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## Weatherford's "Last Call on Route 66" Promises Good Eats and Intrigue



The Weatherford Chamber's Education Committee is rolling back the calendars a century and transporting guests back to the Jazz Age for "Last Call on Route 66" a Murder Mystery Dinner to be held at the Stafford Air and Space Museum's event center on Saturday, February 28th beginning at 7pm.

The event offers wannabe gumshoes or ne'er-do-wells an opportunity to take on roles in the murder mystery which is slated to begin after a sumptuous dinner prepared by Bean and Ladle. The SWOSU Jazz band will also be in attendance offering the perfect music accompaniment for a night that's primed to be filled with good company, stiff drinks and of course intrigue.

Guests are encouraged to come dressed in their finest era appropriate garb and must be prepared to confront a heinous murderer.

Tickets for the dinner, drinks and participation in the murder mystery are set at \$100 for individuals, and \$150 for couples with a \$1000 VIP package that includes VIP seating as well as an opportunity for an opening toast among other perks. Make sure to purchase your tickets soon as seating for the event will be limited to only 150 guests.

To purchase tickets for the event you can find them online by visiting [tinyurl.com/2j9c3er9](https://tinyurl.com/2j9c3er9) and you can contact the Weatherford Area Chamber of Commerce for more information.

## Special Elections for School Bonds Held Across Western Oklahoma



Mike Smith  
News Director

Voters in the Weatherford and Merritt school districts turned down bond proposals on Tuesday, February 10. Voters in Merritt rejected a bond issue for an ag barn, auditorium, and track, while voters in the Weatherford school district rejected proposals for transportation needs and a new high school.

We won't stop working and brainstorming and we'll throw every proposal up. We'll run it by the board, we'll run it by the committee, we'll run it by stakeholders, [and we'll] put a survey out for the community and see what they feel is best," shared Weatherford Superintendent Mark Harmon, adding that future proposals will start at public opinion.

"If they want to still go the route of a [new] high school, [we'll do that,] or if they want to wait a little bit to find out if that evaluation grows at the clip that we [theorized]," expressed Harmon.

Cordell voters, meanwhile, approved a no tax bond for improvements in the district. As Cordell Superintendent Sam Belcher explained it: "We are going to build a new secure entrance at the elementary. We're also going to do an elementary playground upgrade, and we're going to have a high school restroom renovation and a district-wide technology upgrade."

In the town of Hydro, for the Board of Trustees, Jimmy Fickling defeated Kirk Hartman.



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**Floyd Helt**

Floyd Earl Helt was born in Antlers, OK on December 26, 1949 to Joe and Edith Jeanette (Fowler) Helt. He passed away on January 28, 2026 at his home in Eakly, OK, at the age of 76.



Floyd grew up in Antlers and later moved to the Corn/Colony area as a teenager. He quit school in 8th grade to help his grandparents on the farm. He met Elaine Rachel Maggard in Colony and married in 1971. Two daughters, Shawn and Stephanie, were born to this union and the couple made their home in Eakly.

In 1965, he started work at the cotton gin in Eakly and continued working there for the next 10 years. Floyd began working at 3M/Imation as a machine operator in 1976 and worked here for 36 years, never missing a day!

Hunting, fishing and spending time with his family were Floyd's life. He was a jack of all trades and a master of none, always helping others. If it was broken, he could look at it or touch it and it would work. Floyd could fix anything.

Floyd was preceded in death by his parents; brother, J.E. Helt; daughter, Stephanie Helt and sister-in-law, Janice Helt. He is survived by his wife, Elaine Helt; daughter, Shawn Helt; grandchildren, Dawson Watson, Dayton Carter and Tayla Carter; brothers, Tommie Helt, Glenn Helt and wife, Patty, Richard Helt and wife, Leigha; and sister, "Blondie" Boland and husband, Jerry.

**Eddie Watkins**

Eddie Watkins, 87, of Weatherford, OK, passed away peacefully on February 12, 2026, surrounded by the love of his devoted wife, Gerry.



