



Elk City Chamber of Commerce Awarded Over \$200,000 for Route 66 Revitalization Project



Teresa Kilhoffer / WW

The Parker Drilling Company's Rig 114 is located in Elk City on the corner of N Madison Street and Route 66. It was once the world's tallest and deepest oil tower, standing at over 180 ft. tall and reaching nearly six miles into the Earth's crust. Elk City has housed the rig since 1991, and it has been a popular attraction on Route 66 ever since.

Susie Cupp
Elk City Chamber President

The Elk City Chamber of Commerce is excited to announce it has been awarded over \$200,000 through the Route 66 Revitalization Grant Program to enhance one of Elk City's most iconic landmarks: *Parker Drilling Rig 114*. This grant is a major step forward in our ongoing mission to preserve and promote Elk City's place on the historic Route 66 corridor. Parker Drilling Rig 114 is a symbol of our community's rich oil history and frontier spirit, and this funding ensures it remains a destination for generations to come.

The Chamber thanks the Oklahoma Department of Commerce and all stakeholders involved in securing this grant and looks forward to sharing progress updates with the community.

We would also like to thank Lisa Church (SWODA) for helping us facilitate the grant application.

This significant investment will fund a comprehensive improvement project that includes:

- Lighting and Uplighting
- Landscaping
- Painting and Equipment Restoration
- Digital Signage for Historical Content
- Parking Improvements
- Installation of City Benches
- Installation of Extra Trash Receptacles



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Oklahoma History: The Life and Death of Charles “Pretty Boy” Floyd



Provided by the FBI's Public Records

Charles “Pretty Boy” Floyd’s FBI mugshot, taken on June 22, 1933, following his arrest for bank robbery. This photograph was circulated during his time as Public Enemy No. 1. In various wanted posters, announcements and newspapers like these.



Provided by the FBI's Public Records

The body of Charles “Pretty Boy” Floyd after his death in East Liverpool, Ohio, on October 22, 1934. Law Enforcement officers and a coroner inspect the remains of the outlaw following the fatal shootout.

Chase Wright
Staff Writer

Charles Arthur Floyd, better known as “Pretty Boy” Floyd, was born on February 3, 1904, in Adairsville, Georgia. In 1911, his family moved to Oklahoma, settling near Akins in Sequoyah County. Growing up in poverty, Floyd turned to crime early, with his first arrest at 18 for stealing \$3.50 from a local post office.

At age 20, he married Ruby Hardgrave and fathered a son, Jack Dempsey Floyd. For a brief time, he tried the honest life. But there wasn’t enough money in farmwork. In 1925, a payroll heist in St. Louis earned him a few years behind bars. Fellow inmates started his infamous nickname of “Pretty Boy” for his good looks and slick style, a name Floyd hated for the rest of his life.

After his release, Floyd became involved with criminal gangs in Kansas City, Missouri, and began a series of bank robberies across the Midwest. Between 1929 and 1934, he was involved in numerous heists, often targeting institutions in

Oklahoma, Ohio, and Kentucky. Floyd gained a reputation for his supposed acts of generosity, with stories circulating that he destroyed mortgage documents during robberies to free debt-ridden farmers, earning him the moniker “Robin Hood of the Cookson Hills.”

That notoriety helped him build alliances along the way. He partnered with men like George Birdwell, a fellow Oklahoman, and later Adam Richetti, a young outlaw from Missouri. He moved through a tight network of hideouts, from the back roads of Cookson Hills to the alleys of Kansas City. Friends and family sheltered him. Strangers too. In the Dust Bowl days, resentment against banks ran deep, and many saw Floyd not as a criminal, but as one of their own fighting back.

Still, Floyd’s criminal activities made him a target for law enforcement. In 1934, following the death of John Dillinger, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover named Floyd “Public Enemy No. 1.”

Despite the bloodshed tied to his name, Floyd

stayed fiercely loyal to his family. He often returned home in secret to visit his son or help relatives struggling through the Depression.

He paid off medical bills for neighbors. He bought groceries for families teetering on starvation. In private, they knew him as “Charlie,” a loyal son, brother, and father, not as the face on America’s “Public Enemy #1” wanted poster.

Eventually, the manhunt caught up to him and on October 22, 1934, Floyd was shot and killed by FBI agents in a cornfield near East Liverpool, Ohio. His last words were, “I’m Charles Arthur Floyd”.

