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May 2016

Volume 1 Issue 5

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STAFF & CONTRIBUTORS

Publisher

J. M. Winter

EditorLaci Jones
editor@okfronline.com**Managing Editor**Jessica Crabtree
editor@ntfronline.com**Art Director**Kayla Jean Woods
kayla@post oakmedia.net**Senior Sales Executive**Daniel Yates
daniel@post oakmedia.net**Advertising Executives**Stephanie Cox
stephanie@post oakmedia.net

Susan Stewart

susan@post oakmedia.net

Kathy Miller

kathy@post oakmedia.net

Christy Sellers

christy@post oakmedia.net

Amy Lynn

amy@post oakmedia.net

Business ManagerBrenda Bingham
accounting@post oakmedia.net**Circulation Manager**Marnie Brown
subscriptions@post oakmedia.net**Copy Editor**

Judy Wade

Contributing WritersSara Honegger
Josh Gaskamp
Dr. Lauren Lamb
Amanda Martin
Staci Mauney
Marty New
Lacey Newlin
Judy Wade
Barry Whitworth**CONTACT US****OKFR Magazine**200 Walnut St.
Bowie, TX 76230
940-872-2076
www.okfronline.com*in association with*

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...Bring May flowers

Hello OKFR readers and welcome to the May issue of the Oklahoma Farm & Ranch magazine. I personally love this time of year when everything is vibrant, fresh and delightful. This month's issue is filled with timely tips and lively events!

Cinco de Mayo is coming up, and families can celebrate Mexican heritage at the Cinco de Mayo Festival in Clinton, Okla. The festival began 10 years ago, and the events include a jalapeño eating contest, a piñata and various entertainment provided by local bands and dance groups. The Little Mister and Miss Cinco de Mayo contest, which gives kids recognition for wearing traditional dress from various areas in Mexico, also takes place at the festival.

With the potential for more precipitation in the next few months, producers need to keep an eye out for any signs of lameness from foot rot. In "Foot Rot in Cattle," Barry Whitworth, DVM and area food/animal quality and health specialist for eastern Oklahoma talks about what to expect with foot rot as well as prevention and treatment options.

Some of the most common equine emergencies are skin lacerations, colic and eye injuries. Next, read how to prepare a first aid kit for horses in "Always Come Prepared." The article addresses what materials and medications to keep in the first aid kit.

This month, I traveled to The Pickin' Parlor in Tishomingo, Okla., to visit with owner, Allen Stonecipher and profile, Roger Springer. Springer is a singer/songwriter who was baptized in country music after listening to Merle Haggard for the first time. In "Baptized by Country Music," Springer talks about moving to Nashville, being on the road, learning the "do's and don'ts" of the music industry and helping other artists get their start.

Finally, read about Oklahoma State Park of the month. Robbers Cave State Park in Wilburton, Okla., is known for its folklore as Jesse James with the James-Younger Gang and Belle Starr would hide out in a local cave. The state park hosts many events and activities throughout the year including the Fall Festival in October.

It is officially time to get out and enjoy the fresh air and warm weather! Why travel when you can find fun events to attend in Oklahoma? Checkout the OKFR calendar of events for local events in your area.

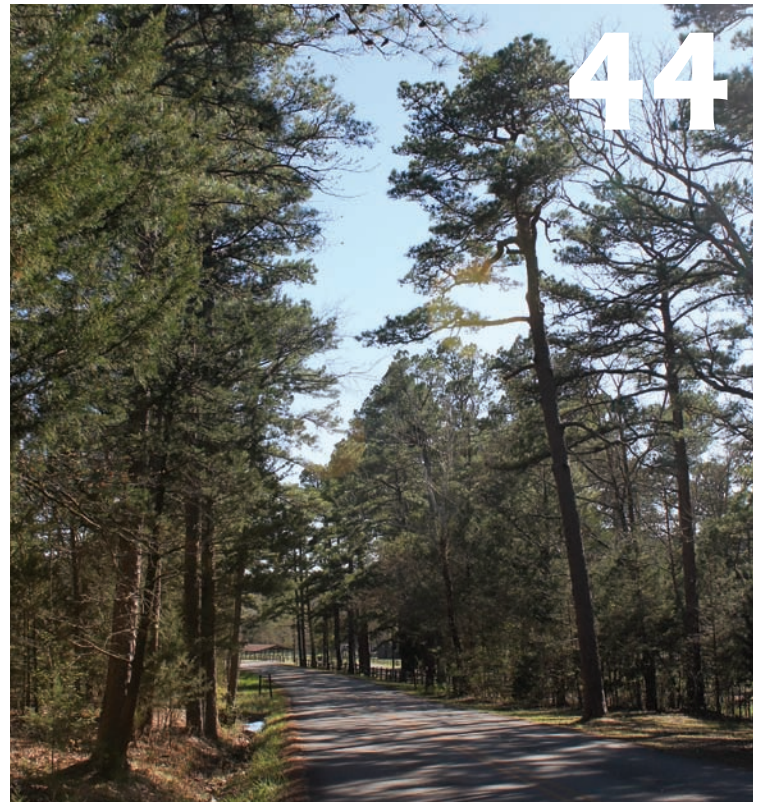
If you have an event, photo or topic idea that you would like to see in Oklahoma Farm & Ranch, send it our way at editor@okfronline.com. Keep up with new OKFR updates on our Facebook and Twitter pages. For more information or subscription information, visit our website www.OKFRonline.com.

Until next month,



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OKFR / socializing

ON THE COVER

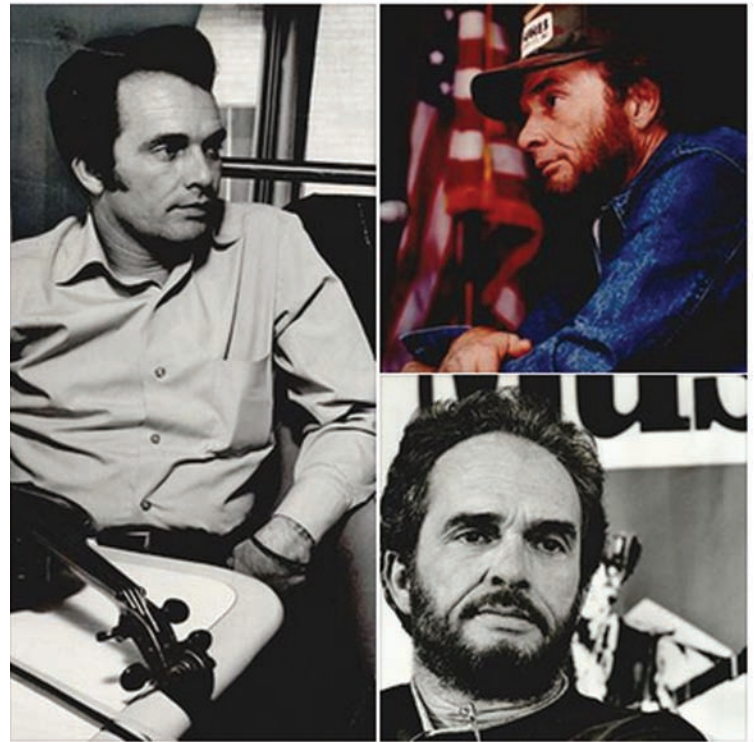
Singer/songwriter, Roger Springer was baptized by country music after listening to Merle Haggard for the first time. A few years later, the Caddo, Okla., native packed his bags and headed to Nashville to try and make a name for himself in the music industry. Springer succeeded, and he toured with country music artist Vern Gosdin as well as Mark Chesnutt. Today, Springer and long-time friend, Allen Stonecipher, opened The Pickin' Parlor in Tishomingo, Okla., to give artists a chance to be heard. (Photo by Laci Jones)

FACEBOOK WALL



Oklahoma Farm & Ranch shared Oklahoma Historical Society's post.

Published by Laci Jones | 7 | April 8 at 10:05am · 🌐



Oklahoma Historical Society added 3 new photos.

April 8 at 9:01am · 🌐

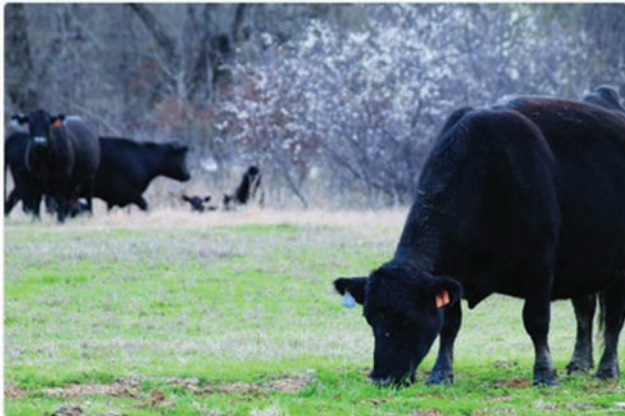
Merle Haggard was not born on Oklahoma soil, but his life story is certainly linked with our state. Merle's parents, Jim and Flossie, left Oklahoma during the G...

TWITTER FEED



OKFR Magazine @OKFRMagazine · Apr 5

Cows should be provided a mineral supplement if grass tetany is suspected. Learn more at ow.ly/10jHyr.



OKFR Magazine @OKFRMagazine · Apr 4

Spring Turkey Season is fast approaching! Read ow.ly/10gTLF in the #April issue of #OKFR to learn about wing bone turkey calls!

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When Pigs Sweat

Four tips to managing sows in the heat

The rays of the Oklahoma sun beat down, ice cream melts faster and the air conditioner is cranked up. Summer is coming! Are you and your sows ready?

A sow's normal body temperature ranges from 100 to 103 degrees Fahrenheit, and the environment plays an important role in sow productivity. Pigs are more sensitive to sun rays than other animals.

"Pigs do not have sweat glands," said Darrell Maggard, owner of Maggard Show Pigs. "They pant, but they do not sweat."

When sows experience stress from heat, it can be detrimental to a sow's health and productivity. Maggard said when sows get too hot, it can cause a drop in feed intake, especially during lactation. If ignored, heat stress can cause problems for the sow as well as the piglets. A decrease in feed in-

take results in fewer key nutrients reaching the piglets.

Genetics can also play a role in heat stress, Maggard said. Pigs that are more intensely bred or "stacked up" are more prone to the stress carrier gene, he added. Anything that is out of their normal environment will be stressful on them.

According to the *Journal of Animal Science*, heat stress refers to the meteorological elements that interfere with heat loss from the animal to the environment. When pigs are under heat stress, their tongues hang out, their respiration increases and they foam at the mouth, Maggard said.

Here are four tips to prepare your sows for the summer heat.

1. Feeding frequently

Digestion generates heat in sows, and larger meals cause a sow's body temperature to increase exponentially. Producers

need to make sure they feed the sows smaller, frequent meals to avoid a rise in body temperature.

2. Good body condition

While feeding frequently is important, it is equally important to not overfeed. Maggard said it is important to keep body condition of sows in mind when heading into the summer months. An increase in body condition can cause a sow's body temperature to rise.

"Don't get the sows too fat," Maggard explained. "The fatter they are, the rougher it is on sows."