Born on May 6, 1938, in Coalgate, OK, Eddie was the son of William and Luda (Puckett) Watkins. He cherished the day he married Gerry Hatfield in Edmond, OK, forming a partnership grounded in love and shared interests.

Eddie dedicated 30 years to Southwestern Bell, where he worked as a telephone installer and repairman. Beyond his professional achievements, he had a passion for raising cattle on his farm in Coalgate. He took great pride in teaching his grandchildren the value of farming and hard work, lessons he always shared before taking them out to fish or hunt—simple treasures that shaped their time together.

In addition to his love for family, Eddie and Gerry enjoyed traveling across the country in their fifth wheel trailer, often attending Blue Grass festivals. Their active involvement in the Coalgate Church of the Nazarene reflected their deep commitment to their faith and community.

Eddie is survived by his beloved wife, Gerry Watkins of Clinton, OK; sons, Kent Watkins of Guthrie, OK and Rick Watkins of Shirley, AK; daughter, Katherine Kreizenbeck and husband, Kevin of Arapaho, OK; son-in-law, Lyle Shepherd of Arapaho; nine grandchildren; 14 great grandchildren and a host of nieces, nephews and friends.

Eddie is preceded in death by his parents, William and Luda Watkins; daughters, Becky Ford and Kyle Lynn Shepherd; son, Eddie Brent Watkins; brothers, Buddy Watkins and Glen Watkins.

Eddie's legacy is one of love, dedication, and a spirit of adventure, leaving a profound impact on all who knew him. He will be deeply missed and fondly remembered.

**Johnnie Borden**

Johnnie Brian Borden was born on April 7, 1944 to Vernon and Leota Borden in Fort Cobb OK. Grandparents were Frank and Jesse Borden and Jim and Ann Bidleman of Fort Cobb, OK. He died peacefully at his home in Hinton, with his wife by his side on January 29, 2026.



Johnnie graduated from Fort Cobb High School in 1962; then spent 4 years in the United States Air Force. Upon completing his military service he graduated from SWOSU in Weatherford, OK with a Bachelors and Masters degree in Industrial Education. His career started by teaching Carpentry at the Caddo-Kiowa Vo-Tech in Fort Cobb, OK.

In 1979, Johnnie went to work for 3-M in Weatherford where he spent 20 years as a tool and dye machinist. He retired in 2009.

In 1974 he married Vicki Young of Oney, OK. They spent almost 52 years together. They raised two daughters, Tamra Stephens of Enid, OK and Jessica Geraughty of Yukon, OK. They were Faithful servants of First Baptist Church in Hinton.

They spent several enjoyable years RV-ing through many States and campgrounds, until Johnnie was diagnosed with Dementia. Vicki retired in 2019 to be his caretaker. Johnnie is survived by his wife Vicki, of Hinton. Daughters Tamra Stephens of Enid and Jessica Geraughty and husband Chad of Yukon. 5 grandchildren, Braden Stephens and his two sons, Owen and Nolan Stephens, Jacob Stephens and his wife Haley, and their son Loden Stephens and son #2 arriving in July, of Newcastle, OK. Cade Stephens and Joseph Stephens, both of Enid, OK and Jeraca Nuse of Oklahoma City, OK. Bother-in-law, Larry Young of Hinton, OK

Johnnie was preceded in death by his parents, both sets of grandparents, his sister Connie Henderson and her husband Bart of Fort Cobb, OK, Ann Scudder and her husband Max of Mountain View, OK. His Parents in law, Mark and Joyce Young of Pensacola, FL. Son-in-law, Bradley Stephens of Enid, OK. Nephew Joel Henderson of Fort Cobb, OK, nephew Rex Scudder of Mountain View, OK, siblings in law, Kenneth Young and Susie Young, both of Pensacola, FL, as well as many aunts, uncles and cousins.