His body was returned to Oklahoma, where an estimated 20,000 to 40,000 people attended his funeral in Sallisaw, marking one of the largest funerals in the state’s history.

Floyd’s legacy remains complex; while law enforcement viewed him as a dangerous criminal, many remembered him as a complicated folk hero, a son of the Dust Bowl who fought the only way he knew how.

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LOCAL AND AREA NEWS


Mike Smith
News Director

“Space City Paddle Battle” Sees Huge Turnout from Across West OK



Weatherford Area Pickleball Association / Facebook

Weatherford recently hosted their third annual pickleball tournament. Attendees from across western Oklahoma stopped by to compete, watch, and participate in the event’s many raffles.



Montgomery Malone / Malone Video & Photography

Mac McCune (left), the Chairman of the Weatherford Area Pickleball Association, participated in the Men’s 3.5/4.0 Division and managed to score 2nd Place alongside Dr. Brian Bluth (right).

Men's Open (1st received \$500) 1st: James Seagraves/Michael Moody 2nd: Joseph Campbell/Joseph Sraader 3rd: Jake Brydges/Kenny Cowell	Women's 3.0 19+ & 50+ 1st: Isabel Li/Melody Li 2nd: Taylor Lewis/Mallory Hankins 3rd: Amanda Currier/Te Dragg
Men's 2.5 19+ & 50+ 1st: Jonathan Young/Karson Howerton 2nd: Allen Carson/Chad Cochran 3rd: Nic Townsend/Christopher Curtis	Women's 3.5/4.0 19+ & 50+ 1st: Arlee Copeland/Amy Bluth 2nd: Sherry Roden/Kathy Knight 3rd: Juli Cowden/Amy Poyner
Men's 3.0 19+ 1st: Chris Forbes/Sutton Hayes 2nd: Ben Cuevas/Alex Nelson 3rd: Richard Pope/Chris Fourcade	Mixed Open (1st received \$500) 1st: James Seagraves/Alex Bowers 2nd: Joe Merrell/Mandy O'Neil 3rd: Brian Richardson/Jennifer Harjo
Men's 3.5 50+ 1st: Chris Jones/Joe Munson 2nd: Jason Doughty/Michael Belter 3rd: Mike Baker/Chris Bivens	Mixed 2.5 19+ 1st: Michael Huang/Isabel Li 2nd: Katelyn Jones/Ivan Ding 3rd: Isaac Han/Ellie Beleleu
Men's 3.5/4.0 19+ 1st: Taiwo Adedipe 2nd: Mac McCune/Brian Bluth 3rd: Addison Augusta/Lewis Timbrook	Mixed 3.0 19+ 1st: Carson Ngo/Melody Li 2nd: Oliver Lackey/Olivia Lackey 3rd: Zach Hunt/Chayse Kirk
Women's 2.5 19+ 1st: Katelyn Jones/Olivia Lackey 2nd: Gabrielle Mangrum/Tara Cuevas 3rd: Valerie Stuart/Kensey Nelson	Mixed 3.0/3.5 50+ 1st: Jason Doughty/Melinda Parsons 2nd: Mike Belter/Martha Moore 3rd: Danny Parsons/Juli Cowden
Women's 2.5 50+ 1st: Cindy Wagner/Tereasa Kirkwood 2nd: Victoria Sturtevant/Jody Wiechmann 3rd: Missy Heard/Terri Harrelson	Mixed 4.0 19+ 1st: Austin Christopher/Dally Halbrooks 2nd: Jacob Kuehn/Sherry Roden 3rd: Jake Brydges/Megan Brydges



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from Weatherford Athletic Department

The Weatherford Lady Eagles’ golf team has been named “Academic State Champions” for having the highest cumulative GPA among all other 4A schools in Oklahoma.

BECKHAM COUNTY / FATALITY - The Oklahoma Highway Patrol says a California man was recently killed when the semi he was driving overturned on Interstate 40, five miles west of Sayre. OHP says 24-year-old Dilpreet Singh was pronounced dead at the scene. Troopers say Singh was driving east on I-40 when his semi departed the road, Singh overcorrected, and the semi overturned.

WATONGA / SHELTER - The Blaine County Sheriff’s Office and Watonga Public Schools have created a partnership to ensure the citizens of Watonga have a safe and secure storm shelter during inclement weather. Sheriff’s deputies will ensure that the storm shelter located at Watonga Elementary will be accessible if a tornado warning is issued. Meanwhile, the storm shelter at Watonga High School will be utilized if necessary. Individuals will enter the west side entrance of the elementary school to access the safe room. If the elementary school becomes crowded, the high school safe room can be utilized. This will be for hours outside the school day.

