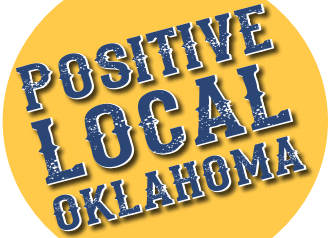


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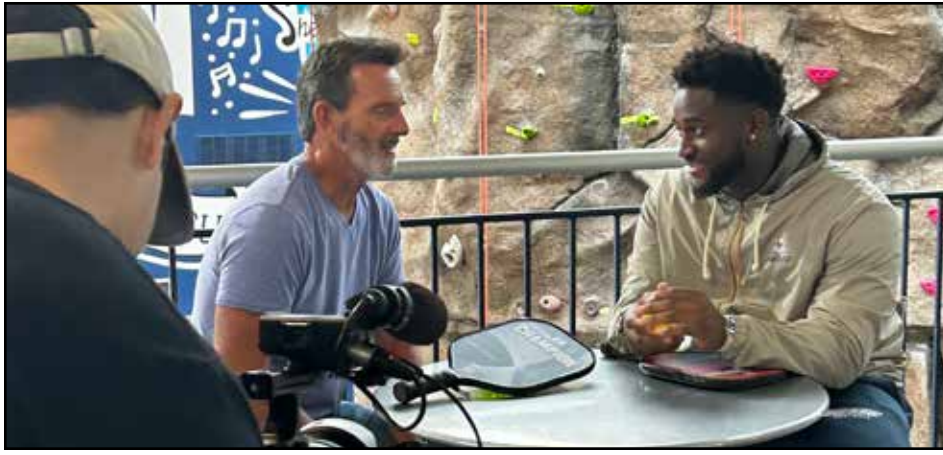


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## SWOSU Featured in Amazon Prime's "The College Tour" Season Premiere



J. Boone Clemmons / SWOSU

Jalen Momoh sits down for a discussion about SWOSU Athletics in the Wellness Center with The College tour crew.



J. Boone Clemmons / SWOSU

2024 College of Pharmacy Graduate Landon Santa-Pinter gives the crew a look at the CPP building's controlled substance room.



J. Boone Clemmons / SWOSU

2024 SWOSU Graduate Rebecca Lau chats with the crew as they set up for her introduction outside of the Stafford building.



J. Boone Clemmons / SWOSU

The School of Nursing shows off the geriatric patient care dummies used for teaching SWOSU nursing students about living assistance.

**Debbie Anglin**  
Anglin Content Coordinator

SWOSU is the first public university in Oklahoma to be featured on the popular television series "The College Tour," which will showcase the vibrant campus life, stories of students, diverse academic programs and unique spirit of SWOSU to a national audience. The episode is slated to be the first episode of Season 13.

SWOSU invites the community to celebrate its national television debut with a special premiere event on Tuesday, September 10th, at 1:30 p.m. in the SWOSU Fine Arts Center Auditorium.

Airing on Amazon Prime, Apple TV and other streaming services, "The College Tour" takes viewers on an immersive journey through exceptional colleges and universities across the United States.

Each episode offers a glimpse into the student experience, highlighting academics, student organizations, campus traditions and the surrounding community. The crew of The College Tour filmed over five days on the SWOSU campus in June. The episode features 10 students and recent graduates.

"We chose SWOSU for its commitment to student success, diversity of students from all over the globe, and dedication to providing a high-quality, affordable education," said Alex Boylan, host of The College Tour. "Our film crew was met with so many surprises during our time there – the beautiful campus, investment in facilities and equipment and the stories and passions of students who make SWOSU a special place to learn and grow. We really fell in love with this university and the

community of Weatherford."

"This is an incredible opportunity for potential students and their parents to get an inside look at what it's truly like being a student at SWOSU," said Diana Lovell, president of SWOSU. "We look forward to showcasing SWOSU to viewers and invite anyone interested in learning more about us to tour our beautiful campus."

The SWOSU episode will enjoy two premieres. It is available to watch on thecollegetour.com as of September 10th and will premiere on Amazon Prime in February 2025.

A sneak peek of the episode is available right now, and can be viewed at [www.swosu.edu/thecollegetour.php](http://www.swosu.edu/thecollegetour.php). Visit [www.thecollegetour.com](http://www.thecollegetour.com) for more information on The College Tour,

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**Joyce Johnson**

Joyce Clyde “Halford” Johnson was born on the side of a creek east of Sayre, Oklahoma, on August 12, 1934. She was the fifth child of Earnest Lee Halford and Julia Irene (Walters) Halford. Joyce passed away on September 1, 2024, in Elk City, Oklahoma, surrounded by her family.



