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FROM TREE TO TABLE

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Give thanks in all circumstances...

What a wet spring we've had. I don't know about you, but I feel my feet shall soon be webbed.

While I admittedly have been frustrated with the immense amount of water that has permeated the ground, I can't help but remind myself to be grateful for it. It's likely in a few short months the ground will be parched, and we'll be wishing for a bit of rain to settle the dust and fill in the cracks.

You see, God tells us to be thankful. In 1 Thessalonians 5:18, the Bible says, "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

I must be honest, though. The "all" in that verse gets me – or maybe I have trouble getting it. I am sure most of us can be thankful for lots of things, at a lot of times, but not necessarily in "all" situations. It's difficult, no doubt.

Then I thought about it a little more, and realize it says, give thanks "in" all, not "for" all. I believe we should all recognize that the difficult challenge or frustrating situation (like the rain) we're facing may be a greater blessing, as God works in powerful and mysterious ways. No matter how hard, I believe we should choose to give Him thanks, in "all" things. So as the rain continues to pelt the ground, I will give thanks, and look forward to the undoubtedly lush pastures we will soon have.

Getting to meet Justin and Jared Miller of Miller Pecan Company in Afton, Okla., was a real treat – literally. Unfortunately, my bag of goodies from their retail store has disappeared, and I've found myself debating if it's worth the almost four hour drive to go get a few more sweet and savory pecan delicacies. Luckily, they ship. Justin and Jared are proof that with hard work and determination, the possibilities are endless. I hope you enjoy reading "From Tree to Table" on page 28.

Our great writers outdid themselves once again, so if you get a chance to meet one of them in person, make sure to let them know you enjoyed their hard work.

As always, if you have an article topic, photo, or event you would like to submit to OKFR, e-mail editor@OKFRonline.com. Follow OKFR on all social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Visit www.OKFRonline.com to subscribe to the digital version of OKFR. You can also subscribe to OKFR and receive a printed copy each month by calling the office at 940-872-2076.

Father's Day is June 16, and I know we have many hard-working fathers out across our state. We wish all these great men a Happy Father's Day.

Savannah Magoteaux, Editor

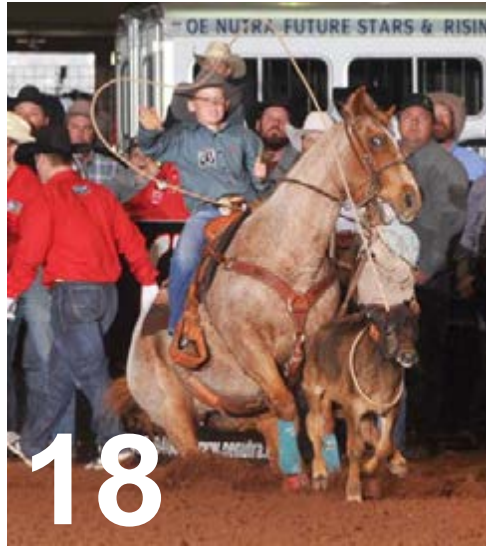
ON THE COVER

With their father, Len, brothers Justin and Jared Miller began growing and harvesting pecans in the mid-1980s. As their passions evolved, the Miller brothers desired to carry on their father's legacy in pecan production, as well as expand into other areas of the pecan processing business. (Photo by Savannah Magoteaux)

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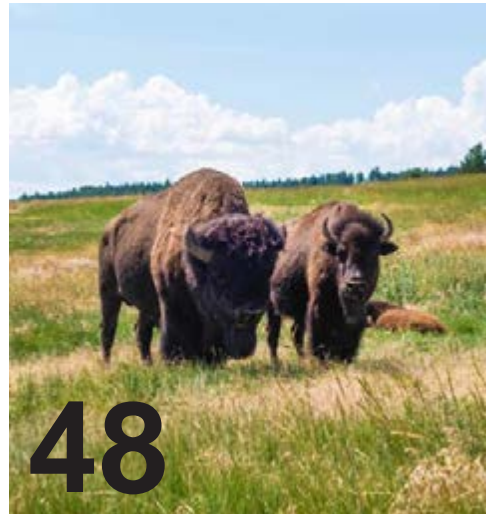
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From Tree to Table

Miller Pecan Company might have humble beginnings, but with the hard work of brothers Justin and Jared Miller, it has become one of the most unique pecan companies in the state.

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What's Your Okla. IQ?

Do you know the state bird? State mammal? What about the state flower? If you think you're an Oklahoma expert, flip on over to page 48 to take the test and learn even more interesting facts about the state. .

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President Roosevelt Visits the Big Pasture

The Big Pasture played a major role in the history of Oklahoma., and in 1905, President Theodore Roosevelt paid it a visit.

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BIOSECURITY

at the FARM LEVEL

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

Recent events such as African Swine Fever in China, Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea at the Oklahoma Youth Expo and Virulent Newcastle Disease in California have shown how vulnerable livestock operations and events are. These and other diseases could have a devastating impact on livestock producers in the state. The best defense against these threats is a good biosecurity plan. If producers do not have a biosecurity protocol, they need to develop one and if they have one, they should review it.

What is biosecurity? “Bio” is life and “security” is protection. Biosecurity is the development and implementation of management procedures to reduce or prevent unwanted threats from entering a herd or flock. The protocol is designed to reduce or prevent the spread of these threats through the herd or flock if a pathogen does enter the herd or flock. Lastly, a biosecurity plan is designed to prevent the threat from infecting neighboring livestock operations.

Biosecurity is one of the best disease prevention methods available to livestock producers. It cost very little to implement, but it can be a challenge to maintain the program. When reviewing the 2014-2015 Avian Influenza outbreak, failure to follow biosecurity protocol was the main reason given for the spread of the virus. To have any realistic chance of a biosecurity program being successful, all parties involved in the operation must be willing to fully participate. If one person fails to comply with the protocol, the



Animals that are provided with good care are more likely to remain healthy and resist infections. (Courtesy photo)

program is doomed to fail.

Biosecurity can be broken down into four basic areas which include traffic, isolation, sanitation, and husbandry. Livestock producers must attempt to control traffic on their operation. Livestock operations should have a perimeter buffer area. For ranches, this would be the perimeter fence. For poultry operation, this could be the fence that surrounds the poultry house. All entry points need to be clearly marked with “Do Not Enter” signs. Producers should not allow anyone to enter the area where animals are kept unless it is absolutely necessary. People may unknowingly carry dangerous organisms on their clothes or shoes. If visitors are allowed on the premises, producers should make sure that they wear clean clothes and shoes. Producers should provide disposal shoe covers and a place to wash hands and dip shoes before and after entering the farm. Any producer that visits

another livestock operation should shower and change clothes and shoes before having contact with his or her own animals.

Owners must also attempt to discourage contact with other animals domestic and wild. Making sure that the ranch is kept clean and free of brush will discourage wild animals. All feed should be kept in feed bins or storage containers to prevent attracting wild animals. Rodents and insects should be controlled. Cattle, especially pregnant cows, should be discouraged from having nose to nose contact with neighboring cattle. This can be accomplished by placing an electric wire inside the perimeter fence. Producers should discourage visitors from bringing their animals to the operation. These animals may carry a pathogen on their bodies or be sick and infect other animals.

Isolation is another practice that will aid in keeping a herd free from a preventable disease. Ide-

ally, producers should maintain a closed herd. If this is not possible, animals should be purchased from a reputable seed stock producer. All new animals need to be tested for diseases and placed in quarantine for a minimum of 30 days and observed for any signs of illness before being added to the herd. If producers are involved in showing livestock, show animals should be placed in quarantine upon returning from an exhibition. Also, any animal that shows signs of illness needs to be isolated from the herd. When animals are in quarantine, they should be fed after all other chores have been completed to prevent exposure to other animals. Producers do not want to bring home diseases or borrow diseases from their neighbors.

Sanitation should be a top priority in all operations. All food and water troughs should be kept cleaned. Lots, pens, barns and cages should be kept free of manure build up. If equipment

such as a front end loader is used for dual purposes such as manure management and feeding, it needs to be cleaned and disinfected between jobs.

Avoid borrowing equipment from neighbors. If it is necessary to borrow an item, producers should clean and disinfect it before and after using it. Feeding and haying areas should be moved regularly to prevent manure build up. Any feed spills should be cleaned immediately to avoid attracting wildlife. After traveling to shows, fairs or livestock auctions, trucks and trailers should be washed and disinfected. All show equipment needs to be cleaned and disinfected after being used. Maintaining a clean environment for your animals will go a long way in preventing diseases.

Animals that are provided with good care are more likely to remain healthy and resist infections. Animals need a good source of clean water. Their nutritional needs should be met. They should be provided protection from harsh

environmental conditions. It may sound unnecessary to mention, but all livestock owners should be familiar with normal animal behavior. Any deviation from normal behavior should be investigated. They should know the warning signs of an infection. Most importantly, they should report any unusually large numbers of sick or dead animals to their veterinarian, or state veterinarian.

Livestock producers that would like more information about biosecurity may want to read APHIS fact sheet Biosecurity: Protecting Your Livestock and Poultry at https://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_health/content/printable_version/fs_bio_sec_07.pdf.

For a detailed biosecurity plan for poultry producers go to healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov or check out Oklahoma State University fact sheet Small Flock Biosecurity for Prevention of Avian Influenza ANSI-8301 at the local county Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service office. ☒

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Oklahoma Conservation

deeply rooted and getting stronger

By Bryan Painter, Communications Director for Okla. Conservation Commission and Okla. Natural Resources Conservation Service

The recently released 2017 U.S. Census of Agriculture detailed in part that less and less of Oklahoma's soil is whisked away by its powerful winds.

A good anchor will do that.

"The Oklahoma Conservation Commission (OCC) and local Districts felt sure the actual findings of the Census would show that the roots of conservation in Oklahoma are strengthening. The report did that and so much more," said Trey Lam, executive director of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission. "The hundreds of field days, demonstration farms and educational events created even more change in no till and cover crop adoption rates than we expected. Oklahoma farmers and ranchers 'get it.' By adopting a system that protects and restores the productivity of our soil, they can improve their bottom line and leave their land in better shape for generations to come."

Anticipating the release of the Ag Census information was reminiscent of report card day back in school. Oklahoma farmers and ranchers in cooperation with the Conservation Partnership had put in the time and hard work to increase soil health practices. The Ag Census is the report card on whether all that work paid dividends.

Lam, along with others such as Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Conservationist Gary O'Neill, are excited to share that report card.

The 2017 U.S. Census of Agriculture – released by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agricultural



Jimmy Emmons is seen here in a cover crop used to control weeds. (Photo courtesy of Jimmy Emmons)

Statistics Service (NASS) – showed that in Oklahoma, compared to 2012, there was a 24 percent increase in the number of farms using cover crops, a 51 percent increase in acres using cover crops and a 29 percent decrease in intensive tillage practices. On a national scale, the report shows that Oklahoma is seventh in the nation for the largest decrease in cropland acreage using conventional tillage practices.

O'Neill said, "Reduced tillage and cover crops are two of the primary principles of Soil Health systems. These data trends show that Oklahoma farmers and ranchers are recognizing the benefits from implementing Soil Health Systems on their lands."