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**Carolyn Mason**

Carolyn Ruth (Thomason) Mason was born on September 7, 1939, to Delmer Ernest and Alice Lonita (Jaques) Thomason in Hinton, OK. She passed away Tuesday, February 10, 2026, at Oxford Springs Assisted Living in Weatherford, OK, at the age of 86.



Carolyn graduated from Hinton High School in 1957 and was united in marriage to Donald Ray Mason on February 22, 1959, at the Bethel Methodist Church west of Hinton. The couple lived in Wichita, Kansas, for a few years before returning to the Hinton area, where Carolyn helped Don Farm and Ranch. She loved checking cattle and driving the wheat truck. A true girly girl who didn't mind getting dirty, Carolyn was known for her strong grip and strong spirit. She was the listener and the most forgiving person. She loved traveling to Branson, Missouri, often serving as the group "tour guide," and enjoyed shopping and getting her nails done. Carolyn was a member of the Red Hatters and a longtime, faithful member of the First Baptist Church in Hinton.

Carolyn is survived by her children: Craig Mason and wife Nancy of Clinton, OK; Roger Mason and wife Beth of Lookeba, OK; Melissa Weathers and husband Alton of Hinton, OK. Grandchildren include: Janelle Miller and husband Trent of Carrollton, Texas; Tate Mason and wife Becca of Yukon, OK; Ty Weathers and wife Maddy of Hinton, OK; Sierra Weathers of Hinton, OK; and CY Mason Roark and wife Kaitlyn, one great-grandchild on the way, her brother Fay Delmer Thomason of Hinton, OK, and in-laws Jean Mason of Bartlesville, OK; Bob Ramming of Hinton, OK; and Roy and Alice Ryker of Hinton, OK, along with many other relatives and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents, Delmer and Alice Thomason; her husband, Don Mason; and her in-laws, Darlene Ramming and Wayne Mason.

The family requests that anyone who wishes may wear cheetah print, hot pink, turquoise, or bling in honor of Carolyn's vibrant and joyful spirit.

Funeral services were held Friday, February 13, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. at the First Baptist Church in Hinton, OK, with Rev. Keith Gillham officiating. Burial will follow in the Hinton Cemetery. services entrusted to Turner Funeral Home, Hinton, OK. Condolences may be sent to the family at turnerfuneralhomes@gmail.com, turnerfh.net, or you can find them on facebook.com.

<b>Partly Cloudy</b>  H: 73° L: 50° <b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Sunny/Windy</b>  H: 69° L: 28° <b>Thursday</b>	<b>Partly Cloudy</b>  H: 52° L: 32° <b>Friday</b>	<b>Mostly Sunny</b>  H: 57° L: 31° <b>Saturday</b>	<b>Mostly Sunny</b>  H: 56° L: 30° <b>Sunday</b>	<b>Partly Cloudy</b>  H: 58° L: 42° <b>Monday</b>	<b>Cloudy/Windy</b>  H: 69° L: 51° <b>Tuesday</b>
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**STEP UP's Annual Gala Returns March 7th**



Provided by STEP UP Transitional Living Program

A promotional photo for the event, featuring eight of STEP UP's directors dressed in Greek-esque attire.

**Alexander Shook**  
WOK Contributor

STEP UP Transitional Living Program is hosting its annual "informal gala" fundraiser. The event will be held on March 7th starting at 6:30 pm at the Sorelle wedding venue, located at 9320 N 2370 Rd in Thomas.

General Admission is \$100 per person. Tickets will cover dinner, access to the open bar, live entertainment, and professional photo shoots. VIP tickets start at \$300, which grant access to a private VIP Reception. All proceeds will help fund the organization which provides support for Western Oklahoma youths at risk for homelessness. This year, the gala is looking to raise \$20,000. Registration for the fundraiser, as well as optional monetary donations, can be made online by visiting [givebutter.com/VenusValor](http://givebutter.com/VenusValor).

This year's theme is "Venus & Valor," taking inspiration from Greek Mythology. Attendees are invited to get creative, dressing up in their finest togas and stephane headdresses, with the "Best Dressed" receiving a special award.

