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## “Porkapalooza” Returns: Weatherford Prepares for Sizzling Spring Event



# APRIL 17TH, 2026

# SIGN UP NOW!

**Krystal Blackwell**  
WOK Contributor

The Weatherford Chamber of Commerce is gearing up for one of its most anticipated spring events as they host their annual Porkapalooza BBQ Festival next Friday, April 17, from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., at Milam Stadium.

The festival, which had previously drawn strong crowds and local participation, has been on hold in recent years. Now, organizers say they are excited to bring Porkapalooza back bigger and better giving residents and visitors alike something to look forward to this spring.

The event promises an evening packed with food, music, and family-friendly fun. Hosted along historic Route 66, Porkapalooza has quickly become a local favorite, bringing together barbecue enthusiasts, local businesses, and the community for a night of smoky flavors and friendly competition.

Attendees can look forward to a wide variety of activities, including a People’s Choice BBQ competition, live music from the Jimmy Lee Jordan Band, inflatable attractions, SWOSU’s spring football game, vendors, food trucks, and a beer garden.

“This is going to be a NIGHT OUT in Weatherford. Great food, great people, a little competition, and a lot of community pride,” expressed Chamber Director Kim Silman. “We can’t wait to see it all come together.”

One of the highlights of the evening is the barbecue contest, where participants will compete in categories such as steak, beans, sauce, and the crowd-favorite “Anything Butt.” There will also be awards for best booth setup and the coveted Big Willie’s Ultimate Smoker title.

Adding to the excitement, the SWOSU Spring Game will kick off at 7 p.m., giving sports fans another reason to attend and making the event a full evening of entertainment.

Advance tickets for the People’s Choice tasting are available for \$10, with pre-sale starting April 13. Visit the Weatherford Chamber of commerce on main in Weatherford to purchase advance tickets.

Local sponsors and community partners, including the Weatherford Chamber of Commerce and SWOSU Foundation, continue to support the event, helping it grow year after year.

With a mix of great food, live entertainment, and hometown spirit, Porkapalooza is expected to draw a strong crowd and serve as a kickoff to the spring season in the town of Weatherford as well as the greater western Oklahoma region.

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**Bea Williams**

Beatrice West Williams, 92 of Sayre, Oklahoma and Delhi, Oklahoma native, was born on February 2, 1934, in Cloudy, Oklahoma to John Elbert and Jettie Mae (Thurman) Westrope. Bea looked upon the



face of her Lord and Savior on Wednesday, March 25, 2026, at her residence, Sayre, Oklahoma, surrounded by her loving family.

On July 16, 1949, Bea married, Charles Cooper in Wheeler, Texas. He preceded her in death on February 18, 1956. She later married John Henry Throckmorton, and they shared time together from 1957 to 1959. In 1963, Bea married Maurice West in Sayre, Oklahoma, and they remained together until his passing in 1997. She found love again and married Glenn Carter Williams in 1999 in Sayre, Oklahoma, where they made their home until his death in 2021.

Bea was the Sayre Journal's 1993 Woman of the Year. She was a member of the Sayre Business Professional Women's Club for fifteen years, a member of the Hudson-Essex-Terraplane Club for fifteen years (where she served as secretary of the Dust Bowl Chapter in Sayre, Oklahoma for several years), Democratic Party volunteer, Sayre Chamber of Commerce volunteer, and the auxiliary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Bea was a devoted member of Assembly of God Church, Elk City, Oklahoma, where she served with a willing heart as a substitute Sunday School teacher and in the Children's Church Ministry. She was also a member of the church's Women's Ministries Program and enjoyed cooking for church socials.

Bea found great joy in life's simple pleasures. She loved organizing and attending antique car shows, going to rodeos in Sayre, Oklahoma, dancing, and traveling to new places. She also enjoyed trips to the casino and took special delight in feeding the deer and wild turkey, moments that brought her peace and happiness.

Bea found great joy in spending time with her family, she delighted in watching her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren grow. Bea enjoyed being active in Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Girl Scouts. She became the first woman to serve on the Boy Scout Council in 1967. Beatrice cherished every moment spent together, whether at family gatherings, or in everyday moments.

Bea's presence brought love, joy, and laughter, she will be deeply and forever cherished by all who knew and loved her. The memories she created will continue to provide comfort to those she leaves behind.