Jimmy Emmons of Leedeey, along with wife Ginger, received

Oklahoma's first Leopold Conservation Award in 2018. The award recognizes extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation by American ranchers, farmers and foresters. Emmons also waited anxiously for the release of the report.

"I was expecting the no till and cover cropping numbers to be up, but not that much," he said. "Less tillage is a wonderful number. The report is so exciting because it shows all the hard work we have done promoting no till and covers is working."

The Census of Agriculture is a complete count of U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. Even small plots of land - whether rural or urban - growing fruit, vegetables or some food animals count if \$1,000 or more

of such products were raised and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the Census year. The Census of Agriculture, taken only once every five years, looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures.

The Census of Agriculture provides the only source of uniform, comprehensive and impartial agriculture data for every county in the nation. Through the Census of Agriculture, producers can show the nation the value and importance of agriculture and can influence decisions that will shape the future of U.S. agriculture.

"I definitely think this shows that Oklahoma has embraced conservation and is a true partner with a lot of the organizations around the state that are putting conservation on the ground within the ag community," said Troy Marshall, the Oklahoma State Statistician for USDA NASS.

Most report cards leave a little room to build on. While statistics improved in cropland with reduced till practices and in cropland with intensive till practices, there was a decrease in cropland with no-till practices, and Emmons said, "Hopefully (that) will change as people understand cover cropping."

Lam believes the root system of conservation in Oklahoma will only continue to strengthen.

"The pace of change should only increase from this point forward," Lam said. "The momentum created over the last few years by NRCS and OCC programs make the future bright for natural resource conservation in our state." ☞

New Paraquat Requirements

By Everett Brazil III

Paraquat has long been used as a broad-spectrum herbicide, as it attacks a variety of weeds across the state. Applicators using the herbicide will now have to follow additional requirements for use in the 2020 season, as the EPA cracks down on the dangerous side effects the product can have.

Paraquat is a broad-spectrum contact herbicide sold under numerous brands, including Blanco, Bonfire, Devour, Firestorm, Gramazone, Helmquat, Paraquat, Parazone and Quik-Quat. The product is used for weed control prior to crop emergence. Like glyphosate, the ingredient in Roundup, it attacks numerous weed species, both grassy and broadleaf, and some that are proving to be problematic in Oklahoma, such as mare's tail and kochia. Other weeds found in Oklahoma include cheatgrass, cocklebur, giant ragweed and volunteer wheat. Producers have found numerous uses for the herbicide, such as in no-till systems, as well as controlling glyphosate-resistant weeds.

"It's a non-selective herbicide that pretty much kills everything," said Todd Baughman, Oklahoma State University Weed Science Program Support leader. "It is labeled in many of the crops we grow in Oklahoma."

Some of those crops include corn, cotton, peanuts and soybeans, which are all produced in the state.

Unlike glyphosate, there are no resistant traits in any crop to identify tolerance to the herbicide, so applicators can only use it before crop emergence.

"It controls the existing vegetation. There aren't any transgenic crops (resistant to it), so it's used



Paraquat is used for weed control prior to crop emergence. Pictured is Giant ragweed, a weed commonly found in Oklahoma. (Courtesy photo)

as a burndown or fallow weed control," he said. "It's either used by itself or in a combination with other herbicides, but a lot of times, we see it used by itself as a burndown product."

The herbicide has long been labeled as restricted use, meaning applicators, both private and public, must receive certification for use in the field, or even handling the product. The EPA is now putting new requirements on the product, due to its toxicity to humans.

"The biggest problem with the product is it's highly toxic if ingested," Baughman said, "It can poison a person, if ingested."

He added that it only takes a

small amount of the product ingested to cause damage.

Due to the toxic nature of the product, the EPA is making changes to the product, including labeling, and requiring continued education through a training module on their website prior to applying the herbicide. The training module can be accessed through the EPA's website, and must be renewed every three years.

There are several ways the product is changing, and that includes the packaging itself. The packaging will have a specialized lid to be attached to the spray tank, minimizing human touch and ingestion.

"There will be no way to ex-

pose the compound," he said.

There will also be a warning label on the container.

Any product without the new packaging may still be used without the training. The new product should be available in November.

A second component is online safety courses, which will be available in the fall.

"The training is primarily on how to handle it from a toxicity problem. It doesn't have much to do with movement," he said.

For more information, visit the EPA at <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-worker-safety/paraquat-dichloride-training-certified-applicators>. ☒



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Suspensory Ligament Injuries

By Garrett Metcalf, DVM

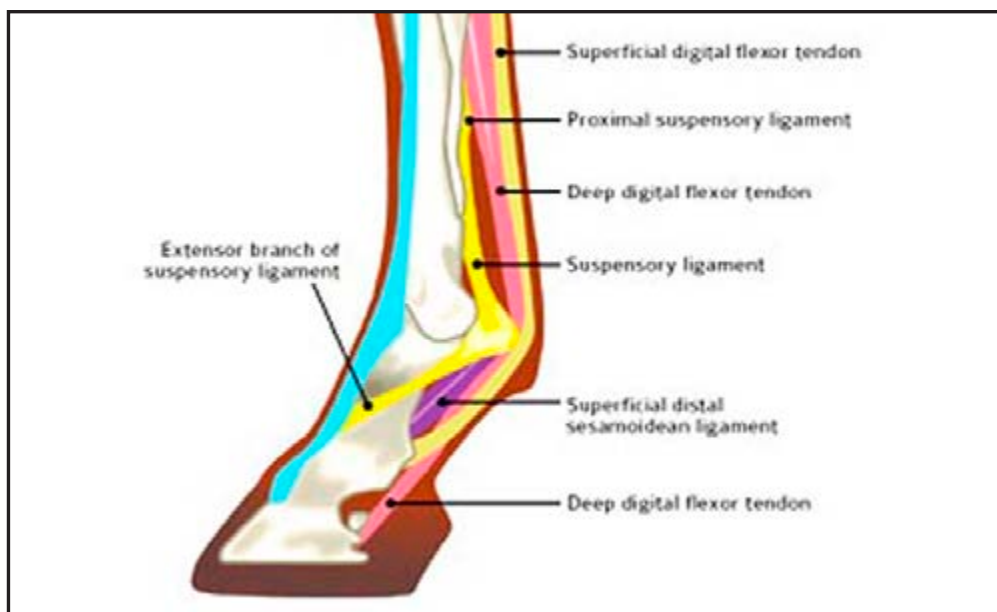
The suspensory ligament is a very important structure to the locomotion, soundness and support of the lower limb of a horse. It is a common tissue that can become injured acutely or sustain chronic injury over time that eventually causes lameness. Horse owners are typically aware of the suspensory ligament but don't always understand the importance of the structure and what it does biomechanically for the horse. This article will cover anatomy, biomechanical function of the suspensory, types of injuries and treatment options.

Anatomy and Biomechanics of the Suspensory Ligament

The suspensory ligament is truly named as a muscle called the interosseous muscle because it often contains muscle fibers, but it has evolved to act more like a ligament than a muscle. The suspensory ligament can be divided into three sections. The proximal suspensory is at the very top, or the origin, where the suspensory begins by attaching to the back of the cannon bone. The body or the middle section of the suspensory is between the proximal part and the branches of the suspensory ligament. The last section of the suspensory is the branches. The suspensory at this level splits into two branches that attach to each sesamoid bone behind the ankle or fetlock joint. This section is where the suspensory ends or inserts onto the sesamoid bones.

The suspensory has its own nerve innervation that provides sensation to it by a small branch off of a larger nerve just above where the suspensory begins. This is important as you read later about the treatment options when dealing with injury to this structure.

The suspensory can be simply thought of as a shock absorber or springs on a car's suspension system. It is made to absorb force and load that is applied to the limb with each step. It is able to do this with thousands of collagen fibers that act like a rubber band that is able to stretch and then return to its original size once again ready to absorb more load just like a shock absorber on a car. The suspensory and sesamoid bones act as a pulley/cable system to keep the fetlock from extending excessively and supporting the lower limb. These fibers



when looked at with an ultrasound look like a section of rope or cable made up of many small strands of fibers to create the entire structure of the suspensory. This can be used to illustrate what the injuries look like in the horse. Imagine when a section or bundle of these fibers break. It weakens the entire structure of the suspensory, just like strands in a rope breaking and fraying causing the rope to not be as strong as it was before. The breaking of the fibers causes significant pain and inflammation leading to lameness in the horse.

Diagnosing Suspensory Injuries

Multiple breeds of horses and disciplines can be subject to suspensory desmitis. Suspensory injuries are common among sport horses, races horses and western performance horses. Injuries to the suspensory ligament can be acute sudden injuries that leave the horse quite lame initially with sometimes notable swelling, heat and pain with palpation of the leg or chronic multiple injuries overtime that cause enlargement of the suspensory ligament. Acute injuries may only need to be diagnosed with an ultrasound examination of the suspensory ligament.

Chronic injuries usually require a lameness examination, localization of the pain with diagnostic anesthesia and then ultrasound imaging of the ligament. A common history

of a chronic hind limb suspensory issues is that the horse has had repeated hock injections that were working for a period of time, but the injections stop working or are only lasting for a short period of time. This is because the hind proximal suspensory is closely located near the lower hock joints and the medication decreases the inflammation and pain around the proximal suspensory for a period of time.

Suspensory Treatment Options

Acute inflamed suspensory injuries are treated with traditional methods of anti-inflammatory drugs, icing, compression, and rest. These lesions initially on ultrasound, if caught rather early, may appear rather harmless, but over a few weeks the full extent of the injury may be revealed. Multiple ultrasound examinations may be necessary to understand the full extent of the injury. With acute injuries, once the inflammation has subsided and a few weeks have passed, it is often desired to improve the healing quality of the suspensory to prevent further injuries. When there is significant damage to the suspensory that is going to lead to poor healing, often it is recommended to use regenerative biological treatment products such as PRP (platelet rich plasma), Stem Cells or extracellular matrix products to promote more rapid and better quality healing of the injured ligament.

Not all suspensory injuries have core lesions or disruption of the ligament fibers but rather chronic inflammation and enlargement.

This chronic inflammatory compartment type syndrome is common with hind limb proximal suspensory ligaments. These types of lesions have been notorious for poor response to rest and rehabilitation alone and recurrence of lameness even after prolonged periods of rest.

The treatment of choice in these cases is surgically splitting of a dense fascia that lies over the back of the suspensory ligament compressing it against the splint bones and cannon bone, along with removing a section of nerve that innervates the suspensory. This is called a plantar fasciotomy with neurectomy of the deep branch of the lateral plantar nerve. This surgery is being widely used to treat enlarged chronically inflamed suspensory ligaments that have little fiber damage or significant lesions in the ligament.

The other great thing about the surgical treatment is the quick response and early return to work.

A typical time to return to light work after surgery is six weeks and full work shortly after that. Other treatment options of these types of injuries are shockwave, local injections of steroids around the suspensory ligament and rest.

These treatment options work well in cases with mild to moderate suspensory pain or in cases short term relieve is needed for the horse to continue to work until a better time is reached to perform surgery if necessary.

The suspensory apparatus is a very important structure to the horse, and whenever there is an injury suspected to this structure, a thorough examination is recommended to fully understand the extent of the injury.