**About STEP UP Transitional Living**

STEP UP was founded in May of 2018 in Weatherford. The program was designed to help people transition from struggling with homelessness to self-sufficiency. STEP UP accomplishes this goal by providing housing and support services for youth between 18-24. These services include employment assistance, counseling and education. From their first service in October 2018, STEP UP has helped 17 other youth since. More information can be found by visiting [stepuptransition.org](http://stepuptransition.org)

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# LOCAL AND AREA NEWS

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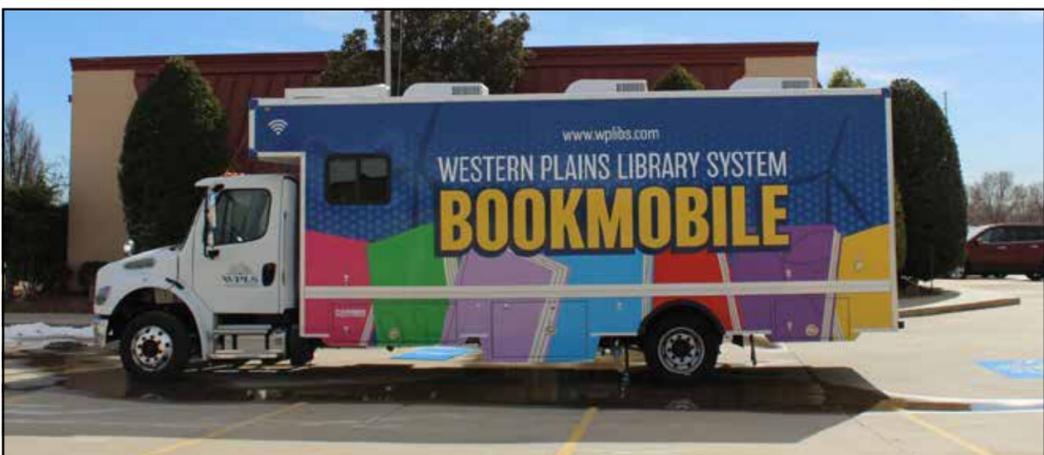


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## WPLS Welcomes New Bookmobile to Service



Western Plains Library System is excited to continue its long history of exemplary service across western Oklahoma with a fresh look through a new bookmobile. The new vehicle will see its first day of service on April 6, 2026 and will pay a visit to 32 locations across the WPLS service area along its regular route.

schools in order to serve as many people across the service area as possible.

The new vehicle will continue to serve rural communities, schools and nursing homes across Custer, Dewey, Roger Mills, and Washita Counties bringing WPLS' large host of resources including physical books and movies to customers. In addition to its current schedule, the bookmobile's route will also be extended to include new communities and

The new bookmobile is the sixth vehicle of its kind purchased by WPLS and is a 2024 Farber M2. It was custom designed and produced by Farber Specialty Vehicles in Columbus, OH. to serve the unique needs of the WPLS service area. The vehicle is 22 feet long and 12 feet and 6 inches tall.

Over the course of the vehicle's two-week revolving schedule, it will travel an estimated 1,540 miles with stops in Leedey, Vici, Camargo, Rocky, Dill City, Burns Flat, Taloga, Putnam, Corn, Colony, and Reydon. A full schedule of bookmobile stops can be found at [wplibs.com](http://wplibs.com).

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**CARNEGIE / SAFETY** - Officials with the town of Carnegie have announced that the town's volunteer fire department has partnered with the American Red Cross to bring the "Home Fire Campaign" to the community. The program provides free smoke alarm installations and home safety checks, with a focus on helping families and individuals who may be most at risk. Volunteers will install up to 3-4 smoke alarms per household. Alarms include 10-year sealed batteries and help families create a home fire escape plan. Signups will be held February 22nd at the Carnegie High School Cafeteria from 11am-2pm.

