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Wright.Media Welcomes Kyra Huckabay as Assistant News Director



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KYRA HUCKABAY

Assistant News Director

Wright Media has recently welcomed Kyra Huckabay to its news department as the Assistant News Director.

Huckabay has worked as a news reporter in the Weatherford area for two years and is now expanding her skillset to include broadcasting, noting she is most excited to form a more personal connection with listeners who hear her voice telling the stories.

After graduating from Mangum High School in 2021, Huckabay began her college journey at Western Oklahoma State College in Altus, where she obtained her associate's degree. She then transferred to Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford where she graduated with a bachelor's degree in Communication Arts in 2025.

As a college freshman, Huckabay was uncertain about what career path she wanted to take, so

she decided to stick with what she loved doing most: writing.

"When I was in school, I always thrived in English class," Huckabay expressed. "Whether it was a creative writing project or a research paper, I've always found comfort in storytelling of all kinds."

In college, Huckabay was so fascinated by the media courses she took in the Creative Media and Visual Arts department at SWOSU that she began working as a local news reporter to gain hands-on experience in the field. She soon realized her passion was much deeper than she originally believed.

"I started working in news because of my love for writing, but my work is so much more rewarding to me now," Huckabay said. "I've gained amazing relationships with so many individuals, have been trusted to tell their stories, and continually get to keep the public informed."

Huckabay has written about a wide range of news topics including local government, school events, and the businesses and individuals who help make local communities thrive. She expressed her excitement about her new role.

"The entire team at Wright Media has welcomed me with open arms and I'm so grateful for the opportunity I've been given to continue my passion for local storytelling," Huckabay said.

Huckabay also acknowledged News Director Mike Smith, saying none of this would be possible without his guidance and support.

In her spare time, Huckabay enjoys reading or watching anything in the thriller genre, going thrift shopping, and listening to Taylor Swift music.

She looks forward to continuing interactions with local communities and encourages anyone to reach out to her to share their stories.



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Jimmie Ann Gothard

Jimmie Ann Gothard was born on March 29th, 1939, to Jim and Naomi Evans in Ardmore, OK at the Hardy Sanitarium, and left this earth to go be with her lord and savior on April 23, 2026.



Jimmie Ann received her education starting with grade school in Lindsey, Texas, and Lone Grove Oklahoma. The family then moved to Fillmore, California, where she continued from junior high through the eleventh grade, returning to Lone Grove and graduating her senior year in 1957. While living in Lone Grove, she would travel with her father Jim Evans to his café before school started to help him prepare the day's menu for residents, truck drivers and local workers. She always spoke so fondly of this time in her life.

Jimmie Ann started her working career at Exchange National Bank as a teller and continued her employment with ENB for 16 years. Jimmie Ann retired from OG&E in 1994, where she met her life partner, Sonny Reed. Also, she engaged in other employment opportunities with Hobby Lobby, Uniroyal, American Nation Bank, Ardmore Public Schools, and worked part time for her dear friend, Carolyn Cox, at the Downtowner a favorite local lunch spot. She also enjoyed working part time in other gift and antique shops around Ardmore and worked for several years for the Carter County Election Board.

Additionally, Jimmie Ann jointly owned two antique and gift shop businesses in Ardmore and Lone Grove with her daughter, Tammie Gothard Schoonover, for 10 years. Jimmie Ann loved antiques, decorating, gardening, and fishing. She also loved engaging in crafts such as tolé painting, ceramics, and needlework just to mention a few of her many hobbies. Jimmie most enjoyed and always truly loved her time spent just riding around the countryside and taking unplanned trips with Sonny. Additionally, she loved supporting her grandchildren and great grandchildren by attending every sport and school function possible with Sonny always at her side.

Jimmie Ann's favorite time to gather with her family and friends was during the Christmas season. She always looked forward to decorating her home and yard. As she came from a long line of excellent cooks, cooking for her kids, grandkids and great grandkids gave her much joy every Christmas. It was a time of great joy, laughter, and love for her. Jimmie was a devoted and extremely loving Mother to her children, and Meme to her grandchildren and great grandchildren. She was also devoted to everyone that she called her friend.

