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Clinton native Earl D. Plumlee awarded Medal of Honor



Chase Wright
Staff Writer

The Medal of Honor is the United State's military's highest award for valor. It is also the only military award that is congressionally approved for presentation by the President. When ranked among the most prestigious medals in the world, it is the U.S.'s top award.

As such a highly distinguished honor, recipients must be of the highest quality, "distinguished conspicuously, at the risk of his or her life above the call of duty, by courage and intrepidity." They must have extraordinary merit, personal bravery and risk of self-sacrifice at the highest levels, incontestable. Gallantry. Heroism. And unwavering devotion. These recipients are what we all strive to be, beacons of selflessness with unwavering conviction.

Finding people who meet these criteria is a rare thing and even rarer still to have one so close to home, but we do. Master Sergeant Earl D. Plumlee of Clinton, Oklahoma, of the 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) was chosen and presented with the Medal of Honor on December 16, 2021.

Since 1863, there have been 3,476 Medals of Honor awarded, with only 10 awarded since the Vietnam War.

Earl D. Plumlee grew up working with his family on their cattle ranch and oil field instrument company. His military career began when he joined the Oklahoma National Guard during his junior year of high school. Following graduation, he joined the U.S. Marine Corps.

Plumlee would go on to rise through the ranks, graduate from special training programs, and serve around the world. He quickly proved himself to be an effective leader, full of bravery and heart.

The moment that showcased his resolve came on August 28, 2013, when he engaged with the enemy during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. That day, the complex he was stationed in was attacked. When an explosion rang out, knocking a 60 foot breach in the perimeter wall, Plumlee and 5 other special operations soldiers quickly jumped into a vehicle and sped to the site.

Insurgents with suicide vests and armaments poured through. The driver of Plumlee's vehicle purposefully slid into a spot between the enemies

Master Sargeant Earl D. Plumlee of Clinton, OK, pictured above, was awarded the Nation's highest honor for armed service members this past Month. *Provided*

Weatherford Chamber Kicks Off 2022 with Banquet

Chase Wright
Staff Writer

The Weatherford Chamber of Commerce Banquet aims to introduce the 2022 new year to western Oklahoma with a social hour at 6 PM before the program on January 13th. New Chamber Director Elizabeth Amen is excited to kick-off the new year and outline the program's goals at 7 PM. Tables and seating is limited to first come, first served and tickets are going fast. Tickets can be picked up by contacting the Chamber's office: \$50 per ticket for individuals and \$500 for a table of eight (includes table sponsorship). Also available at the Chamber are

tickets for that night's raffle of \$2,000 of Chamber Bucks, redeemable at any chamber business. Tickets for the raffle are purchasable for \$50 a piece or you can grab 3 for \$100, and you won't have to worry if you can't make it to the banquet, because you don't have to be present to win!

The banquet will introduce the new members of the Chamber committees and present 2021 awards. The program and social hour will have wonderful food and drink, sponsored by Public Service Company of Oklahoma and catered by Southwestern Oklahoma State University. The evening dinner will cap off with a delectable dessert, provided by Pioneer.

(See PLUMLEE, page 7)

Weatherford Chamber of Commerce **Back to Business Chamber Banquet**

Raffle to Win!

\$2000 Chamber Bucks

1 Ticket - \$50 Winner will receive \$2,000 in chamber bucks to be used at participating businesses. Anyone can purchase a raffle ticket and you are not required to be present to win.

3 Tickets - \$100

For more information contact: (580) 772-7744

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This year's Winter Reading challenge encourages readers to explore diversity, empathy and action through literature! To complete the challenge you must earn 10 badges by February 23, 2022 to be entered to win the grand prize! Go to wplibs.beanstack.com to start the challenge!

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Sheila Kay Miller

Funeral Services for Sheila Kay Miller were held Friday December 31, 2021, at 10:00 AM, at the Bethany Brethren In Christ Church, officiated by James Rainwater. A burial service was held at the Custer City Masonic Cemetery and under the direction of Kiesau-Lee Funeral Home.



Sheila Kay Miller was born February 13, 1958, in Elk City, Oklahoma, to Charles and Peggy Ann (Bourlier) Lash of Custer City, Oklahoma. She passed from this life on Monday, December 27, 2021, at the age of 63.

Her fondest memories as a child were growing up on the farm, northeast of Custer City where she learned many life lessons such as how to properly curse and then follow that up with a prayer.

She was a graduate of Custer City Public Schools in 1976.

She was united in marriage to Danny Miller on October 27, 1976, in Pampa, Texas. One son Matthew Landon Miller was born to this union on February 12, 1981.

They made their home in Taloga, Oklahoma, where she owned the Sunshine Express Preschool & Daycare for many years. She thoroughly enjoyed teaching and caring for each child. Eventually, she worked at First American Bank until she retired.

Sheila had an infectious laugh, a quick wit, and a big heart for anyone whom she met.

In her spare time, she enjoyed gardening, creating arts and crafts, and especially spending time with her 3 grandsons.