**WASHITA CO / VAUGHT** - A Canute man is scheduled to be back in Washita County District Court on April 9th for a plea and disposition. 32-year-old Zakkary John Vaught is charged with lewd or indecent acts to a child under 16 for allegedly inappropriately touching a 14-year-old juvenile female.

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**WEATHERFORD / GROWTH PROJECTIONS** During the Weatherford Chamber of Commerce's annual award banquet, the chamber's Executive Director Kim Silman shared some of the city's achievements in 2025. "This past year, we have welcomed 43 new members, putting us over 100 new members in the last two years. "We've hosted 20 ribbon cuttings this past year, celebrating growth, entrepreneurship, and the investment right here in Weatherford," expressed Silman. "Our events continue to grow, [and] our social media presence has gained nearly 2,000 new followers, helping tell Weatherford's story."

**SWOSU / MUSIL EXAMINATION** - The Oklahoma State Medical Examiner's report on the death of Southwestern Oklahoma State University student Logan Musil has been released. Investigators say the remains of Musil were too decomposed to determine how he died, and the report lists both the cause and manner of death as undetermined. Musil was a freshman at SWOSU in Weatherford when he was reported missing in September. Weeks later, his body was found about 150 miles away in a wooded area near Veterans Lake in Sulphur, OK. Authorities focused their investigation on college acquaintance Cameron Lewis after learning that Musil was last seen at Lewis' parents' home in Purcell. Court records show Lewis admitted he and Musil got into a physical fight. Lewis told investigators he dropped Musil off in Edmond, but phone records instead placed him near the lake where Musil's body was found. Lewis is charged in Chickasaw Nation district court with abusing a corpse. A preliminary hearing for Lewis is planned for April 15th.

**CUSTER CO / WILDFIRE** - A large grass fire broke out in Custer County, which started along I-40 and reached about six miles west of Weatherford. Multiple fire departments went to the scene to battle the blaze. "We estimate 550 acres burned, [caused by] near-critical fire conditions," shared Weatherford Fire Chief Kory Selman. "We were able to keep it from getting to any of the houses on the east side."

**CUSTER CO / MARIJUANA SEIZED** - A traffic stop in Custer County has led to a major drug seizure. "We had a deputy make a stop on I-40 that ended in an arrest and impounding the vehicle with 100 pounds of marijuana," according to Sheriff Dan Day. Officials say efforts to stop illegal drug activity in Custer County remain ongoing.

**WEEKLY SHOUTOUTS!**

**Happy Birthday Wishes for Feb. 18** - Tanea Caldwell, Keith Cox, Glenn Edmondson, Sue Hajny, Beck Johnson, Rance Lax, Connie McClemore, Randi Moynihan, Tara Pope, Glen Reach, Dylan Renna, Alisha Shafer, Becky Ureneck, Marty Cuppie, Amber Wilhoil, Judy Wood, John Wyatt. **Feb. 19** - Denise Barthel, David Bergman, Shane Cannon, Derek Creswell, James Wandr, Jennifer Davidson, Angela Flaming, Curtis Garrison, Janet Helt, Mike Hixon, Butch Marshall, Jonathon Pebley, Richard Phelps, Julie Pickett, Bart Royal, Prezley Wright; **Feb. 20** - Jerry Atteberry, Jacob Bass, Elane Cain, Kristi Chauncey, Catherine Crawley, Alanna Gay, Tristan Green, Luke Hobbs, Steven Land, Alicia Patterson, Marie Perigo, Lacey Scheffler, Linda Stoffe, Melanie Torres; **Feb. 21** - Jackie Aaron, Cindy Groth, Ryan Houck, Phillip Lanier, Terry McClemore, Jackie Price, Mark Shadid, Kay Villines; **Feb. 22** - Chris Arganbright, Bill Bendure, Rick Freeman, Bob Huddleston, Kyle Jeffers, Maralea Kliewer, Jessica Martin, Jace Martin, Marcia Matz, Ralph May, Collin McQuillen, Chuck Megli, Steven Mejia, Ferrel Roles, Joshua Salinas, Rhonda Weil; **Feb. 23** - Carl Baily, Paige Bradley, Marti Brooks, Aubrey Crowder, Mervine Kock, Diego Martinez, Brad Meadrum, Camden Mendez, Michaela Pullum, Kristin Sweeney, Yatina Wreath, Jessica Zibell; **Feb. 24** - Harrison Cornell, Ronnie Henson, Kristen Kelley, Britton Linstead, Mizie Mol, Monica Smith, Claude Snider.