Jimmie was survived by her daughters and son-in-law: Tammie Gothard Schoonover and husband Kent of Springer, OK; Ron and Lee Anna Sedgwick of Owasso, OK son and daughter-in-law, Butch Gothard and wife Tina of Canyon Lake, Texas; grandchildren and spouses, Brianne Gothard Mills and husband Jake of Weatherford, OK, Ashley and Susan Gothard of Fischer, Texas, Carlie Gothard and Fiance Ryan McCutcheon of Asheville, North Carolina, Kyle Schoonover and wife Betty of Springer, OK, Hannah M. Sedgwick of Owasso, OK; great-grandchildren, Megan Mills and Payton Mills both of Weatherford, OK, Hayden Gothard of Fischer, Texas, Cannon Schoonover, Travis Schoonover, Sam Schoonover all of Springer, OK; sister and brother-in-law, Sue and JE Kirby and their daughters and son-in-laws, Rene and Steve Smead, Tina and Edgar Cook all of Santa Paula, CA; sister-in-law, Carol Evans of Asheville, NC; and her son, and daughter-in-law Jimmy and Annie Evans of Ecuador, and daughter, Susie Evans of Asheville, NC, and numerous great nieces, nephews, and cousins and long time friend Carolyn Cox and numerous other friends and the Gothard family whom she has always loved. Preceded in death by her life partner, Sonny Reed; mother, Naomi Evans; father, Jim Evans; brother George Evans; paternal grandmother, Annah Lou Evans; paternal grandfather, George L. Evans; maternal grandmother, Bertha Sewell; maternal grandfather, Marcus Sewell; father of her children, Darvin H. Gothard; very special friends Ola Mae and Orlan Edlen, Janie Gathright and Cookie Wells and numerous cherished aunts, uncles, cousins and numerous friends.

In closing, our family would like to say a special thank you to the amazing individuals below for their love and compassion towards our mother and our family. Our mother received such excellent care from each of them, and we are certain that each of them is a partial reason that we received more time with our precious mother. Our family has grown in size with their presence in our lives. Special caregivers: Kim Wright, Shelby Miller, Denise Taulton, Dana Norton, Donna Horton (deceased). And the following: Lezlie Hacker - RN, Michelle Collins - RN, Dawn Bonham -Social Worker - and Robert Peterson - Chaplain - all of Mays Hospice, Ardmore.

Jimmie Ann always loved flowers; However, she was also a long-time donor to MD Anderson, American Heart Association, St. Jude's for Children, and The Wounded Warrior Foundation. Please feel free to honor her where your heart leads you.

Condolences made be made to the family online at www.hdouglasfuneralhome.com

Langston Pratt

Langston Alan Pratt was born November 15, 2006, in Yukon, OK, to Sidney Alan Pratt and Kimberly Nichole Kenne. He passed away Saturday, April 25, 2026, in Hydro, OK, at the age of 19.



Langston was raised in Geary, OK, where he was surrounded by a large and loving family. He began wrestling at the age of three and carried a deep love for the sport throughout his life. While he was dedicated on the mat, he was also known as "the world's worst" at cutting weight, often keeping snacks hidden nearby. He also played football during his school years. He graduated from Hinton High School and was currently working as an electrician for Lewis Electric.

Langston loved the outdoors, especially fishing and shooting. He enjoyed wrestling around with family and friends and had a natural ability to make people laugh. As a child, he had a playful spirit—famously carrying raw eggs in his pockets to surprise people. He loved picking on his mom and always had a smile on his face.

Family meant everything to Langston. He was raised by both sides of his family and carried himself with kindness, strength, and positivity. He was a leader to his siblings—Bentlee, Taylan, Steele, Seth, and Addaley—who looked up to him as their rock.