Joyce came from humble beginnings, born during the Great Depression. Joyce grew up East of Sayre attending school at Sayre, Doxey, and Merritt. Joyce grew up enjoying time with her family and friends, going to town, and reading.

Joyce met James “Jim” Marvin Johnson in 1951. She spent her Senior year writing letters to him while he was stationed in Korea.

When he returned, they quickly eloped to Santa Rosa, New Mexico.

They made their home in Sayre, Oklahoma, and had 3 children, Jimmie “Lee,” Joel, and Gina. She loved caring for her children, husband, and their extended families. She sold Avon. She was proud of her success and thankful for her customers.

Joyce spent a lot of time with family, including Saturday night hamburgers and Sunday fried chicken at her momma’s house every week after church.

Joyce and Jim took their children on numerous adventures across the country in a small camper, visiting family along the way. There are many wild stories from these trips.

Joyce and Jim moved West of Enid, Oklahoma, in 1979, where they built their home themselves. They started “Jim’s Torch and Regulators.” She worked side-by-side with her love for over twenty years.

Joyce helped lead the Enid chapter of Modern Woodsman, planting trees, installing park benches and other community projects.

Jim and Joyce made many wonderful friends while they lived in this area. They lived in their home until 2023 when they returned to Western Oklahoma.

Joyce came to know Christ and baptized February 19, 1961. She was a member of First Baptist Sayre, First Baptist Drummond, and First Baptist Enid. She spent many summers, assisting with Vacation Bible School and working in the nursery. She used her love of cooking by preparing food for every event at the church. She was a good and faithful servant in all that she did.

She and Jim raised a huge garden every year. They donated the best of the harvest to Van’s House, Y&FS Shelter, and Salvation Army food kitchen. St. Jude’s and the Shriner’s are organizations that she supported and believed in.

She loved camping, gardening, puzzles, reading, cooking, baking, and beating anyone at card or board games. She was funny, witty, and just the best. She hosted most holidays, birthdays, weeklong stays with her grandchildren and the random stays of relatives just stopping to stay a while. She loved to cook for everyone who walked through her door. There were yearly camping trips with her children and grandchildren at Great Salt Plains and Canton Lake.

Carrying Joyce’s legacy, she is survived by her husband of 70 years James Johnson; one son Joel Johnson and wife Tracy of Mooreland, OK; and one daughter Gina Stewart and husband Ron of Elk City, OK.

Joyce is also survived by many granddaughters: Amber Washington and husband Kevin, Tuttle, OK, Erica Johnson, Florence, NC, Crystal Stewart, Oklahoma City, OK, Valerie Fairless and husband Johnathan, Yukon, OK, Jennifer Bauerly and husband Nick of Sioux City, Iowa; grandsons Joshua Collison, Omaha, Nebraska, Garrett Baker of Oklahoma City, OK; great grandchildren; Noah Heckathorn and Leah Washington, Tuttle, OK, Henry and Braiden Fairless, Yukon, OK, Reagan and Colton Lee, and Hannah Bauerly, all of Sioux City, IA.

She was Aunt Clyde to thirty-one nieces and nephews, which she loved dearly. She has innumerable other family members and many close friends.

She is preceded in death by her parents E.L. and Julia; son Jimmie Lee Johnson; brothers: Dean, Lafayette, Wayne, and Don Halford; and sister Betty Hodo.

**Brad Giblet**

William Bradley “Brad” Giblet was born to A.L. “Gib” and Betty Mae (Black) Giblet on December 22, 1956, in Cordell, Oklahoma, and passed away on Thursday, August 29, 2024, at his home in Hydro, surrounded by his family, at the age of 67 years, 8 months and 7 days.



Brad was raised in Cordell, the baby of seven and graduated with the Cordell Class of 1975. After high school he attended Southwestern Oklahoma State University, graduating in 1980 with a bachelor’s degree in business administration and marketing.

He met Lita Carol Mosburg while they were both attending SWOSU, and the two married on June 6, 1980, at the Mosburg Homestead north of Weatherford. They made their home in Cordell where he worked alongside his father Gib at Giblet Motor Company on the curve south of town. Once Gib retired, Brad began his career in the banking industry.

Their family was blessed with two daughters and a son – Brittany, Bryce, and Bralee. In 1999 the family relocated to Hydro, Oklahoma, which would become their forever home. Brad had always dreamed of owning his own bank and his dream came true in 2012 when he purchased First State Bank in Ryan, Oklahoma. He went on to open a second branch in Weatherford, Oklahoma, and rebranded the banks as First Summit Bank. Brad met many amazing people and made so many great friends throughout his banking career.