3. Optimum temperature

A combination of temperature and humidity cause heat stress, and the combination of these numbers is known as the Temperature-Humidity Index. The optimum environmental temperature for a sow is approximately 45 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit. They begin **See PIGS page 11**



BY LACI JONES

editor@okfronline.com

PHOTO DETAILS

When sows experience stress from heat, it can be detrimental to a sow's health and productivity. (Courtesy photo)

Pigs

to feel stressed when temperatures surpass 70 degrees Fahrenheit.

When the temperature increases in the summer, mud pits can be used to cool sows. However, producers need to also have ample amount of shade as the heat from the sun can also increase the temperature of the mud pits.

“A lot of guys will keep them in climate controlled temperature indoors,” Maggard said, “but we keep them outside and have shade and water.”

When sows are placed in farrowing crates, producers need to make sure they have plenty of misters. The barns also need to have proper ventilation, he added. The ventilation systems when sows are in the farrowing crate should remain no warmer than 78 degrees Fahrenheit.

4. Plenty of water

“The sows that I have are

outside in the environment,” he said. “If it is outside and humid, we have water of some type on them.”

When sows get too hot, they stop eating, Maggard explained. Sows will stop eating because digesting food makes the sows warmer. Producers need to feed their pigs consistently and provide them with enough fresh drinking water.

“The sows that I have will drink up to about five or six gallons of water per day,” he said.

Maggard recommended producers have some form of mist system to keep them cool. If a sow gets too hot, he said to cool them off by running cool water over their neck and nose.

“You don’t want to spray them down because it can actually send them into shock,” Maggard said.

Maggard said he raises pigs



Heat stress can cause a drop in feed intake, especially during lactation. (Courtesy photo)

for his grandsons as it teaches them values and responsibility. Regardless of why you raise pigs, it should be noted that all facilities are different. It is important to do what is best for your operation.

Producers should consult their local veterinarian if any problems arise. If a producer follows these few tips, they can have a productive farrowing season and a profitable herd.*

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Horn Fly Control for Cattle Operations

Horn flies are common fly species associated with livestock. They are the most abundant biting flies present during the spring and summer months on cattle in Oklahoma. Horn flies are a small black fly with piercing/sucking mouthparts that feed on cattle in an inverted position with their head facing down.

Male and female flies take blood from the host and feed 20 to 30 times a day. Horn flies continually stay on the animal and only leave the animal for short periods to lay eggs. Typical feeding areas on cattle include the back, side, belly and legs of cattle. Horn fly populations begin building up in the spring as early as April and last until the first frost. The life cycle of horn flies lends itself to building large populations on cattle, if control is not implemented.

Horn flies complete an entire generation in as few as 14 days during the summer months, which leads to numerous generations of flies throughout the summer months. Horn flies have complete metamorphosis, which consists of egg, larva, pupae and adults.

The adult female must lay eggs in fresh manure. The eggs hatch within 48 hours into first instar larva that feed in the manure pat and progressively grow into second and third instar larva. Third instar larva crawl from the manure pat to a drier area to pupate. Inside the pupal case, the adult fly forms and the adult will emerge from the pupal case and seek a suitable host, typically cattle. During mid-fall, adults do not emerge and the horn fly spends the winter in the pupal stage.

Economic losses associated with horn flies are estimated at more than \$800 million annually in the United States. High fly populations can cause con-



siderable animal irritation, blood loss, reduced grazing efficiency, reduced weight gains and decline in milk production. Studies conducted in Nebraska have shown that treated animals had 18 percent weight gain advantage over untreated animals. Other studies utilizing stocker cattle and replacement heifers demonstrated that treated animals had 18 percent weight gain advantage over untreated animals.

Horn fly control is typically implemented on cattle when the number of horn flies per animal reaches a threshold of 200 flies per head. The buildup of fly populations varies from year to year according to the weather. Populations usually reach this threshold in late spring.

Numerous pesticides and application techniques are available to use in control of horn flies on cattle. Some of the more popular

products include insecticides that are incorporated into ear tags and ready-to-use pour-on formulations of pesticides.

Other methods for applying pesticides include sprays, backrubbers, dust bags, paintball gun delivery applications and feed through additives. Many products are dual purpose and may be used either as a spray or in a backrubber application according to label instructions. Some application methods are much more labor intensive than others. For instance, pesticide sprays must be applied thoroughly and cattle must be gathered to apply sprays properly. Pesticide sprays generally provide only three weeks of control. Materials applied by backrubbers and dust bags give good control as long as these devices are properly maintained. Cattle must be forced to use them or at least must use **See FLY page 15**



BY MARTY NEW
marty.new@okstate.edu

PHOTO DETAILS

The typical feeding areas of horn flies on cattle include the back, side, belly and legs. (Photo by Marty New)



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them frequently to be effective.

Regardless of the method of application, rotation between insecticidal classes is critical to managing insecticide resistance in horn fly populations. Endectocides, which have become popular for use in controlling internal parasites in the past, will provide four weeks to five weeks of horn fly control. Timing the application of endectocides for control on internal parasites and cattle grubs late in the fly season will allow cattlemen to make one application and reduce two pests simultaneously.

Insect Growth Regulator (IGR) products can be used to prevent horn fly larvae from developing into adults. IGRs are administered to cattle as feed additives; immature horn flies are exposed to these chemicals in the manure

of the cattle which consumed the product.

Some formulations are available ready-to-feed, in the form of protein or mineral blocks or tubs, while others will require top-dressing or custom blending. IGR products are effective against horn flies because they lay their eggs only in fresh manure where IGR is actively killing the immature stages. Developing larvae are not able to complete their development to the pupal stage.

Mineral supplements that have IGRs are effective only when most of the cattle in a herd are consuming the required amount of mineral supplements. They work best when non-treated cattle are not nearby as populations of horn flies will exchange from one herd to another. Some other things to consider when trying to control



Economic losses associated with horn flies are estimated at more than \$800 million annually in the United States. (Courtesy of Marty New)

horn flies: start before you have a horn fly problem, rotate insecticide classes if using ear tags and remove ear tags at the end of the fly season or when they lose effectiveness.*



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Foot Rot in Cattle



With all the rain that continues to fall in most of the state and the weather service predicting above normal chance for precipitation over the next few months, producers need to watch cattle closely for any signs of lameness. Lameness is the first sign of foot rot. With moist conditions, foot rot may become a problem.

Foot rot is caused by *Fusobacterium necrophorum* subspecies *necrophorum* and sometimes two other bacteria are involved (*Porphyromonas levii* and *Prevotella intermedia*). These bacteria are normal inhabitants of the digestive tract of cattle and consequently in the environment.

The problem arises when the bacteria gain entry into the tissues of the foot through a break in

the skin. The damage to the skin may be from puncture wounds or abrasions or continuous exposure to wet conditions which softens the skin.

Once the bacteria gains entry into tissues, it multiplies and releases toxins that damage tissue. If left unchecked, the bacteria invades deeper structures in the foot. This may result in permanent problems and may shorten the life of the cow.

Diagnosis of foot rot begins with a thorough examination of the foot. Foot rot lesions usually infect both claws, so if only one claw is infected, the problem is not likely foot rot. Look for signs of swelling between toes and for redness or necrotic tissue and for separation of the skin at the hoof wall.

Most cases of foot rot will have a foul spelling odor. The foot may feel warm to the touch. This distinguishes foot rot from fescue foot which is cold to the touch. Cows may have a fever, refuse to eat and are reluctant to bear weight on the infected foot due to pain.

When treated early, most cases respond well. Treatment begins with cleaning the foot and removing as much necrotic tissue as possible before applying a topical medication. Most cases do not require bandaging.

Administering an antibiotic is also necessary. A producer should consult with their veterinarian for what product works best in their area.

Pain management may also be necessary in some cases. See **FOOT ROT** page 17



**BY BARRY
WHITWORTH**

barry.whitworth@okstate.edu

PHOTO DETAILS

Prevention of foot rot is the best plan of action and begins with good hygiene. (Photo by Laci Jones)

Foot Rot

Continued from page 16

times damage to deeper structures of the foot occur and require more aggressive therapy such as surgical intervention to salvage the animal.

There is a very aggressive form of foot rot with a fast onset, extreme necrosis and erosion of the interdigital space. The condition is referred to as "super foot rot," and it is resistant to regular treatments. Super foot rot is thought to be caused by a resistant strain of *Fusobacterium*.

Prevention is the best plan of action and begins with good hygiene. Preventing cattle from standing in wet manure-infested areas will help deter foot rot. Cows that have foot rot should always be isolated until healed.

In the past, the use of ethylenediamine dihydriodide (EDDI) was used to prevent foot rot. However, under the U.S. Food and Drug


Compliance Policy Guide, the use of this product is restricted.

If cattle are deficient in zinc, the addition of a mineral mix with zinc may aid in prevention of foot rot. Footbaths work well in confinement operations but are not practical in range conditions. There is a foot rot vaccine available with a label claim to aid in preventing the disease.

The most important thing producers should do is to pay close attention to their cows during these wet conditions.

At the first sign of lameness, cattle should be examined for any signs of foot rot and treated promptly. Any delay may lead to complications.


A fact sheet ANSI-3355 is available from Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service at Oklahoma State University with more detailed information. ★



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Equine Dentistry



The overall health and well-being of a horse begins with its mouth, according to Edey Lucas, owner of Oklahoma Equine Dentistry.

"If they can't eat, they can't digest food properly. Then they just don't thrive," Lucas said. "Every aspect of a horse's life pretty much revolves around how good his teeth are."

If a horse has bad teeth, it is going to have health issues including weight loss, she added.

"Every single horse, including horses out in the wild to domestic horses, has the same kind of teeth," Lucas said. "They grow and erupt all the time from the time they're born to the time they die."

Like humans, horses lose their baby teeth. Horses shed all of their deciduous teeth, also known as baby teeth or caps, by the time they are five years old. Dental is-

ssues come from the lack of dental care or some kind of trauma to the face or jaw, she explained. This trauma is normally caused by getting kicked in the face by another horse.

"If a horse is missing a tooth, as long as you have its mouth balanced once a year or sometimes twice a year depending on age, typically it's not an issue at all," Lucas said.

Younger horses may need to have their mouths balanced twice a year because their teeth tend to grow faster, she added. Lucas said horses that are missing all of their incisors can still pick grass with their lips.

"They can still eat hay because they typically still have all of their molars," she said. "That's what they chew and grind with."

Lucas once had a case where a horse was missing an upper molar,

and the horse never had her teeth done. Because the tooth was missing, the opposing tooth grew into the empty space, through the soft tissue, into the bone and into the sinus cavity because nothing was there to keep the tooth ground down.

"I had to go in there, have the right kind of equipment and file that tooth back down into place where it needed to be," she explained. "If there's a missing tooth, then the opposing tooth is going to grow into the empty space very quickly."

However, Lucas said the most common equine dental-related issue is sharp points.

"Every horse is going to have sharp points," she explained. "Typically if they are too sharp, when they try to eat or anytime they open and close their mouth, See **DENTISTRY** page 19



BY LACI JONES

editor@okfronline.com

PHOTO DETAILS

A horse owner will be unaware of dental issues without the use of a speculum, an instrument used to hold open the mouth of a horse. (Courtesy of Edey Lucas)

Dentistry

those sharp points just constantly gouge the sides of their cheeks.”