He is survived by his fiancé, Katie Baker of Geary; his daughter, Rory of Geary; his parents Kimberly Kenne of Geary, Oklahoma and Sidney and Taryn Pratt of El Reno, OK; his siblings, Bentlee, Taylan, Steele, Seth, and Addaley; and his grandparents, Alicia Pratt of Woodward, OK, Shelly Wigington of El Reno, OK, Shelley Yates of Geary, OK, and Rodney Candyfire of El Reno, OK; He is also survived by his aunts and uncles, Erika Rogers and Adolfo Venegas of Oklahoma City, OK, Rebecca and John Russell of Watonga, OK, Jason and Sharissa Arnold of Watonga, OK, Christopher Yates of Florence, Colorado, Brittany Yates of Oklahoma City, OK, O.J. Birdshead, Jr. of Geary, OK, Briannah Birdshead of Oklahoma City, OK, Rich Candyfire, Jr. of Mineola, Texas, Cecil and Tatum Harrall of Geary, OK, Stacey Pratt of Geary, OK, Valentine and Lynen Pena of Gage, OK, Lindsey Pena and John Myers of Woodward, OK, Rocky Ortiz of El Reno, OK, Oscar Pratt, Steven Pratt, Sr., Patricia Waysepappy, Sandra Pratt Thunderbull, Leah Pratt, Gayle Pratt, Julia Pratt, and Regina Pratt Buffalomeat; he is also survived by his cousins, Alexander Thunderbull and wife Kenzie, Tucker, Makenzie, Saydie, and Alexis Thunderbull, Brian Graham, Austin, Makayla, Gregory, Sandra, and Braden, Hollis Harrall, Elliott Harrall, Kyle Harrall, Karver Harrall, Vaeda Pena, Vaylen Pena, Laina and Mila Dorman, and Jaylah Myers.

Langston was preceded in death by his great-grandparents, Samuel and Angeline Pratt, Joan Candyfire Pawnee, Wilby Pennington, and Donnie and Charlene Wright; his grandparents, Jacquelyn and Tony Ahl and William Richard Candyfire, and Bob Pena; his aunts and uncles, Wilby Candyfire, Kayla Yates, Seth Wigington, Ducky, David and Gloria Spottedcorn, Susie Gilbert, Curtis Pratt, Mary Jefferis, and Adam Pratt; and his cousin, Valor Pena.

An all-night wake service was held at the Gib Miles ERC in Geary, OK, on Friday, May 1, 2026, beginning at 7:00 P.M.

Funeral services were held at the Jenks Simmons Field House in El Reno, OK, on Saturday, May 2, 2026, at 1:00 P.M., with Rev. Waylan Upchego officiating. Burial followed at the Sunset Cemetery in Geary, Oklahoma. Services entrusted to Turner Funeral Home, Geary, OK, Condolences may be sent to the family at turnerfuneralhomes@gmail.com, turnerfh.net, or by finding them on Facebook by visiting facebook.com/TurnerFuneralHomes

Mona Jean Suter

Mona Jean (Taff) Suter, daughter of Thomas Earl Taff & Edith Opal (Smith) Taff was born July 26, 1935, on a rented farm in Oklahoma, about halfway between Hydro and Eakly. She was the middle child of two brothers, Ivan and Dale.



She began school at North Pleasant Valley, a one-room first through eighth grade school with one teacher, Mary Jane Haley. Mona Jean shared a two-person wooden desk with Joy Wildman, her best friend.

In the middle of her first grade, her parents bought a farm near Eakly, so she finished her first grade at Eakly School and graduated there in 1953 as valedictorian.

While at Eakly, she was active in softball, basketball and 4-H, serving as president of the local 4-H club several years and as president of Caddo County 4-H Club her senior year, also receiving a state award for her 4-H record book. The family worshipped at the Eakly Methodist Church, and Mona Jean was active in the Methodist Youth Group.

Due to her high school English teacher, Jean Kenedy, she decided to major in English at Southwestern Oklahoma State College. In college, she played softball, basketball and volleyball and was football queen candidate. She attended Southwestern Chapel daily along with many of her classmates.

She served as secretary to Dr. Gladys Bellamy, head of the English department. She graduated in May 1956 with majors in both English and Business Education. Three years later, while teaching, she obtained her Masters in Education from Southwestern. She also did additional post graduate work at Oklahoma State University and Oklahoma University.

On June 1, 1956, after graduating from Southwestern, she married Glen Richard Suter, youngest son of H.A. (Ray) and Ina Suter, with Jess Haney officiating at the Eakly Methodist Church.

She belonged to several organizations: OCTE, NEA, OEA, Oklahoma Writing Project, Sorosis and Red Hatters. She taught school 36 years total at Eakly Public Schools and Thomas Public Schools with 27 years in the English Department at Southwestern Oklahoma State University.

