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Elk City Centennial Carousel Temporarily Closes



A popular Ackley Park attraction in Elk City is closed until further notice. Due to mechanical problems, the Centennial Carousel is out of commission until repairs can be made.

“There are only a handful of people, nationally, who work on carousels,” City Manager Tom Ivester explained, “and we’re at the mercy of one man’s availability.”

The regular repairman who maintains the Centennial Carousel lives in Ohio. According to the Elk City Chamber of Commerce Facebook page, he initially told city officials that it would be a matter of weeks before he could travel to Elk City to work on the carousel.

He has since informed city officials that it could be longer. As a result, the city is considering other repair options. Ivester hopes to have the carousel running and available for riders during Christmas in the Park activities.

The Centennial Carousel was first opened to the public in 2001 as a monument to celebrate 100 years since Elk City’s founding. It, along with the Choctaw Rocket Express Train and the Old Town Miniature Golf Course, has made it a very popular destination for locals and tourists alike.

The Centennial Carousel also remains popular during the city’s annual “Christmas in the Park” festivities and lights display.

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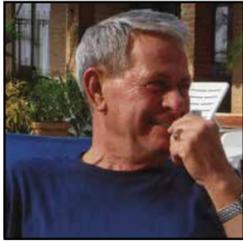


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Bob Vincent

Robert Earl Vincent was born December 10, 1942, in Weatherford to Lige Thomas and Katie Lee (Herron) Vincent and passed away Monday, August 7, 2023, at St. Anthony West in El Reno, at the age of 80 years, 7 months and 27 days.



Bob was raised and attended school in Eakly and graduated from Eakly High School in 1960. After high school, he attended Southwestern Oklahoma State University on a baseball scholarship. On August 11, 1964, Bob married Glenda Hines in Mountain View. They lived in Weatherford and moved to Yukon in 1975 where he worked in athletic equipment sales for 15 years and later retired from car sales in 2011. On April 9, 2009, he married Linda Gail (Davidson) Bennett in Oklahoma City and made their home in El Reno. Bob enjoyed fishing, raising cattle, farm work, grandchildren and watching baseball.

Bob is survived by his wife Linda Vincent of El Reno; three sons: James Edward Vincent and wife Jennifer of Derby, KS; Mark Alan Vincent and wife Jamie of El Reno, and Andy Paul Vincent of West Yellowstone, MT; two step-sons: William Bennett of Carnegie and Darin Bennett of Weatherford; two brothers, Frank Vincent of Eakly and Reuben Vincent and wife Sabrina of May, TX; two sisters: Reba Jackson and husband Dale of Mountain View and Debbie Vincent of Stillwater;

Bob was also survived by seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; one brother Gerald; and two sisters: Marietta and Bonnie.

Bob Klaassen

Bobby Joel "Bob" Klaassen was born September 26, 1942, south of Corn, to Frank J. and Augusta (Krewall) Klaassen and passed away Sunday, August 13, 2023, at Weatherford Regional Hospital, at the age of 80 years, 10 months and 17 days.



Bob was raised and attended school in Corn and later graduated from Weatherford High School in 1960.

He earned his Bachelor's Degree from Southwestern Oklahoma State University in 1964 and earned his Master's Degree from Oklahoma State University in 1967.

On January 15, 1966, Bob married Betty Ann Pfenning in Hobart, making their home in Oklahoma City. In 1978, they moved back to Weatherford and he worked at SWOSU as Director of Admissions and later as Registrar for 32 years before retiring in 2010.

While at the university, Bob served in more than two dozen organizations, often holding leadership positions.

He won numerous awards for his service, including the OACROA Outstanding Achievement Award.

Bob was very active in First Baptist Church as a deacon and leading various ministries, most recently Promise Keepers, 55 and Up, and caring for the deacon widows.

He also served his community in countless ways, volunteering at the Pioneer Center, Connections Food and Resource Center, Corn Heritage Village, Baptist Collegiate Ministry, Meals on Wheels, and many others.

His participation only increased after retirement, and he was honored as Volunteer of the Year by the Retired Senior Volunteer Program.