When an accurate diagnosis is achieved, the proper treatment plan can be implemented, giving the horse the best possible outcome and chance to return to intended use.

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Cowboy Chizm

By Ddee Haynes

Located in western Oklahoma is the small town of Carnegie. With a population of less than 2,000, Carnegie doesn't even have a stop light or a blinking light. What Carnegie does have is the Liberty Theatre, one of the longest running theatres in the state of Oklahoma. Carnegie is also the home of a young cowboy by the name of Chizm Kuykendall.

Twelve-year-old Chizm is a stocky built, freckled face red head with a crooked smile and the talent and determination of someone three times his age. Chizm knows what he wants in life and isn't afraid to go after it.

I have watched this young man in and out of the rodeo arena for more than six years. From the first day I watched the little red-head riding his pony and swinging a rope, he became one of my favorite cowboys. I knew he was a force to be reckoned with and his name was one to remember.

Chizm, a sixth grader, is the son of Justin and Mandie Kuykendall, and big brother to eight-year-old Haze, who is also a talented young cowboy. Justin runs cattle and farms while Mandie is an elementary teacher. Both Justin and Mandie grew up in the rodeo world so it was only natural that both their boys took to the sport like ducks to water.

Chizm is a member of the Oklahoma Junior High School Rodeo Association (OKJHSRA) where he competes in the tie-down roping, ribbon roping, break-away roping and the boy's goat tying. Chizm also enjoys competing in several well-known roping events such as The Rising Stars, Future Stars and Roy Cooper Junior rop-



Chizm Kuykendall is a member of the Oklahoma Junior High School Rodeo Association where he competes in the tie-down roping, ribbon roping, break-away roping and the boy's goat tying. (Photo courtesy of the Kuykendall family)

ings. In 2017, Chizm qualified for the Junior World Finals held in Vegas. Just a few short months ago, Chizm won the 12 and under break-away roping at the Joe Beaver Easter weekend roping. Not only did Chizm walk away with a pocket full of cash, he also took home a beautiful trophy saddle.

While it seems Chizm has been blessed with lots of success in his short life, he has also experienced the hard times that come with any type of competition.

A while back, Chizm had to work himself out of a roping slump. For two months it seemed he could not catch anything. Having experienced this with my own daughters, I know how hard it can be for the kids, as well as the parents. Sometimes those slumps

See CHIZM page 21



The Kuykendall Family. Mandie, Justin, Haze and Chizm. (Photo courtesy of the Kuykendall family)

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Chizm

Continued from page 18

may be caused by a new horse, a sudden growth burst where the kid wakes up with more arm and leg length than the night before, or often, the kids are fighting a mental battle within. Rodeo isn't just about the horse power or the talent and athleticism of the competitor. It is also about mental toughness.

Being able to push through those tough times makes the winning times even sweeter. With his never-give-up attitude, his raw talent and pure determination, Chizm worked his way out of the roping slump and will continue to conquer every slump or road block he faces on his road to success.

Chizm, a die-hard Oklahoma State University fan, isn't just a fierce competitor in the rodeo arena.

Chizm also plays baseball,

basketball, football and runs track. He claims football as his favorite sport after rodeo, because like any typical boy he likes to tackle people!

Chizm's goal for this season of the OKJHSRA is to win the rookie of the year. After looking at the latest standings, I feel confident that goal will be accomplished. Other goals and dreams include following his parents' footsteps to attend OSU and study agriculture, continuing to have a successful rodeo career and to someday qualify for the National Finals Rodeo.

All lofty goals but, as my dad used to say, "It ain't no thing for a stepper!" Bit of history: Carnegie, Okla., was the birthplace of one of my other favorite cowboys, my dad!

Until next time... 



Chizm and Joe Beaver with the 12 and under championship saddle. (Photo courtesy of the Kuykendall family)

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- Geldings! Geldings! Geldings! All ages!
- 2016 Gelding by **Herman Goldseeker** out of a daughter of High Brow Cat, rides nice!
- 2018 Sorrel Filly by **Peptoboonsmal** out of a daughter of Dual Rey
- 2013 Sorrel Stallion by **Metallic Cat** out of daughter of Smart Little Lena, really broke to ride and great disposition.
- 2016 Red Roan Stallion by **Metallic Cat** out of a daughter of One Time Pepto, super disposition & rides good.
- 2018 Red Roan Stallion by **San Man** out of a daughter of Docs Stylish Oak, Futurity prospect.
- First 2 yr olds by **Frenchmans Chubby** all started riding.
- 2017 Blue Roan Stallion by **The Cowboy Cadillac** out of a Goldseeker mare.
- 2018 Sorrel Stallion by **One Time Pepto** out of a daughter of Grays Starlight.
- 2017 Red Roan Stallion by **One Time Pepto** out of a daughter of Grays Starlight, been in training since January 1, 2019.
- 2013 Black Stallion by **Little Cat Olena**, 15 hands, 5 panel N/N, sound & ready to show.
- 2017 Sorrel Stallion by **Cats Merada** out of a daughter of Hesa Peptospoonful, with lots of chrome and fancy broke. 5 panel N/N
- 2017 Sorrel Stallion by **Hydrive Cat** out of a daughter of TR Dual Rey, super disposition and rides great.
- 2018 Bay Roan Stallion by **Hes Wright On** out of a daughter of Mecom Blue
- 2016 Palomino Gelding by **Show Me A Song Joes** out of a daughter of Sensation Cash, really really broke. Pitzer Ranch Invationals Eligible.
- 2017 Chestnut Stallion by **Spots Hot** out of a daughter of Boonlight Dancer, started riding.
- 2018 Gray Stallion by **Metallic Gray** out of a daughter of Rhinestone Bartender, lots of color in this pedigree
- 10 Broodmares from Cudd Quarter Horses all in foal – some 3 in 1 package.
- 2008 Red Roan Mare by **One Time Pepto** out of a daughter of Smart Little Lena, 5 panel N/N & bred to **Hashtags**.
- 2005 Red Roan Mare by **A Streak Of Fling** out of a daughter of Mr Baron Red, in foal to **Metallic Gray**.
- 2015 Blue Roan Mare by **Poor Me A Pepto** bred to One Fabulous Time, 5 panel N/N
- 2 pretty 2018 Stud colts by **Fuel N Shine** out of daughters of Pepto Playboy
- Several Pitzer bred Geldings eligible for the **Pitzer Ranch Horse Invitational**
- 8 Yearlings from the Bruce Rader Ranch of LaJunta, CO
- (2) 2018 Outstanding Roan fillies by **Automatic Cat**
- 1999 Broodmare by **Freckles Fancy Twist** out of a daughter of Freckles Playboy, 3 in 1 package.
- 1999 Broodmare by **Miss N Command** out of a daughter of Zans Misty Gold, 3 in 1 package.
- 2017 Red Roan Gelding by **Bet Hesa Cat** out of a daughter of Haidas Little Pep, started nicely, great futurity prospect.
- (2) Yearlings, (2) 3 yr olds, all by son of WR This Cats Smart, MP ROC Kat.
- Nice selection of yearling Futurity prospects.
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BETTING ON A CURE CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

By Savannah Magoteaux

For the past decade, owners, trainers, jockeys, and racing fans have come together at Oklahoma's Remington Park for a night of fundraising to fight a devastating disease, raising more than \$320,000 to aid in the fight against cancer over the past nine years. This year's Betting on a Cure, which benefits Rein in Cancer, will be June 1.

The vision began in early 2009, when several members of the Remington Park racetrack "family" were stricken with or affected by cancer. Driven by a need to help not only their friends, but everyone fighting the disease, members of the Oklahoma Quarter Horse Racing Association began to brainstorm a new fundraising effort. "We wanted to help the cause. We started kicking around ideas and originally started with a Tough Enough to Wear Pink" tag," noted Krissy Bamberg, Director of Special Projects for the OQHRA.

The next step was finding a recipient for the funding. "We originally went to the OU Cancer Center because we wanted to donate to them, but because of the gambling aspect of the racetrack, they couldn't directly take the funds. They said there were two entities that really supported them, and that was Ally's House and Rein in Cancer," Bamberg explained. "Both charities were great, so we decided to split the funds between the two of them."

After several years of being involved with Rein in Cancer, the OQHRA elected to solely benefit that charity, and changed the event from Tough Enough to Wear Pink to Betting on a Cure.

Rein in Cancer President Cher-



yl Cody noted, "The OQHRA has worked hard to create a very special event with a very important impact.

"The funds raised through their efforts provide care and support for the people who need it the most."

For Bamberg, Betting on a Cure continues to fill the need to help. "Unfortunately, every year there are more and more people affected by the disease. You want to do something because you feel so helpless," she said.

The event will begin at 5 p.m., and kids are welcome. There is



Top: Jockeys dressed in pink for the 2010 event.

Bottom: Rein in Cancer Co-Founders Shorty Koger, Cheryl Cody, and Tracie Anderson with Toby Keith. (Photos courtesy of Rein in Cancer)

free admission and valet parking, as well as a free dinner buffet. The event features both a live and silent auction, as well as a raffle drawing. "Some of the big ticket items are a John Rule Bicentennial Saddle, a gorgeous hat from Shorty's Hattery, a striking Roy Harris bronze, Oklahoma City Thunder and Dallas Cowboy packages, and more," Bamberg said. "We're still nailing more items down."

While most people think of pink when it comes to cancer, Bamberg added, "It's not just a pink event anymore because we support the fight against all types of cancer. We encourage people to wear a color that corresponds with a cancer that has impacted their life."

For more information about Betting on a Cure, contact the OQHRA at 405-216-0440. **See HORSEMEN page 24**

Horsemen

Continued from page 23

An 501(c)3 organization based in Oklahoma, Rein in Cancer was created by Shorty Koger, Cheryl Cody and Tracie Anderson in 2007 to use the generous hearts of the horse community to help with the fight against cancer. Its first project was to create the Shirley Bowman Nutrition Center at the Charles and Peggy Stephenson Cancer Center at the OU Cancer Institute in Oklahoma City. That nutrition center provides nutrition counseling and support to patients undergoing treatment.

Rein in Cancer continues to provide operating support for the Nutrition Center, named after Koger's late sister. The Nutrition Center became fully funded in 2012. Rein in Cancer also makes direct payment to members of the horse world being treated for

cancer.

Funds have been raised 100 percent through activities supported or hosted by equine industry events. Included in the long list of horse-related activities where Rein In Cancer funds have been raised are the American Quarter Horse Association World Championship, the National Reined Cow Horse Association Snaffle Bit Futurity, the National Reining Horse Association Futurity, the All American Quarter Horse Congress, the National Reining Breeders Classic, the March to the Arch, the Arizona Sun Circuit and countless cuttings, ropings, barrel races, and other horse shows from a variety of disciplines.

Cody noted, "When a family goes from two incomes to one or when one income is reduced and



One of the many donations to the live auction is this beautiful bronze by artist Roy Harris. (Photo courtesy of Rein in Cancer.)

the expenses of treatment are so high, a little boost can sometimes make all the difference. It is because we hear from recipients who tell us how much the payments help, that we are so appreciative of the people in the horse industry like the Oklahoma Quarter Horse Racing Association who continue

to help."