WRH / RADIOLOGY - Weatherford Regional Hospital CEO Darin Farrell recently told the hospital board that there has been a delay surrounding results on outpatient radiology reports. According to Farrell, the medical staff is seeking alternative solutions to help patients in need of imaging modalities. Farrell expressed how difficult it’s been to find other agencies who are looking for other clients. Bridget Cosby with SSM stated a shortage of radiologists is responsible for the delay in outpatient radiology results.

CLINTON / BLAKEBURN CLINIC - The Blakeburn Clinic in Clinton says Dr. Mark Mann, a highly respected family medicine physician, will join the practice as a concierge physician beginning July 1st. Dr. Mann brings a deep commitment to rural healthcare, patient-centered service, and community care. In the meantime, Dr. Blakeburn will continue to manage patient care and after-hours needs.

CORDELL / NEW SUPERINTENDENT - The Cordell School Board of Education has approved the hiring of a new superintendent. Board President Jeff Jaronek says Sam Belcher has been hired to lead the district beginning July 1st. “We’re really excited to have him come to Cordell,” expressed Jaronek. “I think he brings a lot of expertise, a lot of knowledge, and I think he’s going to fit in the community [well].” Belcher previously served as Mountain View-Gotebo’s Superintendent and is currently a Calumet Principal. He succeeds current Superintendent Travis Victory, who recently submitted his resignation effective at the end of the current school year.

ELK CITY / PD INSTAGRAM - Officials with Elk City Police say the department does not have an Instagram account. Officials say if you come across content shared from an “Elk City Police Department” Instagram account to not engage or share the content as it is not affiliated with Elk City Police and should be considered spam. The department has an official Facebook page as its only social media presence.

WEEKLY SHOUTOUTS!



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Alcohol causing problems? Alcoholics Anonymous meets daily at 928 W. Main, Weatherford. Call (580) 819-0727 for more information. Christian Free Store – Donations of school supplies, clothes, shoes, etc. are needed or if you are in need. Please call (580) 637-2345 or (580) 291-3875. Alfalfa, OK, Community Center “Bible Study,” Every Monday Night from 7:00 to 8:00 Hwy 58. Five miles South of Hwy 152. For more information contact (405) 643-9211. Free and Open to the Public. OK Parkinson’s Alliance, monthly support group meeting the second Thursday of each month, excluding December, at 5:30 p.m. at Weatherford’s Pioneer Center, 1000 Gartrell Place. Patients, caregivers, family or friends are welcome. Questions? Contact OK Parkinson’s Alliance (405) 810-0695 or info@OKpa.org. Iron Sharpens Iron is a Christ-centered adult support group every Tuesday night at 7pm. 233 E Main in Hydro, First Christian Church.

Happy Birthday Wishes for April 23 - Marilyn Baldwin, Shelby Blagg, Lena Cardenas, Tyler Ellis, Andrew Fraser, Adam Fraser, Devon Jordan, Daryl Mosburg, Tom Willis; April 24 - Sandy Duncan, Nikki Frye, Ron Goodman, Mary Harris, Jason Kemper, Shelby Martinez, Greg Mouse, Carol Wahnee, Jill Ward; April 25 - Casey Elston, Gary Eytcheson, Regena Gardner, Mercedes Hampton, Edward Lopez, Bailee Pond, Kacie Roof, Brooke Schneberger, Shaun Skinner, Baylor Watkins, Lonnie Whitson; April 26 - Megan Britton, Peyton Carmin, Micah Dobrinski, Dennis Green, Alex Hicks, Matt Lamm, Denise Lay, Kenneth Maddox, Dakota Meinhardt, Benton Toczko; April 27 - Richard Ballew, Kaden Buckner, Arthula Carmen, Songhawk Fields-Toahty, Melissa Martin, Liz McBrayer, Avry Nailon, Hermon Small; April 28 - Janice Ball, Jacob Bass, Alison Mainers, Jay Martin, Alvin McNeal, Gentry Ortiz, Matthew Sumner; April 29 - Mack Barnes, Ben Brown, Derek Carroll, Mary Frye, Dana Janning, Trent Koch, Summer Lettkeman, Logan Litke, Bailey Mae Matthews, Bruce McLemore, Michelle Nance, Suzzi Rossiter, Vernon Slagle, Cheryl Thomason, J.R. Ussery; April 30 - Tanner Holt, Kenny Lehman, Ryan Lehman, Thomas Martin, Kassie Miller, Steve Owens, Mark Ray, Austin Richardson, Lauren Roles, Jack Schwartz.