Brad was not only proficient in banking he was also an expert on anything with wheels, especially classic cars!

Brad is survived by his wife of 44 years Lita of the home; daughters: Brittany Yeager (Brandon), Weatherford and Bralee Benda (Austin), Kingfisher; son, Bryce Giblet (Kadree), Hydro; grandchildren: Bailey Yeager, Triston Yeager, and Hailee Giblet; and his special fur friend Sissy. He is also survived by his brothers: Richard Giblet (Toni), and Allen Giblet (Jan); sisters: Louise Capps (Jim), Fran Horton, Sammie Edmondson (Jack), Glenda Trammel; His brothers-in-law Darrell Mosburg (Debbie) Kelly Mosburg (Kim), and Don Mosburg; and sister-in-law Jackie Dickerson (Dale). As well as many nieces and nephews and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents A.L. and Betty Giblet, his father and mother-in-law Leon and Joy Mosburg, and his brothers-in-law Phil Horton and Joe Trammel.

**Darlene Woods**

Linda “Darlene” Woods passed away on Thursday, September 4, 2024, at the age of 80 in Lubbock, Texas. She was born on September 12, 1943, in Sayre, OK.



During her early years, she was an avid basketball player and enjoyed riding horses. Later, her hobbies included raising cattle on the ranch, water sports, and flying, having earned her pilot license. Above all, Darlene loved animals and valued spending quality time with her family, and friends creating lasting memories.

Darlene is survived by her daughters, Shelley Assiter (Scott) and Wendy Woods. Her legacy continues through her grandchildren, Kristen Green (Cress), Haily Wells (Lair), Mark Woods (Kellee), Amanda Assiter, and her eleven great-grandchildren, along with numerous nieces and nephews. She is also survived by her sisters, Joy Dorman, and Carol Haley (Steve), and brother, Monte Plummer.

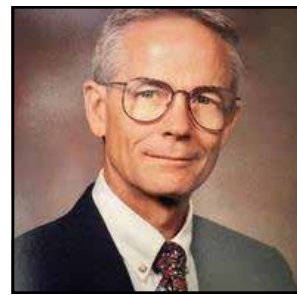
Darlene was a successful real estate owner and operator, demonstrating her strong-willed and independent nature throughout her career. Her faith was an integral part of her life, actively participating in the South Park Baptist Church.

Darlene was preceded in death by her parents, Charles and Eunice Plummer; sons: Brent Bartz, and Barry Woods and husband Harold Woods.

Darlene’s commitment to philanthropy is reflected in her support for numerous charities across Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma.

**Stuart Burchett**

Long-time resident of Weatherford Alfred “Stuart” Burchett passed away in Weatherford on September 6, at the age of 83.



Stuart was born September 29, 1940, in Seiling, Oklahoma to Ray and Vera (Jackson) Burchett.

Stewart was the fourth of five children. He grew up and attended school in Seiling, Oklahoma, and graduated from Seiling High School in 1958. Stuart graduated from Southwestern State College (SWOSU) in 1962 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Chemistry. Stuart continued his education, earning his PhD in Analytical Chemistry from Kansas State University. He taught Chemistry at Southwestern Oklahoma State University for 33 years, retiring in 1999.

Stuart was the second Professor ever to be awarded the prestigious Bernhardt Academic Excellence Award in 1995. Stuart was also awarded the SWOSU Alumni Association Emeritus Award in 2018 and has both an Analytical Chemistry Scholarship and an Analytical Chemistry Award named after him.

Stuart was a long-time and active member of The Federated Church of Weatherford.

Stuart was a Court Appointed Special Advocate Volunteer for CASA of Southwest Oklahoma. Before getting involved with CASA, Stuart helped get the Multi-County Youth & Family Services children’s home in Clinton started. Stuart was a participant in forming the Weatherford Environment Action Group. He even had a day named after him, declared the “Stuart Burchett Day,” in 2014 by Mayor Mike Brown in appreciation of his service on the Environmental Advisory Board.

Stuart made numerous contributions to his community over the years and was loved by everyone who had the privilege of knowing him.

Stuart very much loved his family and friends. He also cared deeply for the many students he was privileged to teach.

Stuart’s final wish was that his cremated remains be scattered in Lake City, Colorado, where he and his family spent many years vacationing. His ashes will be scattered along with Stacey’s ashes near the family cabin.

Stuart is survived by his wife of 62 years Carolyn, daughter Julee and her partner Maryann of Minneola, Florida, daughter-in-law Karen of Littleton, Colorado, and four grandchildren: Riley, Libby, Kylee and Jaxson.