Rein In Cancer has no employees – only volunteers – and over 97% of that total has gone directly to the advertised causes. For information on how to contribute, how to host a fundraiser or set up a bequest, visit the Rein In Cancer web site at www.reinincancer.com. ☞



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LACEY'S PANTRY

By Lacey Newlin



Olive Cheese Spread



Serves: 10 • Time: 30 minutes

Ingredients

- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup Monterrey Jack cheese, grated
- 1 cup Pepper Jack cheese, grated
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup green olives, diced
- 1/2 cup black olives, diced
- 1 clove garlic, finely minced
- 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes

Directions

Preheat oven to 350° F.
 In a medium mixing bowl, and using a hand mixer, mix together ingredients until well blended.
 Spread into baking dish (or dishes) of your choice and bake until hot and bubbly.
 This recipe can be used multiple ways including dips, pinwheels, spreads and any other way that sounds delicious to you. ☞



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Photo credit Susanna Clare Photography

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FROM TREE

Justin and



E TO TABLE

Jared Miller

***I**t began in the mid-1980s when, alongside their father Len, Justin and Jared Miller began to grow and harvest pecans. As their knowledge of the industry grew, the brothers worked to evolve and expand the family's business.*

From building a custom cleaning facility in a nearby Kansas town, to constructing harvesting facilities in Miami, Okla., to finally landing a home in Afton, Okla., the family business has continued to grow and progress. In 2017, the Miller brothers were recognized as the Growers of the Year by the Oklahoma Pecan Grower's Association, and in 2018 were named the Small Business of the Year by the Miami Regional Chamber of Commerce.

FROM TREE TO TABLE

Justin and Jared Miller



Miller Pecan Company, now one of the largest pecan companies in the state of Oklahoma, came from humble beginnings. It all began in the mid-1980s, when founder Len Miller was in need of a job. He had been employed at tire manufacturer BF Goodrich, and when the company shut its doors in 1986, more than 1,000 people were jobless. Len had the opportunity to follow the tire giant to its new home in Tuscaloosa, Ala., but elected to stay in Oklahoma.

Looking for a way to make money in addition to his new job at the ammunition plant, Len began harvesting pecans for extra cash, and soon bought his first pecan picker. His sons Jared and Justin, at the time eight and 10 years old, joined him in the fields.

Still, it wasn't a certainty that the brothers would continue in the pecan business. As they got older, they began to look towards different career paths. Justin went to nursing school, while Jared went to college.

While older brother Justin pursued a nursing career for a couple years, it wasn't the best fit, and

soon Jared joined him and Len back at the pecan farming operation, which continued its steady growth.

In 2000, the brothers made a big business move, purchasing a custom pecan cleaning facility in Chetopa, Kans. "We used to clean pecans for everyone up there, but we sold it to another local grower in 2006," Jared explained.

"We purchased the big farm in Miami in 2001," Justin noted. The new farm on the fertile land equated to a lot of room for expansion, including a new custom cleaning facility. The Miami farm already has countless native pecan trees. "A tree can produce pecans easily up to 120 to 130 years, and there are a lot of older trees in production. Unfortunately, once trees get that big, storms can tear them down," Jared explained. "Many of the trees were here before statehood. We've cut down and counted rings on several of ours, but once we get to about 110 or 120 rings, they all start running together."

Now, Miller Pecan Company farms more than 1,000 acres with more than 24,000 trees in the river

bottoms and creek beds around Afton and Miami, Okla. "We have a really rich river bottom soil that is kind of a real silty loam. It can hold moisture a long time, and we get quite a bit of rainfall in this area. The good thing is that we can go weeks at a time without rain without the trees being affected at all," Jared explained. "The only downside is that it dries out very slowly, so sometimes we'll be wanting to work but we just have to be patient and wait."

Unfortunately, Len Miller was unable to see the continued growth of the business he started with his sons. He passed away in 2010. "The farm was doing really well, but he didn't get to see what it is today," Justin said.

Expansion continued in 2014, when Justin and Jared opened a new processing plant with a retail store in the northeast town of Afton. Along with pecan delicacies, the store also offers a host of other local products such as honey, oil, jellies, nuts, syrups, noodles and more. "My wife Carrie and Jared roast the praline and cinnamon sugar pecans, and the savory pecans are custom roasted

by another Oklahoma company," Justin explained. "A lot of our products are pecans we sell to other companies, and then turn around and buy their products to resale in the store."

While both brothers work in the processing plant, they both have their areas of focus. Justin runs the processing plant, ensuring everything runs smoothly, while Jared is the authority on buying and selling.

While the brothers are the face of the company, most of the family is involved. Justin's wife Carrie helps run the business day to day, doing everything from bookkeeping to pecan roasting. "I have a son, Seth, who is a freshman at NEO, and my daughter Katie is a junior in high school," Justin said. "During the holidays Katie will come every day after school to help, and Seth has been working at the farm since a young age with various jobs, such as raking, mowing, and harvesting."

Jared and his wife Ashley have three boys; Hayden, 12; Hayes, 10; and Holden, 6. "My oldest boy Hayden is just starting to drive
Continued on page 32

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FROM TREE TO TABLE

Justin and Jared Miller

Continued from page 30

tractors, but the others are still a little young,” he explained.

Thirty years ago, the brothers didn’t expect for Miller Pecan Company to be the successful venture it has become. “But with a lot of hard work, dedication, and great employees, anything can be achieved,” Justin said.

Precision Processing

The retail store in Afton fronts the new, high-tech processing facility. Inside the plant, workers sort, sanitize, crack, shell, inspect meticulously, package and ship approximately 16,000 pounds of nuts on a typical day, and more than 24,000 pounds each day during peak seasons.

The layout of the plant is precisely designed, and the attention to detail and pride in the job of the Millers and the employees is evident. First, batches of pecans in the shell are sized to optimize the rest of the process.

Once sized, the pecans are sent through the sanitizer to kill any salmonella, e. coli, or other bacteria. The low water activity of pecans and their shell housing generally protects against the presence of pathogens.

However, because the nuts are typically harvested from the ground, the potential for surface contamination of the shell exists. To protect the kernel inside the shell, it is necessary to sanitize the shell prior to cracking.

At Miller Pecan Company, the sanitizer runs higher than Oklahoma requirements. “We run it at 190°. Just to make sure we’re getting it. Some states require 180°, Oklahoma is only 170°, but we



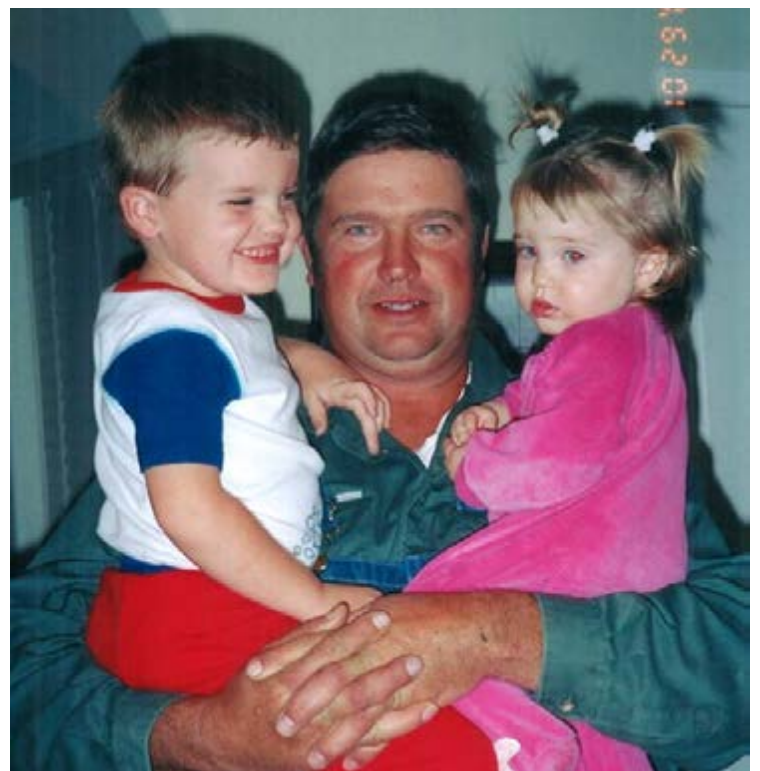
want to make sure everything is taken care of,” Justin explained.

Jared added, “We want to go above and beyond. From that point forward, after sanitation, everything is handled in a very clean environment.”

Following sanitation, pecans are cracked, then ran through a float system to separate the pecan meat from the shell. Because too much moisture can cause mold, the pecans are then run through a drying machine. Moisture content is continually checked to ensure consistency; something especially important to the Millers.

Next up is the machine sizing, which can size whole pecans and pieces down to the 1/16th inch. Pecan halves are worth more than pieces, so it’s important to utilize as much of the pecan as possible.

The quality control process concludes in the inspection room, where employees visually inspect each individual pecan. With more than 10 inspectors working at a time, it can get crowded, which is



Top: The final step before the pecans are packaged and shipped is a hand inspection of each individual pecan. (Photo by Savannah Magoteaux)

Bottom: Miller Pecan Company founder Len Miller with grandchildren Seth and Katie. (Photo courtesy of Miller Pecan Company)

why a new, larger inspection room was built in early April 2019.

While thousands of pounds of pecans are processed daily, floors stay clean and walkways are clear. "It's definitely a priority for us. We have one guy that cleans all day long. He goes from one end to the other, and starts back over," Justin noted.

"Then, in between jobs, if I see something, I'll sweep it up, and all the guys are good about it, too. Everyone that comes through here comments about how clean we keep it."

Jared added, "We've been in plants before that really weren't something you would want to eat food from, and we pride ourselves on our open-door policy. If our customers want to come in while we're in production, they can come and walk through the plant any time."

No usable part of the pecan is wasted. Blemished pecans have the unusable areas sorted off, and then are used for oil stock. The shells, of which there are many, are sold to third parties. "The dry shells get bought by an oil company for fracking. This time of year, we have landscapers lining up just about every day to take our wet shells. The only other option I'd have for them is to take them home to a burn pile," Justin said with a laugh.

In addition to the pecans that are kept for selling in the retail store, Miller Pecan Company pecans find their way to numerous high-end bakeries, convenient store chains, and other retail outlets.

Oklahoma pecan production typically ranks in the top five states, and there are several hundred pecan farms across the state. While the majority of the pecans that go through the high-tech processing facility in Afton are grown from Miller-owned pecan groves, the company will buy pecans from other growers. Some are local, and some come from as far as Georgia and Louisiana.



Justin and Jared's children. Pictured are Seth, Katie, Hayden, Hayes, and Holden. (Photo by Carrie Miller)

In addition to their own production, Miller Pecan Company offers custom shelling for other regional pecan producers. "They'll have their own retail stores near their orchards. It's really important for them to be able to sell their own nuts, because they're selling came from the trees outside," Jared said.

Looking Forward

The Millers are invested in the future of their business. "We're going to plant new trees every year until we run out of acres to plant. That means we're trying to put in 20 to 30 acres of trees every year," Jared said.

Growing pecans requires immense patience and long-term

commitment; it can take more than a decade before a pecan tree is in full production. "It takes about 13 years for a tree to get to production here in northern Oklahoma, while in the southern part of the state it can take as few as eight or nine years because of the difference in the soil," Jared explained.