She is survived by her daughters Sheryl Springer and husband Rango and Kim Hall and husband Hale, grandchildren Brandon Stutzman and wife Holly, Chase Stutzman and wife Susan, Tessa Stutzman and husband Cameron Bower, Glen Springer, and Levi Springer

Mona Jean is also survived by her five great grandchildren: Jenna Stutzman, Tucker Stutzman, Alec Stutzman, Lexy Stutzman and Cru Stutzman. She is also survived by her sister-in-law, Neva Jo Taff.

She is preceded in death by her spouse Glen Suter, parents, her brothers Ivan Earl Taff and Dale Ray Taff, her in-laws Ray and Ina Suter, brothers-in-law Orman Suter and Donald Suter and sisters-in-law Joan Suter and Grace Lee Suter.

Mona Jean loved her church and Sunday School, reading, teaching school, watching Thunder basketball, and having her family for Sunday lunch. She humored us all with her wit.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Step-up Transitional Living Program, PO Box 1016, Weatherford, OK 73096 or to Connections Food and Resource Center, PO Box 362, Weatherford, OK 73096.

Mary Lou Preston



Mary Lou Preston, age 93, of Corn, Oklahoma, passed away peacefully on April 24, 2026, in Corn. Born on February 27, 1933, in La Plata, Missouri, Mary Lou was the cherished only daughter of Clarence Jr. and Mildred (Keck) Baity.

Mary Lou's early years were marked by dedication to her education, attending various schools before graduating from Chickasha High School in 1951. She pursued further studies at Phillips University in Enid, Oklahoma, and gained valuable experience working at St. Mary's Hospital. Committed to a career in nursing, she completed her training at University Hospital in Oklahoma City, earning her RN degree.

She cherished her role as a mother and found joy in playing the piano, painting, and traveling. Her faith was central to her life, and she especially loved participating in Bible studies.

On August 15, 1953, Mary Lou married R.M. Preston. Together they journeyed through several states as Dr. Preston completed his Residency and Fellowships and served honorably in the United States Navy.

In 1964, they settled in Clinton, Oklahoma, making

it their home for many years until their move to Corn in 2011.

The family extends heartfelt gratitude to Mary Lou's dear friend and long-term caregiver, Yolanda Nevarez and devoted caregivers, Brandi, Michelle, and Abbi; and to the dedicated staff of Shepherd Home Health and Hospice and Strive Professional Caregivers for their compassionate and excellent care.

She is survived by daughters, Rebecca Preston of Vashon Island, WA, Shelly McKee and husband Bret of Saultillo, MS, Mary Margaret Nava and husband Luis, of Pampa, TX; grandchildren, Josh Scott, Katie Pakzad and Nima, Chephra McKee, Christopher McKee and wife Courtney, Elaine Nava, Marianna Nava; great grandchildren, Jett Pakzad, Dash Pakzad and Margot Pakzad.

She was preceded in death by her husband Russell; daughters, Deborah Preston and Kathy Scott; parents Clarence Jr and Mildred Baity and a brother, Gene Baity.

Mary Lou Preston's life was a testament to devotion—both to her family and her profession—and she will be warmly remembered and deeply missed by all who knew her.

Donations may be made to the Chad Richison Hope Lodge, OKC, through the American Cancer Society, online or mailed to PO Box 6704, Hagerstown, MD 21741.

SWOSU's Lola Bruner Wins First Place at Phi Alpha Theta Conference



Lola Bruner holds her Certificate from the annual Oklahoma Regional Conference, hosted by Phi Alpha Theta at OCU in Edmond last Saturday, April 25. Pictured left is Dr. Fred Gates, the chair of SWOSU's Social Sciences Department since 2022.

Lola Bruner, a senior history major at SWOSU, won first place for Best Undergraduate Paper in American History at the Oklahoma Regional Phi Alpha Theta conference on April 25. Her paper, "The Psychological Scars of World War II: How the Battle of Hürtgen Forest Shaped Psychiatry," earned top honors in the category.

This is the second year in a row that a SWOSU student has won first place in that category at the regional conference.

"Lola's work is an excellent example of the dedication and passion SWOSU History majors have for the discipline," said Dr. Fred B. Gates, Chair of the Department of Social Sciences. "She has worked very hard during her time here, and this award is a culmination of her career at SWOSU."