Stuart was preceded in death by his son Stacey; parents Ray and Vera (Jackson) Burchett, and siblings Phyllis, Wendall, Beth and Steve.

The family would like to thank Homestead Assisted Living and Memory Care of Weatherford, and Shepherd Home Health & Hospice of Clinton for the love and care they provided for Stuart in his later years.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to CASA of Western Oklahoma or the American Cancer Society for Pancreatic Cancer Research.

**Cindy Buxton**

Cynthia Kelley Buxton was born on December 11, 1961, the daughter of Donald “Don” and Glenda Kelley and passed away into the loving arms of her Savior on August 31, 2024, at the age of 62 years, 8 months, and 20 days.



Cindy graduated from Weatherford High School in 1980 and continued her education at Southwestern Oklahoma State University, graduating with a Bachelor’s Degree in Accounting.

During her adult life, she worked for the Internal Revenue Service.

After her retirement, Cindy enjoyed shopping, horseback riding, traveling, spending her days with her family, and rock and roll.

Cindy is survived by her mother; one daughter; two grandchildren; two brothers; two sisters; and numerous nieces and nephews.








Cindy was preceded in death by her son; father; and one brother.



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Krystal Blackwell / WW

In association with the Weatherford Chamber of Commerce, Frida's Mexican Grill & Bar recently held a Grand Opening Ceremony. The establishment is located at 111 W Main St. in Weatherford.

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Connections Food & Resource Center / Facebook

Timber (8), Teddy (3), and Tillie (5) Akin set up their own lemonade and cookies stand, then donated their sales to the Connections Food and Resource Center in Weatherford.

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# HIGHER GROUND

## Finding Forgiveness



The time was 7:49. A.M. December 7, 1941. Mitsuo Fuchida was leading a squadron of 360 Japanese fighters over the island of Oahu, Hawaii.

Seeing the American fleet peacefully at anchor below his plane, he smiled as he ordered to his men: "All squadrons, attack!"

"Tora, Tora, Tora," the attack had begun. On that day which shall live "in infamy," 5 battleships were destroyed and 14 other ships were sunk or damaged.

More than 2,300 Americans lay dead or dying. Fuchida later described the day as the most "thrilling exploit of my career."

At the same time, Sergeant Jacob Deshazer was on K.P. duty at his base in Oregon. When he heard the news over the radio he threw a potato against the wall, screaming, "The Japs are going to have to pay for this."

Some months later, Deshazer volunteered to join a special squadron being formed by Jimmy Dolittle to take the war to the Japanese in a daring bombing raid over Tokyo.

While it had little military success it was a morale booster to the U.S. But Deshazer's bomber ran out of fuel before it could reach a safe area in China, and he and his crew were forced to bail out over Japanese held territory.

Deshazer would spend the next 40 months as a prisoner of Japan, 34 in solitary confinement, during which time he was routinely tortured. And his already burning hatred of the Japanese was fanned into an inferno.

Fellow prisoners were executed or died of starvation, disease, or torture. Fuchido went on to fight other battles for Japan. Three years later, after Nagasaki and Hiroshima, Japan would be forced to surrender.

Meanwhile, solitary confinement gave Deshazer time to ponder the human condition. He wondered what could cause such hatred among fellow human beings. He remembered some Sunday School lessons from childhood and asked his guards for a Bible.

Two years after his capture he finally received one and he eagerly devoured it, gulping down lessons on mercy, forgiveness, and redemption. He would later write, "I discovered that God had given me new spiritual eyes and that when I looked at the enemy officers and guards who had starved and beaten my companion so cruelly, I found my bitter hatred had changed to loving pity...I prayed for God to forgive my torturers and I determined by the aid of Christ to do my best to acquaint these people with the message of salvation."

On August 20, 1945, a smiling Japanese guard opened the door and said, "War over, you go home now." Deshazer wrote a book called "I was a Prisoner of Japan" and after studying at Seattle Pacific College, returned to Japan, this time as a missionary to his former enemies.

In the meantime, Fuchida, tried to return to a life of farming. He was deeply shamed by Japan's loss. He was married but had a mistress in Tokyo where he traveled frequently. He led a very unsatisfying life.

In October 1948, while getting off the train in Tokyo, he saw an American handing out leaflets in Japanese. The title caught his eye. "I Was a Prisoner of Japan."

He was taken with Deshazer's Christian testimony. A friend told him to get a Bible. He bought one for 40 yen. He was struck by Jesus' words in Luke 23:34, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

He later wrote, "I was impressed that I was certainly one of those for whom Jesus had prayed. The many men I had killed had been slaughtered in the name of patriotism, for I did not understand the love of Christ..."