Celebration of Life will be conducted 10:00 a.m., Saturday, April 11, 2026 at Martin-Dugger Funeral Home Chapel, Elk City, Oklahoma. Eric Easter will officiate and Mike Cooper will assist. Services have been entrusted to the care of Richard and Tammy Dugger and the staff of Martin-Dugger Funeral Home and Cremation Services in Elk City, Oklahoma.

Bea is survived by her two sons, Michael Earl Cooper of New Hebron, Mississippi, John Throckmorton and wife, Sandy of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; two daughters, Melinda Blakenship and husband, Rick of Sayre, Oklahoma, and Patricia Ann Cooper of Sayre, Oklahoma; thirty-four Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren; two brothers, Eugene Westrope of Hazlehurst, Mississippi, and Haskell Westrope of Moore, Oklahoma; and numerous other relatives and friends.

She is preceded in death by her parents, J. E. and Jettie Westrope; her husbands, Charles Cooper, Maurice West, and Glenn Williams; two daughters, Carol Jean Norman, Cindy Charlene Cooper; one brother, James Westrope; one sister, Imogene Westrope; one daughter-in-law, Rebecca Cooper; and one grandson, Trevor Cooper.

**Edna Patton**

Edna Mae Patton, 93, of Elk City, Oklahoma was born on May 1, 1932 in Elk City, Oklahoma. She is the daughter of Edward and Audrey Faye (Peck) Tillman. She went to sit beside her Lord and Savior on Sunday, March 22, 2026 at Elk City Homestead, Elk City, Oklahoma.



Her faith in the Lord was a source of great pride and strength throughout her life. She was baptized in 1978, and as the years passed, her relationship with the Lord deepened and her faith grew ever stronger.

Edna married the love of her life, Leo Douglas Patton, on June 15, 1957, in Elk City, Oklahoma. Leo preceded her in death on June 22, 2009. Together, they built a warm and loving home in Elk City, where Edna took great joy in cooking and hosting family dinners. She loved watching her favorite shows—soap operas, Walker, Texas Ranger, and Survivor. Known affectionately as the family's "Weather Woman," Edna could always be counted on to call and make sure everyone was prepared for approaching storms or any change in the weather.

Cherishing her memory is her four loving children, Linda Lyles of Cache, Oklahoma, Sonja Marshall and her husband, Wes of Clinton, Oklahoma, Darron Patton and his wife, LeAnna, Doug Patton and daughter-in-law, Brenda Patton all of Elk City, Oklahoma; seventeen grandchildren, Tammy Patton Damm and her husband, John, Teresa Patton Gorden and her husband, Joe, Tiffany Gilliland Kirman and her husband, Robert, Johnny Gilliland, Joshua Lyles, Tasha Marshall, Krystal Marshall Milkeraitis and her husband, Wes, Cody Patton and his wife, Bailey, Cooper Patton, Courtney Dale Goss and her husband, Chris, Dalton Patton and his wife, Kirsten, Chayce Jackson, Braxton Patton, Dallas Sanders and his wife, Tara, Devyn Sanders and his wife, Brittany, Sydni Sanders Anderson and her husband, Wyatt, Degan Sanders; numerous great grandchildren and great-great grandchildren; one brother, Joe Tillman of Elk City, Oklahoma.

Edna is preceded in death by her husband, Leo Douglas Patton; parents, Edward and Audrey Tillman; son, Gene Patton; daughter, Shirley Tillman; son-in-law, Ronny Lyles; brothers, Bill Tillman and Bobby Tillman; sister, Wanda Webb.

**Julia Recker**

Julia Ann Recker was born on August 31, 1962, in Weatherford, OK, to Ruben and Joyce (Campbell) Stutzman. She went to her heavenly home on March 29, 2026, at Weatherford Hospital at the age of 63.



After graduating high school in Flagstaff, AZ, she attended SWOSU in Weatherford and obtained a degree in medical records. She lived many places but made a home for many years in Enid, Ok and worked for Bass Medical Center, a daycare center and Dillard's. In 2015, she moved to Binger to be closer to her son and family.

She was a devout Christian and her lived her life serving Jesus. She had a big heart, was very caring, and loved to travel.