She was preceded in death by Danny Miller, her parents Charles Lash and Peggy Waller; sisters: Debbie Clark and Judy Lash. She is survived by her son Matthew Miller and wife Aleesha of Custer City, Oklahoma; grandsons: Jacob Lee, Danny Mason, and Charles Connor Miller of Custer City, Oklahoma; life-long best friend Lita Giblet and husband Brad of Hydro, Oklahoma; sister Charleen Jantz of Weatherford, Oklahoma; 2 nephews: Chad Friesen and wife Kellie of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, & Chris Clark and wife Lisa of Leesburg, Texas; Aunt Shirley Lash of Weatherford, Oklahoma; other family and many dear friends.

operated Sandy's Little Angels Daycare for 5 years. Sandra loved her grandchildren and enjoyed going to the lake with family and friends, decorating for Christmas, reading and shopping. Memorials may be made to the YMCA.

Sandra is survived by her husband of 38 years, Dale Butler of their home in Weatherford; two sons: Anthony Butler and wife Chasta of Edmond and Shane Butler and wife Jamie of Mustang; one daughter Ashley Corlee and husband Michael of Weatherford; one brother Michael Terry and wife, Suzanne of Blackwell; one sister Ruby "Kathy" Bingham of Bethany; and twelve grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents; one brother Max Terry; one sister Shirley Creger.

Barbara Ann Walker

Barbara was born on October 2, 1942, in Greenfield, OK to Lloyd and Hazel Jump Lanning and passed away on Tuesday December 28, 2021, in Woodard, OK having reached the age of 79 years, 2 month, 26 days.



She was raised on the family farm near Greenfield where she learned to work hard, milking cows and picking cotton. She graduated from Greenfield High School with the class of 1960. After high school, Barbara attended Draughn's Business College in Oklahoma City, OK. Barbara married Clyde Walker in 1961 and made their home in Eagle City, OK. The couple was blessed with 4 children. Barbara was also the chief cook for a harvest crew, traveling from Texas to Canada for many years. She cooked three meals a day for the crew, drove tractors, combines and trucks while serving as a surrogate mother to the young men on the crew. This experience developed a love for travel and fostered many friendships over the years. In 1974, Barbara began working for the United States Postal Service in Oakwood, Eagle City, and Fay, Ok before becoming the Postmaster in Thomas in 1983. She always had a smiling face and was loved by almost everyone she met. She retired from the postal service after 32 years of service in 2005. Barbara had a kind spirit and a humble servant's heart, preferring to shine in the shadows. She displayed this characteristic in many ways, blessing others. She served on numerous mission trips from 1994-2000, starting with a trip to Mexico, working on construction and medical needs. She cooked meals for the team members and helped with vacation bible school. She followed this trip with trips to Venezuela, Bolivia, Costa Rica, England and Bethlehem. In 1999, she and her traveling partner June took their grandchildren on a mission trip to the Appalachian Mountains in Virginia to work construction. After her retirement from the Post Office, she began making blankets and bags. She donated these items to the local Department of Human Services for children entering foster care. This simple act started a movement with other individuals, following her lead. In April of 2017, Barbara was honored by DHS for her efforts and received the Ed Birchall Award which was given in recognition of the tradition of Ho Ho the Clown for his unselfish commitment and caring. Barbara was a member of the Eagle City Christian Church and the Thomas First Christian Church. Most recently, she attended the Freedom Worship Center of Thomas. She served her church family in numerous ways over the years. Her greatest desire is for others to know and accept Jesus. Barbara enjoyed many activities over the years which included bowling, golfing with her mother and grandson Jimmie, gardening, writing poetry, traveling, knitting and quilting with the ladies. Her greatest pleasure was in spending time with her family and the tradition of waffles and home-made syrup during family gatherings. The pearls of wisdom she would leave to us all is to value your family, never stop learning, keep your priorities straight, make good choices, make great memories; and above all, put God first in your life. She will be profoundly missed.

Barbara is survived by her 3 daughters: Sheila Thomas of Thomas, Kelli Litsch of Eagle City, Melody Hamilton and husband Shayne of Arnett, Ok; 8 grandchildren: Jimmie Litsch, Levi Stewart, Kade Litsch, Sierra Binns, Dakota Thomas, Cody and Brody Walker, Riley Smith; and 6 great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents; one brother Stacey Lanning; son Michael Walker; and grandchildren: Quinci and Logan Stewart and Micah Walker. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Freedom Worship Center building fund.

Reverend Dr. Harold Hughes Hendrick

Rev. Dr. Harold Hendrick, slipped away into Jesus' arms Thursday evening December 23rd after a short illness, at the age of 86 years, 4 months and 17 days. Born in Liberty, MS, and raised in Jackson, MS, he was an only child who went on to higher education at Oklahoma Baptist, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, TX. A gifted pastor for 27 years, his show Encounter made him a well-known radio personality in St. Louis where he later became the Director of Public Relations for Bott Radio Network. His career with Bott spanned over 40 years.