Some horses are more likely to have dental issues than others.

Lucas said miniature horses have worse teeth than others. Their tongues often look like they have been “hammered by a meat cleaver” because their teeth are so sharp, she added. They have some of the worst before and after photos, she added.

“As long as you keep their teeth balanced, then the likelihood of them having these issues goes way, way down,” Lucas said.

“[Miniature horses] don’t typically get their teeth done very often because owners don’t really ride them or do a lot with them,” Lucas said. “Just because you don’t ride them doesn’t mean they don’t have bad teeth.”

Lucas said she has fixed horses’ teeth for no cost because she saw the horses eat or they looked malnourished.

“As soon as I’m done, the horse can actually eat,” she said. “Whereas, before it was kind of struggling to even chew up anything. It makes a difference.”

As an equine dentist, Lucas said most horse owners complain of their horses dropping food. While food dropping can be indicative of a dental issue, she said even horses with perfect teeth drop food.

Some horses eat too fast, some eat too slow and some are “worry eaters,” Lucas explained. Some owners hang feed buckets on a fence while others feed horses on the ground.

“Feed dropping is the least of my concerns when it comes to the teeth,” she added.

A horse owner may not always need a professional to see if there is a dental issue. In fact, an owner can place one hand on the horse’s nose and the other on his lower jaw. Apply a little pressure and try

to glide his bottom jaw back and forth to see if the horse has lateral movement, she said.

“If their bottom jaw doesn’t slide all the way across with ease, if it gets locked up at any point, then there’s a dental issue,” she added.

That is the only way a horse owner can see if there is a dental issue, Lucas said.

“A lot of people don’t get their horse’s teeth done because you can’t see in their mouth,” she said. “Their teeth go way back, all the way to under their eyeball.”

Lucas can go elbow deep into a horse’s mouth, and she said the back of the mouth is always worse than the front. The owner will not really know if any dental issues are present without the use of a speculum.

“Unless you have a speculum or have a dentist or veterinarian come out and actually open up their mouth, the owner really will not know,” she explained. “I can’t even do a proper inspection unless I open their mouth and feel.”

Bad teeth do not only affect a horse’s health, but their behavior as well. Lucas has attended barrel races and seen how bad teeth can negatively affect a horse’s run.

“Typically as an owner, the last thing they’re going to think is having their teeth done,” she explained. “You could probably avoid a lot of these training issues and disciplinary things with your horse if you just get his teeth done.”

When a horse’s mouth is balanced, there is no pressure on his temporomandibular joint disorders (TMJ) and everything works well, she said.

“As long as you’re having your dentist look at your horses every year, then all of this stuff is preventable or fixable,” Lucas explained. “You’re probably saving their lives in a lot of cases.” *



The most common equine dental-related issue is sharp points, which will need to be floated. (Courtesy of Edye Lucas)

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ALWAYS COME PREPARED

PREPARING FIRST AID KITS FOR HORSES

Experienced horse owners already understand their horse is an accident waiting to happen. First-time horse owners will soon understand what I am talking about.

It seems like no matter how hard we try to prevent a horse from getting injured, they always find a way to cut their skin, scratch their cornea or sprain a ligament or tendon in their leg. The old saying, "You can put a horse in a padded room and they would still find a way to hurt themselves" holds true all too often. I am a "glass half full kind of guy," so the silver lining to owning an accident-prone pet, such as a horse, is that you get to be best friends with your local veterinarian (some may feel like they know their vet far too well because of the frequent visits with their horse). You will become very good at wrapping legs, cold hosing wounds and giving medication.

Some of the most common equine emergencies are skin lacerations, colic and eye injuries.

This article addresses what materials and medications you should have in your first aid kit in order to initiate therapy on the farm or stable.

How to administer the medication or apply bandages is beyond the scope of this article. I strongly recommend that you contact your veterinarian prior to administering any medication or placing any wraps or splints on your horse.

The ideal first aid kit is a plastic or rubber box that is waterproof and airtight with a top that can be locked to prevent unauthorized individuals from accessing the medication.

The first aid kit should be portable, so that you can take it with you when you are traveling with your horse.

A list should be taped to the



underside of the lid that lists all the materials and medication in the first aid kit.

This list should serve two purposes. First, it is a quick reference to remind you of what medication and materials you have in the kit during times of stress and panic. Second, it is a way to keep the first aid kit properly stocked.

When a medication or bandage material is used from the kit, you can make a check by that item on your list to help remind you to restock that product the next time you are at the feed store or veterinarian's office.

You should also tape the phone numbers of your local veterinarian, local hospital and fire department to the underside of the first aid kit lid.

The essentials for a first aid kit:

Banamine: paste or inject-

able (NEVER give banamine in the muscle; this can cause a life-threatening illness)

Bute: paste or injectable

Acepromazine

Syringes: Five to six- 3 ml, 6 ml, 12 ml and 30 ml (remember not to give any injectable medication without first consulting a veterinarian)

Needles

Bandage material

- Cotton for leg bandages
- Vetwrap
- Wound ointment: I prefer SSD or Silvadine. Never use nitrofurazone on wounds; it is toxic to the skin cells
- Telfas or some other type of wound dressing
- Brown gauze
- Soft cling: this is usually used to hold the wound dressing on the wound

See **FIRST AID** page 23



**BY LAUREN LAMB,
DVM, MS**

PHOTO DETAILS

Horse rolling due to colic.
(Photo by Lauren Lamb)



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right where it belongs!'

FIRST AID

• Gauze squares: at least 3x3-inch squares

Bandage Scissors: used to remove bandages

Suture Scissors: used to remove sutures

Forceps or tweezers for removing splinters, ticks or other small items from your horse

Stethoscope: you can purchase one from a pharmacy for less than \$30

Rectal thermometer

Antiseptics: Betadine (povidone-iodine) or Nolvasan (chlorhexidine)

Alcohol: used for cleaning wounds along with the antiseptics listed above

Epsom salts (magnesium sulfate): used with warm water and betadine to soak foot abscesses

Poultice material such as surgardine or Magnapaste

Diapers (size 2-3): used for foot bandages when wrapping a foot or to apply pressure to a bleeding wound

Duct tape: for foot bandages, applying leg splints and any other thing duct tape can be used for

Hoof knife and hoof pick

Hoof nippers and farrier rasp to remove a shoe if needed

Iodine shampoo: this can be used for various skin conditions

Flashlight

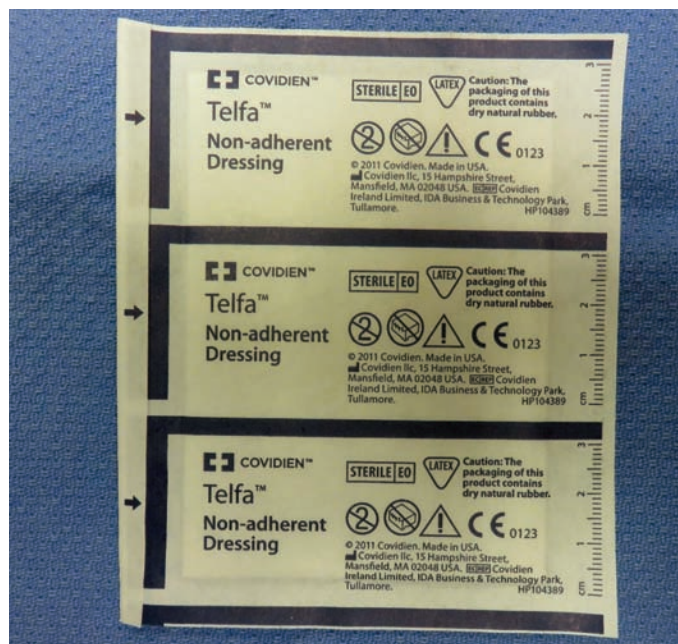
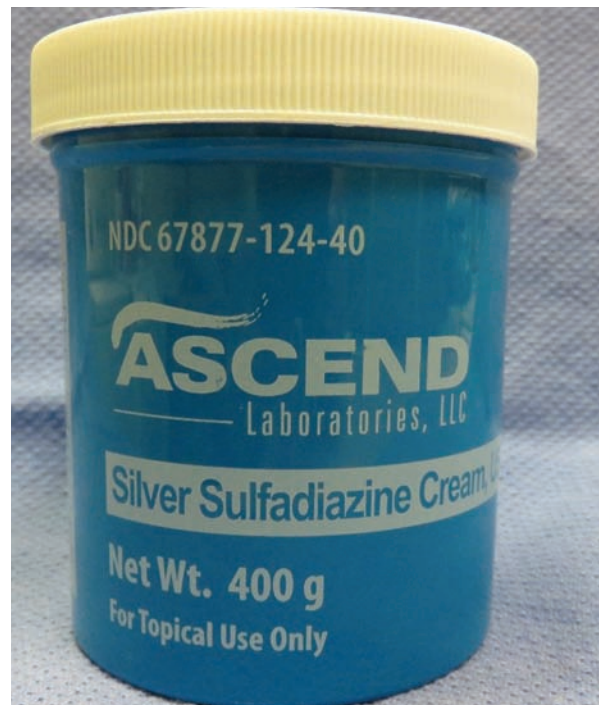
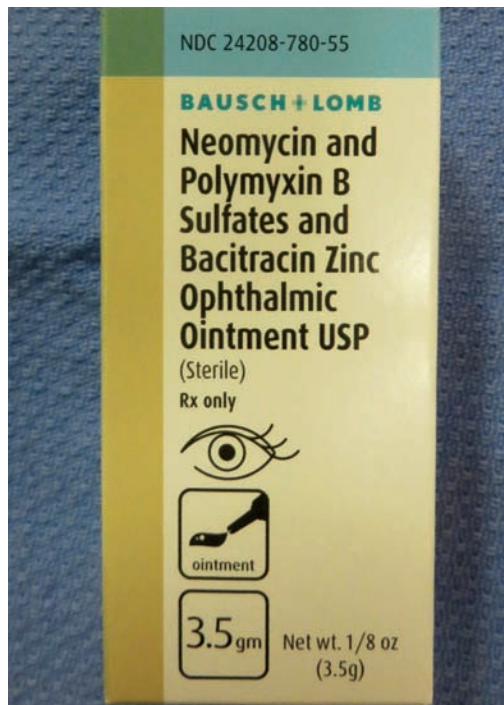
Latex gloves: used for cleaning wound. Never touch a wound with your bare hands.

Bottle of sterile saline: used for cleaning wounds and flushing eyes

Ophthalmic triple antibiotic ointment: used to treat infection in the eye. Be sure you do not purchase triple antibiotic ointment with dexamethasone in it.

Ophthalmic atropine ointment: dilates the horse's pupil and decreases the amount of pain in the eye following a scratch to the cornea.

This is not an all-inclusive list,



(Clockwise) Triple antibiotic ophthalmic ointment is used to treat corneal ulcers. Silver Sulfadiazine Cream (SSD) is my preferred wound ointment. Telfa pads are the best bandaging material to place on the wound, under the layers of cotton. Banamine paste is usually used to treat colic, but can be used for anything that requires an anti-inflammatory medication. (Photos by Lauren Lamb)

but it does contain most of the essentials that will be helpful when faced with a medical emergency with your horse.

