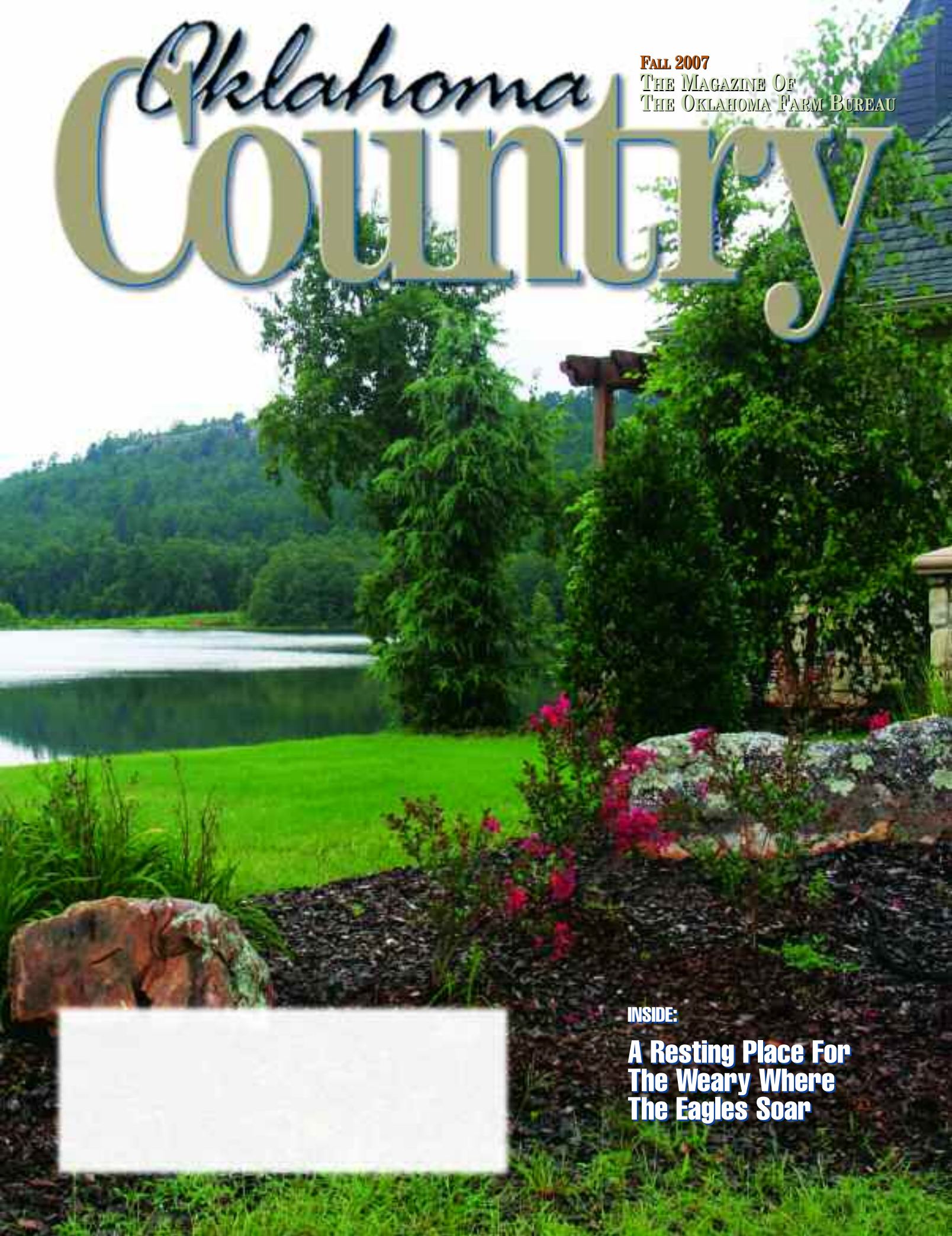


Oklahoma Country

FALL 2007

THE MAGAZINE OF
THE OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU



INSIDE:

**A Resting Place For
The Weary Where
The Eagles Soar**





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The curtain comes up this fall on Oklahoma's newest bed & breakfast. The magnificent facility in southeastern Oklahoma's Kiamichi Country promises sophisticated amenities set in surroundings so picturesque that even eagles make an annual trek here to hatch and raise their eaglets.

BY MIKE NICHOLS

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Cover Image

A breathtaking vista awaits guests who travel to Rockland Inn, which is located about 12 miles outside of Wilburton.



