

# Passages

*The presence of Paul Lefebvre, who died July 29, continues to be felt in the pages of Oklahoma Today.*



**Oklahoma Today** art director Steven Walker with Paul Lefebvre at the magazine's fiftieth anniversary celebration in January 2006

FRED W. MARVEL



The May/June 1956 issue, the third in the magazine's history, was Paul Lefebvre's first as art director. Lefebvre also painted the state bird, the scissor-tailed flycatcher, for the magazine's Spring 1970 issue.



**B**EGINNING IN 1956 and continuing for twenty-seven years, Paul Lefebvre's life work was capturing the essence of Oklahoma. *Oklahoma Today's* longtime art director, Lefebvre was instrumental in guiding the magazine through its first decades.

Steven Walker of Walker Creative, Inc., *Oklahoma Today's* art director since 1991, says Lefebvre was an artist as well as a designer.

"His focus was illustration," Walker says of Lefebvre, who illustrated the state seal and other state emblems for the magazine. "I always thought his forte was as an artist."

Lefebvre died on July 29, 2008, at age eighty-nine. Originally from New Jersey, Lefebvre traveled across Oklahoma for years with his wife, Irene, showing the life of the state through his photographs, many of which were published in *Oklahoma Today*.

In January 2006, in conjunction with its fiftieth anniversary celebration, *Oklahoma Today* presented Lefebvre with a Lifetime Achievement Award for his contributions to the magazine, including its transition to color printing.

Louisa McCune-Elmore, editor in chief of *Oklahoma Today* since 1997, says Lefebvre's imprint still can be seen today.

"I had the opportunity to meet with Paul a few times over the last decade, and he always shared wonderful stories about the magazine's early years," McCune-Elmore says. "Paul defined our basic visual philosophy: gorgeous photography, classic typefaces, and high-quality printing. At *Oklahoma Today*, we let great design amplify great imagery. He appreciated this and was an instrumental force in creating one of the most-decorated regional magazines in publishing history. We will miss him."

—Kristin Hale



## SELLING HISTORY

*Oklahoma Today's* ad director receives a national award.

On June 11, MIN/Media Industry Newsletter named *Oklahoma Today* advertising director Brian Brown a runner-up for salesperson of the year in the magazines under 500,000 circulation category. *Oklahoma Today* was second to *The Atlantic*, and Brown received the prestigious award among other magazines including *Martha Stewart Living* and *National Geographic*.

"In a market increasingly affected by vanity titles and pay-for-play editorial products, *Oklahoma Today* stands out for its integrity and high editorial standards," says Brown, who has helped boost sales more than 300 percent since his return to the magazine in 2006.