He is survived by his wife Joan (Thomas) Hendrick, with whom he shared over 60 love-filled years of marriage and raised 3 wonderful children, David Harold (Cortland), Stephen Thomas (Lori), and Karis LeAnn (Kevin) Burritt.

He loved and encouraged his many grandchildren: Moriah, Mckayla, Titus, Dawson and Mikah Hendrick; Andrew, Ashlyn (Mike) Jones, Avery (Phil) James, and Abigail Hendrick; Samantha, Savannah and Sterling Burritt, Jacob and Joshua Burritt.

He was the founder of Hendrick Ministries which catalogs hundreds of hours of testimonies and supernatural acts of God at www.haroldhendrick.com. Leading in many evangelistic and ministry events throughout the years, such as the 1999 Billy Graham Crusade, Rock the River with Franklin Graham, My Hope America, etc, he was known as a great networker of people across all denominational lines and races. He was prominent in talks and prayer events with a focus on reconciliation, following the Michael Brown shooting and has been a resident of North County for over 40 years. He's served on multiple boards, including Hannibal LaGrange University.

Most importantly, he loved Jesus with all his heart and spoke of Him constantly, sharing the hope that we can all have in our Lord and Savior Jesus. Likely the most positive person you would have ever met, he was a great encourager and leaves a legacy that his family will continue to honor and transfer to all around them. He is not here, but still he lives and is survived by the thousands of lives he touched in the time he had here. He will be dearly missed by all. "Well done thy good and faithful servant." Matthew 25:21 (NKJV)

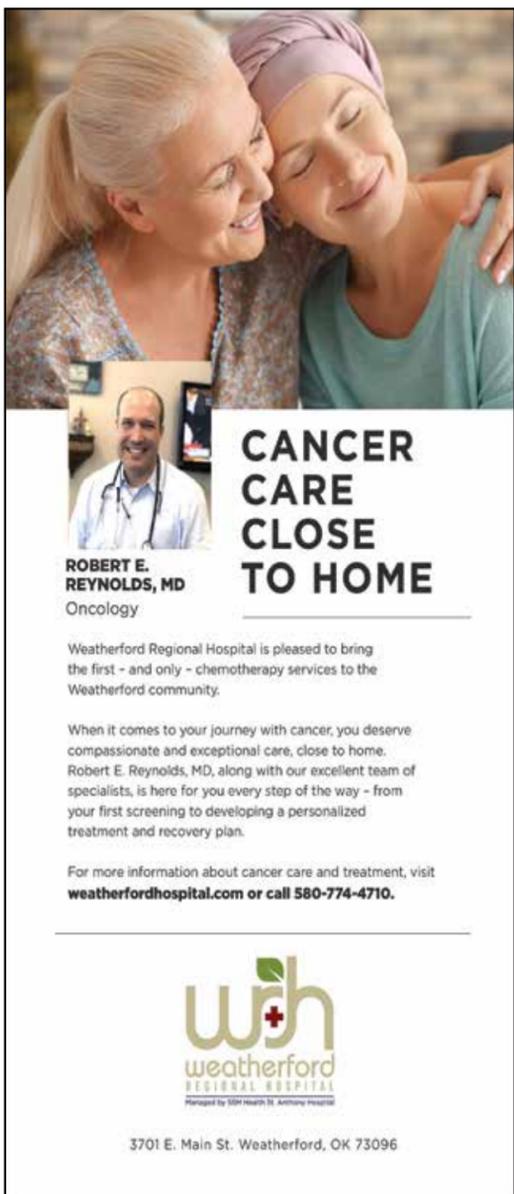
In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorials be sent to Hendrick Ministries, 6752 Mignon Dr., St. Louis, MO 63033,

Sandy Butler

Sandra Lynn Butler was born November 30, 1954, in Oklahoma City to William Eddie and Edna Leoma (Friday) Terry and passed away Wednesday, December 22, 2021, at Integris Baptist Hospital in Oklahoma City at the age of 67 years and 22 days.



Sandra was raised and attended school in Oklahoma City, graduating from Putnam City High School in 1972. She attended cosmetology school. On January 21, 1983, she married Dale Butler and made their home in Weatherford. Sandra worked alongside of her husband at H & C Services. She had owned and



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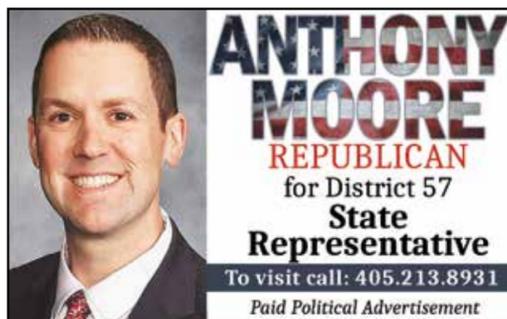
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Legislation Filed Recognizing County Sheriffs as Chief Law Enforcement Officer of Counties



Provided
A portrait of Canadian County Sheriff Chris West who worked with legislators to draft legislation that would name county sherrifs chief law enforcement officers.