Julia is survived by her son Jonathan Recker and his wife Alisha; her grandchildren Brittany Recker and Ray, Karlee, Bradley, Dustee Recker, and Bobby Duke; her great grandchildren: Braxton and Karter Duke.

She was preceded in death by her parents Ruben and Joyce Stutzman and her grandparents.

The family would like to thank Good Sheppard Hospice, Corn Heritage Village of Weatherford, and the Weatherford Regional Hospital for all they did.

**Scott McCathern**

Scott McCathern, 67, of Clinton, Oklahoma, passed away Tuesday, March 31, 2026, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He was born September 6, 1958, in Oklahoma City to Marvin L. McCathern and Helen M. (Upton)



McCathern. Scott was raised south of Binger, OK, alongside his siblings, where he grew up working on the family farm. He cherished helping his father and brothers with cattle, a passion that stayed with him throughout his life. Scott graduated from Oney High School in 1976. While still in school, he attended Vo-Tech courses, where he developed an early interest in computers. He began his working career at Hollytex Carpet Mill, where he was employed for 23 years. Over the years, he also worked as a meat cutter for Duty Packers, Red Bud, and Williams Grocery. He later held positions with Fractech Oilfield Chemicals and Walmart for a few years prior to his retirement. Scott proudly served his country in the US Air Force Air Guard Division from 1979 to 1985, specializing in telecommunications.

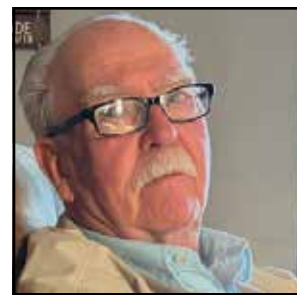
On October 19, 1985, he married Carol Ann Morrison in Clinton, Oklahoma. The couple made their home together and, following retirement, moved to Clinton in 2021. Scott was a devoted member of the Church of Christ in Gracemont, where he taught classes and occasionally led singing. He found great joy in simple pleasures—raising chickens, gardening, fishing, and walking along the creek.

He is survived by his loving wife, Carol McCathern of Clinton; two daughters, Sarah Galbraith and husband Adam of Noble, Oklahoma, and Cayla McCathern-Ray of Clinton, Oklahoma; two grandsons, Dakota Palmer and Tyler McCathern; two brothers, Farron McCathern and wife Rhonda of Clinton, Oklahoma, and Ross McCathern and wife Sherry of Anadarko, Oklahoma; one sister, Carla McCathern of Anadarko, Oklahoma; as well as numerous aunts, cousins, nieces, nephews, other relatives, and a host of friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Marvin and Helen McCathern, and his in-laws, Roy and Billie Jo Morrison.

**Troy Wiles**

Troy Lee Wiles was born March 19, 1943, to Isaac Newton "Ike" and Pearl Marie (Benton) Wiles in Quinton, Oklahoma. He passed away Tuesday, March 24, 2026, at Integris Hospice House in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, at the



age of 83. Troy attended Lookeba-Sickles Schools. He was united in marriage to Sandra Kay Lindley on August 22, 1960, in Wheeler, Texas. She preceded him in death on April 22, 2021. Troy worked for George Chenoweth at his dairy, worked at Sequoyah Mills/ Aero Commander & McDonald Douglas as an airplane mechanic, and later worked as a code operator for 3M, retiring in 2009. He enjoyed hunting and fishing, loved tending to his cattle, gardening—especially his tomato plants—and sharing them with everyone, and keeping his yard neatly mowed. Troy was a familiar face at the Cherokee Restaurant, where he ate daily, and he cherished visiting with sisters Bernice and Susie. He took great pride in making homemade birthday cakes for his grandchildren each year and never missed a birthday. Above all, he loved his grandchildren dearly. He was a member of Mount Zion Pentecostal Holiness Church.

Troy was preceded in death by his parents, Ike and Pearl Wiles; his wife, Sandra Kay Wiles; and his siblings, Tommy Wiles, Kenneth Laughlin, Gail Warren, Loretta Cooper, and Leona Green.