Hidden number worth \$50!

One member family's Oklahoma Farm Bureau membership number is hidden somewhere in this issue of OKLAHOMA COUNTRY, and could earn that member family \$50.

To claim the cash prize, the member family must find its own hidden membership number and contact Mike Nichols before the last day of the month Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to

4 p.m. at 405-523-2300.

The OFB membership number hidden somewhere in OKLAHOMA COUNTRY must match the number on the face of your individual OFB membership card for you to claim the cash prize. The membership number that appears on your magazine's mailing label is not the hidden number, but must match the hidden number for you to claim the cash prize.



BY STEVE KOUPLEN
*President,
Oklahoma Farm Bureau*

Fall has arrived and as I begin writing my last article for you as your president, I look forward to the events that will transpire at our annual meeting in Oklahoma City at the Cox Convention Center.

Members from all 77 counties will converge to accomplish tasks ranging from policy development, awards and recognition, Young Farmers and Ranchers events, Women's Committee events, election of state directors and state president, vespers program, information break-outs, guest speakers and many more.

Our Saturday night banquet will be highlighted with the appearance of Ronnie Milsap as our entertainment. A number of elected officials and other guests will be present to enjoy a great night of fun and fellowship.

This entire convention will be squeezed into three action-packed days.

When I look back at my experiences with other organizations and compare ours to theirs, I am extremely proud of the fact that even though other organizations will use the term "grassroots organization," we definitely are one. Our policies come from each and every county in the state. This difference is one that worked yesterday, works today and will work tomorrow.

Grassroots participation by you – our members – makes our organization. Keep up the good work and again thank you for the privilege to serve you for the last eight years as your president. The friendships and acquaintances will never be forgotten.

Steve Kouplen

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BY MATT WILSON
*Executive Director
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Our members owe a debt of gratitude to all our elected leaders – their service to the organization they believe in encompasses many sacrifices on each one's part.

The future of our organization depends on its voting delegates

Our 66th annual meeting is on the horizon. It's just a few days before delegates representing our 77 member county Farm Bureaus converge on Oklahoma City's Cox Convention Center to conduct the business of the state's largest and most influential farm organization.

Our members and the delegates they pick to represent them at the annual meeting chart the course for this organization by adopting policy to guide us in the future and selecting our leaders.

Members originate recommendations for our policies, and members – through the delegates they pick – ultimately set the policies and direction for their organization.

With the strength of more than 166,000 member families behind them and clear instructions from those members, Oklahoma Farm Bureau staff and our volunteer leaders have accomplished remarkable results.

Whether it is one of the organization's earliest accomplishments (state sales tax exemptions for machinery, feed, seed and fertilizer) or one of the latest (trespass law reform), Farm Bureau uses a proven system that gets results.

That's one very important reason the annual meeting is so crucial to this organization.

Another key to the success of our

organization is the leaders delegates select during the annual meeting.

Young Farmers and Ranchers and Farm Bureau Women will caucus to select leaders of their groups. This year, delegates from districts three, six and nine will caucus to pick directors to represent them on the state board of directors.

The entire delegate body will select a new president for Oklahoma Farm Bureau at the 66th annual meeting. Bylaws established and adopted by delegates at previous annual meetings prohibit President Steve Kouplen from seeking another term.

Our members owe a debt of gratitude to all our elected leaders – their service to the organization they believe in encompasses many sacrifices on each one's part.

Delegates, who represent each and every member of Farm Bureau, are given the important task of picking the new leaders and deciding the future of your organization.

Voting in our elections provides an important way to decide the future of the organization.

So I urge our delegates to speak their minds in all the elections and caucuses. Select the person who best represents the views of those you represent in your home county.

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BY JOE BENTON
*Extension Educator,
 Ag & CED*

Preparing the garden for winter

Many of us gardeners have mixed feelings about this time of year – sad to see another garden year draw to a close, but at the same time relieved to get a break from the chores of weeding, watering, pruning and more weeding. But before you hibernate, there are still a few more chores to take care of outdoors.

Winter mulch isn't necessary for all garden plants, but it can mean survival for some less hardy plants. Winter mulch has a different purpose than summer mulch. The main benefits of winter cover are to protect against wide temperature fluctuations in the soil and to prevent extreme cold temperatures from harming plants.

