

October 9, 2013

Issue 3

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# Ozark Homesteader



## Quote of the Week:

"The executives who run the fast food industry are not bad men. They are businessmen. They will sell free-range, organic, grass-fed hamburgers if you demand it. They will sell whatever sells at a profit." — Eric Schlosser

## Dogwood Hills Guest Farm Homestead Day

Dogwood Hills Guest Farm is hosting a Homestead day on 11/9 from 10:00 am until around 6:00.

We are looking for people that would like to share a homestead skill with the younger generation. We have invited the home-school groups in the area. It will be an outdoor event, but will have the barn loft open for people that need that kind of space.

All kinds of skills are welcome. Message Ruthie Pepler to participate.

[www.facebook.com/DogwoodHillsBB](http://www.facebook.com/DogwoodHillsBB)

**Do you have a story you would like to share with other homesteaders? Tell it to us! We are looking for contributors and story ideas.**

## Ozark Calendar of Events:

10/11 & 10/12 – Mountain Man Rendezvous in Leslie, AR

10/19 – Homesteaders Swap Meet in Harrison, AR

10/19-10/20 - Homestead Days Festival @ Nathan Boone Homestead State Historic Site - Ash Grove, MO

10/31 – Halloween

11/02 – Homesteaders Swap Meet in Clinton, AR

*Sustainability – Sufficiency – Sanctuary – Personal Responsibility*

## Homestead Highlight: Dogwood Hills Guest Farm

Dogwood Hills Guest Farm is owned and operated by Ruth and Thomas Pepler. Dogwood Hills is located in Harriet, Arkansas, 11 miles NE of Marshall. It is a "farm stay" where people can learn what it is like to live on a farm.

Ruth and Thomas define homesteading as "a constant renewal of skills that will allow you to truly live off the land." Although admittedly still in transition, they began homesteading about 4 years ago and would rate their level of self-sufficiency at 5. They are installing a "high tunnel" this winter which will increase their level to 7. As with many homesteaders, an outside income is still useful to supporting a homestead. Thomas works as a Hospice nurse in Harrison, AR.

While Dogwood Hills is "on

the grid", Ruth and Thomas have developed their spring to provide water for the whole farm. They will eventually install an exterior wood furnace to heat their home and the barn.

Dogwood Hills Guest Farms has cows, sheep, meat, dairy and fiber goats, fiber sheep, chickens, ducks, and horses. It's no wonder that the fence post pounder is listed as the one tool that they couldn't do without.

Most homesteaders can sympathize with the Pepler's when they say that chiggers are the most annoying on their homestead. However, we were surprised to find that asparagus is their favorite garden plant. The biggest challenge they find in homesteading? "Getting it all done :)"

The Pepler's were drawn to

homesteading because they wanted to move toward sustainability.

Ruth and Thomas tell us: "We are not maybe the traditional homestead, but as a guest farm, we have people here all the time that are learning the 'old ways' of doing things, and taking skills home that they can put into practice. For us, teaching and duplicating is the focus." It's no wonder that their 12 year old daughter could run a farm; make her meals from scratch; can food; sew clothes; and spin her own yarn. The maybe amazing part is that she enjoys it all.

If you would like to know more about Dogwood Hills Guest Farm, visit them on the web at <http://www.dhfb.com>

## Off Grid Living – Part 2

In the last edition, I explained our energy usage, which is minimal. I also explained that we use batteries to supply what energy we do use. This week I would like to explain where we get energy to charge the batteries.

Most on-grid people assume we use solar cells. We do use energy from the sun, but not for electricity – not much anyway. When we answer negative on solar, they assume we use a generator. While we do have a generator, it doesn't run unless we are using power tools. A few guess that we use wind, but store bought wind turbines are out due to cost. Homemade wind generators are much cheaper, but there are many other projects ahead of that one.

We use an inverter hooked up to 2 deep cycle marine batteries for electricity in the cabin. We recharge them either with our vehicles or sometimes during the occasional visits to my mother's house. A power inverter allows us to use the batteries to power regular, everyday appliances, including our LED lights. We can also use it to power our propane fridge, since it will also run on regular electricity as well as propane. The fridge will run off of our truck's batteries all day long, requiring only 30 minutes or so of idling to recharge the batteries at the end of the day. This comes in handy if we run low on propane.

As far as solar, we use that

to charge some lawn lights during the day. We bring them in at night to light up the cabin. If I work diligently to keep them in full sun, they last about 7 hours at night before going dead. We also use solar thermal to heat our water during the summer. It works better than you might think. But that's another story.