He went on to become an evangelist throughout Japan and Asia, and he and Deshazer eventually became close friends. Seventy-five years ago the two men were bitter enemies. Yet they became brothers in Christ, a testimony to the power of God's grace.

To comment: 580-302-1142, [jhm82@outlook.com](mailto:jhm82@outlook.com)

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# LOCAL AND AREA NEWS



**Mike Smith**  
News Director

## SWOSU's Charitable Hunt Returns for its Fifth Year September 13th



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**THE SWOSU™ CHARITABLE HUNT**

**REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!**

**Austin Prickett**  
RFBO Marketing Manager

The 5th Annual Southwestern Oklahoma State University (SWOSU) Charitable Hunt is September 13 in Devol, a small town in southern Oklahoma. The SWOSU Foundation, Inc., is pleased to announce that MA+ Architecture is serving as the event's Official Sponsor.

MA+, with offices in Oklahoma City, Weatherford, and Norman, is an award-winning architecture firm, providing professional services in architecture, interior design master planning, school bond planning, 3D visualization and furniture selection since 1968.

"Philanthropic partners like MA+ are invaluable supporters of SWOSU's mission," said SWOSU President Dr. Diana R. Lovell. "We are deeply grateful to MA+ for generously sponsoring the 2024 SWOSU Charitable Hunt."

Proceeds from The Hunt will be allocated to the Dr. Ken Rose Memorial Fund, which benefits SWOSU Parks & Recreation Department.

This unique event will be facilitated by BlackOak Farms, a full-service hunting operation that is integrated with traditional agriculture practices of farming and ranching. A sporting clay competition will be followed by a late afternoon/early evening guided dove hunt. Participants will be treated to a cocktail reception, dinner, live auction and entertainment following the hunt.

The event will provide philanthropic support to SWOSU's Department of Parks & Recreation Management (PRM), which seeks to facilitate the development of professionals in the fields of conservation management, parks and recreation management, sport management, parks law enforcement and wildland fire management.

Ryan Haggard, chair of the SWOSU PRM Department, said the program offers exceptional, specialized coursework and experiences to SWOSU students. Unique and expanding rapidly, SWOSU PRM is the only program of its kind in southwestern Oklahoma.

Registration for the Charitable Hunt is still open but very limited. Cocktail hour and dinner-only registration is also available for non-hunters who wish to join the fun with SWOSU alumni and friends.

To register, visit [www.HuntWithSWOSU.com](http://www.HuntWithSWOSU.com). For more information, contact Jessica Perry via email at [jessica.perry@swosu.edu](mailto:jessica.perry@swosu.edu) or call 580-774-3287.

The SWOSU Charitable Hunt is organized by the SWOSU Foundation, Inc., which was established in 1977 to promote philanthropy and distribute funds to support the activities and programs of SWOSU.

For more information on the SWOSU Foundation, please visit [www.SWOSUFoundation.com](http://www.SWOSUFoundation.com), visit the Burton House on the Weatherford Campus, or call 580-774-3267.

**CLINTON CC / MIDTOWN DEMOLITION** - Clinton City Council, acting as the industrial authority, has moved forward with the demolition of the Midtown Travel Inn after not receiving any requests for proposals for use of the site, says City Manager Robert Johnston. Demolition of the site was carried out on Monday, September 9.


**CLINTON CC / HOSPITAL** - Clinton City Council has approved a line of credit agreement with the Clinton Hospital authority doing business as Clinton Regional Hospital. Chief Executive Officer Len Lacefield believes the hospital will become cash flow positive by the end of October.

**CUSTER CO / DISTRICT 1 ROAD WORK** - Custer County District 1 Commissioner Wade Anders says he has several road projects that he hopes to get to next week. The access roads Anders focused on the most were 2240 Rd (28th Street in Clinton) and 2400 Rd (Custer Street in Weatherford). Anders also says his district personnel have been working to catch up on mowing.

**CUSTER CO / DISTRICT 2 ROAD WORK** - District 2 Commissioner Bruce Walker gave an update on street projects in Thomas and Weatherford during this week's Custer County Commission meeting. Thomas's street project was the most focused on, with the asphalt/concrete replacement coming along nicely. Additionally, Walker says the Lawter Road project is also making good progress.

**CLINTON / LUNCHEON** - The Clinton Chamber of Commerce will host a luncheon later this month says President Julie Caldwell. At the event, Clinton Superintendent Tyler Bridges will inform the chamber on the Nance Elementary move-in. Additionally, Caldwell said the new middle school construction has "come a long way, even just this week." The luncheon is planned for September 25th. RSVP to the Clinton Chamber of Commerce.