The annual event brings together undergraduate and graduate students to present research, receive feedback from faculty evaluators, and engage with peers in the discipline. The conference includes participants from institutions such as the University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma State University, and other universities across the state.

Phi Alpha Theta is the national honor society for historians, with chapters at colleges and universities throughout the country. The organization holds regional conferences that support undergraduate and graduate research.

At SWOSU, history students develop skills in research, source analysis and critical thinking while studying historical perspectives across time periods and regions.

Please visit swosu.edu/social-sciences for more information about the Department of Social Sciences at SWOSU.

Clinton Public Schools Looking to the Future Following Completion of New Middle School



Photos of Clinton's new Middle School, which hosted its first class February 3, 2026.

Mike Smith
News Director

After completing several building projects for Clinton Public Schools, District Superintendent Nathan Meget looks ahead to future projects, with a focus on the annual Redbug School Grants from medical marijuana taxation.

"[With] the Redbud funding the state set aside [for us], we'll be able to knock off some projects and not have to always go back and say, "taxpayers, let's make a vote on a \$40 million bond," which will be nice," Meget shared.

In the last few months, Clinton Public Schools have seen a number of major improvements to their campuses. This included an entirely new middle school campus, located at 2100 Jaycee Lane, with faculty moving into the new facility in early 2026.

"Our next big project is a press box for the football field," explained Meget. "We had some bond money left over from the middle school that we'll be able to tie into the press box and do a really good job."

Meget added that the district needs to also look at growing programs, including soccer.

Taylor McMahon and Makenlee Shieldnight Earn Final Bulldogs of the Week for 2025-26



Jon Chidester
SWOSU Media Relations

Taylor McMahon (softball) and Makenlee Shieldnight (track & field) have been named the final Bulldogs of the Week of the 2025-26 school year. This weekly honor is presented by Wright Media — the official part-ner for SWOSU athletic livestreams and radio broadcasts.

McMahon (Yukon, OK) missed a cycle by a home run in SWOSU's series opener against ATU on Saturday. She finished the game 3-for-3 with two RBI, and finished the weekend 4-for-9 (.444) to lead the lineup.

Shieldnight (Prague, OK) broke the 1500m school record at the GAC Championships, clocking a time of 5:06.28. She also PR'd in the 800m.

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LOCAL AND AREA NEWS

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Founding WOCS Teacher Mrs. Peters Retires After 39 Years of Service



DIANE PETERS
1st Grade Teacher, WOCS

Provided by Jena Skarda / WOCS

Mrs. Diane Peters will retire from Western Oklahoma Christian School in Clinton this May after 39 years in education. As a founding teacher when the school opened in 1987, she has taught multiple grade levels but says first grade is her favorite. At a recent retirement celebration, Peters shares hugs with current students Benjamin Funk, Tess Miller, and Tripp Miller (pictured, left).

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OSBI / CHRISTIAN - An Oklahoma State Senate candidate for District 38 who went missing earlier this week has been found dead. The Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation have reported that 54-year-old Barry Christian was last seen April 28th in Sayre. Christian's vehicle was discovered by Beckham County deputies in the Sandy Sanders Wildlife Management Area, just south of Erick. Authorities say OSBI Special Agents processed the scene and discovered a body inside the vehicle, positively identified as Christian. The body has been transported to the office of the chief medical examiner to determine the cause and manner of death. Officials say Christian's death is still an ongoing investigation.

HINTON / SMITH ARREST - A Spencer man was recently arrested by Hinton Police and the Caddo County Sheriff's Office. Andrew Smith allegedly threw multiple packages over the fence at Great Plains Correctional Center in Hinton containing cellphones, tobacco, THC vapes, knives and 115.5 grams of illegal drugs. Smith was booked into the Caddo County Detention Center and charged with trafficking in illegal drugs, bringing in contraband, unauthorized entry into a prison, possession of a cellphone in a penal institution, and possession of contraband with intent to harm.

WEST OK / BUTLER SENATE CAMPAIGN - One of three State Senate candidates for District 26, Brady Butler of Greenfield, highlights his motivation for deciding to run for office. "I'm looking for substantial reforms to how we do government. I'm looking back at 1787, 1788, thinking about how to reform government, not just tax reforms," explained Butler. "We have to change the structures and the processes, [and] I believe I have the experience to fight for good reform. I'm not God's Savior to Oklahoma by any means, I'm just a passionate guy who has studied these things, and I think I've put my finger on the big issues, and I'd be happy to go fight for you." Butler will appear on the June 16th Primary election ballot alongside opponents Rick Koch of Weatherford and Jessica Winegeart of Okarche.