Bob loved his family and friends. His faith in Jesus was evident in the way he served others and spent his time, creating a legacy of intentionality and deep family love.

He leaves behind a lifetime of great family memories and joyful relationships.

Bob is survived by his wife of 57 years Betty Ann Klaassen of their home in Weatherford; two sons: David Klaassen and wife Deleise, of Edmond and Matthew Klaassen and wife Kelsey, of Edmond; one daughter Mary Ann Hutchison and husband David, of Houston, Texas.

Bob is also survived by 12 grandchildren: Garrett Klaassen and wife Jenna; Tyler Klaassen and wife Shaylin; Riley Hershberger and husband Ethan; Cole Klaassen; Elizabeth Hutchison; Noah Hutchison; Emma Hutchison; Joshua Klaassen; Jake Klaassen; Isaac Klaassen; Eli Klaassen; and Megan Klaassen.

Bob was preceded in death by his parents; three brothers: Roy, Denver, and Orville; and two sisters Beatrice Owen and Mary Leppke.

SeReatha Steele

SeReatha Ann Steele was born to William Morris and Wanda Jo (Truelock) Stephens on September 27, 1944, in Coryell, TX and passed away at her home on Wednesday, August 9, 2023, in Thomas, OK, at the age of 78 years, 10 months and 12 days.

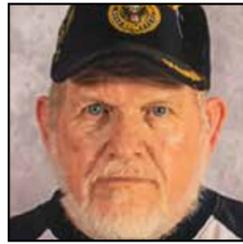


SeReatha was raised in Quitaque, TX. She attended school in Quitaque and graduated in 1963. After high school she went to West Texas A.M. for three years. She married and made her home in Austin where she worked for the Chamber of Commerce. SeReatha retired and moved to Lubbock to take care of her mother. On August 12, 2017, she married Jim Ed Steele in Thomas where they made their home. SeReatha enjoyed crocheting, her dogs, Country and Western music, and spending time with family and friends.

SeReatha is survived by her husband of six years Jim Steele of their home in Thomas and one nephew Shawn Stephens of Prosper, TX. She was preceded in death by her parents and one brother.

Clifford Steffes

Clifford Leo Steffes was born March 26, 1950, in Elk City, OK and passed away Monday, August 7, 2023, in his Clinton residence.



Clifford was raised in Clinton, OK and graduated from Clinton Schools in 1968.

He was employed with Kellwood Factory but was soon drafted in the U.S. Army in 1971.

He was stationed in Germany and Vietnam. He received the National Defense Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, he was an expert with the handgun and was a sharpshooter with the M16.

He was Honorably discharged in 1973. He returned to Clinton and was able to return to Kellwood and served them 25 years until they closed.

He then worked for the K-Mart Stores and retired after 25 years.

He cherished times that he was asked to be the Santa Clause with the Clinton Elementary Students. He enjoyed staying in contact and corresponding with his classmates.

He was an avid football fan and watched Championship Wrestling.

He was preceded in death by his parents, brother Johnny Steffes, by two nephews Mitchell Steffes and Michael Palmer.

He is survived by sisters Sally James and husband Jimmy, Clinton, OK; Sharon James, Clinton, OK, Edwina Hurley, Berryhill, OK; Rhonda Williams, Clinton, OK; and Lisa Woody, Shawnee, OK; brothers Gary Steffes and wife Rita, Clinton, OK, Mickey Steffes and wife Tina, Clinton, OK; and Larry Steffes and wife Dori, Staunton, VA.

He is also survived by numerous nieces, nephews and other relatives and friends.

Wayne Ray

Wayne Preston Ray was born at Elk City Hospital on August 19, 1944, to Wesley Garrett Ray and Jean Alice (née Martin) Ray and passed away on Wednesday, August 9th, 2023, at the age of 78.



Wayne grew up on the family farm with his sister Karen and his double cousin/best friend/semi-brother David Martin. Wayne learned to farm early and was at his happiest driving a tractor.

He went to Elk City Schools where he excelled in the sciences.

He graduated as the Valedictorian of his class and went to Oklahoma City University on scholarship where he completed his bachelor's degree in chemistry. While there, he met the love of his life Carolyn Sanders, and they were married on May 29, 1964.