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## Regional Food Bank's Holiday Match to Help Provide Over 9 Million Meals to Fight Hunger



**Audrey Johnson**  
RFBO Marketing Specialist

Thanks to generous donors and supporters, the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma's Holiday Match campaign will help provide more than nine million meals to Oklahomans facing hunger. The match was made possible thanks to presenting sponsor APMEX and the Cresap Family Foundation. KOCO 5 News partnered with the Regional Food Bank as the official television partner throughout the match.

"We are incredibly thankful to everyone who gave to the Holiday Match," said Stacy Dykstra, chief executive officer of the Regional Food Bank. "This campaign embodies our mission to provide nutritious food to Oklahomans experiencing hunger. At a time when the need was especially great, the match played an essential role in helping us rebound after the longest government shutdown in U.S. history."

Donations to the Regional Food Bank were matched from Nov. 15 through Jan. 15, thanks to generous gifts from presenting sponsor APMEX and with support from the Cresap Family Foundation. Overall, the match raised \$3,030,790.

"Giving back has always been a core part of who we are at APMEX. Since 2011, our partnership with the Regional Food Bank has helped provide millions of meals to families across our state, a commitment rooted in our shared belief that no one in our community should go hungry," said Ken Lewis, chief executive officer of APMEX. "We're proud to have contributed and grateful for the opportunity to make a meaningful impact alongside such a dedicated partner."

In addition to their financial donations, APMEX employees also spent the evening of GivingTuesday volunteering their time with the Regional Food Bank. "Oklahomans have once again shown what it means to step up and care for one another," said John Cresap, president of the Cresap Family Foundation. "We're grateful for every person who comes to the table and responds to the needs in our communities. We'll keep doing this together."

Over the last year, the Regional Food Bank helped provide over 59 million meals in central and western Oklahoma. Learn more about the work of the Regional Food Bank by visiting [rfbo.org](http://rfbo.org).

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# Oklahoma History: The Deadliest, Most Expensive Storm in State History



Beverly Reese / National Weather Service

Photos taken in northwestern Norman, OK on December 10, 2007, showing tree damage blocking roads and building entrances.

**Chase Wright**  
Staff Writer

It was early December 2007 when a strange winter calm settled over Oklahoma. A humid air mass had been riding over a shallow pool of Arctic air at the surface, and when it froze, rain turned to glistening glaze. By dawn on December 10th, tree limbs were bowed under ice so heavy that the sound of cracking wood echoed through neighborhoods. “You can hear them falling everywhere,” recalled Norman resident Lonnie Compton in a report by contemporary news sources kept in *The Journal Record*, as he shoveled ice from his driveway. Around the state, people awoke to similar sounds.

Meteorologists later called it one of the costliest ice storms in Oklahoma history. The storm officially began on December 8th and rippled eastward through December 11th, coating the major urban corridor from Lawton to Oklahoma City to Tulsa. More than an inch of ice glazed trees and power lines, collapsing limbs and poles under its weight. Within hours, power failed on an unprecedented scale. At the peak, over 641,000 electric customers – nearly one-third of all Oklahomans – were in the dark. On December 10th the National Weather Service warned that this “devastating ice storm” would bring the worst power outage in Oklahoma history.