CLINTON / INTERSTATE WORK - Clinton Mayor David Berrong recently discussed progress of the road project along Interstate 40 at Exits 65/65a. "Once it's completed, we feel like the economy of Clinton will boom with new locations for all sorts of different interstate businesses right there on Business Route 66," expressed Berrong. "If people haven't been by there...it's stunning. It was like... the bridge over the interstate [was gone] overnight." Berrong anticipates the work restructuring Clinton for a future of growth and success. "We have a great construction crew [in] DUIT," added Berrong, "and they have a plan of action that by all counts, they are sticking to and they're moving as rapidly as anyone could ever hope for."

RICK KOCH REPUBLICAN
STATE SENATE DISTRICT 26

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EXPERIENCE COUNTS

(PAID FOR BY FRIENDS FOR RICK KOCH)

WEATHERFORD / NEW SURGEON - A general surgeon will be joining Weatherford Regional Hospital (WRH) in August. "We have signed an employment agreement with Dr. Jacob Swords, a general surgeon with ties to Oklahoma," explained WRH Chief Executive Officer Darren Farrell. "He's going to be a great addition to Weatherford Regional Hospital." Farrell has informed the Board of Trustees about the agreement with Dr. Swords, saying he will offer opportunities for many outpatient and inpatient procedures to be done locally

SWOSU / MUSIC CAMPS - Registration is now open for SWOSU Music Camps this summer. University officials invite middle and high school musicians to participate in the 71st year of their various camps including band, choral, string, jazz and musical theater. Approximately 1,000 students and faculty travel from around the region to attend camps each year Visit SWOSUcamps.com to register. Questions can be directed to their Office at 580-774-3296.

WEATHERFORD / BACCALAUREATE - The Baccalaureate for Weatherford High School's senior class of 2026 will be held on May 13th at 6 pm at the First United Methodist Church, located at 817 N 7th Street in Weatherford, OK.

WEEKLY SHOUTOUTS!

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"When Christ Comes Again" – current series theme, 11am Sundays, Christ Community Church, E Main & Lera (1/4 mile east of The Point), Weatherford. **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 May 6 - Samantha Altland, Preston Bragg, Kyla Brooks, Jill Coykendall, Christine Hart, Jim Johnson, Jeanne McRay, McKayla Mercer, Scott Miller, James D. Moore, Jeff Nickel, Emily Steffes, William Steffes, Esther Taylor, Daron Worrell; **May 7** - Ruth Bearshield, Brett Bonham, Tory Haynes, Sherry Manke, Virginia McCarthey, KayLynn Music; **May 8** - Ginger Emmons, Michelle Huckabay, Mike Richardson, Marc Whittington; **May 9** - Kyle Burton, Dana Davis, Landon Little, Susan Pierce Donald Settles, Emily Spraldin; **May 10** - Jennifer Bass, Denise Richardson, Rhonda Ridgeway, Courtney Ringler; **May 11** Rosella Adler, Dana Brunner, Bryce Conway, Silas Dodgen, Kristi Fleece, Theresa Harms, Ridge Parsons, Autumn Phillips, Ron Russ, Darrell Stinson, Betty Taylor, Theresa Vargo, Ann Weaver; **May 12** - Emma Ferrell, Diana Hawkins, Paula Howes, Susan Rinehart, Monte Smith, Debbie Suderman, Tiffany Buckner.

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SWOSU Senior Night Concludes 2026 Softball Season vs. Arkansas Tech



Provided

Seven seniors were honored prior to the first day's action (from left): Riley Lusk, Maddie Rahon, Skyla McPhillips, Sierra Woods, Blaire Gentry, Taylor McMahon, Emily Wedel.

Jon Chidester
SWOSU Media Relations

SWOSU Softball came up empty on Senior Day, falling to Arkansas thrice to conclude the final series of the season.

The Golden Suns generated their offense with power, hitting three home runs and adding an RBI double as part of their eight-hit performance. Blaire Gentry (L) took the loss after pitching 4.0 innings. Lily Barfield followed with three innings of relief, allowing one run.