Rep. Jay Steagall, R-Yukon, Chair of the Oklahoma House States Rights Committee, has filed legislation for the upcoming session that would identify county sheriffs as the constitutionally-recognized chief law enforcement officer of their respective counties.

Currently, there is no statute in place that designates a chief law enforcement officer of a county, and Steagall says this legislation is important to make sure that lack of recognition does not cause issues in the future.

"The office of your county sheriff is charged with numerous duties including supporting the justice of the county, keeping the peace and protecting our lives and property," Steagall said. "However, there is no greater duty that a Sheriff has taken an oath to discharge than that of supporting and defending both our state and national constitutions. Sheriffs are responsible directly to the people in their elective capacity, which is unlike any other law enforcement position in our Union."

Canadian County Sheriff Chris West, President of the Oklahoma Sheriffs' Association and Secretary of the National Sheriffs' Association, worked with Steagall to introduce the legislation.

"It is a tremendous honor to work with Rep. Steagall on this very important piece of legislation," West said. "I have been fortunate to have worked with many outstanding federal, state, county and municipal

law enforcement agents throughout my career in different capacities and on multiple types of cases. However, unlike all other police executives, sheriffs are elected by and answer directly to their constituents. The securing of the constitutionally-recognized and protected freedom, liberty and rights of those they represent is of an utmost priority to our sheriffs, which makes recognizing their position as the county's chief law enforcement officer vitally important for our citizens."

Steagall said that this legislation is also important due to a continued effort by the federal government to reach into the day-to-day issues of states and municipalities.

"This legislation solidifies in statute our support for our county sheriffs and ensures that there is a constitutionally-recognized law enforcement officer working on the behalf of those who have elected them," Steagall said. "If the federal government tries to encroach on the rights of our counties or municipalities, the citizens should feel confident that their elected chief law enforcement officer has the power to draw a line in the sand and push back against that overreach. The sheriff is the local protector of the people's rights, and in their sphere is superior to all persons acting contrary to the rights of the people – including the government itself."

Governor Stitt Issues Statement on Oklahoma State Board of Equalization Certification

Governor Kevin Stitt issued the following statement after the Oklahoma State Board of Equalization certified an estimate indicating lawmakers will have \$9.1 billion in certified and authorized funds for the 2023 fiscal budget year, which begins July 1, 2022.

"This past fiscal year, Oklahoma's economy has bounced back in a big way and continues to improve," said Gov. Stitt "State revenues are climbing while we are cutting taxes for every Oklahoman. I am committed to investing in our future by adding to what is already the largest state savings account in history, and ensure we remain fiscally responsible with Oklahomans' tax dollars."

During the meeting, Gov. Stitt brought attention to \$1.1 billion in one time carryover and special cash held over from the FY-2021 budget.

"We have changed the perception for how taxpayer dollars should be spent in Oklahoma," said Gov. Stitt. "I'm proud of Senate Appropriations Chairman Roger Thompson, Senate Appropriations Vice Chair Chuck Hall, House Appropriation Chairman Kevin Wallace and House Appropriations Vice Chair Kyle Hilbert for their fiscal discipline last year and thinking long term. We will have the largest savings and unspent cash in history at over \$2 billion to start FY 2023 and have avoided any cuts to state agencies and services. We'll continue to be fiscally responsible and invest in our future to set ourselves up for success."

The Board of Equalization will return in February to certify a final estimate on how much revenue lawmakers will have to build a budget during the upcoming legislative session.



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HIGHER GROUND

A Real Beauty Queen

Phillip Yancy tells a story about an experience he had while visiting a rehabilitation center for victims of leprosy in Nepal.

As they were taking a tour of the hospital, he noticed one of the ugliest human being he had ever seen. Her hands were bandaged in gauze, she had deformed stumps where most people have feet, and her face showed the worst ravages of that cruel disease. Her eyes, mottled and covered with callus, let in no light; she was totally blind. Scars covered patches of skin on her arms.

He said, "We toured a unit of the hospital and returned along the same corridor. In the meantime this creature had crawled across the courtyard to the very edge of the walkway, pulling herself along the ground by planting her

elbows and dragging her body like a wounded animal. I'm ashamed to say that my first thought was, She's a beggar. She wants money. My wife, who has worked among the down-and-out, had a much more holy reaction. Without hesitation she bent down to the woman and put her arm around her. The old woman rested her head against Janet's shoulder and began singing a song in the Nepali dialect, a tune that we all instantly recognized: 'Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so for the Bible tells me so.'"

The physical therapist told Yancy, "Danmaya is one of our most devoted church members," "Most of our patients are Hindus, but we have a little Christian chapel here, and Danmaya comes every time the door opens. She's a prayer warrior. She loves to greet and welcome every visitor who comes to the hospital."