Soil tends to heave when subjected to wide temperature changes, pushing plant roots up out of the ground. Heaving is most harmful to relatively shallow-rooted plants, such as strawberries and newly planted specimens of any kind that have not yet had a chance to develop solid footing. Winter mulch also prevents extreme cold damage to above-ground plant parts.

In most cases, 2 to 4 inches of mulch, such as straw, pine needles, hay or bark chips, give adequate protection. For some plants, such as roses, more elaborate protection is needed.

Timing is critical when applying winter mulch. It's best to wait until after temperatures are consistently below freezing to apply the mulch. Normally, this is well into November or early December. Applying too early can smother the plant and encourage disease development.

Winterizing your landscape plants is just as important as winterizing your car. Those bright, sunny days of winter may be a welcome sight to us humans, but they can spell trouble for some landscape plants. Direct sunshine on young thin-barked trees warms the bark

considerably. But when the sun goes down, air temperatures drop rapidly, and that can result in the tree's bark splitting. Other types of winter injury are also common, including breakage from heavy snow and ice, severe drying and animal feeding damage. However, you can help protect your plants by properly preparing them for the winter season.

Shading young, thin-barked trees on the south and west sides will help prevent bark splits from temperature extremes. This splitting is called southwest injury. The bark tends to split vertically on the sunny side of the tree, because as the temperatures drop rapidly at sundown, the outer bark cools down and contracts faster than the inner bark. Thus, the outer bark must split to accommodate what's below. Wrapping the trunks with commercial tree wrap provides some protection.

You can't do very much about excessively low temperatures. But you should be sure that the plants chosen for the landscape are hardy to our average winter conditions and otherwise adapted to the individual site conditions.

All plants, but especially evergreens, are susceptible to drying out over winter. The above-ground parts, such as twigs and evergreen leaves, are very much alive and are continuously losing water through a process called transpiration. The result is drying leaves, buds and twigs. Sunny, windy conditions cause water to be lost from the tops more rapidly, further aggravating the situation. Broad-leaved evergreens are particularly susceptible since they have a greater leaf surface to lose water from.

Making sure the plants have a sufficient supply of soil moisture before the ground freezes, on a regular basis, will help create

healthier specimens to fight the winter battle. Water thoroughly, every seven to 10 days, if fall rains are not sufficient. Shading susceptible plants from winter sun and wind also can be helpful. Plant highly susceptible plants, such as rhododendrons, on the north side of the house or a hedge to avoid strong winter sun.

Don't forget that trees and shrubs do not die in the winter. If the winter is dry, remember to water every couple of weeks. Their root system is still picking up moisture even if the plant has no leaves.

Multi-stemmed shrubs seem to be particularly prone to damage from heavy snow and ice loads. The intense weight of snow and ice bends branches to the ground, breaking the bark and cutting off circulation of the food manufactured by the leaves to the roots. Starving roots eventually die, which leaves the tops without a supply of water, and eventually the whole plant will die. The process could take several years.

To prevent damage from heavy loads, support multi-stemmed plants by bundling the stems together using burlap, canvas or chicken wire. Simply binding stems together with cord will do in a pinch. Be sure to carefully remove heavy snow as soon as possible, but don't try to remove ice. More damage to the bark probably will occur than if the ice is allowed to melt on its own.

Picking up old leaves and twigs will help prevent disease next spring. Fungal disease spores that were present this last spring and summer often reside in the left over leaf material. Good cleanup will help control or at least hopefully postpone its start next spring.

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*A resting place
for the weary*

Where the



Larry and Karla Boggs and their grandson, Brandon, stand in front of the huge maple entry doors at Rockland Inn. Guests will be welcomed just inside here when the retreat opens this fall.

it has required about six year's worth of perseverance, but the dream is poised to become reality this fall when the huge maple doors swing open wide to formally introduce Rockland Inn in Kiamichi Country.

Sitting on a stage painted by Mother Nature with a magnificent backdrop of tree-covered mountains reflecting in the blue waters of a tranquil 40-acre lake, it promises sophisticated amenities in an out-of-the way milieu.

This dream-about-to-come-true was once but an image shared by owners Karla and Larry Boggs. This fall, the curtain comes up on their vision.

"I'd always thought the property was so beautiful," says Karla, who spent some of her adolescent years here watching her late father steward this land with diverse enterprises ranging from commercial minnow production to a 2,000-head herd of sheep-for-wool.

"I kept saying the place is too pretty and needs to be shared."



Eagles Soar

Kiamichi Country's
newest bed & breakfast
prepares to welcome guests.

By Mike Nichols