

Cox Chronicles Fall 2025



I realized recently that when it comes to the fire department and being an EMT, that I have worked very hard to sometimes still feel like I know very little. This is in part because there is constantly more to learn. The human body in itself is so intricate and complex and we are continually learning more about it every day. But then there is also the fire grounds and misc skills that I still could master. Learning the pump and water systems (calculating friction loss in a hose), getting certified to drive the engine or tanker, feeling confident running a chain saw. I've just broken the ice (literally) of water rescue certification, learned some knots that I have yet to use, then there's ladder mechanics, proper drag techniques, vehicle extrication, equipment, gear, and on and on. I was once alone on a road for 5 hours turning traffic away from a horrific accident scene while trying to light the flares without my reading glasses to read the directions. In those moments, I often have the question come to mind; "What on earth are you doing here?" When I do something, I like to do it well. And because there's an infinite amount of things to learn in the emergency services, I often feel in over my head. But that's just because I am. Wisdom can feel elusive. It is reachable and simultaneously not achievable. There are many people with an amazing amount of wisdom, but at some point a question will be asked that they don't know the answer to. I've learned so much over my 50 plus years on this earth, and also seemingly forgotten much!

We can chase after facts and figures that we easily forget, but God's word tells us to take a different approach to our quest for wisdom. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." (Prov 9:10) To learn requires humility, and to acquire humility, we must acknowledge that we have a need. We need to understand that we are not in control, He is! We do not know how our day will go, but He does. We don't know what tomorrow holds or even if there will be a tomorrow, but He does. I can do all the training in the world but pull up to an emergency scene and nothing ever looks like the textbook. In those moments, I am quickly reminded to cry out for wisdom. I may have some useful

knowledge, but it's ineffective if I don't apply or remember it. I need wisdom to know how to proceed. I need understanding to process what is before me. I need something bigger than my own wisdom to lean into during these moments. I don't always make the right decisions, remember all the proper steps, see all the variables, but He does, and I can go forward in confidence knowing that He already sees, hears, and controls the outcome. If my mind is set on Him, my fear shifts from self to remembering that I serve a mighty God who is worthy of my awe, reverence, and gratitude. It changes the lenses that I see each situation through. Now if only I can remember where I put those glasses!



Summer camp saw 1208 Ranchers come through the summer program. We gave out \$83,000 in summer camp scholarships. With 85 hired positions and many many volunteers, it was a

rich and full summer! I was blessed with multiple volunteers in the nursing department, and even with some challenging situations, God always shows himself faithful. Jonathan served as a camp counselor, mainly helping with Day Camps and for Emily this was a bit of a challenging season as she continued her job at the bank. It was the first time in her life (she's been working in camp since she was 12) that she wasn't a part of our full summer program. She did, however, get the opportunity to take a week off of work in town to be a camp counselor again. Matt's summer looked vastly different from last year as his hips continue to heal and he was able to ride and do Message from the Mount presentations again. After much prayer, we are looking to sell his sermon horse, Rooster, to meet some financial needs. In the midst of all of this, we grabbed every opportunity to plan the wedding of Emily and Josiah Gross this fall.

With much grief, Josiah's mom, Melina, lost her short battle to cancer in July. We all traveled to VA for the funeral and again, the Lord provided amazing nurses and staff allowing us to step away from camp with confidence. God also provided for Josiah to be gone for much of the spring and summer to be with his mom and help his family.

Josiah and Emily were married on Sept 14th and we were so blessed to have our entire family in attendance. She had always wanted to get married in the grove of trees by our Fort Wilderness and the Lord provided a gorgeous day with a gentle breeze. We could not have asked for better weather. We still find ourselves humbled and amazed by the wonderful community that came around us and the kids to make this wedding happen. God provided friends that made the wedding cake, lent us chairs, cooked the food, baked cookies, made pretzels, did the MCing, coordinated the wedding, played music, arranged flowers, curled hair and so much more. There is no way we could have done a DIY wedding for over 300 people without them. And when it was all over, the reception hall was cleaned and emptied in less than

an hour! We may have pinched every penny, but we are so rich in community.

The newlyweds are currently living in a donated RV until Ranch housing can be set for them. We have multiple families shifting housing units and repairs to do in between and when the dust (or snow) settles, the kids will move into the open unit. Jonathan (17) has enjoyed moving out of his tiny 7 x 9 room and into Emily's old room. The one deal was that we wanted to get rid of the old carpeting. Upon removing it we discovered additional issues that had to be addressed before recarpeting. Jonathan did a lot of work and learned some new skills to help move this project along!



It was wonderful having all the kids home for the wedding. Lydia remains in IN and is loving her community there. Megan, Simeon and Seersha are getting established in their new town of Brownsville, TX and getting ready for the baby coming in January. Hannah, Garrett, and crew have just completed a busy and successful showing season and are looking forward to some slower days ahead and homeschooling the kids.



We have had many opportunities to speak through the fall months as Matt often fills pulpit for churches in the area. We've also presented at missions conferences. The winter looks to be a busy time of travel as well. Besides conferences and meetings, our hopes are to visit TX to meet our new grandchild.

As I type this, we are preparing to leave for a week and take both of our moms to the beach along with

Jonathan and his friend. This has been a much anticipated time as we haven't been able to step away for a couple of years now. It's been a season of defining what "rest" really is and how we view it circumstantially instead of something that is found in our hearts.

We have been having some challenges with our vehicles and seeking wisdom and provision as to the next step to take. As I write this, our Highlander is undergoing extensive repairs but we are hopeful that this will keep us rolling for quite some time. With our many obligations, it has been challenging to be down to one vehicle.

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We are excited about our new class of 38 students. We personally are advisors to 2 guys this year and it has been fun getting to know them.

In the fall of 2026, we are being sent on sabbatical. We really don't know what this will look like yet, and have a lot of details to figure out in the meantime, but we look forward to what the Lord will do through this time. This is a new practice for the Ranch and our board is excited to introduce this to our staff. We would appreciate your prayers as we plan and make preparations both in scheduling and financing this opportunity.

We want to thank you for your wonderful prayers and support over these many years. We are celebrating our 32nd anniversary this month and it's incredible to look back at all of God's faithfulness through his people. As young newlyweds, we could never have imagined that we would be where we are right now. We rejoice that God continues to use us in His service.

Matt and Jenni Cox and family

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