A few months later Yancey heard that Damaya had died. He said, "Close to my desk I keep a photo that I snapped just as she was singing to Janet. Whenever I feel polluted by this beauty-obsessed celebrity culture I live in—a culture in which people pay exorbitant sums to

shorten their noses or plump up their breast to achieve some impossible of beauty while nine thousand people die daily from AIDS from lack of treatment and leprosy's scrape by on charity crumbs—I pull out that photo. I see two beautiful women: my wife, smiling sweetly, wearing a brightly colored Nepali outfit she had bought the day before, holding in her arms an old crone who would flunk any beauty test ever except the one that matters most. Out of that deformed, hollow shell of a body, the light of God's presence shines out. The Holy Spirit found a home."

In 2022 God wants to make himself fully at home in your life. He wants to finish the construction. He may want to put in some windows so that the light of his love and grace can shine through. He may want to clean up the library so that you will be able to spend some quality time, studying his word and other helpful books that will enrich your soul. He may want to build a prayer closet so you can get alone with Him and pray with a broken, repentant heart.

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For Sale- Selling veteran and collector estate sale, German WWII regalia for sale. 580-330-1437

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LOCAL & AREA NEWS



Mike Smith
News Director

Elk City Chamber of Commerce to Host Annual Banquet January 11th



The Elk City Chamber of Commerce's annual banquet is scheduled for Tuesday, January 11, at 7 pm. The banquet's featured spotlights will be to introduce the Chamber President for 2022, Pam Muncrief, and to discuss and highlight milestones from 2021 and goals for 2022. Keynote speaker Ronda Mikles will be presenting.

Tickets to the banquet at the Convention Center will need to be purchased by January 5th with RSVPs sent to the Chamber. Tickets are \$35 per person, or \$280 for a table of 8. Additional information and ticket purchases are available by contacting the Chamber at (580) 225-0207.



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Remembering James Sill: SWOSU Professor, Protector, Public Service Director

As a 17-year veteran of the Southwestern Oklahoma State University Language Arts Department and a member of the United States Armed Forces, Dr. James Sill didn't mind hard work, including digging his own backyard fallout shelter.

Sill came to SWOSU in 1960. Throughout his nearly two decades on the faculty, he taught English Composition, Speech, Debate, Philosophy, Ethics, Old Testament Survey and New Testament Literature, and for five years he was Director of Forensics.

Sill was also an Army Reservist. The Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union was still raging with no end in sight in the early 1960s, and Americans throughout the country, including Weatherford and western Oklahoma, prepared to survive a Soviet nuclear attack.

The October 13, 1964, edition of SWOSU's student newspaper, The Southwestern, carried a story about the eight campus fallout shelters that had just been stocked with food and medical supplies provided by the federal government to accommodate more than 2,000 people for up to two weeks after a nuclear attack.

Two months later, Sill was featured in the Dec. 8 edition of The Southwestern because he was digging a dual-purpose fallout and storm shelter in the back yard of his Weatherford home.

According to the story, Sill, then a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserve, sought the protection that the shelter would provide and thought that digging it would also be a great way for him to get some exercise.

Sill spent his summers then on the faculty at the Army Chaplain School in Fort Hamilton, NY. He had served as



Provided

Dr. James Sill filled several roles at SWOSU during his 17 year tenure.

chaplain with the Third Air Force during World War II in the 1940s and with the Army during the Korean War in the 1950s.

Later in the 1960s, Sill added to his teaching duties by serving as SWOSU's Director of Public Service. In this capacity, he traveled the state and region speaking to educational and civic groups on behalf of SWOSU—130 times in 1967 alone. Sill also arranged speaking appointments for other SWOSU faculty members, and he hosted campus visitors.

Sill retired in 1977, but he returned to campus as SWOSU's 1983 commencement speaker.

An educator, public service director, chaplain and Army Reservist, SWOSU professor James Sill wore many hats. And he wasn't afraid to operate the working end of a shovel when he needed to.



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JUST JOY ACTIVITY CENTER- Just Joy Activity Center recently launched in Weatherford as a day center for adults with special needs. President of the board Ben Irvin said a future goal of the center is to get involved with local businesses. The center is open from 8-5 Monday through Thursday and 8 to noon on Friday's

THOMAS NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL- Thomas Fay Custer Schools will be opening their new elementary school to start the spring semester. Superintendent Rob Friesen said teachers are ready to be in the new building after having class in a local church for the last six weeks due to wind damage at the old elementary building. Teachers will report on January 3rd and students will be back in the classroom on January 4th.

CUSTER COUNTY/STORM SHELTER PROJECT- Custer County Emergency Management Director Mike Galloway said he is still working on the next safe room project. Galloway said the funds have not been released yet for the project. The individual safe rooms are purchased by the individual and will then be given a rebate if selected for the program.

BECKHAM CO DIST COURT/CARLOCK- a preliminary hearing scheduled for January 5th in Beckham County District Court for an Enid man charged with multiple offenses including maiming, conspiracy and kidnapping has been moved to January 7th. Twenty-nine year old Christopher Carlock is accused of among other things, the beating and kidnapping of

a man at an Elk City hotel. Carlock was captured near Lawton after a brief pursuit.