Game One - ATU 5, SWOSU 2

Taylor McMahon tied the game in the bottom of the first inning with a two-RBI single, highlighting a 3-for-3 performance in which she finished a home run shy of the cycle. It proved to be SWOSU's only offense, as Arkansas Tech broke the tie with single runs in the fourth, fifth, and sixth innings. McMahon accounted for three of SWOSU's five hits in the contest.

Game Two - ATU 3, SWOSU 0

Extra-base hits proved costly again in game two, as Arkansas Tech used a pair of RBI doubles in the first inning and added a solo home run in the third. SWOSU brought the tying run to the plate in the final inning, but could not come away with the timely hit to keep the inning alive.

Despite the result, Alexis Taylor turned in a strong performance in the circle, striking out nine without issuing a walk in her seventh complete game of the season.

Josie Oakley and Emily Wedel led the offense, each going 2-for-3 at the plate. SWOSU held a slight edge in hits, 6-5.

Game Three - SWOSU 1, ATU 3

SWOSU Softball closed the 2026 season with a 3-1 loss to Arkansas Tech on Sunday. A pair of solo home runs by the Golden Suns proved to be the difference.

SWOSU answered Tech's first home run in the fourth inning, tying the game at 1-1, but Arkansas Tech quickly regained the lead in the fifth, which held the rest of the way. Another solo home run in the seventh added an insurance run.

Trailing 1-0, the Bulldogs used back-to-back doubles from Riley Lusk and Jaylyn Freer to put runners in scoring position with one out. Sierra Woods followed with a sacrifice fly for SWOSU's lone run.

In their final at-bat, trailing 3-1, the Dawgs brought the tying run to the plate but could not push anything across. SWOSU was outthit 9-6, with six different Bulldogs recording a hit.

The Bulldogs finish the 2026 campaign with a 13-36 record. Senior Maddie Rahon concluded her career with 208 hits, just two shy of the program record.

Maddie Rahon, along with fellow seniors Riley Lusk, Sierra Woods, Blaire Gentry, Emily Wedel, Skyla McPhillips, and Taylor McMahon, have played their final game as SWOSU Bulldogs.

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Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Sighting Confirmed Across Both Eastern and Southern Oklahoma



The invasive Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), known for killing all species of ash trees in North America, has been confirmed in Wagoner County by USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). Wagoner County joins Carter, Choctaw, Delaware, Love, McCurtain, Murray and Pushmataha counties with confirmed cases.

EAB lays eggs in the cracks of ash trees and the larvae burrow into the tree and feed on the inner bark. Larvae emerge as adults in the spring and remain active until the end of summer.

"Emerald ash borer threatens Oklahoma native ash populations, said Dieter Rudolph, Forest Health Specialist for Oklahoma Forestry Services. "These trees are most prominent around our lakes and waterways and are common in our state parks, but we can slow the spread of this invasive pest and potentially stop future invasive pests from establishing in Oklahoma by buying and burning local firewood."

EAB is present in 35 States and is spreading. EAB can fly up to 10 miles per year and traditionally travel on firewood. Do your part to protect Oklahoma's ash trees and burn firewood where you buy it.

EAB is the primary cause of our nation's extensive ash decline. Since its discovery, EAB has killed tens of millions of ash trees and has cost municipalities, property owners, nursery operators and forest products industries tens of millions of dollars.

If you see Emerald Ash Borers, immediately notify OKForest@ag.ok.gov and include photos.

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Applications Now Open to Join Young Professionals “PLATE Collective”



Provided

Members of the previous PLATE Collective met up once at month from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. at the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma’s headquarters (3355 S. Purdue Avenue in Oklahoma City).

Audrey Johnson
 RFBO Marketing Specialist

The Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma is seeking

The acronym **PLATE** defines what it means to be a member of the organization:

applications for The PLATE Collective, a leadership group for young professionals interested in becoming more involved in the fight against hunger in Oklahoma.

- Professionals
- Leadership
- Advocacy
- Time
- Engagement

Applications for joining the group are open until Saturday, May 30 and are open to those ages 24 to 40. Members will be immersed in a deeper understanding of the root causes of hunger and how they can make a difference in the lives of Oklahomans.

