

## **Boy's Ranch Battles a 'Blue Norther'**

John Smith was 12 years old when a judge sent him to the Roy E. Childres Memorial Boy's Ranch in Coppell. During his stay, he attended Coppell schools and earned his keep tending livestock and crops on the ranch farm. Smith recollects that one summer afternoon a "blue norther" swept through the area, threatening a crop of hay the boys harvested. Smith and the other boys ran into the storm to cover the bales with tarps. The rain gave way to hail, but they would not be deterred. Wet hay would rot and could not be sold.

The boys worked into the night and returned home covered in bruises, only to find that the storm knocked out the electricity in their dorm and shattered the windows on the northern side of the building.

Despite the hardship, Smith recalls that he and the other boys felt nothing but pride. The crop had been saved.

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