CLINTON EXIT 65 PROJECT- Clinton Mayor David Berrong said that there is anticipation around the town for the new Exit 65 project. Berrong mentioned Southerlands moving in to the old K-mart building, a renovation of the old Taufest building, and the re-opening of the bowling alley on Gary Boulevard. The project will begin construction in a few years.

WEATHERFORD CITY COMMISSION/HOTEL MOTEL COMMITTEE- The Weatherford City Commission approved several grants from the Hotel/Motel Committee. One of the grants was for \$4,500 for the 2022 U.S.S.A. Weatherford softball tournaments. Hotel/Motel Committee Spokesperson Brian Adler said the tournament has the opportunity to bring in people to the city of Weatherford. Some other grants that were approved include an \$8,600 grant to the Weatherford F.F.A. boosters for the 2022 Southwest Oklahoma Show Pig Series and Western Oklahoma Swine Classic and \$12,500 to Weatherford summer baseball for fees to host 2022 regional and state tournaments.

WRH/STAFFING NEEDS- Like many hospitals, Weatherford Regional Hospital has staffing needs. That message was part of the CEO report to the board from Brian Denton, who said that internal staff has been covering many of the open shifts. However, Denton told the board that the hospital had budgeted \$140 an hour for agency registered nurses. However, Denton said the going rate now is \$165 an hour.



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WEEKLY SHOUTOUTS!

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Happy Birthday Wishes for January 5th- Misty Carmin, Jackie Galloway, Ivonna Hinton, Carrol Kiegha, Stacy King, Jennifer Pebley, Kendra Robinson, Luke Toho; **January 6th-** Anita Anderson, Kaydence Andes, Joyce Austin, Ashley Breedon, Brooklyn Christian, Jordan Crane, Korbin Hart, Evelyn Moncrief, Kimberly Rhoads, Kimberly Smith, Tonya West, Truman Whiteshield; **January 7th-** Michael Buckner, Jarrod Burton, Jennifer Daniel, Mark Frye, Winston Gates, Kynsee Hamar, Joe Harl, Bryee Heather Miller, Niki Sawatzky, Zachary Smith; **January 8th-** Louise Bette, Bobby Birdwell, Timber Sway Bishop, Deidra Bright, Tosha Christian, Haley Cordes, Kelli Goldenm Sadie Harris, Diana King, Randy Lowenkamp, Cindy McGuire, Marc Odom, Dawn Dunn Potter, Jamie Sisson; **January 9th-** Floyd Birkenfield, Mark Bowman, Carla Caldwell, Levi Cupp, Zach Grossman, Andrew Kern, Frances Kissler, Rusty Kreizenbeck, Hailey Martin, Dawson McCamon, Doug McGuire, John E. Royal, James Sharry, Andrea Snider, Monte Taylor, Dustin Thomas, Robert McMack; **January 10th-** Ardean Atteberry, Bernard Boeckman, Anthony Davenport, Harold (Griff) Griffin, Charla Holland, Bruce Kasper, Kimberly King, Summer Megli, Rick Reynolds, Martha Sauer, Madella Shelton, Robert Skipworth, Denise Slagle; **January 11th-** Codie Adcock, Sue Brandhorst, Bobby Green, Marvin Hines, Paula Jeffers, Chuck Maddox, Robert Mayfield, Jack Olson, Charles Sewell, James Taylor, Logan Taylor, Daniel Torres

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SWOSU Women's Basketball Rings in New Year with Victory at SAU

Jon Chidester
SWOSU Assistant AD/Media Relations

SWOSU Women's Basketball led by only four points with 7:49 left to play against Southern Arkansas on Saturday afternoon but scored the next 12 points to give them the breathing room they needed. The No. 19/25-ranked Lady Dawgs went on to defeat the Muleriders 85-72 for their 11th consecutive win on the season.

Makyla Tramble looked good all afternoon on offense. She finished with 32 points – one shy of tying her career best – and shot 50% from the field on 13-of-26 attempts overall. She was also the team leader in assists with four.

SWOSU led wire-to-wire against the Muleriders. They did not waste any time to build their lead after jumping out to a 13-0 start. SAU managed to weather that initial storm to keep the margin similar. By halftime, the score was 45-32.

A 10-2 Mulerider run that started at the end of the third quarter and went into the fourth made things interesting, but SWOSU didn't panic and answered back. Leading 66-62 with 7:49 left to go, the Lady Dawgs rattled off a 15-2 run that included 12 unanswered points to squish any momentum SAU had gained.

SWOSU finished shooting nearly 44% (34-of-78) as a team overall from the field and held Southern Arkansas to 33% (22-of-66). SAU consistently got to the line, finishing 23-for-28 (82%) from the charity stripe compared to SWOSU's 10-for-15 (66%) rate.



SWOSU Junior Lauren Ramey dribbles the ball down the court as Sophomore Macy Gore follows behind her. The SWOSU Lady Bulldogs are still undefeated in conference play.