With the use of the solar lights, we can really stretch out the time between battery charges. Think months. If we use the stereo or the fan, think weeks. If we run the fridge, think hours.

How we recharge the batteries will have to wait until the next edition.

## P.E.H Supply

Plumbing, Electrical, Hardware,  
Septic Systems  
4319 HWY 65 SOUTH  
Clinton, AR 72031  
501-745-6222

## Picture of the Week



Fall has arrived! Here's a pic of the homestead from last fall. Send us your favorite fall pic.

Email your picture to [ozarkhomesteader@gmail.com](mailto:ozarkhomesteader@gmail.com) to submit it for Picture of the Week. No copyrighted pictures, please.

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## October "Before Winter" To Do List

If you are new to the homestead world or a seasoned veteran, you already know... you never stop learning. We at Justus Farms have been newbies for 16 years now. There have been things that we have tried that just did not work and things that we said, "why did we not think of that?"

Here is a list we have come up with over the years to help us get ready for the colder months without the "Crap It's Here!" feeling:

- Clean out the animal beds and hutches. When we clean bedding, we like to pile it in one place for later burning in a bonfire. Hutch bedding is scattered over the garden spot for fertilizer as are loose pig and horse droppings. We use hay to replace the bedding. Bunnies love to munch on this so check often.
- Take care of the chickens. The temp may not be freezing yet but the cooler nights can be hard on young chickens. Young chickens are any that you have hatched this year. In addition, some types of chickens need to be warmer than others. Plastic on the outside of the north-facing wall of the coop works well. Hay the coops. In addition, some breeds will need a heat lamp.
- Check your water lines. One busted line when it is freezing will teach you this.
- Check the antifreeze in car, trucks, and tractors.
- Winterize your lawn equipment. Drain the gas and run until dry in the carb. Add a drop of oil to the spark plug hole also.
- Store your gardening tools. Oil them down and you will make them last for years.
- Check your underpinning. Block holes so critters do not move in. One skunk and you will remember to do this every year!
- Check your barn and storage building roofs.

- Pile all brush and bedding in one place for disposal.

Make your own list as things come up that would help you if you had just done it while it was still warm. Remember to keep learning from what we do each day. It could help a newbie someday.

Submitted by:

Justus Farms - Cleveland, AR  
"Never settle for just a share of your dream."

## Poll Results

Are you on grid or off grid?

Current Results:

On Grid: 26

Off Grid: 1

Vote at

[www.ozarkhomesteader.com](http://www.ozarkhomesteader.com)

## Media Review: Fast Food Nation (2006)

The movie is based on the book. That's about all they have in common. I expected a movie that followed the book. Something more of a documentary. What I got was a drama about illegal immigrants choosing to work in a slaughterhouse and a group of mostly white middle aged men who make money off of those immigrants, off of minimum wage workers, and off of an unsuspecting customer base. It is cliché, but the book is much better than the movie.

A middle aged upper level manager is tasked with finding out why independent studies show that his company's equivalent to the "Big Mac" contains cow excrement when his supplier's studies show that it does not. His research leads him to conclude that the meat is contaminated but that nobody wants to know about

it. Cleaning it up would require hiring competent workers in both the meat packing industry and the fast food industry. It would also require slowing down the meat processing line. All of these changes would cost money, which would raise the price of fast food, which would reduce the sales and profits of both the meat packing industry and the fast food industry. Better to just leave it alone.

At the same time, a group of Mexicans hire smugglers to illegally immigrate to the US. Their voluntary journey is perilous and faced with danger because they have to walk through the desert and deal with criminals. Once here, they take any jobs that they can get. The slaughterhouse hires them, seemingly because no one wants to work there. Drugs are used to make the job more bearable

and sex is used to get more desirable positions inside the plant.

To make the movie even worse, there are gratuitous and explicit sex scenes, unnecessarily vulgar language, and depictions of drug use. The scenes from the slaughterhouse "kill floor" are real, and therefore necessarily gruesome.

Kris Kristopherson was chosen to play a rancher trying to hold on to his cattle farm. This was probably the best part of the movie. If you want to see how big corporate slaughterhouses turn animals into meat, then get the movie and fast forward toward to the end. Warning: the scenes are disgusting. Some of the animals are ripped apart while still alive. However, this was filmed in a real slaughterhouse with real workers doing

their very real jobs. If this doesn't make you buy your meat from local, independent farms, or raise your own, then nothing will.

If you are interested in real facts about where our food comes from, skip the movie and read the book. If you still want to watch the movie, it is available at Big Lots! for \$3.00.