Survivors include his son, William "Billy" Wiles and wife Nancy of Hinton, OK, grandchildren, Napoleon Wiles of Yukon, OK, Roxanna Coppage and husband Devin of Hinton, OK, Natasha Taylor of Weatherford, OK, Lindsay Johnson and husband Joshua of Coweta, OK, Turner Spivey of Weatherford, OK, and Michael Wheeler of Anadarko, OK; his great grandchildren, Jozie, Ethan, Tatum, Brody, Kylee, Jade (Troy), Lily, Justyce, Xavier, Winry, Brakyn, Lilyanna, and Jocelyn; siblings, Alfred Wiles, Bernice Coats, and Carolyn Butler and husband Larry all of Hinton, OK; as well as many nieces, nephews, other relatives and many friends.


Graveside services were held Saturday, March 28, 2026, at Lookeba Cemetery in Lookeba, Oklahoma, with Mr. Donnie Mooter officiating.

Services entrusted to Turner Funeral Home, Hinton, OK, Condolences may be sent to the family at turnerfuneralhomes@gmail.com, turnerfh.net, or on Facebook at facebook.com/TurnerFuneralHomes.


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**Elk City Farm & Home Expo Begins April 11**



**APRIL 11**  
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**APRIL 12**  
 Noon - 5:00pm  
 1016 Airport Industrial  
 Elk City, OK

**Alexander Shook**  
 WOK Contributor

The 42nd Annual Southwest Farm & Home Expo will return to the Elk City Convention Center Saturday, April 11, and Sunday, April 12. Whether it's the farm, home, lawn or garden, this Farm & Home Expo will give you the opportunity to see the newest and best products and services in these areas.

Over 100 displays will showcase the latest in farm and livestock equipment and lawn, home, and garden supplies. Several dedicated events are scheduled for this year's show including an antique tractor display, the FFA Ag Mechanics Show & Silent Auction, the Children's Pedal Tractor Pull, and the BBQ Cook-Off.

Various Food Trucks will be in the North Parking lot on Saturday and Sunday. The Elk City FFA will be running concessions in the South Exhibit Hall on Saturday, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., and Sunday, Noon - 5:00 p.m., in the North Exhibit Hall East Room.

**Day 1 - Saturday, April 11th**

The event opens to the public on Saturday at 9:00 a.m. and will close at 6:00 p.m. Throughout the first day, the FFA Ag Mechanics Show & Silent Auction will be held in the South Exhibit Hall, with the Antique Tractor Display on the South Exhibit Grounds.

Starting off Saturday's proceedings, farmers and ranchers are invited to get their CEU credits in the east meeting room. Coffee and donuts will be offered for early arrivals at 8:30 a.m. At 9:00 a.m., two back-to-back talks will be held featuring two local Agronomy Specialists. Josh Bushong will offer Dicamba Herbicide Training, while Raedan Sherry will cover general weed control strategies with an emphasis on sandburs and johnsongrass. Lunch will be provided at noon by the Fowler Agency.

The All-Breed Bull Sale will kick off on Saturday at 2:00 p.m.. This event, which draws people from Oklahoma, Texas and Kansas, will feature some of the top breeders in the region. Bulls will range from yearlings to two-year-olds. The All-Breed Bull Sale is sponsored by the First National Bank & Trust of Elk City.

**Day 2 - Sunday, April 12th**

Sunday's proceedings will open to the public from Noon until 5:00 p.m. The Antique Tractor Display will still be available to view on Sunday at the South Exhibit Grounds.

The Children's Pedal Tractor Pull (for ages 4-12) will be the first major event of the day. Registration opens at 1:00 p.m. in the South Exhibit Hall and the pull itself begins at 1:30 p.m. Each participant will receive a T-shirt, with the top two winners in each age division also receiving a plaque, courtesy of Great Plains Bank of Elk City. Additionally, there will be a drawing for three Pedal Tractors, courtesy of Great Plains Kubota, Western Equipment, and the Rother Brothers.

The BBQ Cook-Off kicks off on Friday, April 10 at 6:00 p.m. with the Cook's meeting and meat inspection. A \$25 entry fee for each category will be due at this time. The check-in / set up will begin Saturday, April 11 at 7:30 a.m., and end Sunday, April 12 at 8:00 a.m. The judging will begin at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 12. Categories are Chicken, Pork Ribs, Beef Brisket and Jalapeno Appetizers. There will be cash prizes for first place in each category and plaques for 1st, 2nd, & 3rd places. Prizes will be awarded on Sunday at 4:30 p.m. in the North Exhibit Hall.