**CLINTON / SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION** - Clinton Schools Superintendent Tyler Bridges says building projects in the district are making a lot of headway. Nance Elementary has finished construction after nearly two years of work. Southwest Elementary is expected to be completed by Fall Break. Bridges was elated to report that the middle school project is running on-time, if not a bit ahead of schedule. "If you've driven by the middle school in the last week... you might have noticed it has just come to life."



**WEEKLY SHOUTOUTS!**

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**Happy Birthday Wishes for September 11th** - Nathan Albright, Tommy Baldwin, Jennifer Friesen, Shannyn Gaffney, Randy Gilbert, Vince Mavity, Patches Mitchell, Terry Pearey, Irvin Schmidt, Tyler Sloan, Al Swaney, Jessica Vassar, Miley Whitley, BJ Whitley, Miley Whitley; **September 12th** - Emma Kay Christian, Colton Gay, Reonna Gossen, Betty Jo Hill, Anita Malone, James Mitchell, Ellen Reel, Grant Schamburg, Nikki Slagell; **September 13th** - Colby Ellis, Devin Flores, Liz Hinojosa, Janie Hunter, Lora Jones, Tori Laird, Don Lynch, Johnathan McCoy, Maurillo Sabanilla, Tammy Sperle, Amanda Williams, Star Williams; **September 14th** - Tanya Garrison, Randy Goossen, Angie House, Trinity Howell, Lauren Jones, Slade Nightengale, Donna Osborn, Jerina Pearey, Ty Short; **September 15th** - Jennifer Billy, Blair Cook, Sherri Goeringer, Chris Kreizenbeck, John Seifried, Turner Sharry, Jennifer Thiessen, Larry Wright; **September 16th** - Jadan Euing, Dan Jacobsma, Benjamin Smart; **September 17th** - Louise Aaron, Jessica Benevento, Crystal Biswell, Edith Entz, Lance Fuhrmann, Monica Garcia, Nannie Hines, William Howell, Alene Kurtz, Emma Ratterree, Connie Ringler, Scott Robinson, General Thomas Stafford, Todd Wilson;

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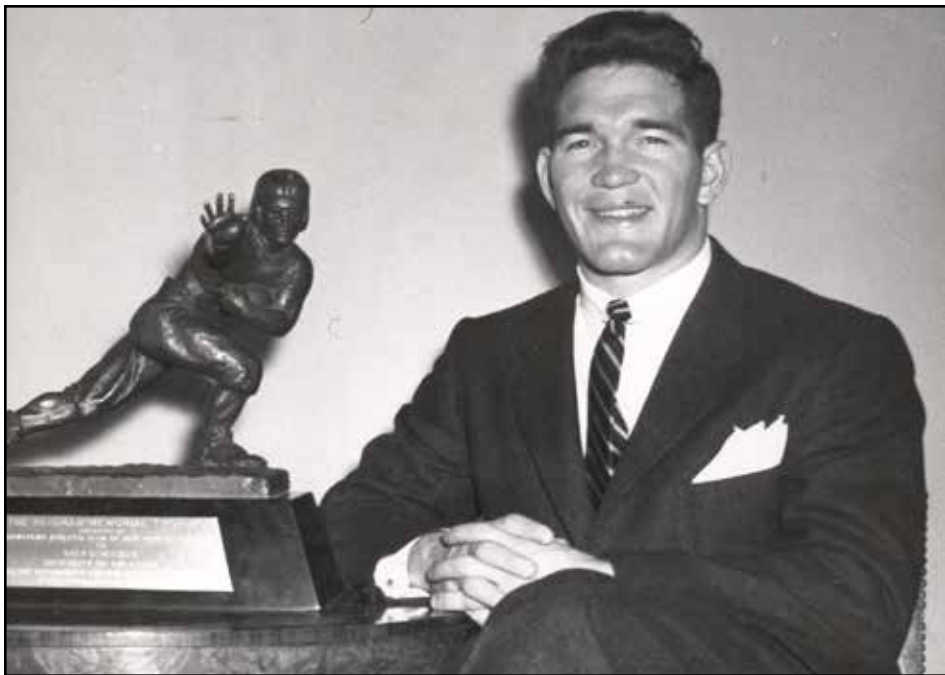
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# Oklahoma History: Billy Vessels, OU's Breakout Starring Halfback



Courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society

**Billy Vessels rushing against Notre Dame in his breakout performance that secured him as the frontrunner for the 1952 Heisman Trophy recipient.**



Courtesy Heisman Historical Archives

**Billy Vessels with his Heisman Trophy during his ceremony (1952). He is the first player to win for Oklahoma and the first to win with over 1,000 yards rushing.**

**Chase Wright**  
Staff Writer

Football season is here and it's only fitting to revisit a star of the past. Billy Vessels might not be a household name today, but in the 1950s, he was a football hero. From Cleveland, Oklahoma, Vessels grew up in the small town and his natural talent would eventually lead him to the University of Oklahoma. At the time, Norman's team was being coached by the legendary Bud Wilkinson who spoke with Billy in high school and greatly influenced his decision to don the crimson and cream. Billy came to the Sooners as a halfback and shared the backfield with quarterback Eddie Crowder.