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Starkist Tuna Creations, 2.6oz. (All Varieties)		4 for \$5.00	Grape Tomatoes, pint	\$0.99	
Spam Luncheon Meat, 12oz. (All Varieties)		2 for \$7.00	Red Seedless Grapes	\$1.99 lb.	
Food Club Peanut Butter, 16oz.		\$1.89	Yellow Vadalía Onions	\$0.99 lb.	
Old Hearth Wheat Hamburger or Hot Dog Buns, 8ct.		2 for \$4.00	Baby Potatoes, 1.5lb. (Asst. Varieties)	\$2.99	
Duncan Hines Cake Mixes (All Varieties)		\$2.19	Green Asparagus	\$3.99 lb.	
Food Club Baking Chips (All Varieties)		2 for \$7.00	Broccoli	\$1.99	
Hunts Snack Pack Puddings, 4 pack		2 for \$3.00	Frozen		
Kraft Miracle Whip or Mayo, 30oz.		\$6.49	Mrs. Smith Flaky Crust Pies (All Varieties)		\$5.98
Kraft Salad Dressings, 16oz. (All Varieties)		2 for \$7.00	Bella Gardens Fruit (Asst Varieties)		\$2.99
Food Club Ketchup, 20oz.		2 for \$3.00	Cravn Ice Cream, 48oz. (All Varieties)		\$2.99
Vlasic Pickles, 16oz. (Asst Varieties)		\$3.99	Food Club Texas Toast or Bread Sticks		\$2.99
Cheerios Protein Cereals, 11.2oz.		\$5.59	Mr. Dell's Hashbrowns, 24-32oz. (All Varieties)		\$3.99
Hamburgar Helper (All Varieties)		2 for \$3.00	Meat		
Idaho Instant Potatoes, 4oz. (All Varieties)		2 for \$3.00	Boneless Ribeye Steak		\$17.99 lb.
Hunts Spaghetti Sauce, 24oz. (All Varieties)		2 for \$4.00	Boneless Top Sirloin Steak		\$8.59 lb.
American Beauty Pasta, 16oz. (All Varieties)		2 for \$3.00	Boneless Pork Loin Roast		\$2.99 lb.
On The Border Fiesta Tortilla Chips, 15oz.		2 for \$6.00	Pork Spare Ribs		\$2.99 lb.
Food Club Brown or Powdered Sugar, 2 lb. bag		2 for \$4.00	Pilgrims Pride Boneless Chicken Breast		\$3.39 lb.
Dairy		Circle S German Sausage, 2 lb. pkg. (All Varieties)		\$8.79	
Pillsbury Biscuits (All Varieties)		\$2.78	Opas Jalapeno & Cheddar Summer Sausage, 16oz. pkg.		\$5.99
Food Club Real Cream Topping, 6.5oz.		\$1.98	Dry Grocery		
Simply Potatoes (All Varieties)		2 for \$5.00	Charmin, 6 mega rolls		\$5.99
Country Crock Spread, 15oz. (All Varieties)		\$3.49	Dawn Dish Spray, 16oz.		\$4.99
Food Club Orange Juice, 52oz		\$3.99	Kingsford Charcoal, 16 lb. bag (All Varieties)		\$12.99
Food Club Half and Half, pint		2 for \$3.00			
Food Club Heavy Whipping Cream, 16oz.		\$2.99			

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Shining a Light on the Emotional Well-Being of Older Adults in Long-Term Care Facilities



May is Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness about the importance of mental wellness for all ages. As a Long-Term Care Ombudsman, I am committed to advocating for the mental and emotional well-being of our aging population, especially those residing in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and other long-term care settings.

While mental health concerns impact people across all demographics, older adults often face unique challenges—such as isolation, loss, physical decline, and transitions in living arrangements—that can contribute to anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues. Unfortunately, these concerns are frequently overlooked or misunderstood in aging communities.

Mental health doesn't diminish with age—if anything, the need for meaningful connection, dignity, and emotional support becomes more critical. Residents in long-term care settings deserve not only high-quality physical care but also compassionate mental and emotional support.