The Elk City Chamber of Commerce, which sponsors the Southwest Farm and Home Expo, prides itself on promoting education in agriculture. Every year, they award several scholarships to help further high school seniors with their education in the field of agriculture.

The Southwest Farm & Home Expo Committee would like to thank the City of Elk City for their help with the facilities, barrels, cones, and some of our advertising. They would also like to thank their event sponsors, volunteers, exhibitors, Bull Sale Ad Sponsors, Consignors, the Children's Pedal Tractor Pull Sponsor, CEU speakers, and everyone that visits the Expo.

For a complete schedule of events or more information, call (580)-225-0207, find them on Facebook, or email ElkCityChamber@itlnet.net.



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**CASA Celebrates 3 New Training Graduates**



Jackie Aaron / CASA Western Oklahoma

These 3 ladies just completed a new CASA volunteer training curriculum that consisted of the training being online for the majority of the training. This helps meet the needs of training volunteers across our five county service area. Pictured, from left: Lori Malson (Durham), Nancy Charbonneau, (Weatherford), and Janice Miller (Elk City). Please email [tammi.goodall@casawok.org](mailto:tammi.goodall@casawok.org) for more information regarding CASA or their next training opportunity.



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# LOCAL AND AREA NEWS

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**Mike Smith**  
News Director

## Weatherford's Elementary-Aged Students Go Easter Egg Hunting



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Burcham first graders went to Rader Park this past Thursday for a chance to meet the Easter Bunny and hunt for easter eggs.



Provided

Because of inclement weather, the First United Methodist Church of Weatherford held their easter egg hunt indoors last Wednesday.

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Krystal Blackwell / WM

The Rotary Club of Weatherford has named their latest Students of the Month. Pictured Left to Right: Assistant Principal Kelly Wilson, Ky Warner, Tory Hume and Rotarian Heston Wright.

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**HINTON / HARRIS** - The Oklahoma Department of Corrections reported that Christopher Harris was arrested by Great Plains Correctional Center staff and Hinton Police after Harris allegedly threw contraband over the fence. Authorities say the drop included tobacco, cellphones, and various other items. Harris was booked into the Caddo County Jail and charged with bringing contraband into a penal institution.

**BECKHAM CO / SIMPSON** - A Sayre man is charged in Beckham County District Court with buying or possessing child sexual abuse material. 33-year-old Trentity Khane Simpson allegedly had a total of 13 sexually explicit photos of a 17-year-old female which were stored and saved within Simpson's snapchat account.


**CUSTER CITY / ARSON** - A former Custer City firefighter is facing charges including eight counts of third-degree arson and one count of pattern of criminal offenses. Skyler Dean Terrell of Custer City was investigated after reportedly being on or near the scene of several suspicious fires within Custer and Dewey counties. Court records show Terrell later admitted to setting the fires, saying he missed being a firefighter after being terminated and claimed to be obsessed with fire. Terrell was booked into the Custer County jail.

**SWOSU / HODGE CENTER** - SWOSU is proud to welcome guests to an upcoming open house events at the Jerry and Margaret Hodge Center for Pharmacy and Rural Health. The university dedicated the facility on March 12th in a private ceremony. Now, SWOSU is inviting campus and community members to experience the new facility through a dedicated event in April. A campus open house and walk-a-thon for SWOSU students, faculty and staff with a drug takeback event will be held Saturday, April 25th from 9-2.

**ODOT / I-40 PROJECT** - The Oklahoma Department of Transportation has provided updates on two Canadian County projects. Eastbound and westbound Interstate 40 traffic is narrowed to one lane in both directions near the U.S. 281 spur for striping operations beginning today through mid-May. Drivers should expect delays and consider alternate routes. Meanwhile, the u.s.281 spur bridge rehabilitation near I-40 includes the enhancement of several safety features, including replacing the existing two-lane bridge with a wider five-lane bridge, adding dedicated left-turn lanes for on-ramps and reconstructed roadway sections leading to the ramp areas. The new bridge will also provide more clearance for taller vehicles. The project will be built in phases so traffic can continue moving during construction. Weather permitting, the project is anticipated to be complete this fall.