During the 1950 season, Billy helped lead the team to, and to ultimately win, the national championship game with 15 touchdowns. The National Football Foundation inducted Billy into the Hall of Fame in 1974 and cites one of his greatest performances being during the Oklahoma-Texas game that year, a rivalry built in stone and a game that became a generational classic.

During the season, both teams were favorites to become national champions. Trailing with four minutes left to play, the Sooners called Billy's number, placing their trust in the fresh sophomore. It was the right call. Billy broke through to the endzone for his second touchdown putting Oklahoma in the lead for the final score 14-13. Oklahoma secured their national championship ticket a few weeks later in a game against Nebraska, and they clinched the #1 spot by delivering the only loss Texas had that season.

Two years later, in 1952, Billy was named as an All-American and became Oklahoma's first Heisman Trophy winner with a season total rushing yards of 1072 and 17 touchdowns. Billy won the Heisman with the selection poll giving him 98 first place votes and 525 points. Second and third place received 367 and 329 points, respectively. Coach Wilkinson told a reporter from the Austin American-Statesman newspaper about Billy, "He has been a fine team player for us, a fine influence on our whole squad. We're all very happy for him".

The College Football Hall of Fame inducted Billy in 1974. Despite this, Vessels remained humble about his successes. He often credited his teammates and coaches for any and all achievements, refusing to be in the spotlight alone. His reputation for modesty and ability to change the outcome of a game with a single play made him a fan favorite.

Following college, he joined the Western Interprovincial Football Union, before it became the Canadian Football League (CFL). He signed under the Edmonton Eskimos. New team, new stage, new country, but same Billy. He led the pro league in rushing and became the first player to win the Schenley Award, which became the Most Outstanding Player Award that annually designates the best player in the CFL. Billy cut his time in the Canadian league short when he joined the US Army in 1954 and played for the service team in Fort Sill.


After leaving the service, Vessels joined the NFL with the Baltimore Colts, a team who had drafted him years ago.

Billy initially declined their pick to join the Canadian league. While with the Colts, Billy ran into injury issues and had limited playing time. With the other Colts running back Lenny Moore having a breakout season, Colt's Head Coach Weeb Ewbank moved Billy to a wide set position to make use of his speed on the edges, the beginnings of the wide receiver position. Billy had some great performances, leading the team in rushing in a couple games, returning kickoffs with an average of 23 yards, and receiving for 177 yards and a touchdown.

However, Billy ultimately decided to hang up his cleats and retired after that 1956 season. He moved to Florida and worked in construction and development. In the 1970s, he joined the horse breeding Florida Parimutuel Commission where he worked his way up to serving as its executive director. He served on the South Florida council serving 3 counties and worked in real estate with his wife while raising his children.

Billy passed in Coral Gables, Florida, in 2001, and in September of 2003, his hometown of Cleveland, Oklahoma renamed its high school stadium to the "Billy Vessels Memorial Stadium". In 2007, the University of Oklahoma gave his Heisman statue to Cleveland, Oklahoma as part of the State Centennial Celebration. OU commissioned new replacement statues and Billy stands in Heisman Park at the Memorial Stadium in Norman, OK and outside his high school in front of the gymnasium and event center.


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# Join the Fight Against Hunger During Hunger Action Month 2024



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**Austin Prickett**  
RFBO Marketing Manager

The Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma encourages all Oklahomans to take action against hunger this September during Hunger Action Month. Throughout the month-long campaign, the Regional Food Bank joins Feeding America network members in raising awareness and inspiring action against hunger. Every action counts, whether it's donating, advocating, volunteering or spreading the word online.

"As one of the hungriest states in the nation, no action is too big or too small," said Stacy Dykstra, chief executive officer of the Regional Food Bank. "Just take action. Whether that is by wearing orange for hunger awareness, starting a food or fund drive or joining us for a volunteer shift."

Sign up for a volunteer shift at the Regional Food Bank at [rfbo.org/volunteer](http://rfbo.org/volunteer) or organize a food and fund drive in your community by visiting [rfbo.org/foodandfunds](http://rfbo.org/foodandfunds). Throughout the month, the Regional Food Bank urges everyone to join them for a variety of activities to raise awareness about hunger in the state:

Those unable to attend a Hunger Action Month event can help fight hunger by donating to the Regional Food Bank. Learn more about Hunger Action Month by visiting [rfbo.org/hunger-action-month](http://rfbo.org/hunger-action-month).