Wayne began his master's degree in chemistry, but felt the need to join the workforce to support his growing family. He started working as a chemist and engineer for a helium plant in SW Kansas until an opportunity arose when 3M built a new plant in Weatherford.

He joined 3M's operations from the very beginning of the Weatherford plant, where he was instrumental in developing film coating technology that was used across the world.

His "real world know-how" separated him from most engineers, and 3M recognized his contributions by awarding him the "Golden Step," the company's highest honor, four different times. He even traveled to help 3M install his process at new plants in Alabama and Paris, France.

When his kids went to college, he and Carolyn moved to Granbury, Minnesota, where his career progressed until he moved back to Weatherford to be closer to family in 1996.

He continued to work for "The Plant" until he retired in 2000. In his retirement, he kept busy driving "hot shot" and farming for friends like Tim Lowry.

Wayne was best known as "Papa" to his family. He knew how to fix almost anything, and was the first call when anyone needed help.

He loved to play with his grandbabies, cooking them breakfast and taking naps in his chair after reading to them.

He also loved to fish, and he was good at it; he once caught a 9.5lb walleye out of Canton Lake which would have won \$1000 at the Walleye Rodeo. He passed on a love of fishing to both of his sons and loved to spend time at the lake with his friends, especially Rodney Corlee.

Wayne grew up in the Church of Christ and was always active, either singing, leading, or serving. He served as an Elder in the Woodbury Church of Christ during his time in Minnesota, and was a deacon in the Weatherford Church of Christ, serving the Bible chair and even doing the books for the church.

Wayne was survived by his wife of 59 years Carolyn Ray; his sister Karen and husband Ralph White; his two sons James "Skeet" Ray and Dr. Jason and wife Dr. Kathryn Ray; his five grandchildren: Jessa and Husband Cody Jarvis, Jayden and wife Kaylin Ray, Jaquelyn and husband Quentin Sims, James Preston "J.P." Ray, and Jaelynn Ray; and his three great grandchildren Charlie Wayne Jarvis, Chelsea Jarvis, and Callum Jarvis.

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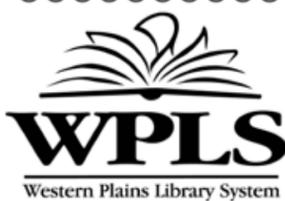
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Oklahoma Human Services Announces New Text Notifications for SNAP, TANF, and Other Benefits

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Oklahoma Human Services is excited to announce new text notifications for customers who receive benefits through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and other assistance programs offered through the agency.

The notifications launched as of August 18, 2023. These text messages will come from 405-522-1672 or 405-521-1671. This new service will let customers know where they are in the application process for benefits and the next steps they need to take.

Possible process notifications customers could receive via text messages include:

- Renewal Due
- Application/Renewal Received
- Mid-Certification Verification Needed
- Mid-Certification Verification Received
- Mid-Certification Renewal Completed
- Benefit Approval

Customers will receive one text message as they move to each application status and have the choice to "opt out" of the service at any time by texting STOP to 405-522-1672 or 405-521-1671. Similarly, customers can choose to opt back in by texting START to the same numbers.

"We know the majority of our customers use their cell phones to apply for benefits or check the status of their cases, and these text messages will give them a snapshot into what step they are in the process," said Deb Smith, Director of Adult and Family Services. "We're excited for this additional opportunity to meet our customers where they are and increase critical communication about the status of their cases. Our hope is that this feature also allows them to receive information without waiting to talk to a specialist on the phone."

Customers are still able to check the status of their cases online at <https://okdhslive.org/> or by calling 405-522-5050. The web option at okdhslive.org/ is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Oklahoma Human Services texts will never ask for personal information, such as social security numbers or bank account numbers. Additionally, the agency will never text or call you to notify you that your card has been "locked" or "placed on hold."

If customers receive a call or text from a number they don't recognize asking for personal information, they should hang up and call 405-522-5050 to ask Oklahoma Human Services to verify the request. Do not click on any links that may be included in suspicious text messages.