**WEATHERFORD / WARD REDISTRICTING** The Weatherford city commission has approved an ordinance modifying ward boundaries within the city. "In 2010, our population was 10,833. In the 2020 census, we grew to 12,076," shared City Clerk Carolyn Sanders. "After we reevaluated our wards, this put us outside of the 5% threshold that we're allowed, mostly in ward one. That's where the majority of our growth is happening." The target population range for each ward is a minimum of 2,871 to a maximum of 3,173. Ward 1 will have a population of 2,880 residents, with 3,067 in Ward 2, 3,055 in Ward 3, and 3,087 for Ward 4.

**WEATHERFORD / COMMUNITY CENTER** Progress is moving forward toward construction of a new community center in Weatherford that will be run by the YMCA. "Looks like it's probably going out to bid in [late-2026]. It's going to be about a probably around a \$40 million project," expressed Mayor Mike Brown, who estimated the project to be completed in 2028.



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**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](mailto: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 8** - Opal Boyd, Daniel Lamar, Quinda Lane, Cory Price, Ebony Smith, Vincent Sperle, Floyd Winn, Jennifer Williams; **April 10** - Jessica Allisen, Mike Brown, Lacey Burdick, Chad Chaplin, Patsy Chisum, Elmer Croaker, Shannon Duncan, Beau Ferrell, Jeffrey Maynard, Scott Moore, Brant Purdum, Sam Smith, Mark Stapleton; **April 11** - Chuck Ackley, Ari Albrightson, Ian Brennoferder, Charlene Cantrell, Darla Davenport, Patty Doran, Bill Mucker, Shelby Nance; **April 12** - Billy Birkenfeld, Teri Boyd, Cindi Bruce, Rhownw Grossman, Rob Grogan, Leslie Harrison, Kelis Hart, Amy Hoffman, Sonny Makesry, Bobby Richardson, Lisa Stephens, Julie Weichel; **April 13** - Emily Garrison, Donis Hardaway, Kim Heger, Molli Reeves, Troy Shirey, Tristan Shirey; **April 14** - Tisha Campbell, Bobbie Edwards, Harold Goldmann, Clayton Johnson, Rickey Mackin, Pam Martin, Kim Pickett, Debra Purdum, Alfredo Reyes, Michella Sims, Tinaya Sisler, Allan Weil.

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Libby's Pineapple, 20oz. (All Varieties)	2 for \$5.00	Inside Round Roast	\$6.99 lb.
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Idahoan Instant Potatoes, 8oz. (All Varieties)	\$2.99	New York Strip Steak	\$13.69 lb.
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# Hinton Board Members Tap John Hancock as Next Superintendent

**INTRODUCING** 

NEW HINTON SUPERINTENDENT  
**MR. JOHN HANCOCK**



**“**I'm most excited about the opportunity to build relationships with students, staff and the community while continuing the great work already happening.**”**

**Rainye Coats**  
Hinton Public Schools

Hinton Public Schools board members selected John Hancock as their district's next superintendent in a special meeting April 2. He will step into the superintendency July 1, upon current Hinton Public Schools Superintendent Marcy Derryberry's retirement. Hancock is currently the executive director of personnel and secondary instruction at Guthrie Public Schools.

“Our board is excited to welcome John Hancock, who is a leader who puts students first,” Hinton Board President Jodi Combs said. “With years of administrative experience, Mr. Hancock collaborates with his staff, parents and communities to build a cohesive vision for the future. He has proven success in facility improvements and program expansions, which are areas we are really excited about when thinking of the future of Hinton schools. He will fit right into our district family, and we cannot wait to welcome to the district this summer.”

Striving to build equitable, student-centered learning environments, Hancock has led initiatives

to support teacher retention and recruitment, has boosted student success through collaborative strategic planning and has built open, honest relationships with students, staff, parents and the community.

“I'm most excited about the opportunity to build relationships with students, staff, and the community while continuing the great work already happening,” Hancock said. “It's clear there is a strong foundation here, and I look forward to working together to support student success and growth.”

Hancock is drawn to small-town, close-knit communities, having worked in Guthrie, Washington and small schools in Kansas. He earned his bachelor's degree in education with a focus on social studies at Pittsburg State University and his Master of Education from Emporia State University.