Through September 30, every donation to the Regional Food Bank's Food for Kids Programs is matched dollar-for-dollar, up to \$315,000, thanks to the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma, Chesapeake Energy, Mark and Beth Brewer, Marathon Oil, Dolese Bros. Corp., Energy Transfer, David Gorham and David and Lezlie Hudiburg. Donate at [foodforkids.us](http://foodforkids.us).

### September 10: Hunger Action Day!

Wear orange to promote hunger awareness in Oklahoma. Post a photo of yourself wearing orange and talk about why you choose to fight hunger. Be sure to tag the Regional Food Bank in your post and use the hashtag #HungerActionMonth24. The Regional Food Bank also encourages Oklahomans to light their homes and businesses orange on September 10! The City of Oklahoma City's Skydance Bridge will be lit orange the evening of September 10 in recognition of Hunger Action Day.

### September 15 - 21: Voter Registration Week

National Voter Registration Day is September 17. Encourage your friends and neighbors to register to vote. Visit [ok.gov/election](http://ok.gov/election) to learn more about voting in Oklahoma.

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Courtesy Kelley Schmidt

Harlie Chism (Weatherford Lady Eagles) slides home on a squeeze play just as Lou Wyatt (Elk City Elkettes) is given the ball. Final Score: Weatherford 5 - 4

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## SWOSU Falls in First Game of the 2024 Football Season to Ouachita



	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Southwestern Okla.	0	0	0	3	3
#19 Ouachita	7	21	14	0	42

**Jon Chidester**  
SWOSU Media Relations

SWOSU Football fell 42-3 to a nationally ranked Ouachita Baptist on Thursday night inside Cliff Harris Stadium to begin the 2024 season.

The Bulldogs went toe-to-toe with the Tigers in the first quarter with back-to-back stops on defense to start the game including a fumble recovery from Cadynce Hall on Ouachita's second drive. Following the fumble, SWOSU moved down the field with a 13 play, 62-yard drive that picked up four first downs along the way, getting all the way to the Tiger 21-yard line, before a fumble of their own halted the drive and seemingly shifted momentum for good.

Ouachita capitalized two plays later from a 73-yard touchdown pass, and then put up another 21 points on three consecutive drives in the second quarter to lead things 28-0 by halftime.

Two more third quarter scores went unanswered before the Dawgs finally broke the seal in the fourth quarter. Jaylen Niedo forced and recovered a fumble and Ethan McBee knocked down a 25-yard field goal shortly thereafter for SWOSU's lone points of the game.

The Dawgs finished with 247 yards of total offense – 150 through the air and 97 on the ground. Ouachita totaled 334 yards of offense, 296 of which came in the first half.

Chandler Galban and Kai Kunz split time at quarterback. Galban was 7-of-9 for 56 yards. Kunz finished 13-of-21 with 94 yards and an interception but had success running the ball with a team high 85 yards rushing on 15 carries. Baylor Nash grabbed six catches for 48 yards.

Defensively, SWOSU recovered three fumbles. Both teams had three turnovers, as the Bulldogs coughed up two fumbles of their own and threw another interception. Logan Monroe, SWOSU's leading tackler a year ago, totaled seven more including a sack.

After a road game to start the year, the Bulldogs will get a long week of preparation leading up to the home opener on Saturday, September 14 when Arkansas-Monticello comes to Weatherford. Kickoff for that game is set for 6:00 pm.



*Courtesy SWOSU Foundation*

Friday night the Corn Bible Academy Crusaders took on Kremlin Hillsdale At the Corn complex. This was the first game of the season for Crusaders and the game is finished by halftime. 40-6. Luke Zybach (pictured) had six tackles for loss and multiple hurries on the QB

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<b>SAYRE EAGLES</b>	vs. Thomas	<b>L 8-20</b>
<b>THOMAS TERRIERS</b>	@ Sayre	<b>W 20-8</b>
<b>WATONGA EAGLES</b>	@ Hobart	<b>L 18-34</b>
<b>SWOSU BULLDOGS</b>	@ Ouachita	<b>L 3-42</b>

Tune in to the Chuck Edward's SportsCast on The Coyote 95.5 at 7:50am and 5:30pm and NewsTalk 99.3 at 7:40am and 5:30pm for more information. Tune in to the Zoo SportsCast on the Zoo 101.7 at 8:40am & 5:40pm.

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