By nightfall, frozen highways were slick and deadly; fourteen people were killed in crashes and more died from exposure. All across the state, residents faced bone-chilling cold and silence. Amid the blackout, Oklahomans huddled wherever warmth could be found. In Oklahoma City, the City Rescue Mission lobby filled with more than 500 shivering men, women, and children on Sunday night. More accounts listed experiences with the displacement caused by the storm. “I camped out a few times at a place down by the river,” explained 37-year-old Matt McQuay, a mission resident. “But when the weather gets this bad, you’ll find them here,” he said of the rescue shelter. In Tulsa, the First Baptist Church opened its doors to dozens of families, highway travelers, and stranded bus passengers. Among them was Tawona Davis of Texas, whose Greyhound bus to Ohio was forced to stop. “If it wasn’t for the Red Cross we’d be laying on our luggage,” Davis said, grateful for cots and blankets inside the warmth of the church.

Kevin and Marie Wise, young parents with an 11-month-old baby, spent a freezing night in their powerless Tulsa apartment. They boarded up windows and kept as much heat inside as they could. “We barricaded the windows...we didn’t get up,” Kevin recalled, trying to stay calm for their infant.

Throughout the night people sheltered in place wherever possible – in churches and community centers, in gas stations with generators, or simply under blankets at home. Emergency workers warned everyone to “hunker down and wait it out,” as EMSA spokeswoman Tina Wells urged. To keep families warm, hundreds of county and city shelters were opened statewide. By Monday morning, Governor Brad Henry’s administration reported that at least 27 Oklahomans had died in the storm, mostly in traffic accidents or from exposure.

Lt. Governor Jari Askins – serving as acting governor while Henry was on vacation – declared a state of emergency for all 77 counties. Federal help arrived quickly: FEMA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers airlifted generators and bottled water from Texas into Oklahoma City and Tulsa to aid the blacked-out areas. Frozen highways and broken trees brought the economy to a halt. More than half a million Oklahomans were without electricity in the days following the storm. Light and heat were lost in homes, and in many towns water had to be rationed because pumps and treatment plants ran on electricity.

Tulsa’s main water plant lost power on Monday, forcing officials to cut off flow until backup systems came online. Schools were closed, Christmas parades postponed, and a key holiday shopping weekend was ruined. The impact on groceries was staggering as well – the state’s pecan crop, normally big business, was smashed under falling limbs and icy winds, totaling an estimated \$25 million in losses.

Utility crews worked day and night to restore power. Oklahoma Gas & Electric (OG&E) reported that about 226,000 of its customers were still in the dark by Monday afternoon. Across the state, tree limbs snapped and tumbled across streets, damaging lines; electrical poles snapped like kindling.

A veteran OG&E spokesman, Gil Broyles, told reporters, “If you do the math, probably one out of three Oklahomans has no electricity at this point.” The outage was unprecedented – utility officials agreed it “easily surpassed previous power disruptions.” Mutual aid arrived: crews from dozens of states poured into Oklahoma, working 12-hour shifts to cut, clear and rewire. Only gradually, as warmer air filtered in by Tuesday, did the worst of the ice melt. By then, an estimated 641,000 customers had lost power at some point, and more than 150,000 still waited through the following week.

By midweek the lights finally began to flicker on again. Across Oklahoma, communities came together in recovery. Emergency centers delivered blankets and meals, and church volunteers handed out coffee and hot soup on street corners.

Roads were cleared of icy debris and fallen limbs, and schools and businesses gingerly reopened. The storm cleanup would be immense: officials estimated \$200 million in costs just to haul away broken limbs and repair infrastructure. In Oklahoma City and Norman, satellite and police reports tallied over 750,000 cubic yards of debris along roads and in parks.

Even after the storm, one memory lingered: the silent, brittle beauty of the ice. Photographs from the NWS Norman office – ice clinging to pine needles and silhouetting bare branches – later circulated as reminders of that frigid December.

But residents recalled more than images; they remembered the strangers helping each other through the cold. Heating stations at fire halls, hot water from rural churches, and neighbors sharing generators became part of the story.