“I've very much enjoyed the small-town community atmosphere,” Hancock said. “Hinton is the ideal community for me, and will be a good fit, as working in a close-knit community and district has always been a goal of mine.”



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# Arapaho-Butler Lady Indians Softball State Champions Recognized at OK State Capitol

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**Tricia Pemberton**  
Republican Communications

Speaker Pro Tempore Anthony Moore, R-Clinton, on Tuesday recognized the Arapaho-Butler Lady Indians 2025 Championship fastpitch softball team in the Oklahoma House of Representatives. Moore presented the team with a citation on the House floor recognizing the team's excellence, character and sportsmanship.

“It was my extreme pleasure to recognize this amazing team in the People's House,” Moore said. “These are the kind of young women that I know coaches love to coach. They're talented, dedicated and fierce on and off the field. I'm so incredibly proud of them and know they will remember this accomplishment forever.”

Moore said with only one senior graduating from the team this year, he has every hope of seeing the team return next year to celebrate a follow-up championship.

The Lady Indians softball team finished its season with a 33-8 record, winning the 2025 Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association Class A Fastpitch Softball State Championship in October, the first state championship in the program's history. The team beat Canute 1-0 in the semifinals and beat the Caddo Bruins with a score of 5-3 to win the championship.

The team is led by Head Coach Luke Thompson and Assistant Coach Nathaniel Baker.

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# SWOSU Baseball Sweeps Bulldogs of the Week

## BULLDOGS OF THE WEEK

Southwestern Oklahoma State Athletics



**KEATON FISHER**  
Senior • Baseball



**JOSE MENDOZA**  
Junior • Baseball



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**Jon Chidester**  
SWOSU Media Relations

Keaton Fisher and Jose Mendoza of SWOSU Baseball have been named the Bulldogs of the Week, presented by Wright Media — the official partner for SWOSU athletic livestreams and radio broadcasts.

Fisher (Kalama, Wash.) hit .600 (9-for-15) across four games last week, highlighted by a perfect 5-for-5 performance in the series finale against Southeastern that helped SWOSU secure the GAC series win.

Fisher also homered in a midweek victory over Oklahoma Baptist and added multiple extra-base hits during the weekend series, including two doubles and two triples. Fisher now leads the team with a .400 batting average on the season.

Mendoza (Avondale, Ariz.) went 10-for-14 (.750) on the week, recording at least one hit in every game and multiple hits in three of the four contests. After entering the week with eight hits on the season, he more than doubled his total and raised his batting average to .269.

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**SATURDAY, APRIL 11**

Farmers • Ranchers get your CEU Credits!  
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Topic: Mandatory Annual Dicamba Training and application methods to reduce off-target movement of herbicides.

Raedan Sherry - Area Agronomy Specialist  
Topic: General weed control strategies for pasture and rangeland, with an emphasis on effective management of sandbar and Johnsongrass.

8:30am Coffee • Donuts | 9:00 Meeting  
Lunch Provided at Noon by Fowler Insurance (East Meeting Room)

9:00AM 42nd Annual Southwest Farm & Home Expo Opens to Public

ALL DAY FFA Ag Mechanics Show & Silent Auction (South Exhibit Hall)  
Antique Tractor Display (South Exhibit Grounds)

2:00PM All Breed Bull Sale  
Sponsored by First National Bank & Trust (South Exhibit Hall)

6:00PM Expo Closes

**SUNDAY, APRIL 12** FREE ADMISSION

Noon Expo Opens to Public

1:00PM Children's Pedal Tractor Pull  
Sponsored by Great Plains Bank  
Ages 4-12 (South Exhibit Hall)  
Registration @ 1:00pm | Pull Begins at 1:30

1:00PM BBQ Cook-Off Judging Begins  
(North Exhibit Hall - East Room)

ALL DAY Antique Tractor Display (South Exhibit Grounds)

4:30PM FFA Ag Mechanics and BBQ Cook-Off Awards & Scholarship Presentations (North Exhibit Hall Stage)

5:00PM Expo Closes

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## SWOSU's Seventh Inning Surge Cincos Series



**Jon Chidester**  
SWOSU Media Relations

SWOSU Baseball erupted for 10 runs in the seventh inning to run-rule Southeastern 19-9 on Friday, securing a 2-1 series victory.