You can make a first aid kit yourself by buying supplies from

your veterinarian and/or feed store, or you can buy a pre-packaged first aid kit for horses online.

I cannot emphasize how important it is to consult with your local veterinarian prior to administering

any medication.

Your veterinarian will recommend which medications from your first aid kit to administer, and how much of each medication your horse should receive. *

LACEY'S PANTRY

By Lacey Newlin



Strawberry Pretzel Salad



Strawberry Pretzel Salad

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Servings: 15-20

Crust:

2 cups crushed pretzels

1/4 cup sugar

3/4 cup melted butter

Top:

8-ounces cream cheese, softened

1 cup sugar

1 1/2 cups whipped topping, thawed

2 cups pineapple juice

6-ounces strawberry jello

20 ounces frozen strawberries and juice (In the freezer section)

Directions:

Mix pretzels, melted butter and 1/4 cup of sugar. Press into 13x 9-inch pan and bake for 10 minutes at 350 degrees Fahrenheit. In a separate bowl, blend cream cheese and one cup sugar. Fold whipped topping into mixture and spread over crumb mixture and set aside. In saucepan, heat pineapple juice to boiling, add jello and stir till dissolved. Pour into a large bowl, mix in strawberries and refrigerate until partially congealed. Spread over cream cheese mixture and refrigerate until set. *





First Impressions by Sara Honegger

Fun Necklines

Woven: Oneil
\$50 Tank: BKE



Nike dress: Buckle



Pink Bralette: Victoria's Secret



Maroon Bralette: Free People



Green Bralette: Free People

Unique, funky necklines will be the trend to watch for heading into the summer. I went into my favorite local boutique and played with the different ways to make necklines the statement of your look. I currently love a high neckline with a chunky statement necklace, or a long dainty style necklace with the flare of your outfit coming from bracelets and rings. To add some extra drama to a shirt or dress, I love the options that bralettes can give. They're comfortable, help avoid unwanted lines and add additional personality to an outfit that may be plain without them. Another option is finding a strappy cami or tank top and layering it under a V-neck T-shirt or a woven. The pop that these lines and additional colors can give an outfit adds a great element that is hard to beat!

Charcoal
"Tanga Tank":
RVCA

Look Out here comes the next generation **PART 2**

Get up before dawn, gather a pasture of cattle to ship, go to school, come home, check some wheat pasture calves, go to the practice pen and, if it's not a school night, get in some hog hunting—a scenario not unfamiliar to the Casebolt kids.

Raesh, age 13; Foreman, age 10; and Crosby, age 6 are busy but find time to rodeo on the weekends and make straight A's in school.

The children of Heather and Todd Casebolt, they live on a ranch east of Ryan, Okla., and are being brought up in the true cowboy tradition. "Yes, ma'am," "no, sir," "thank you" and a handshake come naturally to them.

Tradition runs deep in this family. Raesh carries on the name of three generations of Barretts—Rash I, Rash II and Rash III, his grandfather. Spelled a bit differently to avoid confusion, the name is a part of the history of the town of Ryan, where Rash I put together 5,400 acres of ranchland, Rash II added to it and Rash III continues as head of the Barrett Ranch, well known in Jefferson County. That is where Heather grew up. She never rodeoed but was a true working cowgirl.

Foreman is named for Foreman Faulkner, his dad's uncle, who was from the Osage country of northern Oklahoma and won the steer roping in Cheyenne in 1937.

Originally from Pawhuska, Okla., Todd began his career in junior rodeos, continued into high school rodeo, and qualified for the National High School Finals in Rapid City, S.D., where he won the title of calf roping champion. After a stint at college, he became

pickup man for Bad Company rodeo before joining the PRCA and being named Rookie of the Year in steer roping in 1991.

Todd qualified for the National Finals in steer roping in 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998 and 2000 and worked on some ranches and Halliburton before getting into ranching for himself and raising his children in a ranching tradition.

A sixth grader at Ryan Elementary School, Raesh plays basketball and football, but his true love is being horseback.

A member of Mid-South Rodeo Cowboys Association (MRCA), he participates in breakaway, ribbon roping, tie-down, heading and heeling, and goat tying, but he prefers the roping events.

He was Champion Breakaway roper in MRCA in 2013 and 2015, had the fastest time in the Rising Stars breakaway roping, and was second in the average at the Future Stars.

This year, he is a member of the Oklahoma Junior High School Rodeo Association (OKJHSRA) where he enters breakaway and ribbon roping. He also participates in United States Team Roping Championship and Ultimate Calf Roping events.

Raesh describes his biggest thrill, "I won all three go-rounds and the average in the MRCA breakaway roping in 2013 and won my first saddle."

He now has won two saddles, 10 beautiful buckles, saddle pads, bits, spurs, a trophy chest and a trailer load of other prizes.

His two main horses are Harry, an eight-year-old sorrel and Diesel, his four-year-old calf horse, but occasionally he borrows his



brother's horse, Roan Dog. Raesh roped a lot in the pasture and arena before he started rodeoing at age nine. His favorite thing is "dragging calves to the fire," an age-old ranching tradition.

"I would like to go to college, maybe somewhere where they have a rodeo team and someday be able to buy my own ranch," he said.

Foreman, a third grader at Ryan Elementary, is also a member of MRCA where he competes in breakaway, heading and heeling, ribbon roping and goats. He won his first buckle at a Rising Stars competition in Shawnee, Okla. **See GENERATION page 27**



BY JUDY WADE

PHOTO DETAILS

The Casebolt family working cattle. Crosby (left) Heather, Foreman, Raesh and Todd. (Photo by Eye Photography)

Generation

He likes breakaway best because, “You can be so fast!”

He rides Roan Dog for rodeo events and seven-year-old Smarty for ranch work. He would like to go to college and then train horses for a living. The boys told funny stories about when they were too young to ride all alone and Dad led them on a buckskin Shetland pony named Daisy.

Foreman laughed as he told one story, “One time Raesh fell asleep and fell off the horse.”

Another time, “Dad had to go rope a steer so he tied my pony to a tree,” Raesh recalled. “Daisy started circling the tree and a low branch knocked me off. I got my first black eye.”

Foreman was being led by Dad while they were gathering some cows. “A neighbor had put a hog trap in the pasture, and we didn’t know that a big old wild hog had wallowed down beside it. We scared the hog, and he banged into the trap, scaring horses and cattle. Daisy threw me, and I got up with straw in my teeth and a dirt moustache,” Foreman giggled.

Both boys love to hunt wild pigs with their dad. They catch them with dogs, tie them up and sell them. The money goes for ropes and entry fees.

Little sister Crosby, is a Kindergarten at Ryan Elementary. Heather explained, her middle name, Rose, is “for my dad’s sister Rosemary, who, of course, grew up in the family home where my mom and dad still live.” When she was born, friends, Ronnye Benton and David Underwood nicknamed her “Cactus Rose” because “She would have to be tougher than a cactus to keep up with the boys.”

And tough she is! The pint-sized, auburn-haired girl is never still and loves to talk. She goes where the boys go. This is her first year to compete in MRCA in barrels, poles and goats. She likes poles best, “Because I can go fast,”

she added.

She has been placing and is sitting in fourth place overall in poles. She likes school and related, “My teacher is always there for me.” Crosby also takes dance lessons.

She loves Bandit, her 14-year-old horse.

“He is a super-fast good horse. I like to go hog hunting on him, too,” she explained.

Her idol and best friend is Chazli Massey, fellow barrel racer. Chazli is the daughter of Ty and Janae Ward Massey, 2003 WPRA World Champion barrel racer, granddaughter of James and Renee Ward, NFR qualifier and great-granddaughter of Dale and Florence, well-known barrel racers and trainers.

All three give a great deal of credit for their success to their mom and dad.

“My dad and Gage Williams are my heroes,” Raesh said. “They help me with my roping and keep me in horses, but Mom has also found some horses for me.”

Foreman agreed.

“I want to be like dad when I grow up,” Foreman added. “He helps me a lot and helps me be a better rider.”

“Ride your horse, kick, ride right” is advice the three hear often.

Mom also plays a big part in their success.

“She takes care of our entries, videos us and keeps up with our points,” Crosby said.

She also added Foreman to her list revealing, “He gave me his horse.”

The kids were gathering cattle one morning before school and were a couple of hands short. When time to go to school came, Grandad Rash, known as “Baba,” asked if the kids could stay and help.

“You’ll have to ask Mom,” Raesh replied.



Crosby turns a barrel at an MRCA event. (Photo by Digital Photos)



Foreman makes a quick catch. (Photo by Digital Photos)



Raesh sticks it on another one. (Photo by Digital Photos)

Baba got his phone and walked off a ways. He came back and said, “Your mom said she didn’t care.” He did call Heather, but talked about something else.

“The first I knew about it was when the school called and asked

where the kids were,” she said.

When asked who got in trouble, they all replied, “Baba!”

Expect to hear more about this trio in the future as they carry on their rodeo careers and the rich traditions from their past. ★

BAPTIZED BY COU

Roger Springs

COUNTRY MUSIC

ever



BAPTIZED BY COUNTRY MUSIC

Roger Springer

Sitting on a stool with a guitar, singer/songwriter, Roger Springer hums a melody at the Pickin' Parlor in Tishomingo, Okla. People who play music are born with a certain amount of natural talents, but they have to work to hone in these talents. That is exactly what Springer did.

The Caddo, Okla., native grew up around both country music and the country lifestyle. Springer's dad had about 100 head of cows, and many of Springer's family members played musical instruments.

"I grew up around music and always loved it," he said. "When I was about 14, I wrote my first song. I always knew that's what I wanted to do."

When Springer was a kid, people liked either rock n' roll or country music. However, rock n' roll never appealed to Springer.

"When I heard Merle Haggard for the first time, it was like a baptism in country music for me," he said. "I loved country music because it talked to the common people, which I was and still am today."

Springer was married by age 19, and had his first son when he was 20. He worked on the kill floor and then the rendering plant at J.C. Potter Sausage Company in Durant, Okla.

While working at the sausage company, Springer found relief in country music. Country music gave hope to those going through a rough time because the songs are relatable, he added. After working at J.C. Potter for seven years, his dream of going to Nashville, Tenn., finally came to light.

"When the Randy Travis record came out, I knew I had to go and be a part of that," Springer said. "It was great country music."

Springer developed a plan to make it to the music city. At the time, he was not making enough money at J.C. Potter to make the trip, but he started playing in a band on the weekends. Springer quit working for the sausage company, and he started doing a one-man show six nights a week to avoid splitting the money.

"When I would have extra money, I would give my dad enough money to go buy a heifer," Springer explained.

Over the course of the year, Springer purchased 18 crossbred brahman heifers weighing about 800 pounds and a young limousine bull.

"The cattle were my savings account," Springer said. "I got to Nashville. I didn't want to move down there and get a job because I wanted to concentrate on music."

Springer moved to the music city in August 1989. One day, Springer walked into the doors of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), and he said he got lucky.

"I don't know how I got a meeting," Springer explained, "but I just went in, told them my name, and told them I moved there and wanted to talk to somebody about getting into the music business."

The woman working at the front desk escorted Springer along with some cassette tapes back to the office of John Briggs, former vice president of ASCAP.

"They were terrible," Springer said with a laugh, "but I didn't know they were bad. I don't know how he heard any potential out of that."