According to the CDC, nearly 1 in 5 adults aged 55 or older experience some type of mental health concern. Yet, too often, these issues are dismissed as “normal aging,” leading to underdiagnosis and

inadequate treatment. This Mental Health Awareness Month, we urge families, caregivers, healthcare professionals, and policymakers to prioritize the emotional needs of older adults.

How You Can Help:


1. Visit and engage with your loved ones regularly.
2. Support programs that foster social connection and purpose for seniors.
3. Encourage open conversations about emotional wellness.

As an ombudsman, I stand ready to listen, support, and advocate for the rights and dignity of every resident. Let us use this month to recommit ourselves to ensuring that aging with mental wellness is not the exception—but the expectation. If you would like to volunteer or have any other questions or concerns regarding the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program, please contact your local ombudsman supervisor, Chloe Nutley, by calling 580-821-4068 or emailing chloe@swoda.org


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HIGHER GROUND

Show Me the Way I Should Go



Jim Morrison

“Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul. “Psalms 143:8. I memorized this verse years ago—even set it to a tune so I could remember it. To me it is a way of beginning my day with a renewed understanding that everything that will happen to me that day will first pass through the filter of God’s unfailing love.

His love is not diminished through my failures or weaknesses. Nothing I can do or fail to do will cause His love to fail. I can walk with confidence that I live in the shelter of His grace. The only condition for me to sense that love is that I “have put my trust in Him.” If I trust my gifts, my work ethic, my “get’er done” attitude, I will ultimately fail or fall prey to a self-righteous, prideful attitude which diminished the glory reserved for God alone.

In the many possibilities and options for the day, I need God to “show me the way I should go.” There are many things that could consume my time that are eternally worthless. I pray, “Lord, may I not be controlled by pleasure, convenience, or by others. Control my heart that I can give myself to those things that count for eternity.” Since the goal of a follower of Christ is to take on His image, I must constantly filter my thoughts, words, and actions on the basis of, “is this Christ-like? Does this reflect the ways of God?”

Then, I must always remember that I live under His Lordship. To God alone do I “lift up my soul.” I am reminded that “Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.” Heb. 4:13. It is not a walk of fear that I must monitor every moment lest I fall under His wrath, but simply a joyful adventure of faith; trusting the Holy Spirit to instruct and guide me as He promised to do.

Joni Eareckson Tada has long been one of my heroes. Paralyzed from her neck down from a diving accident when she was 17, she has been a tremendous example of a life lived to the glory of God through ministry to others, in spite of, or perhaps because of her handicap. In her book “A Quiet Place in a Crazy World,” she shares the secret of her power.

“I have determined that my bed is to be my place of prayer. Ken helps me out of my chair and lays me down around 7:30 every evening and that means I have plenty of time. How blessed I am because of my disability! Other wives are doing the second load of laundry, folding towels, or putting the third kid to bed. And I am paralyzed in bed. What a privilege! My bedroom is my place of prayer. My bed used to be a ‘bed of affliction.’ No longer. Now it’s my favorite place to be. I’m kneeling with Jesus in the Garden. I’m watching with him for an hour. And sometimes I can’t wait to meet with him there.”

Do you have a “quiet place” to meet with the One who loves and longs to meet with you?

To comment: 1580-302-1142, jnm82@outlook.com

SPORTS

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SWOSU Lady Bulldogs Fall in the Final Inning of GAC Quarterfinals



Chase Wright
Staff Writer

SWOSU Softball's season came to an end in walkoff fashion in the opening round of the GAC Tournament, falling short against 2-seeded Oklahoma Baptist 3-2.

SWOSU closes out the year 22-25, representing its most wins since 2012. It was also the first postseason appearance for the Dawgs since 2019.

After a scoreless first inning, the Dawgs loaded the bases in the top of the second, trying to take an early lead. However, a Chesnie Hewitt pop-up ended the inning, stranding all three runners.

The third inning saw the first lead change, as a Riley Lusk single brought in Taylor McMahon to give SWOSU a 1-0 lead. Oklahoma Baptist quickly responded in the bottom of the third, with GAC Player of the Year Sammie Green knotting up the game with a single through the left side.

A sacrifice fly gave OBU the lead in the bottom of the fourth, but SWOSU responded with a run of their own.

Hewitt reached base on a successful bunt, stole second, and advanced to home on a Jaydn Hook single.