He likened the investment in new trees each year to a savings plan. "Pecans aren't a crop that will give a quick return. They're more like a 401k."

Jared added, "When you enjoy what you do, it doesn't seem like work."

When asked about long-term plans, the brothers are still planning to grow. "You know, we would like to continue growing the

business and create more jobs, and continue to establish our place in the market," Jared said. "Maybe, if our kids want to take it over one day, there will be a business for them."

"I think what we're most proud of is we are still around. We just want to continue to grow and produce high-quality end products." Justin, who serves as President of the Ottawa County Conservation Board, noted.

"I have two children that will hopefully want to be involved in our family farm just like I was with my dad. That's also why conservation is so important to me. It all ties into leaving our piece of the world better than how we found it for the next generation." ☞

WHERE THE PAVED ROAD ENDS

WELCOME TO GOD'S COUNTRY

BY BETH WATKINS

My husband has some unique and profound sayings, the latest one being said as we traveled north on State Highway 75. In his words accented by his rich southern twang, in-light of the situation and due to the fact of the matter, being the overabundance of the no-drivin' sons-a-peaches, he boldly stated; "No one in their right mind should live north of the South Canadian River."

We proudly live south of the South Canadian River. If my husband had his way, there would be a banner or sign over the southbound lane at midpoint of the bridge proudly proclaiming, "Welcome to God's Country!" As it is, there is just a sign stating, "Choctaw Nation Boundary."

I am not quite sure of the reasoning for this being called "God's Country" but it is a general consensus amongst our close family and friends who live here. I have my reasons for agreeing with the term, which are the peace I find here at the end of the dirt road, the night sky is bright with stars, and the cow population outweighs the people population. I appreciate the general respect among ranchers for each other's cows and property. A prime example of "loving your neighbor," and "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," is if a cow is spotted outside its pasture, it's common courtesy to let the owner know, and if possible, help put it back in. Everyone who owns cattle knows they are going to need a helping hand at some point. I guess being a part of a community with like-minded people with the same livelihood and goals is what makes our journey so joyful.



"Here's just a standard pic of 'Indianola's population,'" author Beth Watkins noted with a laugh. (Photo by Beth Watkins)

We do, however, have people here in "God's Country" who don't really belong, and even though they may never have the ability or the mindset of a farmer, we are to love them anyway, bless their hearts. "That dog won't hunt, because it don't know come here from sic em." A perfect example for that statement is in a story that my friend shared with me.

Lydia has chickens and she sells eggs; she gets \$4 for an 18 count carton of her farm fresh eggs. Lydia's husband, Jack, sold some eggs to a lady he works with, who has become a regular customer. The lady, we will call "Helen," called to inform Lydia that she and her husband had decided it would work out better if they had their own chickens, and did they have any for sale? Lydia explained that she didn't have any at this time. Helen said, "Oh, come on! You have like 35

chickens, you can surely spare three or four!"

Lydia politely declined, but offered to put her on the waiting list and said she would sell her some pullet chicks next spring. Helen said, "No thanks. I want laying hens not pullets." Lydia calmly explained that her hens are older and that starter pullets would be what she needed; that would give her time to get ready for them. "Ready for them? I was just planning on putting them in my backyard. My husky is back there, and he is doing just fine," Helen stated. Without going into too much detail, Lydia tried to explain a few, very basic, chicken-care needs, like not feeding them to huskies, for starters. Helen butted in with enthusiasm, "We will come look at your setup; we are loading the family up in the car now. See you soon."

The show that unfolds is pain-

ful. The car pulls into the driveway and Mom and Dad, along with three curtain climbers and a husky, jump out. Instantly the kids are terrorizing Lydia's ponies, throwing dirt clods and screaming at them. Dad then demands his little angels get a pony ride. Lydia explains they are not riding ponies; they are driving ponies. So he insists they be hitched up. Taking that as a warning, the ponies duck into their shed.

They turn to notice the visiting dog is nowhere in sight. Meanwhile, the husky was on the other side of the house furiously, silently and quite effectively digging up three freshly planted fruit trees. Lydia asked Helen to please put her dog on a leash. Helen had not bothered to bring one. Lydia quickly fetched a lead rope, and, thank goodness, Helen took it from her and attached it to her hyper husky before Lydia

wrapped it around someone else's neck. Lydia's husband had already began replanting the trees when one rugrat asked to help, Jack had just turned his back to set down his shovel, which was plenty of time for the brat to seize some loppers and cut the tree off six inches from the ground. Dad then asks to see a receipt because he knows where he can get one much cheaper than what they probably had paid.

At this point the other two Tasmanian devils had just run through a bed of freshly planted carrots. Lydia asked the mother if she could please keep her kids beside her. Helen calmly said, "They are just kids and they need to run off some steam."

Finally, the troop made it to the chicken coop. The buzz of questions ensued: How long do they live? How much do they eat? What do they eat? Which ones are boys? Which ones are girls? How many eggs do they lay a day?

Do they lay an egg every day? Lydia answered with, "I don't keep a rooster." Which spurred more questions; What's a rooster? Does he lay eggs? With the biology lesson quickly and efficiently administered, who could have anticipated the next question? Helen inquisitively asked, "How long do chickens nurse their babies?"

Dad interrupts the silence with the idea to stop and buy a roll of wire and turn the daughters' playhouse into a coop, and he will just purchase those two over there and these two here. At this point Lydia was teetering on the brink of craziness and still had no intention of even selling them a horse turd, let alone a hen, and was just about to utter those words when the little terrors spied the rabbit cages.

They began to scream and run around the cages causing the newly kindled does to go on high alert. Again, the mother was cautioned against allowing her kids to

antagonize the animals. It was all but spelled out to Helen, "These rabbits have brand new babies and are very sensitive right now."

The little demons' mother clapped her hands and squealed, "You guys never told us you had bunnies! Bunnies are my absolute favorite. We love them! How much are they? I'll bet you are raising them to sell for Easter! They are so soft and cuddly and cute. We want to hold them!"

Because she wasn't willing to corral her own youngun's, Lydia had two of the heathens by the arms and no hands left to stop the clueless mother from opening the rabbit's cage and reaching in, only to pull back a scratched up arm. Following a scream that could wake the dead, she went right on talking, "That's okay, I'm sure the babies are much nicer than that mean mother rabbit. We will take three, as soon as they are weaned."

What happened next was pure magic. Lydia stared intensely at the mother only losing her gaze for a brief moment to make sure she had the little hooligan's attention also, and then she calmly and deliberately spoke with an even tone, "No, ma'am, we don't sell them. We butcher and eat them." Silenced descended on the group and then like the whirlwind that blew them in, it blew them out! They were a blur, as they loaded up and backed out of the driveway. Lydia and Jack smiled at each other as they watched the family drive the wrong direction down the dead end road. Jack wondered out loud about the family's reaction when they had to turn around in Pappy's driveway where he had just hung a dead coyote on his fence post next to the catfish heads. Then Lydia chuckled, "It's too bad we don't have a radar gun so we could clock their speed on their way back by." ☞

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WESTERN HOUSEWIVES

BY SUMMER MCMILLEN

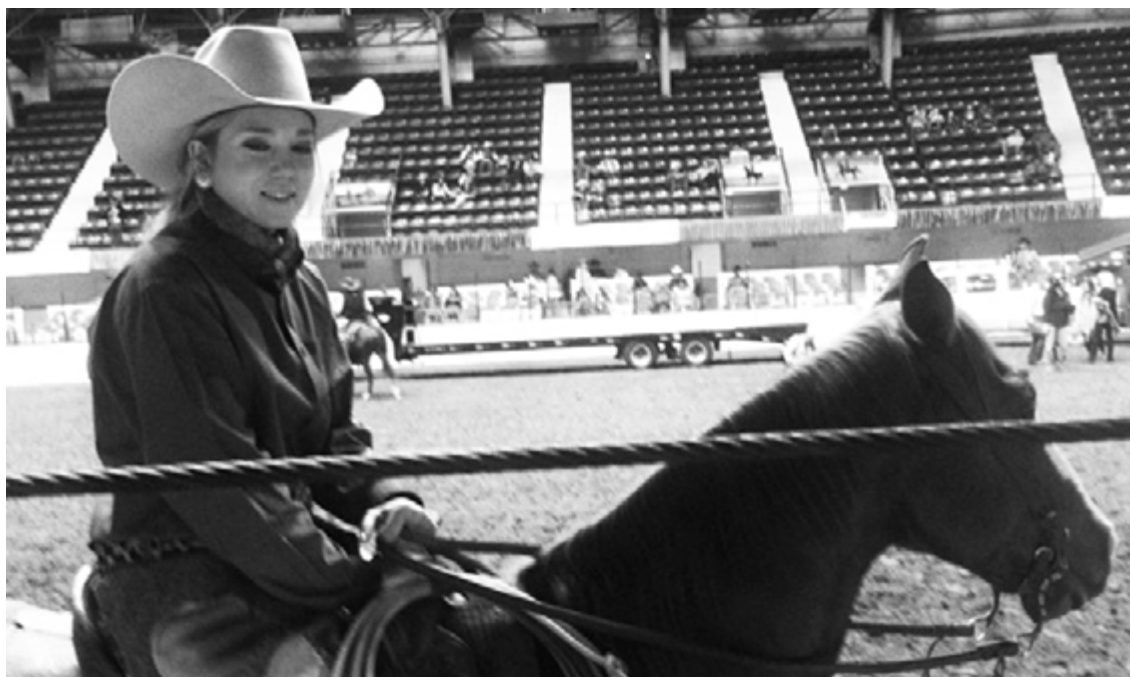
You've all heard of writer's block, but have you ever heard of rider's block? Writer's block is when one has trouble writing an article, a story, or even a grocery list. Rider's block is when one experiences difficulty riding a horse to sort cows, rope or just sit in the dang saddle. Lately, I have been experiencing a severe case of rider's block.

I grew up riding anything my dad told me to, and I never asked any questions because I trusted the man and knew he would take care of his girls. Also, I think I was too dumb and too afraid to tell Papa T anything but "Yes, Sir." My Dad is not a mean man, but he is one who walks in the room and his presence demands respect, mostly because he has earned it. I was a timid little thing who would shake in my boots as he told me what horse I was riding that day, but over time I got to where I looked forward to riding each and every horse he caught. My trust grew, my courage grew and my desire to ride horses grew every day.

Fast forward to modern day Summer, and I'm still working hard every day to be the cowgirl that my dad taught me to be, but with whole new meaning. In addition to riding, I must keep a clean house, full fridge and a seat open for anyone who might happen to stop by.

My Bible needs to be open and so does my heart for anyone who might need more than a full stomach. All of this has come easy to me over the years, but lately a strong case of the aforementioned rider's block has hit me with full force.

These days when my husband



Summer competing at the FWSSR Invitational Ranch Horse Sale long before Rider's Block. (Photo courtesy of Summer McMillen)

tells me to mount up, I question his horse choice for me. "Has this horse been rode in a while?", "Has he been turned out or kept up?", "Is he gentle?", "Is he skittish?" I have so many questions that the man finally tells me to saddle the 4-wheeler and head out. (But, is the 4-wheeler really the safest option?)

I'm so nervous that I've even started to drive myself crazy.