With a strong wind blowing out, both offenses thrived. SWOSU outhit the Savage Storm 18-10 in the high-scoring contest.

The Bulldogs jumped out to a 6-0 lead in the first inning but saw Southeastern chip away, with SWOSU holding a slim 7-6 advantage after three innings. The teams traded two-run frames in the sixth, and after the Storm plated a run in the top of the seventh, the game was tied 9-9 heading into the bottom half.

SWOSU quickly took control in the seventh. Back-to-back singles sparked the rally, and the Bulldogs added four more hits in the frame.

Consecutive doubles from Zach Makarewich and Rusty Wortman capped the inning and ended the game via run rule.

Keaton Fisher led the offensive explosion, going a perfect 5-for-5 and finishing a home run shy of the cycle. He drove in two runs and scored three times. Wortman and Jose Mendoza each added three hits.

Conner Watson provided key relief, tossing 4.0 innings with three strikeouts and three walks while allowing three runs. He entered for Aidan Wagley in the third inning. Kael Shelite (W) earned the win with a late appearance in the seventh, helping Watson escape a jam.

SWOSU now begins a five-game road stretch, starting with a midweek matchup at USAO in Chickasha before traveling to Arkadelphia next weekend to face Ouachita Baptist. Nine GAC games remain on the schedule.

## Storm Walk-Off Downs Dawgs in Series Finale



**Jon Chidester**  
SWOSU Media Relations

SWOSU Softball came up just short in the series finale as Southeastern Oklahoma State answered a late go-ahead home run with a walk-off two-run shot in the bottom of the seventh to claim a 3-2 victory Friday.

Trailing 1-0 entering the seventh, Maddie Rahon gave the Bulldogs the lead with a two-out, two-run home run to left field in SWOSU's final at-bat.

The lead was short-lived. Southeastern opened the bottom of the inning with a single before delivering a walk-off two-run homer to secure the win.

SWOSU's lone run allowed prior to the seventh came in the fifth inning after a leadoff error proved costly.

The runner eventually scored on a sacrifice fly to give the Savage Storm a 1-0 lead. The Bulldogs had multiple opportunities offensively, placing a runner in scoring position in four separate innings but were unable to deliver a timely hit.

Blaire Gentry (L) turned in a strong complete-game effort, allowing seven hits and three runs (two earned) while walking one.

Both teams finished with seven hits. Taylor McMahon and Emily Wedel each recorded two hits for SWOSU.

The Bulldogs return home next weekend to host Ouachita Baptist in another GAC series. Four weekends remain in the regular season.

## SWOSU Continues Busy Stretch at Friends Invite

**Jon Chidester**  
SWOSU Media Relations

SWOSU Track & Field continued its busy stretch of the outdoor season at the Friends Spring Invitational, held April 2-3.

Originally scheduled as a three-day meet, the event was condensed to two days due to projected weather on Saturday. SWOSU's top performances came in the shot put, where Torri Tottress (12.54m) and Haley Baalson (12.39m) placed fourth and fifth, respectively.

Baalson also turned in a seventh-place finish in discus with a personal-best throw of 38.64 meters. She was one of five SWOSU freshmen to record personal bests at the meet. Canon Russell highlighted the distance group, posting a time of 5:10.98 in the 1500 meters, the fastest by a Bulldog in the event since early March of last season, and just missing a spot in the program's top-10 list.

SWOSU will return to action Wednesday at the Red Raven Invitational, hosted by Coffeyville Community College.

Discus	High Jump	4x400m Relay
7. Haley Baalson.....38.64m	14. Rylee LaRue.....1.39m	3. Makenlee Shieldnight Stephanie Gallardo Madison Radke Canon Russell.....4:23.99
Shot Put	400m	1500m
4. Torri Tottress.....12.54m	19. Emerson Sours.....1:02.97	18. Canon Russell.....5:10.98
5. Haley Baalson.....12.39m	400m Hurdles	26. Makenlee Shieldnight.....5:24.12
Pole Vault	12. Katie Lewis.....1:13.58	29. Madison Radke.....5:27.83
20. Katie Lewis.....2.93m	200m	37. Stephanie Gallardo.....5:39.39
	27. Emerson Sours.....26.95	

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