Briggs listened to the tapes and wanted to team Springer up with some songwriters to "learn the craft of songwriting." At the time, Springer did not know what that meant, but he was in.

"I went to this No. 1 party," Springer explained. "I had never seen anything like that before. I think that made me hungrier."

"I think that made me want it more because all the press was there... It was just that scene and not even knowing things like that existed in the world."

Some of the challenges Springer faced did not feel like challenges. He was just thankful to be there and thrilled that the doors to his career in the music industry had finally opened.

"Every day I woke up, and I would tell myself, 'Today, I'm going to write a better song than I did yesterday,'" Springer said. "I knew the songs had to grow and get better, so the challenge was on myself to just be better every day—to grow."

During the early days of his career, Springer learned the "do's and don't's" of negotiating and staying in the music industry.

"I think the difference between my story and other people who have moved there is just work—the dedication," Springer explained. "If you don't apply yourself, it's probably not going to work out."

Springer had his first record deal in 1992.

Tony Brown signed Springer to MCA, and Alan Reynolds produced the solo record. They shot the video for *The Right One Left* that same year in Houston, Texas.

"The record deal did not work out," Springer explained. "In hindsight, I know there is never a rhyme or reason why something works or does not work on country radio. It was just kind of like throwing darts at a board. Some stuck and some didn't."

After the first record deal, Springer turned his focus into becoming a better songwriter. He said it was the turning point in his writing career.

After settling into his writing career for a year, Springer wrote for Warner Chapel—a Warner Brothers company.

Then, he signed a contract with EMI Music, the world's largest publisher at the time. In Nashville, there were about 96 songwriters under that group.

"I started from the bottom rung of that company," Springer said. "This is a non-forgiving world. Everything has to do with where you are at on repaying your goal, on the company recouping their money."

Springer toured with country singer Vern Gosdin. He described his first experience as a songwriter as "a training tool" to his career. The experience taught the young man how to act on the road with a star. Then in 1994 Springer joined country music artist, Mark Chesnutt, who was at the prime of his career, on tour. Chesnutt has recorded 29 of Springer's songs. During those six years on tour, their biggest hit was *It's a Little too Late*.

Soon after, Doug Johnson, president of Giant Records owned by Warner Brothers approached Springer about cutting another record.

"I just didn't think about recording another record," he explained. "That wasn't a thought in my mind to go cut another record. I was the songwriter. I found my space in life and that was where my focus was at. It was where my heart was at."

After a few weeks of Springer declining Johnson's offer, Springer gave in. Joe Manuel, Shara Johnson and Springer formed the Roger Springer Band. The group cut a record, and even Merle Haggard came in to sing a song.

"It was a song I wrote," Springer said. "It **See BAPTIZED page 32**



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Baptized

Continued from page 30

was one of the highlights of my life, and I'm glad I did it."

Roger Springer Band released a single, and Springer found himself not wanting the record to work.

"I went into Doug's office for a meeting," Springer said. "I asked him, 'Are you going to drop anybody off the label?' He laughed because it was an odd question to be asking the president of the record label."

Springer said he was committed to the record deal. He did not want to hurt their friendship, but he wanted Johnson to drop him off the label. Johnson questioned the nature of his request.

"I said, 'Well, I've been on the road for a long time, and I've got teenage boys... They need their daddy a lot more than the world needs another singer,'" Springer said.

Springer said this was a first for Johnson.

"He said, 'I respect that, and you are fired,'" Springer said with a laugh.

The two parted ways, and Springer moved his family out of the city in 1999 and got his boys back to "farm living." He said it was the best decision he ever made.

Even though Springer left the music city, he said he never really left the music business. After his sons were grown, Springer went back to songwriting. He described songwriting as "punching the clock" at a job.

"You sit down and grab your guitar," Springer explained. "You start looking for those moments of inspiration."

How songwriters find inspiration is different from one artist to another, but Springer said he is inspired by many different things. When Springer first started writing songs, fellow songwriter Dean Dillon gave Springer the

advice of writing about what he knew. At the time, Springer did not fully grasp the concept, but now he does.

"You can't make people believe," he explained. "The way I feel about it is I want to touch somebody with a lyric, and I want them to feel it in their soul."

When Springer co-wrote the No. 1 song *Thank God for Believers* for Mark Chesnutt, there was a bit of truth in the song for him. About a year after the song was released, Chesnutt and Springer were backstage at a concert when he noticed a woman watching him with a man by her side. When they made it to the front of the line, she introduced him as her husband.

"She told me his name and said, 'He had a terrible drinking problem, and we tried everything,'" he said. "She said, 'The day he heard Thank God for Believers, he never drank again.'"

The woman had tears in her eyes and thanked Springer for the song. That moment had a lasting impact on Springer. He realized he needed to be responsible with his lyric, and Springer does not write about something that is not true.

"You think about how magical it is when you hear a song and it puts chills on your arm," he explained. "For you to be able to do that with a melody and a lyric, it's pretty magical to me."

Collaboration with each writer is a different experience. Each time a songwriter sits down with someone new, their souls interpret things differently, he added. People who have the gift of writing and have something to say never run out of songs.

"If you are a seasoned writer, we know we have to hone in what's great and what's mediocre," Springer explained. "A lot of times today, I rather write fewer songs and search for those great

songs."

When Springer was young, he wrote everything. He said he would have a group of 30 songs that were not good.

After writing for 26 years, he just wanted to focus on writing good music.

Aside from songwriting, Springer has teamed up with long-time friend, Allen Stonecipher, to open up a publishing company called Blue Springs Music and recently opened a music venue in Tishomingo, Okla.

"It's funny how life works because there was a time when Allen and I, our lives went into different directions," Springer explained. "I was in the heat of the music business, and Allen had a huge ice business. Then 25 years later, here we are back together."

The two opened The Pickin' Parlor in January with the intention of it being a different atmosphere than other venues. Stonecipher said his wife, Karen is the "force" behind the music venue.

The Pickin' Parlor gives artists a chance to be heard, Springer said. Most musicians are used to an environment where alcohol is served and nobody is paying attention, he added.

"It's a listening room," Stonecipher added. "You come here, and the attraction is the music... There's not a big stage, no flashing lights and shooting stuff up in the air. It's just about the music."

Instead of artists driving 700 miles to Nashville, they can come to The Pickin' Parlor and meet somebody that's in the music industry, Springer said. It is a legitimate opportunity that has no price tag, he added.

"I knew there was some good talent within Oklahoma because a great talent comes from Oklahoma, North Texas or Texas," Springer said, "but I mean we've

been kind of overwhelmed by how great the talent really is."

Springer said songwriters come into The Pickin' Parlor who remind him of himself.

"All of the songwriters remind me of me," he said, "even the ones who are starting because I see myself in every one of them."

Springer said he even wrote songs with both of his sons—Roger "Kent" Springer II and Keith Springer. They grew up in the music industry. While Springer was in the recording studio, his sons would shoot pool in the studio.

"When my kids were 12 and 13 years old, and this kind of saddens me a little bit, but most of the pictures I have with them is me at a table with a guitar and a bunch of notebooks," Springer said.

When asked what he wished he would have known back then, Springer paused. Springer met many people in the music city who were about to get a record deal or record a record, but he was not able to write with all of them.

"One of those people who came through my life that I did not take time to write with was Brad Paisley," Springer said. "Brad tried to get me to write with him many times, but I was so busy and focused on other people that I was working with."

Springer wished he had a crystal ball to tell him who would be the next big thing. He also wished he was more educated about the music business in the early years.

"When I moved to Nashville, things happened so fast for me," Springer explained. "I thought that was a big blessing, but the real blessing would have been me being around the music business long enough to learn a few things before I had to start making decisions." ★



PHOTO DETAILS

(Top to Bottom) Springer (right) on a songwriting getaway at an elk camp in Colorado with Dean Dillon, who has written more than 50 George Strait songs. Clefey "Slugger" Morrissett (left), John Mabe, Roger Springer, Mark Chesnutt and Tony Brown at the No. 1 party for "It's a Little Too Late" in 1996. The Roger Springer Band was formed by Joe Manuel (left), Shara Johnson and Roger Springer. Springer (left) with son, Kent at the "Thank God for Believers" No. 1 party. (Courtesy of Roger Springer) Springer and long-time friend, Allen Stonecipher opened The Pickin' Parlor in January, a music venue located in Tishomingo, Okla. (Photo by Laci Jones)

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A WESTERNER: THE ANNUAL CHUCK WAGON FESTIVAL



Have you ever imagined what it would be like to live in the Wild West? To ride across the frontier in a covered wagon? To eat meals out of Dutch ovens over the campfire? If so, make plans to attend the Annual Chuck Wagon Festival at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City on Memorial Day Weekend.

The festival, currently in its 26th year, was created to bring the days of the cowboys back to life.

“We wanted to create an event that harkened back to the old west and how they would have prepared for working cowboys on the trail,” said Gretchen Jeane, education director at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum. “[The event] ties in with our mission perfectly: wanting to preserve the history of the west. It provides a glimpse into the day and the life of a westerner.”

Jeane said the festival provides a family-friendly environment

with tons of activities for kids to participate in.

There are traditional food samples, historical western reenactment actors (including Annie Oakley, herself) and many hands-on opportunities for kids.

Activities, which run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, include family photo opportunities with Straka’s longhorns, candle dipping demonstrations, face painting, faux milking and butter making, rope making, bandana decorating, leather stamping, selfie stations with western themed props and much more. In addition, a line-up of musical talent from the Oklahoma Rodeo Opry, including Matt Tedder from The Voice, will be performing all weekend long on the museum’s garden patio, weather permitting.

“We’ll have three chuck wagons serving food that would have been typical on a cattle drive,” said Jeane. “Cobblers, stews, beans, biscuits, that sort of thing.”

The festival will be relocated this year from the east part of the 30-acre property to the plaza and gardens, which are right outside the museum entrance. The new location is stroller and wheel chair friendly and also offers easy access to tour the museum.

Guests can participate in festival activities or listen to music on the patio and come inside to tour the galleries when they get too warm in the Oklahoma heat. Admission to the galleries is included with the festival tickets, which are \$15 for adults and free for museum members and children under 12.

“I like the fact that it encourages museum guests and people who may have never been here before to experience both the gardens and our galleries,” said Emily Tate, public relations and marketing manager at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum. “The entire facility sits on **See CHUCK WAGON page 35**



**BY AMANDA
MARTIN**

PHOTO DETAILS

The Annual Chuck Wagon Festival serves food that would have been typical on a cattle drive. (Courtesy of the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum)

CHUCK WAGON

30 acres and we have some amazing, larger-than-life statues that you might not otherwise be able to experience without walking in the gardens.”

The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, which was founded in 1955, is America’s premier institution of western history, art and culture. It proudly displays an internationally renowned collection of Western art and artifacts and sponsors educational programs to help tell the story of America’s Wild West. According to Tate, in just half a century the museum has grown from a Hall of Fame honoring the American cowboy to a world-class institution.

The Annual Chuck Wagon Festival, which is sponsored by the Dogwood Foundation, is one of many educational events put

on by the museum and is a very popular one, at that.