Provided

Lauren Ramey had a productive game and finished with 19 points on 6-of-10 shooting (60%) and 3-for-6 from beyond the arc. This was also the second highest point total of her career.

Bethany Franks was SWOSU's other double-digit scorer, finishing with 10 points and a game high six

steals.

Following the completion of their first Arkansas road trip of the season, SWOSU (12-2, 6-0 GAC) will return to the friendly confines of the Pioneer Cellular Event Center next week to first host Ouachita Baptist on Thursday, January 6 at 5:30 pm.

Bulldogs Can't Overcome Cold Shooting Against Muleriders



Provided

SWOSU Junior Kamden Gipson sets up at the point before running a play. The SWOSU men's basketball team will look to end their 2 game losing streak against OBU this week.

Jon Chidester
SWOSU Assistant AD/Media Relations

The Bulldogs shot a season low 25.5% from the field as a team on Saturday and fell to Southern Arkansas 70-41 as a result.

With SWOSU's offense struggling, the defense managed to keep things close in the first half by holding SAU to just 23% shooting. Both schools seemed to struggle out of the gate, but the Muleriders were able to go into halftime with a double-digit, 26-16 lead.

The defense eventually wore down though and Southern Arkansas heated up after the break to outscore the Dawgs 44-25 in the final 20 minutes. The Muleriders opened the second half on a 20-3 run that proved to create too much of a margin for SWOSU's cold shooting to overcome.

Damion Thornton finished with 18 points and as the lone double-digit scorer for the Dawgs. He shot 6-for-15 (40%) including 2-of-7 from beyond the arc. Mark Berry led the team in rebounding, finishing with six boards.

SWOSU (3-7, 2-3 GAC) will be back at home Thursday, January 6 against Ouachita Baptist. Tipoff for that conference game is set for 7:30 p.m.

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Ramey & Tramble First 2022 Bulldogs of the Week




LAUREN RAMEY

MAKYLA TRAMBLE



BULLDOGS OF THE WEEK

Week 17 - Dec. 27 - Jan. 2



Jon Chidester
SWOSU Assistant AD/Media Relations

A pair of SWOSU Women's Basketball players have been named Bulldogs of the Week following their successful road trip last week. The award is brought to you by Wright Wradio, the home of SWOSU Athletics on both 95.5 'The Coyote' and 100.3 'Coyote Classic.'

Ramey (Kiefer, Okla.) averaged 18.0 points last week, including a 19-point performance against Southern Arkansas last Saturday. 19 points is the

second highest point total she has scored in her Bulldog career. In that same game, she filled up her stat sheet by finishing with five rebounds, and two blocks, steals, and assists. Two days prior, the junior tallied 17 points and seven rebounds against Arkansas Monticello.

Tramble (Shawnee, Okla.) averaged 26.0 points last week, including a 32-point performance against SAU. Similar to Ramey, 32 points is also the second highest point total she has scored in a SWOSU jersey. Against Arkansas Monticello, Tramble notched her

first double-double on the year when she finished with 20 points and 10 assists – a new career best for her in assists.

The Lady Bulldogs are currently ranked No. 19 and 25 in the WBCA and D2SIDA national polls respectively and should continue to climb when the next set of rankings are released thanks to another undefeated week. SWOSU has won 11 consecutive games and will look to continue that streak at home this week when they take on Ouachita (Thursday, Jan. 6) and Henderson State (Saturday, Jan. 8).



Provided

(Pictured Left) The Hydro-Eakly Varsity boys' basketball team poses for a picture with head coach Rick Gore after Gore recorded his 500th career win after the Hydro-Eakly Bobcats defeated the Cashion Wildcats 51-49 in the Tournament of Champions in Tulsa.

(Pictured Right) Hydro-Eakly Senior Paxton Price goes up for a lay-up against the Tulsa Memorial Chargers at the Tournament of Champions.

PLUMLEE

Continued from Page 1

fire and teammates on foot, some of them injured. Under heavy enemy fire, Plumlee used his body to shield the driver and exited to engage the enemy. He drew his pistol, without cover and regard for his own safety, and immediately pressed toward the closest enemy who was just meters away.

Plumlee reached cover, having taken out 2 insurgents. With no time to take a breath, he again pressed on, leaving cover and advancing alone. Under intense enemy fire, he temporarily retreated and met up with another soldier. Ignoring his injuries, he pressed on again. And again after heavy fire, temporarily retreated. He bought time and grouped up with another band of soldiers. With them, he pushed out again.

During this push, he saw a wounded U.S. soldier and carried him to safety and addressed his wounds. Without delay, Plumlee organized the newly arrived soldiers into a defensive stance and methodically cleared the area.

Reports came in of his repeated heroism as he continued to put himself in between the enemy and his allies. They called it extraordinary heroism; Plumlee credited his unit and the U.S. Army. When reflecting on the moment and his thoughts, Plumlee states, "It was probably the proudest moment of my career, just to be with those guys, at that time, on that day was just awesome."