Despite the tragedy, the December 2007 ice storm entered Oklahoma history as the benchmark of winter’s fury: the coldest glaze, the largest outage, and one of the deadliest ice storms ever recorded in the region. It reshaped the landscape by snapping century-old elms and bending utility grids. The state’s official archives and weather histories now mark 2007 as the year an “icy siege” tested Oklahoma’s resilience and solidified a season of solidarity amid the storm.

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## SWOSU Basketball Prepares for a Busy Week



Provided by SWOSU Athletics

SWOSU's Men and Women Basketball teams are set to play two games this week. SWOSU is set to host Arkansas-Monticello on Thursday, February 19, and Southern Arkansas on Saturday, February 21.

The GAC standings remain tight heading into the final weeks of the regular season; the boys currently hold a slim edge over two teams sitting at 7-11, who round out the final postseason spots, while the girls sits one game outside the top eight needed to advance to the postseason tournament.

## High School Basketball Area Brackets Out, A Look at Standing for WestOK Weekly Teams

**Alexander Shook** Western Oklahoma's High School Basketball WOK Contributor  
season is heating up, as teams prepare for Area Championships for the 2025-26 school year. Here's a look at some of your home teams' post-season forecast:

### Class 4A: Clinton, Weatherford

The Weatherford Eagles (8-4 Girls, 6-0 Boys) and the Clinton Red Tornadoes (0-11 Girls, 1-5 Boys) will be facing off for the second time this season on Saturday, February 21. This District-level match-up will be hosted in Weatherford, with the girls playing at 6:00 p.m. and the boys playing at 7:30 p.m.

In their January face off, the Weatherford girls defeated Clinton 42-28, and the Weatherford boys won 69-29.

### Class 2A: Hinton

The Hinton Comets (3-5 Girls, 2-1 Boys) are preparing to play against Anadarko's Riverside Indian Braves (1-0 Girls, 3-2 Boys). The girls start at 6:00 p.m., and the boys at 7:30 p.m.

### Class A: Hydro-Eakly, Thomas-Fay-Custer

Class A's District Playoffs were held on Saturday, February 14. That night, the Thomas Terriers and Lady Terriers (1-2 Boys, 3-1 Girls) defeated Burns Flat-Dill City 47-44 and 53-34, respectively. Similarly, the Hydro Eakly Bobcats and Lady Bobcats (3-3 Boys, 2-3 Girls) won their games against the Wayne Bulldogs 67-33 and 52-42, respectively.

Both teams will play their first regional games this Tuesday, February 17th, with the girls playing at 6:00 p.m. and the boys at 7:30 p.m. The Thomas Terriers look forward to challenging the Alex Longhorns (1-7 Boys, 7-1 Girls) at Southwest Covenant. Meanwhile, Hydro looks to face the Canute Trojans (3-2 Boys, 2-0 Girls) in Canute. When the teams last faced in November, the Canute boys and girls came out on top. If Hydro and Thomas manage to come out on top, they'll be slated to face off against each other on Saturday, February 21 at Southwest Covenant.

More information, as well as up-to-date brackets, can be found at ossaillustrated.com/basketball.

## SWOSU's Pitchers Sweep Bulldogs of the Week

**BULLDOGS OF THE WEEK**  
Southwestern Oklahoma State Athletics




**DREW FIFER** Senior - Baseball  
**LILY BARFIELD** Freshman - Softball

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**Jon Chidester** SWOSU Media Relations  
A pair of pitchers, Drew Fifer and Lily Barfield, have been named the Bulldogs of the Week, presented by Wright Media — the official partner for SWOSU athletic livestreams and radio broadcasts.

Fifer (Louisville, Ky.) earned the win in SWOSU Baseball's Great American Conference opener against last year's regular season champions, Arkansas Tech.

The senior turned in six scoreless innings, allowing just three hits — all singles — while striking out seven and walking only one.

Barfield (Cheyenne, Okla.) earned her first collegiate win in the circle for SWOSU Softball, tossing a complete game and allowing just one run in a victory over Fort Hays State. She also appeared in relief against No. 17 Missouri Southern the day prior, where she did not surrender an earned run.

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