This is not something that I can say out loud very easily. I don't want to let my husband or my dad down. They have both taught me so much about a horse that it would be offensive if I told them I was absolutely scared to death of every horse I had to saddle.

So what's the reason for this new found fear? Every other aspect of being a ranch wife has come so easy to me. So, what's

the answer?

The answer is not yet three feet tall, weighs 27 pounds and has curly brown hair.

That's right. My little cowgirl. My little cowgirl who doesn't have one ounce of fear in her veins is making me a lunatic, a no-horse-riding lunatic.

I want her safe. I want her happy. I want her to have fun and love horses. Isn't that what my dad wanted for me? That's when I faced the fact that in order to conquer my rider's block, I was going to have to well, ride.

I've taken it day by day. Horse by horse. Moment by moment. Every time we put our boots on and head out the door I look at that sweet little baby face and tell myself to be brave because she is watching, just like I watched my dad.

She looks out the window, sees her mama on a horse and knows that she can do it, too.

I still have my moments of fear. Like when we gather the Brangus cows for example. Those are some crazy, fence-crashin' girls. Overall though, my rider's block is cured. I trust my husband to mount me on the best horse. I trust my horse to take care of me, and I trust myself to be a good example for my little girl.

Rider's block is a very serious matter, and I'm convinced that every woman has her share of it over the years. Then we stop and remember why we do it.

We may get hurt, we may get yelled at, but the certainty of it is this: we will never forget the days that the rider's block is lifted, and we are once again the little cowgirls our dads taught us to be. ☪



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Magnolia Festival

MAY 30 - JUNE 1 • DURANT

Choctaw Event Center, 3702 Choctaw Rd., Durant, OK 74701. Honoring the heritage of Durant, also known as the “Magnolia Capital of Oklahoma,” the Magnolia Festival of Oklahoma will feature games and festivities perfect for a fun-filled family weekend. Festivities kick off the weekend after Memorial Day each year with a variety of activities with something for everyone. Call **580-924-0848** for more information.

Summerfest

MAY 30 - JUNE 1 • WAGONER

NE 2nd St., Wagoner, OK 74467. Summerfest in Wagoner features tons of family-friendly entertainment, including food and merchandise vendors and a variety of carnival rides. There will also be live concerts each night of the three-day festival. On Saturday, check out the hottest rides at the car and motorcycle show. Afterward, take the little ones to the children’s games where they can participate in relay races, a coin toss or a turtle race. Don’t miss Wagoner’s Summerfest, because there’s sure to be something for everyone. Call **918-485-3414** for more information.

Betting on a Cure

JUNE 1 • OKC

Remington Park, 1 Remington Pl., Oklahoma City, OK 73111. Join us for an exciting night of quarter horse racing which includes the \$1 million Heritage Place Futurity. Be our guest for dinner in the Eclipse Room. Free admission, parking and valet. There will be a live auction, a silent auction, and a raffle. Proceeds benefit Rein In Cancer. Call the Oklahoma Quarter Horse Racing Association at **405-216-0440**.

OKC West Sale

JUNE • EL RENO

OKC West Livestock Market, 7200 E Hwy 66, El Reno, OK 73036. Cattlemen serving cattlemen. Cows and bulls sell Mondays, calves and stockers sell Tuesdays, and feeder cattle sell Wednesdays. Call **405-262-8800** or visit **www.OKCWest.com** for more information.

Tulsa Stockyards Sale

JUNE • TULSA

Tulsa Stockyards, Tulsa, OK 74116. Northeast Oklahoma’s largest and finest livestock market. Sale every Monday at 9 a.m. View the sale online at **www.cattleusa.com**. Visit **www.TulsaStockyards.com** for more information.

Oklahoma National Stockyards Sale

JUNE • OKC

Oklahoma National Stockyards, Oklahoma City, OK 73018. Stockers and feeders sell Monday. Single stockers and feeders sell Tuesday, followed by stock cows, packer cows, and packer bulls. Call **405-235-8675** or visit **www.ONSYS.com** for more information.

McAlester Union Stockyards Sale

JUNE • MCALESTER

McAlester Union Stockyards, 2515 Standard Rd., McAlester, OK 74501. The Old Reliable. Regular sale every Tuesday. For more information call **918-423-2834** or visit **www.McAlesterStockyards.com**.

Red Earth Native American Cultural Festival

JUNE 7 - 9 • OKC

Cox Convention Center, 1 Myriad Gardens, Oklahoma City, OK 73102. Head to Oklahoma City’s Red Earth Festival this June and witness more than 1,000 American Indian artists and dancers from throughout North America gather to celebrate the richness and diversity of their heritage with the world. For three exciting days, Oklahoma City will be at the center of Native American art and culture as more than 30,000 people gather to celebrate. For more information call **405-427-5228**.

Cudd Quarter Horses Production Sale

JUNE 8 • WOODWARD

Cudd Quarter Horses LLC, Woodward, OK. Selling approximately 160 horses including stallions, mares, geldings, prospects, foals, and riding horses. Featuring the bloodlines of Goldseeker Bars. Cudd Quarter Horses LLC produces working horses with the looks and ability to do it all. For more information, call Renee Jane Cudd at **580-515-3133**, visit their Facebook page, or email **reneejane.cudd@gmail.com**. Sale day phone number is **580-256-6666**.

Wines of the West

JUNE 8 • OKC

Stockyards City, Oklahoma City, OK 73108. Visit the historic Stockyards City in Oklahoma City for Wines of the West Festival. Sample some of Oklahoma’s finest wines and get your “wine passport” stamped for a chance to win prizes. Take your pick at several dining options and enjoy live entertainment throughout the day while shopping our exclusive western boutiques and apparel stores. Visit **www.StockyardsCity.org** for more information.

American Heritage ABBI Show

JUNE 13 - 15 • DUNCAN

Stephens County Fair & Expo Center, 2002 S 13th St., Duncan, OK 73533. Get ready for edge-of-your-seat action at the American Heritage ABBI Show in Duncan. Held at the Stephens County Fairgrounds and hosted by American Bucking Bull Inc., this three-day event features yearling, junior, cowgirl, limited and open futurities. After all the action, stick around for a delicious dinner followed by the yearling sale. This event will wrap up with an awards ceremony and derby. For more information, call **719-242-2747**.



MAGNOLIA FESTIVAL
MAY 30 - JUNE 1

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NRHA Derby

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Ben Johnson Memorial Steer Roping

JUNE 16 • PAWHUSKA

Osage County Fairgrounds. 320 Skyline Dr., Pawhuska, OK 74056. The Cattlemen's Convention in Pawhuska showcases Oklahoma's unique Western heritage with numerous cowboy-themed activities, ending with the Ben Johnson Memorial Steer Roping event. Perhaps the most popular event at the convention, Ben Johnson Memorial Steer Roping is open to the public. This exciting competition will focus on the top steer ropers in the nation and will feature saddle bronc events between roping rounds. Witness steer roping at its finest and stick around for other action-packed rodeo events. For more information call 918-287-4170.

Stories on the Square

JUNE 19 • TAHLEQUAH

Cherokee National Capitol. 129 S Muskogee Ave., Tahlequah, OK 74464. Listen to Cherokee origin stories passed down from generations past at the recurring Stories on the Square event. Held at Cherokee National Capitol in Tahlequah, storytellers will regale the gathered crowd with important stories that contain bits of American Indian heritage and culture. After the traditional storytelling comes to a close, stay a little lon-

ger so the kids can make a special themed craft at the Cherokee National Prison Museum. For more information call 877-779-6977.

Buckin' Wild Music Festival

JUNE 20 - 22 • ERICK

Lost Creek Ranch. 17021 Route 66 S., Erick, OK 73645. The Buckin' Wild Music Fest, held at Lost Creek Ranch near Erick, is a fun, exciting event with a variety of activities to take part in. Conveniently located right off Route 66, this event is a celebration of Western Oklahoma and all the people that make it great. If you like country and red dirt music, you'll love the artists slated to perform at Buckin Wild.

There's more than just music at the Buckin Wild Music Festival as well. Amateur and professional bull riders will be excited to take part in the \$20,000 payout bull riding event, featuring PBR bulls. Campers are welcome to set up and get settled Thursday evening at the free pre-festival event. Also, make sure to sample some of the excellent barbecue, pizza, shaved ice, fried chicken sandwiches and more tasty festival treats. For more information call 580-799-5973 or 727-688-2994.

Woodcarving & Folk Arts Festival

JUNE 21 - 22 • BROKEN ARROW

Central Park Community Center, 1500 South Main Street, Broken Arrow, OK. Eastern Oklahoma Woodcarvers Association Presents the Woodcarving & Folk Arts Festival Show & Sale from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. Invited arts include: Woodcarving, Wood Turning, Stained Glass, Ceramics, Mosaics, Weaving, Quilting, Jewelry, Basketmaking, Blacksmithing, Gourds, Beading,



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Tim Moffett at Owasso FFA

JUNE 22 • OWASSO

Mary Glass Performing Arts Center at Owasso High School. Owasso, OK 74055. Bringing out the humor in everyday farm life, Agriculture Comedian Tim the Dairy Farmer is traveling to Owasso to perform. Tim Moffett will bring his experiences as a dairy farmer to the stage. Moffett uses the experiences on and off the farm to bring out the laughter in his audiences. All proceeds from the event will go towards the numerous programs the Owasso FFA Chapter has, as well as the farm facility where students keep livestock for SAE projects. The Owasso FFA Chapter first began 80 years ago and continues to shape and mold the lives of students. Tickets range from \$12-17

ahead of the event and general admission tickets can be purchased at the door the evening of for \$20 per person. For more information, contact Lori Lane at ljlane100@aol.com or at 918-694-5993.

Frontier Days Kids Camp at Will Rogers Birthplace

JUNE 24-26 • OOLOGAH

Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch, 9501 East 380 Road, Oologah, OK. Frontier Days Kids Camp at the Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch near Oologah will be three days of fun experiences of what life on the ranch was like in the 1800s. Hands-on activities will teach youngsters, 5-12, about hard work of ranch life in a fun, entertaining and learning environment. Special guests will be a Cherokee storyteller and cowboy magician. Registration is \$45 per child for non-members and \$30 per child for members. Children must be registered to attend. Each camper will receive a cowboy hat, shirt, rope and other crafts as well as lunch. Register and pay at www.WillRogers.com, "Upcoming Events" and click on Frontier Days Kids Camp.

REALITY CHECK FOR MINERAL OWNERS
WHAT ARE MY MINERALS WORTH?

This is the most common question asked by the mineral owners I have met and talked to. Everyone wants to know what their minerals are worth either by terms of selling their minerals, or trying to secure a lease agreement. The problem is the answer usually is "It depends!"

In my three decades of energy expertise, this question, "What are my minerals worth?" may be one of the most subjective questions asked. Unfortunately, mineral owners for the most part are uninformed, unfamiliar or too inexperienced to really know the important details of their minerals to conclude the market value for their minerals. This applies to leasing terms and or sales prices.

The reality check for mineral owners is that the industry has changed in the last decade and in ways that are significant and macro in size. Mineral owners look back in time to review prior lease conditions as it relates to lease bonuses, royalty interest and sales prices to determine the value today. However, it is very unlikely that there is much similarity from even five years ago to today's market for mineral leasing and acquisitions and sales.