Neither team could gain an advantage in the next four half-innings, sending the game to the bottom of the seventh with the Bison at bat. OBU singled to open the inning before a miscommunication on a sacrifice bunt left runners safe at first and second with no outs. A sacrifice bunt by the leadoff hitter put the Bison runners on second and third with one out, and they capitalized on the moment with the next batter singling to right center, ending the game and the season for the Bulldogs.

Hewitt and McMahon led the way with two hits apiece and were the only players to score. SWOSU racked up eight hits, none of which were extra-base hits, and committed zero errors defensively.

Alexis Taylor finished her freshman campaign 14-11 after taking the loss. She pitched a complete game, giving up eight hits and three runs with four walks and three strikeouts in 29 batters faced.

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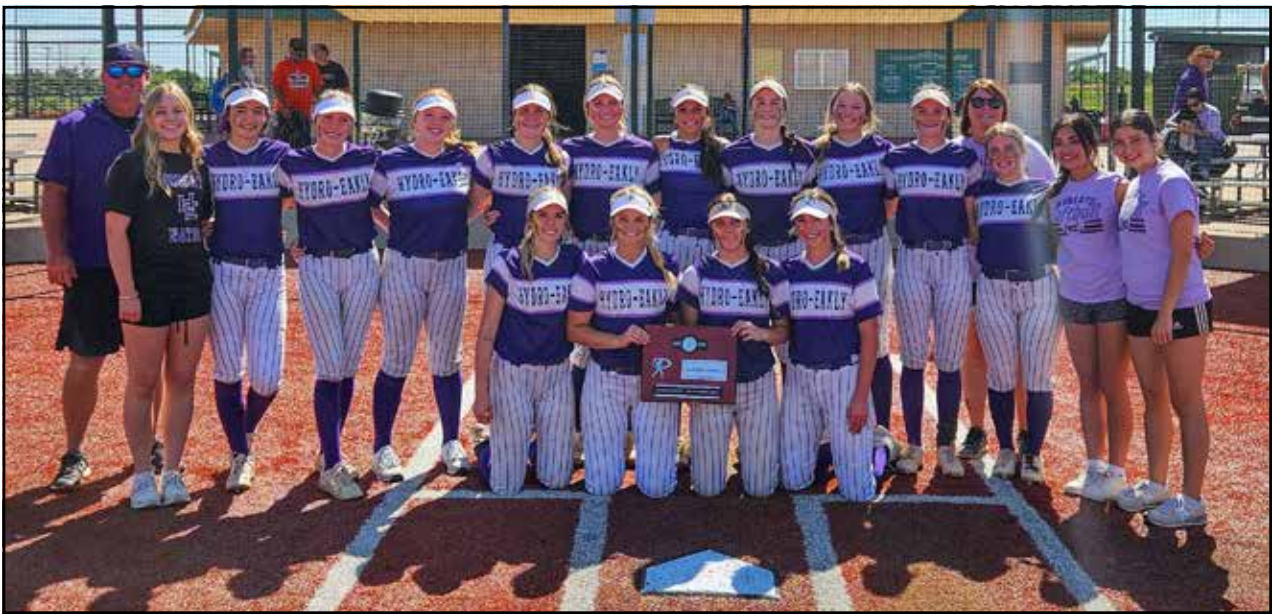
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from Hydro-Eakly Public Schools

On Wednesday, May 7, The Hydro-Eakly Lady Bobcasts will travel to Firelake Ballpark in Shawnee to compete in the OSSAA Slow Pitch State Championships.



from SWOSU Athletics

SWOSU Softball had four players named to Great American All-Conference teams, headlined by Chesnie Hewitt (left) who earned first team recognition. Jadyn Hook, Alexis Taylor, and Taylor McMahon (pictured, in order) were all named to the honorable mention team.

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Monday, May 5 @ 7:00PM
vs. Summit Christian

Clinton Red Tornadoes

Monday, May 5 @ 7:00PM
vs. Chickasha

Holland Hall

Monday, May 5 @ 5:30PM
vs. Victory Christian

Clinton Lady Tornadoes

Monday, May 5 @ 7:00PM
@ Chickasha

Winner, Game 1

Thursday, May 8 7:00PM

Winner, Game 2

Thursday, May 8 7:00PM

Winner, Game 1

Thursday, May 8 7:00PM

Winner, Game 2

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Winner, Game 1

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