To learn additional tips to protect benefits, visit Oklahoma's government website at this link: oklahoma.gov/okdhs/services/snap/snapprotect.

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WE LISTEN SO YOU CAN HEAR



Vanessa Valli / WW

Kayla Rogers and Ember Rogers discuss Pack 355's Cub Scouts on "The Van and Jon Show." The district serves Beckham, Custer, and Washita Counties and is accepting new recruits at the Federated Church in Weatherford.

HIGHER GROUND

School Days



Jim Morrison

Sometimes I run across some material in my files that I feel are too significant to just lay there. So today I share a couple of articles from the Christian Counseling Newsletter in their 1993 issue. They are relevant to any era but certainly for today.

"A few years ago, in an address to three-thousand Roman Catholic lay persons in San Francisco, Pope John Paul II gave an insightful challenge that is worth pondering.

"We face a growing secularism that tries to exclude God and religious truth from human affairs," the pontiff began."

"We face an insidious relativism that undermines the absolute truth of Christ and the truths of faith, and tempts believers to think of them as merely one set of beliefs or opinions among others."

"We face a materialistic consumerism that offers superficially attractive but empty promises conferring material comfort at the price of inner emptiness."

"We face an alluring hedonism that offers a whole series of pleasures that will never satisfy the human heart. All these attitudes can influence our sense of good and evil at the very moment when social and scientific progress require strong ethical guidance. Once alienated from Christian faith and practice by these and other deceptions, people often commit themselves to passing fads or to bizarre beliefs that are either shallow or fanatical. Christ's message must live in the way you live and in the way you refuse to live."

That address was given over 25 years ago. Little did he know how prophetic his words would be. I wonder what he would say today.

That issue also contained some choice words from David Watson, an Anglican pastor who was suffering terminal cancer. In his diary he published the following words.

"Life is not always very funny, and my own situation was far from humorous, but laughter can save us from the early snares of self-pity and self-importance. It can also act as a powerful antidote to disease by turning negatives into positives."

"I found God's word to be a wonderful protection from all dreadful imaginings. Even on a human level the existence of anxieties and fears can accelerate the disease and hinder the healing process. . . As I read or prayed through the Psalms, I was conscious of my tensions unwinding, my fears disappearing, and once again I was aware of the Lord's love surrounding me."

I close with the Apostle Paul's prayer to the churches of his day. "Ephesians 3:16-19 (NLB)

"I pray that from his glorious, unlimited riches he will give you mighty inner strength through his Holy Spirit. And I pray that Christ will be more and more at home in your hearts as you trust in him. May your roots go down deep into the soil of God's marvelous love. And may you experience the love of Christ, though it is so great you will never fully understand it. Then you will be filled with the fullness of life and power that comes from God."

To comment: jhm82@outlook.com, 580-302-1142.

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Oklahoma Highway Patrolman Pays a Visit to Western Oklahoma Christian School (WOCS)



Jena Skarda / WOCS

Oklahoma Highway Patrolman Carson Cabaniss instructs Western Oklahoma Christian School (WOCS) teachers how to keep students safe while crossing the street. Pictured (from left): Carson Cabaniss, Cher Brown, Kris Collins, Dora Miller, and Kim Gill.



Heston Wright / WW

Members of the Weatherford Rotary recently heard from the new Vice President for Administration and Finance at SWOSU. Lori Boyd of Yukon spoke at Lucille's Roadhouse, expressing excitement over directing departments that, as she described them, "don't ever stop." Boyd succeeds Brenda Burgess who will retire effective December 21st.

WEST OK / STORM DAMAGE – Storms, packing high winds and heavy rain, came blowing through western Oklahoma over the span of three nights. Storms on Friday, August 11, left some structural damage through its path in Elk City says Fire Chief Kyle Chervenka. Pictures on the Burns Flat-Dill City school's Facebook page show damage also occurred at their football stadium.

CLINTON / HOSPITAL - Officials are working to reopen Clinton Regional Hospital. City Manager Robert Johnston provided an update to the council this week, saying that the city has received the license to reopen the facility. He says everything won't reopen all in one day. It will happen over several days. Additionally, a feasibility study is being considered that would determine the types of service the hospital will provide beyond basic emergency room and in-patient services.