Members will meet monthly throughout the year-long commitment. They will also participate in fundraisers, social gatherings, community service projects and networking events. The program features important learning opportunities designed to appeal to active young professionals.

“Becoming a member of The PLATE Collective is a perfect opportunity for young professionals to make a difference in the fight against hunger,” said Stacy Dykstra, Chief Executive Officer of the Regional Food Bank. “It is a meaningful way to give back while also expanding their network.”

To apply, visit rfbo.org/plate. Applications close on May 30. For questions, contact Tara Heitz, Corporate Development Officer, at theitz@rfbo.org.

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Weatherford Senior Joins U.S. Marine Corps

DYLAN EPP
 WHS Senior

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Dylan Epp, a senior at Weatherford High School, takes the oath of enlistment as he is officially sworn into the United States Marine Corps, committing to serve his country following graduation. Dylan will head to basic training this September.

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CHAMPIONSHIP GAME DATE & TIME TBA

2026 GIRLS SOCCER STATE CHAMPIONSHIP BRACKET CLASS 4A

Alexander Shook
WOK Contributor

As of Tuesday, May 5th, both the Weatherford and Clinton girls soccer teams are just four games away from being crowned 4A State Champions.

Going into the bracket, the Clinton Lady Reds hold a 9-5 (6-2 District) winrate, while the Weatherford Lady Eagles have maintained a perfect season, with a 15-0 (8-0 District) winrate. Both teams will face off on Tuesday, May 12, at 7pm, assuming they win their two matches before then.

Clinton will be travelling to play in their first championship round on Tuesday, May 5th. Their opponent, the Chickasha Fighting Chicks, currently holds a comparable winrate to the Lady Reds at 11-4 (7-1 Districts).

If they manage to defeat Chickasha, Clinton will advance to face off against either the Stilwell

Indians (4-3 District, 6-7 Overall) or Edmond's Oklahoma Christian School Saints (7-0 District, 11-0 Overall).

Meanwhile, Weatherford will be hosting their first two opponents in the bracket at Rader Park. The Mount St. Mary Rockets, based in OKC, will travel to Weatherford on Tuesday, May 5th. The Rockets currently hold a 12-5 (5-3 District) winrate.

If Weatherford wins, they'll host their next challenger on Friday, May 8: the Catoosa Indians (5-2 District, 10-5 Overall) or the Victory Christian Conquerors from Tulsa (6-1 District, 12-4 Overall).

If you can't make it to these games in person, you can watch them live or on-demand for free by visiting wright.media/one for Weatherford, and wright.media/two for Clinton. We wish these girls the best of luck in the state championship games!

SWOSU Makes Record Efforts at GAC Meet



Jon Chidester
SWOSU Media Relations

SWOSU Track & Field wrapped up the 2026 season Friday at the Great American Conference Championships, highlighted by record-breaking performances from Emerson Sours and Makenlee Shieldnight.

Sours lowered her own school record in the 400 meters, shaving nearly a second off her previous mark with a time of 1:00.91.

Shieldnight capped her career by breaking the program's 1500-meter record, clocking a 5:06.28 in her final race after narrowly missing the mark in her previous outing.

In total, the Bulldogs recorded nine personal-best performances at the meet. Haley Baalson led the way with SWOSU's top finish, placing 10th in shot put with a personal-best throw of 12.51 meters.

SWOSU finished 10th as a team at the meet.

Long Jump 25 Rylee LaRue.....4.34m	400m Hurdles 17 Katie Lewis.....1:11.87*	Discus 15 Haley Baalson.....37.41m
Shot Put 10 Haley Baalson.....12.51m* 11 Torri Tottress.....12.48m	400m 19 Emerson Sours.....1:00.91* 26 Madison Radke.....1:05.22	1500m 21 Makenlee Shieldnight...5:06.28* 30 Canon Russell.....5:13.17 32 Madison Radke.....5:15.30* 45 Stephanie Gallardo....5:35.90*
High Jump 13 Rylee LaRue.....1.48m	800m 27 Madison Radke.....2:27.63* 30 Makenlee Shieldnight...2:30.06* 33 Canon Russell.....2:30.84*	<i>* denotes Personal Record</i>
200m 29 Emerson Sours.....26.94	400m 40 Stephanie Gallardo.....2:41.26	

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