Going through his long list of experiences, accomplishments, and accolades truly deserves a longer piece to really begin to understand and appreciate the weight and impact they have had, and will continue to have, on history. Luckily, each Medal of Honor recipient receives a full dedicated piece detailing the account of their history and the deed(s) that solidified their right to the medal.

The U.S. Army site: army.mil had several coverages of his awards, merits, and deeds, including a special piece over the Medal of Honor. Their YouTube channel also features the White House award ceremony where Plumlee received his medal along with Sergeant First Class Alwyn C. Cashe and Sergeant First Class Christopher A. Celiz.

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OPINION: Addressing Oklahoma's Workforce Shortage in Critical Need Areas

Kyle Hilbert
Oklahoma State Representative 29th District

Evidence of a workforce shortage is everywhere. Placing an online order to finish Christmas shopping this past month, I was notified the company could no longer give an exact shipping date due to workforce and supply chain issues. Unfortunately, this problem is bigger than possibly not getting a family member's Christmas present delivered before Dec. 25.

This workforce shortage is affecting our health care, students in our classrooms and many other sectors of society. We must get a handle on this if we want to thrive and make Oklahoma the Top-Ten state we all believe it can become.

The Legislature can start by looking at three critical areas where shortages existed pre-pandemic: nursing, teaching and engineering.

Nursing goes without saying. Every person in this country is aware of the shortage and the challenges it has caused. During multiple spikes in the pandemic, there were Oklahoma hospitals that had physical bed space yet were unable to take additional patients because they lacked staff. The bright side is that based on public testimony at our American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Health & Human Services hearings, we have enough students interested in nursing to address this shortage. We just don't currently have the capacity at our postsecondary institutions to train them all.

Annually, Oklahoma is only graduating half as many students in our colleges of education as we have teachers retiring. This is according to a recent Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency (LOFT) report. Simultaneously, only half of these graduates are staying in the profession more than five years. With our colleges of education graduates only meeting 25% of the demand five years post-graduation, our K-12 education system cannot possibly function without alternative and emergency certified teachers. It is imperative that we support alternative and emergency certified teachers while also increasing the number of education graduates.

Within the last decade the aerospace sector surpassed all but oil and gas to become the second largest industry in Oklahoma. This diversification of our state's economy has been a goal of Oklahoma legislators for several generations now. However, the energy and aerospace industries – as well as many others – are going to have a difficult time growing in our state if we do not have adequate numbers of engineering graduates from Oklahoma universities.



Provided
Oklahoma State Representative Kyle Hilbert who represents the 29th district of Oklahoma which contains rural parts of Creek and Tulsa County.

As a state we must do a better job of not only increasing interest in STEM careers, but also of providing tutoring and others services so that all students with an interest and ability to be engineers have the tools necessary to get across the finish line.

There are certainly other shortage areas that could be addressed – IT jobs, plumbers, truck drivers, etc. – but tackling these first three is a good start. A quality healthcare workforce is essential to provide the quality of life necessary for our citizens. Without enough skilled K-12 educators to properly train the next generation, it makes addressing all other shortage areas all but impossible. Without enough engineers, our state will not be able to become the Top-Ten state we strive to be. These problems are not unique to Oklahoma, but that doesn't mean we cannot come up with unique solutions to address them.

In closing, I will share a quote from my good friend Majority Floor Leader Jon Echols: "No one is dying because we don't have enough political science graduates. But they are due to a lack of nurses."

Frank Lucas Applauds \$554 Million USDA Investment Expanding Critical Rural Oklahoma Infrastructure

Last month, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the investment of more than \$554 million to build and improve critical rural infrastructure in Oklahoma. Congressman Frank Lucas (OK-03) released the following statement applauding the investment in Oklahoma's communities helping expand access to high-speed internet, clean water, and reliable electricity in people's homes and businesses across rural Oklahoma:

"From businesses on Main Street, classrooms in our local schools, and households dotted across rural Oklahoma, investments in infrastructure help shape the daily lives of each and every Oklahoman. USDA's investment in expanding critical, rural infrastructure will create jobs and provide the necessary resources needed to expand broadband and dependable electric power for those serving rural communities," said Congressman Lucas. "Investing in rural Oklahoma undoubtedly increases economic opportunities for our communities' small businesses, family farms, and hard-working families; and improves the livelihoods of those who call rural Oklahoma home. I thank USDA for their investment in Oklahoma's rural infrastructure, ensuring that when rural America thrives all of America thrives."

Provided by funding through the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, USDA's investments will provide \$554,849,000 in loans and grants to support infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural, Tribal and high-poverty areas, including:

- \$78,000,000- Associated Electric Cooperatives
- \$41,807,000- Northwestern Electric Cooperation
- \$178,831,000- East Central Oklahoma Electric Cooperative
- \$19,322,000- Southwest Rural Electric Association
- \$234,410,000- Western Farmers Electric Cooperative
- \$2,479,000- Rural Water District No. 4

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