Millions of acres previously leased and developed with vertical wells may find that those same acres are not necessarily in the areas where the new shale and horizontal drilling is taking

place. Thus, what used to be attractive or desired minerals are now considered to be yesterday's hot commodity. On the other hand, mineral owners who may have had older leases and long-term production may also be in areas now very viable for shale exploration and horizontal exploration technology, and the value of those minerals could be tenfold or more in value than previously thought. It is as they always say – LOCATION, LOCATION AND LOCATION.

Reality of your mineral values is a combination of many factors. Those factors include, but are not limited to, LOCATION of your minerals, exploration results near your minerals, operators who will lease and develop your minerals, determination of your minerals being predominately natural gas or crude oil, cost of exploration related to your minerals, expectation of drilling to occur in a timely fashion, the terms you will offer, clarity of your mineral ownership title, and much more.

Conclusion: Mineral owners need to get educated, study the market, get informed and be aware of the massive market shifts that occurred in the last decade so their view of values and terms is in line with reality and expectations. Not that one cannot shoot for the moon. So long as they realize they may crash if no one sees their view as being too far askew! Call me to discuss your minerals and learn, listen, and ask questions.

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Pawhuska, Oklahoma

By Lanna Mills

Nestled in the northeast corner of the state, in the heart of Osage County, is the unique and fascinating town of Pawhuska. The town is rich in history and offers an array of attractions.

Pawhuska, formerly known as Deep Ford, was established in 1872 with the reservation for the Osage Nation. It was the home town of famous cowboy movie star Ben Johnson, as well as Clarence L. Tinker, highest ranking Native American officer in the U.S. Army and namesake of the Tinker Air Force Base. In 1909 one of the very first Boy Scout troops was organized there. It is the inspiration behind author David Grann's book *Killers of the Flower Moon*, the Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI. Pawhuska was a great cattle ranching community, as it still is today.

The first home in Pawhuska was built in 1871. Sid Delarue, a Swiss blacksmith, called it home

and used the location to care for many people's horses. The home still stands. It is now the Chamber of Commerce and a great place to learn more about Pawhuska, its history and all the town has to offer.

It was also a hot spot in the Osage oil boom of the 1910s and 1920s, which lead to a drastic increase in its population. However, it began to drop with the decline of the oil boom and the great depression. Today its population is roughly 3,500.

Despite the rather small population, the town now sees an average of 6,000 visitors per day, sometimes rising to 15,000 on occasion, due to the overwhelming popularity of resident Ree Drummond. Ree, "The Pioneer Woman," is a famous food blogger, chef, author, photographer, and television cooking show host. These visitors flock from near and far to visit the Pioneer Woman
See PAWHUSKA page 44



(Photo courtesy of Lanna Mills)

Pawhuska

Continued from page 43

Mercantile, a 25,000 square foot destination restaurant, bakery, and store opened by Drummond and her husband Ladd. The couple spent years renovating the 100-year-old Osage Mercantile building on Main Street. The couple also offer their Pawhuska guests an eight-room boutique hotel called The Boarding House, a pizzeria named P-Town Pizza and a newly opened ice cream shop. You are also welcome to travel out and tour the lodge where The Pioneer Woman cooking show is filmed located on the Drummond Ranch, which is rich with its own history and tradition.

After visiting the Mercantile be sure to step across the street and have a look at the Frontier Hotel. This beautiful triangular shaped, newly redone, five-story hotel sits right in the middle of downtown. It was built in 1912 by Charles Gray as an office building. During the oil boom it housed more than 100 lawyers, jewelers, beauty shops, tobacco stands, and doctors' offices. The building was famous for being the first fireproof building in Oklahoma and only one of five in the United States. The rooms are gorgeous and have all the luxuries we have come to enjoy. With all its modern conveniences and beautiful western decor, the Frontier kept some of its old-world charm. It still has a breathtaking marble staircase and the original glass inlaid wooden office doors.

When in town be sure to also check out its other attractions, such as the many downtown shops and boutiques, Cavalcade-the world's largest amateur rodeo, the swinging bridge, Osage Tribal Museum, Osage County Historical Museum, Osage Hills State Park, Cedar Cove Ranch and Resort, and the Tallgrass Prairie Reserve where you can see miles of rolling hillside, beautiful wild flowers and herds of buffalo. Take a horse drawn wagon ride or schedule a guided bus tour to see all that Pawhuska has to offer.

Whether you are there for a day, a weekend or longer, it just won't be long enough. You are sure to fall in love with the town and all the hospitality that comes with it.



(Photo courtesy of Lanna Mills)

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PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT *visits the Big Pasture*

By Judy Wade

The Big Pasture played a major role in the history of Oklahoma. Comprising what are now Comanche, Cotton and Tillman Counties, The Big Pasture contained approximately 500,000 acres bounded on the south by the Red River.

Originally owned by the Quapaw tribe, it was ceded to the United States in 1818 and became part of the Choctaw and Chickasaw reservations. By the terms of the Medicine Lodge Treaty of 1867, a reservation there was set aside for Kiowa, Comanche and Apache tribes, according to the Oklahoma Historical Society.

“Beginning in the 1880s, Texas cattle barons, including W.T. Waggoner, Samuel Burk Burnett, C.T. Herring, E.C. Sugg and others, leased grasslands for grazing from the Indian agent in charge of the reservation,” according to the Historical Society’s web page.

In 1906 it was sold by sealed bids to settlers in the last of the Oklahoma land openings. In a six day period, the Land Office in Lawton received 7,621 sealed bids offering from \$800 to \$7,367 for a quarter section (160 acres).

But in 1905, it was largely unsettled.

The 1905 visit by President Theodore Roosevelt for a wolf hunt was one of the most significant events in The Big Pasture, creating interest nationwide.

Roosevelt had attended a Rough Riders’ Reunion in San Antonio just prior to his visit to The Big Pasture, and arrived in Frederick on Saturday, April 8 aboard a private five-car train. He received an enthusiastic welcome from an estimated 6,000 Oklahomans.



Roosevelt shows the six-foot rattlesnake he killed. (Courtesy photo)

“About 100 soldiers who had worn either the blue or the gray in the great war of the rebellion marched side by side to do honor to their common president and testified more convincingly than volumes of the friendship that

exists between all sections of the country,” reported the Frederick Enterprise.

A grandstand had been set up, and after an introduction by Oklahoma Governor Ferguson, Roosevelt made a short speech

after which the President was whisked away by carriage to meet with John R. (Jack) Abernathy who was famous for his wolf catching abilities, most notably for capturing them alive—with his bare hands some reported.

The hunting party camped at Panther Springs on the west bank of Deep Red Creek northwest of Randlett, in the south central part of The Big Pasture.

Numerous dignitaries accompanied Roosevelt and Abernathy on the five day hunt, including Comanche Chief Quanah Parker, Texas oil man and rancher Burk Burnett and rancher Guy Waggoner.

According to the Frederick Enterprise, “The hunt for which the President has been yearning... was begun Monday morning. From the start the President was invariably in the lead and even the cowboys and veteran troopers from Fort Sill were astonished at the ease with which he kept his seat while going at breakneck speed over ravine and hill.

By noon the pack [of dogs] had caught three wolves and the party returned to camp with an appetite which left but little of the pickled yearling which had been taken out that morning. In the afternoon the President saw John Abernathy catch a wolf which the dogs had harassed.

“The next day he [the President] rode over a six foot rattler, which sprang at him four times before he had dispatched it with his quirt.”


Abernathy captured several wolves during the President’s visit, genuinely impressing him and beginning a lasting friendship between the two. Soon after the

hunt, Roosevelt appointed Abernathy as U.S. Marshal.

At the end of the hunt, on Thursday, April 13 Roosevelt again spoke to the crowd gathered at the train station to see him off, telling those gathered how much he enjoyed the hunt and praising Abernathy's wolf hunting skills. He then promised to make Oklahoma a state and to visit again.

Oklahoma was admitted to the Union Nov. 16, 1907, the only state to be admitted to the Union during Roosevelt's presidency.

Several towns existed in the Big Pasture. Eschiti, Quanah, Isadore, and Ahpeatone are no longer. Those remaining include Frederick and Davidson on the west, Walters and Temple on the east, and Randlett, Grandfield and Devol, in the south-central portion.

Randlett paid homage to its rich history by naming its school Big Pasture. 



Top: A monument in Frederick shows the location of The Big Pasture on the map at top.

Right: Jake Abernathy (left) and President Roosevelt pose with one of the wolves from their hunt in 1905.



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Tales from an Outdoorsman

By Michael Newell

What's Your Oklahoma IQ?

If you are a newcomer to our state, you might have realized that Oklahomans are a proud bunch. We are also willing to let outsiders be adopted into our ranks.

If you are new to these parts, or have lived here for quite a spell, then I have a little test to see if you are ready to become “one of us.”

Get a pad and pencil and don't cheat! See how many of these state symbols you can identify. We will tally the scores a little later.

Here is how to score your answers. Give yourself one point for each correct answer and two if you get the bonus question correct. Are you ready? Good luck.

Questions:

1. What is the state bird?
 2. What is the state tree?
 3. What is the state floral emblem?
 4. What is the state wild flower?
 5. What is the state mammal?
 6. What is the state fish?
 7. What is the state rock?
 8. What is the state game bird?
 9. What is the state reptile?
 10. What is the state furbearer?
 11. What is the state game animal?
 12. What is the state insect?
 13. What is the state amphibian?
 14. What is the state butterfly?
 15. What is the state grass?
 16. What is the state flying mammal?
 17. What is the state soil?
- Bonus: What is the state meal?

Answers:

1. Here is an easy one to start with. The state bird is, of course,

the scissor-tailed flycatcher. This bird gets its name from the beautiful forked tail feathers that may extend as much as 12 inches on fully developed adults. This graceful bird is adept at catching insects on the fly, hence the name. This state symbol is only a summer resident of Oklahoma, spending its winters in Mexico and Central America.

2. Another easy one- anyone who has been in Oklahoma, especially during the spring has seen the colorful blooming of the redbud trees. The redbud is a medium sized tree that grows in creek bottoms all across the state.

3. This is kind of a tricky one: mistletoe is our state floral emblem. It used to be our state flower; however, since it does not have a true flower, the plant was changed to the floral emblem. This is the oldest of the state's emblems, adopted in 1893 – 14 years before

statehood. The dark green leaves and white berries show up brightly in trees that have dropped their own foliage. Mistletoe feeds off of the host tree and cannot grow on its own.

4. The state wildflower is Gailardia, or Indian Blanket. This is a deep red sunflower with yellow tips. It blooms all summer and frequents the roadsides of Oklahoma.

5. The state mammal is also the largest wild animal in the state. The American buffalo, or bison, weighs up to 2,000 pounds and stands nearly six feet tall at the shoulder. The Wichita Mountains has one of the largest free roaming herds of bison in the country.

6. Famous for their spring spawning runs, the white bass, or sand bass, is the official state fish. This fish is slivery with black horizontal stripes running the length of the body. This fish is found in nearly every lake in Oklahoma.

