theme. It was inspired by real emotions and experiences I've had. I started writing the song about another person, but then in the middle, changed it to first person and it became about me."

A large part of this album was recorded in Travis Linville's studio in Norman. With so many Nashville options, it was interesting why O'Dowd chose to go this route.

"I really love what Travis has done and am so impressed with his musicianship. He is such a great instrumentalist, and he played a lot of it on the album. He not only had a vision for arrangement but also played the parts. He didn't try to change me. We worked together really intensely as far as getting the sound I wanted. He helped translate that to the music," she said.

When asked what is next for Erin O'Dowd, she replied, "I'm definitely going to put out another record. The next one is probably going to be even more of an American roots influenced album just based on the stuff I've been writing.

But, it's also still going to be country and red dirt. I'm excited for the continuing evolution of my sound as well. It's fun to write and feel it emerging. Right now, the plan is to record and release another album next year."

This Oklahoma roots artist is just getting started, and there will be lots more from her in the future. Keeping any genre of music fresh and appealing is a challenge, but she embraces it with excited energy.

When asked what keeps her grounded and inspired, she quickly replied, "It's the writing."

Without a doubt, it is original



O'Dowd wrote everything on Old Town and confesses that they are all true stories in one way or another. (Courtesy photo)

songwriter/performers like Erin O'Dowd that will keep roots music fans anxiously waiting for more.

O'Dowd is touring extensively to promote her new album. Her tour dates can be found at [www.erinodowd.com](http://www.erinodowd.com). 

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# Grazing Oklahoma

## Western Ragweed (*Ambrosia psilostachya*)

By Mike Proctor, Noble Research Institute research associate / [mdproctor@noble.org](mailto:mdproctor@noble.org)

**Characteristics:** Western ragweed (or Cuman ragweed) is a very common forb in the Southern Great Plains. It is a warm-season perennial with extensive rhizomes that can form large colonies. The leaves are rough with deep lobes. The flowers occur in spikes at the top of the plant, while the female flowers are found in small clusters at the base of the spike.

**Area of importance:** Western Ragweed occurs throughout most of the United States, into Canada and Mexico. It is native to the Great Plains but occurs as a weed elsewhere. Western ragweed becomes most abundant on sites that have shallow or poor soils and on areas that have a history of being overgrazed. You may find it on more productive sites, but competition with other species keeps it in check.

**Attributes:** The flowers are in no way showy, and their presence is more likely to be detected

by your nasal cavities than by your eyes. Your eyes may not be working all that well by that time either, as western ragweed is one of the main culprits contributing to airborne allergens in the summer and fall.

Native Americans used western ragweed for a variety of ailments involving labor, treatment of sores and colds.

Western ragweed is an important food source for wildlife such as white-tail deer, Bobwhite quail, wild turkey and many grassland birds. There are some grasshopper species that feed on western ragweed that, in turn, are fed on by several species of grassland birds.

Opinions vary as to the value of western ragweed in regards to grazing. In southern Oklahoma, livestock will graze it as long as it is less than about six inches tall. After that, they are not going to graze it at all.

Western ragweed can become

a problem in a pasture. Occasionally, there is a soil issue causing its growth that can not be easily fixed. Most often though, large populations are usually indicative of a grazing management issue. Unless that issue has been addressed, any steps taken to reduce western ragweed will have limited success. Again, opinions vary as to the best method of controlling western ragweed, but the growth stage of the plant seems to be the key. Prescribed fire, mowing and herbicides have all been successful when applied before the plants reach six inches tall. Even grazing at a high-stock density would likely work before the plants got too big.

I have seen this effect on a ranch in Love County, Okla., where firebreaks were mowed in early June and the fire was conducted in late July. In September, there was almost no ragweed present on the firebreaks. In the immediately adjacent burned areas, it

P

N

W

PLANT ID KEY

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

was two-feet-tall and as abundant as it was prior to the fire.

Some things to consider as you observe the western ragweed in your pasture are how livestock impact it, how much is really there

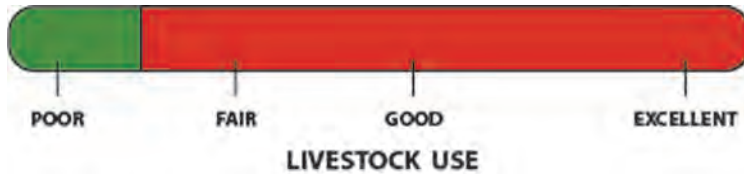
and how is it distributed across the pasture. Is it the only thing left standing? Did the cattle graze out all of the grass and leave the ragweed?

Competition with the grass is what normally controls the ragweed. If there is no grass left to compete with, the ragweed will certainly increase. Techniques such as mob grazing impact all of the plant species present and tend to level the playing field for the grasses.

All of the plants get abused

equally so none gets the upper hand. If they are not eaten, they at least get stomped on. Are there dense stands in one or two areas?

That might just be a soil issue and not something that can be fixed. Rather than worrying about them and spending money and time on those “weeds” in your pasture, you may just need to tell your neighbors that those areas are designated “quail habitat” and stop chasing that rabbit. The same can be said for many of our “weeds.”



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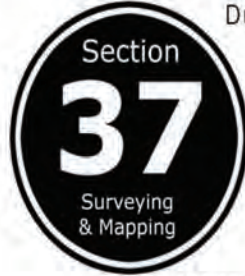
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# PARTING SHOT

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## *J + J Engagement Story*

**J**oshua Langley is from Ada, Okla. and his fiancée, Jayden Lasley, is from Weatherford, Okla. The couple met the summer before their freshman year of high school. The two have been dating since their freshman year in 2012.

Their wedding date is set for June 13, 2020 at a venue that perfectly captures their relationship, which includes a historic 100-year-old barn and two trees which have grown together to become one. The significance of the date is due to the fact that the couple first started dating on the 13th—therefore, when they saw the 13th of June was on a Saturday, they knew it was fate to be wed on that day.

This photo was taken by Joshua's sister-in-law at his brother's farm 3H Farms in Allen, Okla. just outside of Ada, Okla. The couple was hauling hay with Joshua's family on a typical Sunday afternoon when he got down on one knee and proposed to his high school sweetheart.

"The significance of proposing in a hayfield for me was because it is where I feel at "home." As kids growing up, my brothers and I hauled hay every year during the summers and it has taught me to work hard, have perseverance, and never give up—all of which are characteristics I believe it takes to have a long-lasting marriage. You know, popping the question was never a competition to me. My girl truly deserves the world; however, whether we got engaged in Caesar's Palace or in a hayfield in Allen, Okla., it was not going to make our love for each other stronger or make us untouchable. I did what was on my heart that day with the help of my family. I hope my fiancée and I can set an example for future couples, that if two people really love each other it should not matter how you propose because when it is all said and done, they will love you just the same," said Joshua. (Photo courtesy of Joshua Langley)



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