“It’s a great deal for the whole family to come to,” Jeane said. “Families, extended families, grandparents and grand babies, the whole shebang! We’ve got so much for the kids to do to keep them entertained: great music, great activities. What more could you look for?”

The uniqueness of the event keeps people coming back year after year.

“It is a memory you could make with your family and it could become an annual tradition,” Tate said. “It already is for about 4,000 people!”

If you want to be a cowboy for a day, pencil in the Annual Chuck Wagon Festival this Memorial Day Weekend and take a trip to the Wild, Wild West. ★



Western Reenactment Actors will make appearances impersonating famous cowboys and cowgirls such as Annie Oakley and Frank Butler. (Courtesy of the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum)

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CINCO DE MAYO FESTIVAL

Each May, families from across western Oklahoma gather at the Cinco de Mayo Festival in Clinton, Okla., to celebrate their ethnic heritage and enjoy authentic Mexican food and play games.

The festival, sponsored by the Western Plains Library System (WPLS), takes place in McClain Rogers Park.

“The festival began 10 years ago in the street in front of the library,” said Kathy Atchley, WPLS small branch coordinator and branch manager for Clinton Public Library. “The event has grown to 2,000 to 3,500 people each year, and we take up the entire park.”

The Cinco de Mayo Festival is an event that honors the culture of Hispanic families in western Oklahoma through a variety of family-friendly events. Children come to the Cinco de Mayo festival for the games.

Gathering around a piñata, the children are blindfolded by sponsors who oversee the event. Once the blindfolds are in place, the children start swinging at the piñata. When the piñata bursts, children scamper to gather handfuls of their favorite candies.

“This is a great family-friendly event,” said Jackie Kropp, WPLS programs and outreach coordinator. “Families can sit in the park and enjoy a beautiful day.”

The Little Mister and Miss Cinco de Mayo contest is an opportunity for kids ages birth to 10 years old to receive recognition for wearing traditional dress from various areas of Mexico. Contestants are divided into two age groups: birth to four and five to 10.

One boy and one girl winner are crowned in each age group, with the boy receiving a trophy and the girl receiving a tiara. All



participants receive prizes such as medals for the boys and flowers for the girls.

A favorite activity among both children and adults is the lotería. Lotería is Spanish for lottery, and the game, which is similar to bingo, is a game of chance. Instead of numbers on ping pong balls, lotería is played with a deck of cards that contains images with the Spanish name of each image printed on the card.

If the caller does not speak Spanish, he will call the name of the item by looking at the picture. Local merchants donate prizes for which participants compete, and festival goers typically play 30 to 40 games.

The jalapeño eating contest draws those with strong stomachs and a heightened sense of

adventure. Ten to 15 people enter the contest each year, and each participant must sign a waiver. The jalapeños are pickled, not raw, and a glass of milk is provided to quench the fire. The first year the contest was offered, the winner ate 36 jalapeños in five minutes. Since then, the time limit of the contest has been reduced.

Currently the time limit sets at one minute, and last year's winner finished off 16 jalapeños. The winner receives a cash prize donated by a local merchant and a basket filled with stomach remedies.

Local food vendors set up around the park to offer authentic, homemade Mexican food. Participants especially enjoy tacos al pastor, which are made by slowly grilling pork that is tenderized by

See FESTIVAL, page 37



BY STACI MAUNEY

prestigeprose@gmail.com

PHOTO DETAILS

The Little Mister and Miss Cinco de Mayo contest is an opportunity for kids to receive recognition for wearing traditional dress from various areas of Mexico. (Courtesy of the Western Plains Library System)

FESTIVAL

marinating in pineapple. Other favorites include Mexican corn and horchata, a milky drink made from rice with vanilla and cinnamon.

“The food is phenomenal,” Atchley said. “Food is authentic and homemade and provided by local vendors.”

Entertainment is provided by local bands or dance groups. In the past, mariachi bands have performed as well as folkloric dancers.

Entertainment options change each year as the WPLS staff works to bring fresh voices to the festival.

In addition to partners such as St. Mary’s Catholic Church and Bar-S Foods, local vendors and merchants help make this an enjoyable event year after year. WPLS sets up the Bookmobile so that participants have a chance

to explore the mobile unit during the event.

To promote the event, WPLS uses radio and newspaper ads, billboards, social media and vinyl signs posted around Clinton. The Coyote, 95.5 FM, sets up a live radio remote at the event.

“People find out about Cinco de Mayo mostly through the radio and the banners around town,” said Micaela Marquez, WPLS marketing representative.

The event is always the first Saturday of May and runs from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., with quiet hour from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. to respect those attending mass across the street at St. Mary’s Catholic Church.

For more information about the event, visit Western Plains Library System at www.wplib.com or find them on Facebook. ★



The Cinco de Mayo Festival hosts a variety of family-friendly events to pay tribute to the Hispanic culture. (Courtesy of the Western Plains Library System)

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EVENT LINEUP MAY 2016

MAY 02 **PIONEER DAYS CELEBRATION & PRCA RODEO**, Henry C. Hitch Pioneer Arena, Guymon, OK 73942. The Pioneer Days Celebration & PRCA Rodeo in Guymon is one of the signature events held in the Oklahoma panhandle each year. Make your way to Guymon, known as the saddle bronc capital of the world, during the first weekend in May to see where cowboys become legends. Join visitors from the surrounding five-state region to celebrate the pioneer spirit with a barbecue, festival events and one of Oklahoma's largest outdoor PRCA rodeos. Visit www.guymonrodeo.com for more information.

MAY 05 **OWASSO TRAIL DAYS**, 76th St & 169th & Mid High. Owasso, OK 74055. Owasso Trails Days is an annual event celebrating Owasso's heritage and history from May 5-8. The four-day carnival features a parade, an expo with more than 80 vendors, a skateboard competition and more. The Gathering on Main on Thursday includes entertainment and lots of food and vendors. Head to Owasso to learn about the town's early days through fun and entertaining events and activities. For more information, visit www.owassotraildays.com.

MAY 05 **TWISTER ALLEY FILM FESTIVAL**, Woodward Arts & Theatre, Woodward, OK 73801. A festival for filmmakers by filmmakers, the Twister Alley Film Festival is held at on May 5-8. There will be films from directors all around the globe as well as shorts, feature length movies, horror shorts and classic dramas. Don't miss a minute of the action and get a pass that gives you admission to all screenings. The weekend also includes panels touching subjects including women in film, producing, directing, acting and more.

MAY 06 **ROCK-N-RUMBLE CAR SHOW & CRUISE**, Downtown Square, Altus, OK 73521. The Rock-N-Rumble Car Show & Cruise in Altus on May 6-7 begins Friday evening with an open cruise, car poker run and free outdoor music on the courthouse square. Spread out a blanket on the square, or take a stroll to find out what tasty dishes nearby vendors have for sale. Saturday activities include a car show, burnout contest, stereo sound-off competition, entertainment and tailgate parties.

MAY 06 **RODEO MIAMI**, Miami, OK 74354. Travel to Miami for a two-day rodeo event filled with exciting acts, vendors and concessions at the Miami Fairgrounds. Feel the suspense in the arena, and cheer for your favorite championship rodeo participants as they compete in traditional rodeo events such as bronc riding, calf roping, steer wrestling, barrel racing and bull riding. Visit www.visitmiamiok.com for more information.

MAY 06 **CHISOLM TRAIL STAMPEDE PRCA RODEO**, Stephens County Fair & Expo Center, Duncan, OK 73533. Bring the family out to the Chisholm Trail Stampede PRCA Rodeo in Duncan on May 6-7. This event will feature bull riding, team roping, bareback riding, steer wrestling, saddle bronc riding, tie-down roping and ladies' barrel racing. Specialty events at the rodeo include the nickel throw and calf scramble. Other activities at the Chisholm Trail Stampede PRCA Rodeo include the Little Miss & Mister crowning, cowboy church, a mechanical bull and Western exhibits. Chuck wagons and concessions will also be available. Visit www.duncanok.org for more information.

MAY 06 **OKLAHOMA STEAM THRESHING & GAS ENGINE SHOW**, Steam Engine Park. Pawnee, OK 74058. Come step back in time at the 50th Annual Oklahoma Steam Threshing and Gas Engine Association Show on May 6-8. This year, they'll be featuring products made in or in production in 1966. As always, there will be from 15 to 20 steam traction engines (steam tractors) operating various era correct machines. Another popular display is our steam powered saw mill that operates almost nonstop during show hours. Visit www.oklahomathreshers.org for more information.



**MAY
06**

OLD CHICKEN FARM VINTAGE BARN SALE, Jones, OK 73049. Oklahoma's most talented pickers and painters will gather to sell their wares at the Old Chicken Farm Vintage

Barn Sale on May 6-7. Vintage furniture, decor, handmade treasures, repurposed possessions and other incredible items will all be up for grabs. More than 500 booths will spread out 20 acres of treasures. Visit the Old Chicken Farm Vintage Barn Sale in Jones to take home an amazing piece of history.

**MAY
07**

PRAGUE KOLACHE FESTIVAL, Prague, OK 74864. Every first Saturday in May, the citizens of Prague, Oklahoma, welcome people from around the world to join them

in celebrating the rich Czech culture that played a vital role in the city's founding. The Kolache Festival offers dance, song, food, crafts, a parade, carnival rides and royalty. The festival symbolizes the warmth and fellowship of the Bohemian people.

**MAY
07**

LIVING HISTORY ON THE CHISHOLM TRAIL, Chisholm Trail Museum. Kingfisher, OK 73750. Catch a glimpse of the past at Living History on the Chisholm Trail in Kingfisher.

This event, held at the Chisholm Trail Museum, features encampments depicting life on the Oklahoma frontier in the 1800s with lawmen and gunfighters, trick roping and shooting, American Indian history, cowboy stories and more. Visit www.ctok-museum.org for more information.

**MAY
12**

CANTON LAKE WALLEYE RODEO, Canton, OK 73724. Enjoy the annual Canton Lake Walleye Rodeo, Oklahoma's oldest and largest fishing tournament on May 12-15. Prizes

will be awarded for the five largest walleye, total poundage of walleye for all four days and the largest fish caught in each of 10 different species. Other fish species in the competition include striped bass, drum, buffalo, carp, sunfish, flathead, white bass, channel cat, crappie, black bass and hybrid. There are specially tagged fish worth \$20 to \$500 if caught. For more information, visit www.walleyerodeo.com.



STILLWATER STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

**MAY
12**

CHICKASHA SPRING AUTO SWAP MEET, Chickasha, OK 73018. The Chickasha Spring Auto Swap Meet is held on 34 acres just east of the Grady

County Fairgrounds on May 12-14. Hundreds of vendors will be on site for three full days, with auto-related items for all makes and models. The Chickasha Spring Auto Swap Meet offers car parts, transportation specialties, signs, classics, antiques, street rods, muscle cars, special interest vehicles and much more. Food vendors will also be on-site at this event. Admission is free, but there is a \$5 parking fee. For more information, visit www.chickashaautoswapmeet.com.

**MAY
13**

GUYMON OUTBACK MOTORCYCLE SHOW & 5-STATE RUN, Texas County Activity Center. Guymon, OK 73942. A biker's paradise, the annual Guymon Outback

Motorcycle Show in Guymon, Okla., on May 13-14 features a motorcycle run, motorcycle show, local fare, vendors and outdoor music on Friday evening. This year's event includes the annual 5-State Motorcycle Run, which is always held the second Saturday in May, taking riders 300 miles through Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Colorado and Kansas in one day. Visit www.fivestaterun.com for more information.