7. You have probably seen this curiously shaped stone in gift shops, but you may not have known it was our state

rock, the rose rock. The orangeish stones resemble full grown roses and are made of barite crystals. They are found in few places other than Oklahoma, and an old Cherokee legend says the rock represented the blood of the braves and the tears of the maidens who made the “Trail of Tears” journey in the 1800s to Oklahoma.

8. Known as the prince of the game birds, the wild turkey is Oklahoma's state game bird. Two main sub-species are found in the state, the Rio Grande and the eastern. The tip of the panhandle is home to small numbers of Merriam's subspecies. This is also the largest game bird found in the Sooner State, growing up to 25 pounds.

9. Who knew we had a state reptile? Well we do, and they are very common across the state. The eastern collared lizard or the mountain boomer, as it is better known, is the official state reptile. This feisty little lizard has a distinct turquoise blue color with a yellow head and black “collar” marking around the neck. He can stand up and run on his two back legs when frightened, making for a peculiar sight.

10. Known as the little bandit for its black mask and inquisitive



nature, the raccoon is our state furbearer. Once prized for their coat, the numbers of raccoons and human raccoon encounters are on the rise due to a drop in fur prices.

11. Ask any hunter in Oklahoma and they will confirm that white-tailed deer are one of the most popular hunted species in the state. With a population that is growing in leaps and bounds, opportunity to harvest this state game animal is growing as well.

12. Minco, Okla., is home to a festival each year to celebrate Oklahoma's state insect. I am not a big bug fan, but I do enjoy the fruits of this insect's labor, the honey bee.

13. One of the newest state symbols is the state amphibian. Adopted just this past legislative session, the American bull frog is now official. Found in nearly every body of water in the state, the bull frog is a voracious predator that is prized for its tasty legs. Be careful when frying, however, because they have a tendency to jump out of the pan.

14. The state butterfly is the black swallowtail. While not as showy as its cousin the yellow swallowtail, this dark butterfly has beautiful markings to go along with its namesake extended tails.

15. A state grass? You've got to be kidding. No, I'm not. After all, we live in the Great Plains, so it is natural to have a state grass. Indian grass is a common clump grass of the mixed grass prairie, which is found in the majority of the state.

16. The newest addition to the state symbol list is a truly unique creature. It is a mammal and it flies and lives in colonies numbering in the millions.

One of the most impressive outdoor events is the nightly exodus of Mexican free-tailed bats from the Selman Bat Cave in Freedom, Okla. If you have not been to Alabaster Caverns and then stayed for the bat tour, you need to do so.



The Oklahoma Redbud is a staple on the Oklahoma landscape. (Courtesy photo)



The American Buffalo is the state mammal of Oklahoma. (Courtesy photo)

17. Finally, if you get this one, give yourself a bonus point. The state soil, and yes we have a state soil, is port silt loam. Loam is a mix of sandy and clay soils and this soil type is said to be the most common type across the state.

Bonus - OK, I know this is not outdoor related, but after you see what is on the menu, and since I

am a lifelong Okie, you will see why I had to include it. Fried okra, squash, cornbread, barbecue pork, biscuits, sausage and gravy, grits, corn, strawberries, chicken fried steak, pecan pie, and black-eyed peas. If that doesn't get your mouth to waterin', then you don't belong here.

How did you do?

17—13 You are a true Sooner (or cowboy if you prefer)

12—9 Your folks must have followed the Grapes of Wrath to California, but there is still hope.

8—4 Do you think Oklahoma still has cowboys and Indians riding the range?

3—0 You better get back across that old Red River son. ☞

Noble Learning:

MINERAL SUPPLEMENTATION: THE BENEFITS YOU MAY NOT SEE

By Caitlin Hebbert, livestock consultant / cshebbert@noble.org

It's no secret that good nutritional management is one of the most vital contributions to a profitable herd.

Within the realm of cattle nutrition, protein and energy tend to receive the most hype due to their direct relationships to growth performance and overall body condition. This hype is rightfully placed since the first step to a good nutrition program is to identify and meet protein and energy requirements. The second step involves the lesser-discussed dark horse of the ruminant nutrition world: minerals.

Much of the discussion surrounding minerals is vague, and information is more often accepted by producers than is understood since the world of minerals is complicated and tedious to navigate. As a result, I often find myself on the receiving end of this conversation, "Mineral is so expensive and consumption seems to

be hit-or-miss. What will happen if I stop feeding mineral?"

Mineral consumption does indeed vary — from animal to animal as well as from one month to the next. This is often reflective of changing mineral content in forage, fortified winter supplements and the production phase of cattle (growing, lactating, gestating, etc.). These fluctuations should not deter you from making mineral an option to your cattle year-round, as other sources of mineral for grazing cattle are neither constant nor consistent.

It is also important to note that the mineral deficiencies of cattle on an otherwise-well-managed nutrition program are often relatively minor. This may be referred to as a subclinical deficiency, a deficiency that presents itself in obscure ways.

Subclinical symptoms, while not always initially obvious, usually become apparent after they've

already impacted your bottom line. Most of these subclinical deficiencies make you scratch your head and think "Hmmm, something is a little off," but rarely would you make the connection between a change in or a lack of mineral with the discrepancies you are observing. That is, unless you were aware of those connections existing.

Below are a few such connections that I've observed anecdotally, encountered in conversations with producers and verified in research.

"My conception rates are a little low this year."

Most cow herds in the Southern Great Plains are currently in the midst of calving and are rapidly approaching breeding season. The mineral requirements (and nutritional requirements in general) of cows are at their peak when lactation is also at its peak, 30 to 60 days postpartum. It is critical at

this time to make sure your cows are in optimal body condition and that they have all the tools on the cellular level to conceive early in the breeding season.

Some of these tools are minerals that are highly active in various reproductive processes. Selenium, zinc and manganese in particular have been found to have direct effects on reproduction in cattle, significantly affecting processes such as ovarian function, steroidal synthesis, and even testicular development and function in bulls.

It is not uncommon for an extreme mineral deficiency to result in an open cow (as in she doesn't get bred or, just as likely, she suffers early embryonic loss following conception). However, a subclinical deficiency may yield a bred heifer or cow — but one that conceived during second or third service rather than conceiving upon first AI service or exposure to bull. This could lower pregnan-

cy rates in a short breeding season or extend your calving season.

It is well-documented that cows and heifers that conceive early in the breeding season sustain a longer, more productive herd life. Doing what you can to ensure early conception can help boost your long-term profitability.

“I seem to be treating more calves post-weaning than usual.”

Many minerals have dramatic implications in the immune system and its function. Lack of optimal mineral management at the cow-calf level is speculated to be correlated to sickness later on in life — such as incidence of respiratory illness at the feedlot.

When calves are retained at the ranch and preconditioned, the consequences or benefits of nutrition earlier in their life often come to light. Adequate mineral nutrition may be just as important as, and may enhance, the viability of a vaccination program.

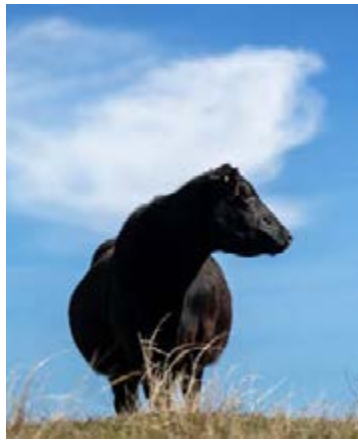
This is not to say that minerals are the magic bullet to end all morbidity problems, but they are an important part of the equation along with genetics, vaccination and overall management.

“My cattle aren’t keeping or gaining condition as well as they have in the past.”

Many metabolic processes in the body are regulated or activated by minerals, including processes vital to sustain physiological systems through periods of high growth.

For example, digestibility can be driven or impeded by availability of minerals. Digestibility in ruminants is largely impacted by the state of the microbial population in the rumen, making microbes the driving force behind utilization of nutrients. Rumen microbes require a specific environment and substrates in order to thrive and survive, and the availability of certain minerals (depending on the microbe) are part of this specificity.

While you should not expect the presence or absence of a mineral supplement to behave like an ionophore or a growth implant in terms of feed efficiency or pounds



of gain, a mineral supplement is a key player in the digestibility and absorption of all nutrients and their subsequent utilization in the body. While any major nutrient deficiency will likely be visibly apparent by way of body condition or average daily gain (or lack thereof), a subclinical deficiency may cost you a pound per week, which really adds up come sale time.

Most mineral supplements are formulated to be consumed at a rate of two to four ounces per head per day. If your supplement targets four ounces, and a cow is “off” supplement about one-third of the year (due to her needs being met through other sources), then she’s consuming about 60 pounds of mineral per year. At an estimated \$35 for a 50-pound bag of loose mineral, meeting her mineral needs costs you \$42 per head per year.

The benefits you reap when offering mineral include:

- Greater utilization of forage and feed.
- Higher quality colostrum.
- More optimal reproductive performance.
- Fewer incidences of illness.

Plus \$42 is less expensive than having to replace a cow that fell out of your target calving season. It’s also less expensive than the ¼ pound you may sacrifice in calves every day and the cost of just one treatment for respiratory illness.

Though not always immediately evident, being intentional and consistent about keeping minerals in front of your cattle will benefit both your herd and your bottom line in the long run. ☞

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PARTING SHOT



Sunshine Crop...

I just couldn't resist taking a picture of this beautiful canola field in full bloom. The bright and cheery yellow color would brighten even the dullest day of spring. The old oilfield pump head just added to the picture of older days when this would have been just another green wheat field. I love that canola does well in our area. It's not only pretty but the bees and butterflies love it. (Photographer Janice Russell) 



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WEATHERFORD

Freshly remodeled 3 bedroom 2 bath home on 5 acres, just 11 minutes from the square in Weatherford. New paint inside and out. Lots of natural light. Large kitchen and spacious living room. Master bedroom with walk-in closet and en suite bath. Mudroom with laundry and hard surface floors throughout.

Gabe Webster-
\$280,000



CLEBURNE

This beautiful custom-built 4 bed, 4 bath home features an elevated view on over 20 manicured acres. Gated entry off a dead-end road guarantees privacy. Just outside Cleburne and 10 minutes to Chisholm Trail Pkwy. The custom features of this designer home will capture your eye. From the stone exterior to the custom flooring and counters. Ample room for a growing family.

Bobby Norris-
\$839,000



MINERAL WELLS

Updated 2862 Sq-ft, 4 Br, 2 Bath, new windows, new appliances, counter tops. Floor consists of refurbished hardwood and tile throughout. Approx. 120 Acres 35 acres Coastal, good fences, cross fenced. 110 x 220 arena, 40 x 60 9 stall barn with tack room. 2 small barn with stalls, 25 x 64 equipment or hay shed. Swim in the pool or sit on the deck overlooking 4-5 acre lake and wildlife.

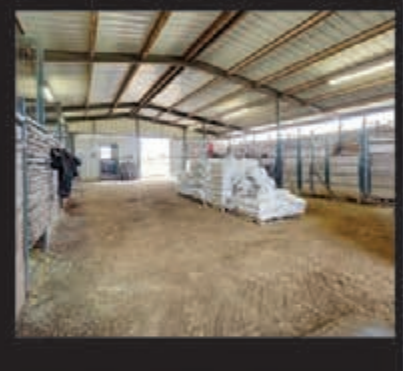
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Bobby Norris-
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