**MAY
13**

ROOSTER DAYS RODEO, Round-Up Club Arena, Broken Arrow, OK 74014. The Rooster Days Rodeo is an annual event coinciding with the Rooster Days Festival in downtown

Broken Arrow on May 13-14. Come out and watch the youngsters compete at Mutton Bustin' and Calf Riding at 7 p.m., followed by bareback bronc, calf roping, steer wrestling, bull riding, team roping, ladies breakaway roping, calf scramble, and both open and junior barrel racing. Watch some of the state's finest ropers and riders compete for money and prizes. Gates open at 6 p.m. For more information, call 918-691-1614.

**MAY
14**

STILLWELL STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL, Downtown Stilwell. Stilwell, OK 74960. Held since 1948, as a way to promote the strawberries grown in the area, the annual Strawberry Festival

in Stilwell has become one of Oklahoma's most-loved hometown festivals. The 69th annual festival will also feature a 5K run, helicopter rides, carnival rides, plenty of food and merchandise vendor booths, Arts and Crafts, and the Strawberry Festival Rodeo, held Friday and Saturday evenings at the rodeo grounds located two miles north of Stilwell on Highway 59 North. For more information, visit www.strawberycapital.com.

**MAY
14**

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

**MAY
14**

MAY DAZE FESTIVAL, Main St. & Broadway, Blanchard, OK 73010. The annual May Daze Festival marks the unofficial start to summer in Blanchard on May 20-21. This event, held downtown on Main Street, features great live entertainment, a carnival, delicious food, shopping, games and much more. At the May Daze Festival, browse through booths filled with crafts, art and antiques. Competitions including a turtle race and the annual Diaper Derby also take place. For more information, visit www.blanchardchamber.com.

**MAY
14**

CRAWDS 'N RODS, NE 75th St. & C St., Elgin, OK 73538. Fire up your taste buds and hot rods at Crawds 'N Rods in Elgin. Bring the whole family out to enjoy the biggest crawfish boil in southwest Oklahoma, as well as a top-notch car show, poker run for both motorcycles and other vehicles, and a huge burn out contest. In addition to the automotive aspect, there is also a fun carnival and free admission. Visitors are also welcome to visit the on-site food vendors offering hamburgers, hotdogs and cold drinks.

**MAY
20**

OLD WEST FEST, Sycamore Springs Ranch. Locust Grove, OK 74352. Bring the family to Locust Grove on May 20-22 and enjoy the Old West Fest! Take a step back in the old Western days, when the west was at its best! Three fun filled days of rodeos, native dancers, chuck wagon, western trade show, music, concerts and more! For more information, visit www.sycamorespring-ranch.net.



CHUCK WAGON GATHERING & CHILDREN'S COWBOY FESTIVAL

**MAY
20**

GRAND LAKE BBQ FESTIVAL, Langley Ball Fields. Langley, OK 74350. Come to the Grand Lake BBQ Festival on May 20-21 for a huge kid's zone, live music and plenty of mouthwatering barbecue. This annual event welcomes everyone to the Grand Lake area to enjoy Oklahoma's best barbecue. For more information, visit www.grandlakebbq.com.

**MAY
21**

2 HIP CHICKS ROADSHOW, Expo Square. Tulsa, OK 74114. The 2 Hip Chicks Roadshow is bringing dozens of vendors and one-of-a-kind items to Tulsa. This traveling vendor show will feature vintage and shabby chic items for your home and yourself. Shop row after row of clothing, home decor, party items and more all at the Exchange Center in Tulsa Expo Square on May 21-22.

**MAY
21**

CLINTON ROUTE 66 FESTIVAL, Downtown Clinton. Clinton, OK 73601. Get your kicks on Route 66 with festivities including a car and bike show, poker run, free concert, vendors, Wiener National dog races and free hot dogs. The festival invites visitors to compete or browse through the Route 66 Car, Truck and Bike Show.

**MAY
27**

WILL ROGERS STAMPEDE PRCA RODEO, Will Rogers Stampede Arena. Claremore, OK 74017. Make your way to Claremore for all the excitement of the annual Will Rogers Stampede PRCA Rodeo on May 27-29. Rodeo events include bull riding, barrel racing, team roping, muttin bustin' for the kids, rodeo clowns and a dance following the nightly performance. See area cowboys compete in steer wrestling, bareback riding, saddle bronc riding and more. Visit www.willrogersstampede.com for more information.

**MAY
28**

CHUCK WAGON GATHERING & CHILDREN'S COWBOY FESTIVAL, National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum. Oklahoma City, OK 73111. Enjoy authentic family entertainment at its finest during the annual Chuck Wagon Gathering & Children's Cowboy Festival, held at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. Come to this much-loved festival for amazing stage entertainment from a hilarious Old West show to the sounds of acclaimed Western singers and musicians. Visit www.nationalcowboymuseum.org to learn more about the Chuck Wagon Gathering & Children's Cowboy Festival.



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The pleasing aroma fills the air, the light purple flowers are in bloom and all the stress of the world floats away.

"When you come out here, it's got a really neat feel," said Anita Sodhi-Thomasser, manager of Lavender Valley Acres in Apache, Okla.

Thomasser said visitors should not expect a paved parking lot or fancy equipment. Everything is home-grown, and Lavender Valley Acres is a little gem in southwest Oklahoma, she added.

"We treat everybody as individuals. We want to get to know you, want to understand why you came by, where you're from and how you heard about us. Everybody is treated just like family."

The family-owned and operated garden began with Thomasser's father, Jag Sodhi.

Sodhi taught for the Department of Defense and traveled across the United States. Sodhi visited one of his students in

Washington, where the majority of lavender is grown in the United States. The student gave him some plants, and said they probably would not grow in Oklahoma.

"My dad took it graciously and thanked him for the gift," Thomasser said, "but he also took it as a challenge."

Jag Sodhi and his wife, Lynda, grew those and other lavender plants. The couple had a lavender garden, and Thomasser said they were successful in growing lavender in the hot state. After Jag retired in the early 2000s, Lynda said he needed a hobby.

Jag and Lynda grew lavender for their own enjoyment and gave products to family and friends for a few years. Being a true entrepreneur, Jag decided to turn his hobby into a business, and they hosted their first public lavender festival in 2007.

"My dad was just so passionate about it [lavender] and loved talking with people," Thomasser

explained. "He loved growing it, and he loved all of the attributes of lavender."

Since 2007, Lavender Valley Acres has added buildings for a retail store, a greenhouse and shaded areas.

"[My parents] really put a lot of time and effort into building the business, Lavender Valley Acres," she added. "When it comes to lavender festival time, we have many family members and friends to come help with the operation. Dad, he just loved it."

Jag died in September 2015, but the family kept the tradition alive. Thomasser moved back to Apache, Okla., in November to help her mom run the operation.

"We are learning, too, because I really think my dad thought he was going to live forever," she explained. "There wasn't always a paper trail or the best hand-off of knowledge"

Thomasser's goal is to improve
See LAVENDER page 43



BY LACI JONES

editor@okfronline.com

PHOTO DETAILS

Jag Sodhi grew lavender for his own enjoyment before turning his hobby into a business. (Courtesy of Anita Sodhi-Thomasser)

Lavender

Lavender Valley Acres by making it more of an all-around horticulture experience, where they can educate visitors on growing lavender and other plants.

“You get so much enjoyment from meeting people and from providing them some education about lavender and its properties or how to grow it,” she said. “It is very fulfilling.”

Growing lavender in Oklahoma can be a challenge because the weather can be “bipolar” in years.

One might think the challenge is the sun, but Thomasser said this is not their experience. In fact, lavender flourishes in full sun and it can go a week without water in the hot summer months if the plant is well-established.

The lavender farm was impacted by rainstorms and flooding in 2007.

“I think the biggest natural challenge that we face is overabundance of rain,” she explained. “You can lose a plant or two over the winter due to ice storms.”

The family raised the garden beds and added a drainage ditch to one end of the garden. During the large rainstorms last year, Thomasser said the drainage ditch worked well, and they did not lose any lavender.

“In Oklahoma, it is just kind of at the whim of Mother Nature,” she said. “You just replant and go forward after that.”

Lavender Valley Acres have tested and narrowed down the top varieties to grow in Oklahoma that are the hardiest. The family has historically grown 10 separate varieties, but they have nine different varieties this year.

“It is nice to have those varieties,” Thomasser said, “but I am probably going to be scaling back because a lot of people are wanting what is the best lavender to grow in Oklahoma.”



Lavender Valley Acres narrowed down the top varieties of lavender grown in Oklahoma to nine different varieties. (Courtesy of Anita Sodhi-Thomasser)

Based on 14 years of growing lavender in Oklahoma, Thomasser said the hardiest of the varieties is commonly known as Spanish Lavender or *Lavandula stoechas*.

“It’s just very hardy,” she said. “It winters over well, it handles the full sun well and it handles the big rainfalls well.”

This variety of lavender is best used for dry cuttings for potpourri or sachets because it has a higher level of camphor, which can smell too strong or bitter if distilled, she added.

Spanish Lavender is followed closely by a crossbred species called *Lavandula intermedia*. Lavender Valley Acres grow two of these varieties—Provence and Grosso. These varieties are cross-

bred for their high oil yield, she explained.

The third hardiest is an English variety called Vera. The oil in Vera, Provence and Grosso is sweeter than the Spanish Lavender, making it better to distill oil for soaps, lotions and candles. A byproduct of the distillation process is called hydrosol—a natural oil/water blend, she said.

“This is an oil/water blend that can be used as a room spray or body spray,” she added. “You can put it on cuts or scrapes, on mosquito bites to relieve the itch or put it on your sunburn to offer some soothing to that.”

Lavender Valley Acres partnered with the Department of Tourism and is considered an

Oklahoma Agritourism site, Thomasser said.

“We have our festival, we have our open houses and the shop is open during the summer,” she said. “We’re established. People know about us, tell other people about us and come out.”

The 12th Annual Lavender Festival will be held on June 11th from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The festival will include workshops on growing lavender, entertainment including a band and a belly dancing troop and traditional Indian food along with food made with lavender.

For more information on Lavender Valley Acres, visit them on Facebook or on their website at www.LavenderValleyAcres.com. ★

OKLAHOMA STATE PARKS

Robbers Cave State Park



Located in the woodlands of Sans Bois Mountains of southeast Oklahoma, Robbers Cave State Park is filled with history and beauty.

“Robbers Cave State Park is a really unique park for Oklahoma,” said Aron Maib, state park manager of Robbers Cave State Park.

Many archaeologists believe this area has been inhabited for thousands of years. Originally named Latimer State Park, the Robbers Cave State Park is located just four miles north of Wilburton, Okla. The state park was one of the original seven Oklahoma State Parks and was established by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in 1935.

While building the state park, members of the CCC camped in Group Camp One, and some of the buildings the CCC used remain there today. Robbers Cave State Park has approximately 140 historical structures onsite, Maib said.

“What I consider to be more or less the gem of the park, as far

as the CCC is concerned, is our Nature Center,” he added. “That is a beautifully restored building that was originally a bathhouse.”

Another part of the bathhouse was turned into the Heritage Center, which gives visitors insight into the history of the park. The CCC also established drinking fountains, campgrounds and dams.

Robbers Cave State Park recently acquired more land, but Maib said the state park is about 4,000 acres including three lakes built by the CCC—Lake Carlton, Coon Creek Lake and Lake Wayne Wallace.

“Lake Carlton is the most popular of the three lakes as far as usage and activities are concerned,” Maib said. “Other than Lake Carlton, there is Lake Wayne Wallace which is the biggest of the three lakes.

“On the east side of Highway 2, we have Coon Creek Lake, which is the smallest of the three and probably the least utilized access. You can get to it, but accessing it

is not as easy as the other two.”

Newspaper editor and state representative, Carlton Weaver, donated 120 acres surrounding the cave to the Boy Scouts of America to use as a camp, according to the Oklahoma Historical Society. Skilled inmates used locally quarried rock to build a kitchen and several buildings for headquarters for the scout troops. Lake Carlton, named after Carlton Weaver, was created by the CCC and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1937.

“[The history of Robbers Cave] goes back further to the outlaw days with a lot of the outlaw legends and the folklore,” Maib said.

Legendary outlaws including Jesse James of the James-Younger Gang and Belle Starr would hide out in the cave hidden in the sandstone hills, which was part of the Indian Territory at the time.

“They would come into this area after they robbed a stagecoach or whatever the case may be.”

See CAVE page 47



BY LACI JONES
 editor@okfronline.com

PHOTO DETAILS

Legendary outlaws including Jesse James and Belle Starr would hide out in the cave until the coast was clear. (Photo by Laci Jones)

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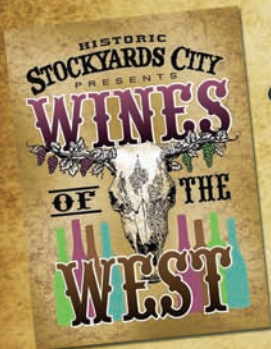
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Robbers Cave State Park offers visitors more outdoor recreational programs and activities than any other state park. (Photos by Laci Jones)

Cave

Continued from page 44

be,” Maib explained. “They would come into this area, lay low for a little while until the coast was clear, and then they would go on about their business.”

The cave is more like an overhang than a cave, he added. When Belle Starr had some “unsavory business,” she stayed in the area and then traveled 20 miles north of Robbers Cave to her cabin.

Many years later, Robbers Cave State Park was renovated and additions were made to the park.

They designated an ATV area, which accommodates ATVs, side by sides, dirt bikes and even Jeeps. The state park has 250 acres of rideable land implemented in February and plan to add 250 to 300 more acres.

“We offer more outdoor recreational programs and activities than any other state park in Oklahoma,” he added.

The state park offers guided tours of Robbers Cave year-round

as well as guided hikes, canoe tours, hayrides and cane pole fishing. They also give 30-minute rides on a trackless train.

“We do campfire cookouts and storytelling, anything from ghost stories to the old outlaw legends,” Maib added. “That is something that we are starting to add back into some of our programming, and we have had a really good response from it.”

Located at the state park is the Robbers Cave Stables operated by concessionaires. Robbers Cave Stables offers two-hour horseback rides, guided trail rides and even guided overnight pack trips.

“You set up camp, they cook for you and you ride back the next day,” Maib explained. “It’s really something unique, well, for anywhere in Oklahoma.”

Maib said the park could always use more lodging as they are booked year-round. The state park is currently finishing the design of two treehouse cabins and will

begin construction soon.

“These being treehouse cabins is going to make them even that much more popular,” he added. “It is just something different to offer our guests.”

The park also hosts several events throughout the year, he explained. They offer a first day hike, an Easter egg hunt and an antique tractor show.

They also host a Fourth of July celebration and a cardboard boat race in August.

“I think [the cardboard boat race] has three different age categories,” Maib said. “That’s been a lot of fun, and I think that is going to keep on growing.”

On the third weekend in October, the state park hosts their biggest event—Fall Festival. Celebrating its 30th year, the three-day event brings in more than 200 craft vendors and 80,000 people into the park, Maib said.

A classic car show known as the Fall Foliage Cruise takes place

on Saturday of the Fall Festival. The car show is the second largest car show in the state of Oklahoma, he added.

“The Fall Festival Committee start planning for the next year the month after the event ends,” he explained. “In November, they will start planning for October of the next year’s event, but it takes a lot of people to get it done.”

Maib said more visitors are coming to the state park during Thanksgiving and Christmas, and the park offers hayrides during the holidays.

“We will always offer something for those families who want to come out,” Maib added. “Instead of having the traditional meal and get together at home with family, they are coming out to the parks and renting our cabins and having their holiday here.”

For more information on Robbers Cave State Park, call 918-465-2562 or email robberscave@travelok.com. ★

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PEARSON LIVESTOCK EQUIPMENT EXPANDS MANUFACTURING TO TEXAS



Pearson Livestock Equipment of Thedford, Nebraska is pleased to announce the addition of a new manufacturing plant in Vernon, Texas.

Pearson Livestock Equipment is a leading manufacturer in the livestock and bison handling industry. Their products are sold nationally through a network of distributors and dealers as well as exported internationally.

The Vernon facility is an expansion of the company's current operation in Thedford so it can better meet the needs of its customers.

The current plant in Thedford will remain open and fully staffed. Situated on approximately 11 acres, the new plant in Vernon will consist of 30,000 sq.ft. of manufacturing and office space.

The company will begin startup operations in Vernon on Feb. 1, 2016. Pearson will be making several personnel changes in 2016 to facilitate this growth.

These changes include the promotion of Troy Collins, currently the Thedford Shop Foreman, to be Plant Manager of the Thedford facility. Mark Amos, of the Thedford plant will relocate to Vernon and assume the role of Shop Foreman there.

"We are pleased to welcome Pearson Livestock Equipment to Vernon and we look forward to working with a company that shares our work ethic and values. We feel that Pearson Livestock will be a perfect fit in our community," says Rick Hardcastle, management consultant, business development corporation of Vernon.

Since 1961, Pearson Livestock Equipment Company has been a family owned business, designing and building quality livestock handling equipment. The company has prospered because of the dedicated and hard working people who build Pearson products.

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direct reflection of the work ethic and pride that comes from Pearson employees. Owners David and Ricky Rater look forward to welcoming Texas workers to the Pearson family and continuing the traditions of innovation, quality and reliability.

Richard (Ricky) Rater, Vice President and General Manager for Pearson Livestock Equipment says, "We are excited for this opportunity to expand our production and serve our customers in a more timely fashion. Working with the City of Vernon and the Vernon Business Development Center has reinforced our conviction that Vernon will be a great fit for us. We look forward to working with their cooperative spirit and growing with the community."

For more information please contact: Ricky Rater Pearson Livestock Equipment, LLC, ricky@pearsonlivestockeq.com, PO Box 268, Thedford, NE 69166 308-645-2231. ★

RANCH RIGS & FARM FIXTURES

PHOTO DETAILS

The new plant in Vernon, Texas will consist of 30,000 sq.ft. of manufacturing and office space. The company will begin startup operations in Vernon on Feb. 1, 2016. (Photo courtesy of Pearson Livestock)

Grazing Oklahoma

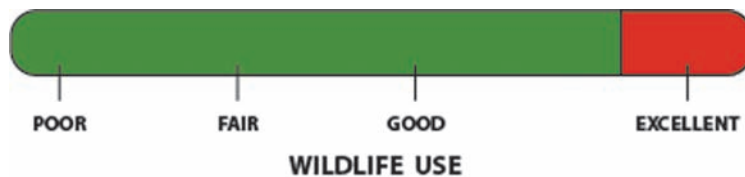
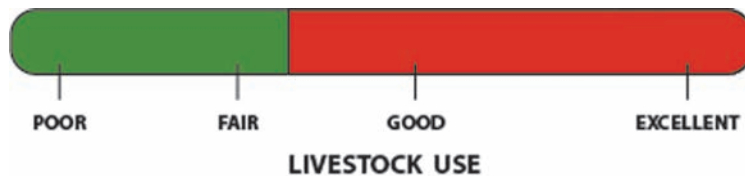
Saw Greenbrier

Characteristics: Greenbrier is a perennial, warm-season woody vine native to the eastern two-thirds of North America, including the Southern Great Plains. It can climb into tree canopies using tendrils or when there is little competition for sunlight, it can be very aggressive, forming dense thickets. Greenbrier is a common understory plant but can be found in open areas.

Leaf blades vary in size and color, are often heart or deltoid shaped and develop a waxy coating and white blotches when mature. Leaf margins and stems have claw-like prickles.

Plants flower in April through June with white or green clustered flowers that form black or reddish-black berries if pollination occurs. Greenbrier spreads mostly by thick, knotty rhizomes, which can make long-term control of the plant extremely difficult.

Area of Importance: Greenbrier will grow on most soil types and can tolerate shade. It is commonly found throughout



Oklahoma on fence lines and in edge habitat.

Attributes: In spring, greenbrier makes excellent forage for livestock and wildlife with crude protein content as high as 40 percent. Livestock and white-tailed deer target the young, tender herbaceous shoots that occur from March to May.

However, it is an even more important white-tailed deer food during fall and winter.

Wild turkey, raccoon, squirrels and song birds consume fruits produced by greenbrier. Northern bobwhite and numerous small

mammals use greenbrier for the dense cover that it provides.

Management of greenbrier depends on the goals for the property. If the primary goal for the property is herbaceous forage production for livestock, then dense stands of greenbrier can be a problem.

Even though livestock use greenbrier as a food source, the short duration that greenbrier is palatable does not justify the reduction in herbaceous biomass that results from greenbrier infestations. If the primary goal for the **See GREENBRIER page 51**



BY JOSH GASKAMP

jagaskamp@noble.org

PHOTO DETAILS

Saw Greenbrier is commonly found throughout Oklahoma on fence lines and in edge habitat. (Courtesy of The Noble Foundation)

Greenbrier

property is wildlife, maintaining greenbrier as part of a diverse plant community provides food and cover for many species.

For humans, greenbrier can cause minor scrapes and punctures; its twining growth form can make it difficult to traverse, but its young leaves, stems and tendrils are edible and can make an excellent salad topping. *

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Locke, J. and E. Funderburg. 2003. *Greenbrier: Identification and Management. The Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation Agricultural Division NF-SO-11-03*




Leaf blades vary in size and color, are often heart or deltoid shaped and develop a waxy coating and white blotches when mature. (Courtesy of The Noble Foundation)



Saw Greenbrier leaf margins and stems have claw-like prickles. (Courtesy of The Noble Foundation)

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Flying Birds

Photographer, Kathie Freeman was hanging out at the park in Yukon, Okla., taking some nature pictures when she came across these birds. (Photo by Kathie Freeman)



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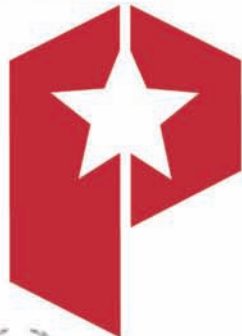
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