CUSTER CO / FATALITY - The Oklahoma Highway Patrol has identified the person killed in a motorcycle/vehicle accident on Interstate-40, about 5 miles west of Weatherford. OHP says 47-year-old Perry Lee Luna of Hobart died at the scene of the accident when a pickup driven by Jimmy Alamilla of Rockford, Illinois, ran into the back of the motor-cycle.

BECKHAM CO / HERNDON - An Elk City man is charged in Beckham County District Court with 4th-degree arson. Fifty year-old Jerry Herndon allegedly set fire to a shed in the 500 block of Patton Circle on August 10th.

BECKHAM / HOWELL – A Sayre man has been bound over in Beckham County District Court on a charge of an act of terrorism. Fifty-three year-old Michael Scott Howell allegedly sent threatening messages by email to a Sweetwater school official. One of the messages had a link to a news article in reference to the Nashville, Tennessee, school shooting that occurred in late March. School officials felt the email was a threat to Sweetwater schools, staff, and students.

WEATHERFORD / GRANT - The Director of Curriculum at Weatherford Public Schools Doug Gungelman says Weatherford recently received the 3rd highest grant in the state from the Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission at \$12,500 for its aviation program. Gungelman says Weatherford has the second biggest aviation program in the state behind Norman. He says the Stafford Air & Space Museum will donate its wind tunnel to the Weatherford Aviation Program.

WEEKLY SHOUTOUTS!

OH HAPPY Day TO YOU!



Have a birthday, anniversary, or other special event? Email us at sales@westokweekly.com to announce it here for FREE!

Alcohol causing problems? Alcoholics Anonymous meets daily at 928 W. Main, Weatherford. Call (580) 819-0727 for more information.
Christian Free Store – Donations of school supplies, clothes, shoes, etc. are needed or if you are in need. Please call (580) 637-2345 or (580) 291-3875.
Alfa, OK, Community Center "Bible Study," Every Monday Night from 7:00-8:00 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 August 23 - Cody Bell, Allen Boyd, Jean Cain, Anne Flood, Darryl Green, Donna Jones, Pat Vawter, Jeremy Washa;
August 24th - Kailin Brodrick, Mackina Dobrinski, Hershel Howes, Bill Leppke, Paige Lindley, Korrina Olguin, Sandi Rhoads, Debbie Shaw, Corbin Sims, Tyler Steiny;
August 25th - Dustin Britton, Preston Britton, Mickael Carlisle, Randon Folsom, Barbara Griffin, Terry Igo, Desirae Lindsey, Rebecca Manney, Joshya McCoy, Brandie McCoy, Laurel Nowlin, Heather Parsons, Pasiley Payne, Mart Tisdal, Sheryl Troxel, Karessa Wallace;
Aug. 26th - Kelsey Baker, Sue Blagg, Julie Caldwell, Bailey Coronado, Kletta Garrison, Melinda Henson, Amanda Isch-Benton, Mitch King, Carol Lin, Coleen Mannering, Sharla Sharry, Larry Williams;
August 27th - Amanda Blatnick, Mike Corrigan, Jaycee Harris, Moretta Johnson, Ralph McConnell, James Pannell, Ashley Peck, Jacon Schneberger, James Thompson, Dave Watson, Jane Weichel, Heston Wright;
August 28th - Monica Hinojosa, Sandy Koop, Sharon Mahan, Bobby Nailon, David Shaw, Dylan Stewart, Lyndsey Taff;
August 29th -Anthony Friebein, Misti Gregston, Ashley Kelley, Sandy Lenius, Ron Pebley, Alvaro Ramos, Chris Ruiz, Bentley Sperle, Ashlyn Taylor, James Thompson.

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3-Drawer Solid Wood Cabinet MUST SELL! \$50. 580-375-9425.

3 Handheld Vacuums - \$30 each. 580-613-0108.

Tall Wood Table - 3ft x 3ft. Can be used for eating, board and card games--anything, really! \$45. 580-613-0108.

Brothers Sewing Maching - Portable. \$50. 580-445-6765

Chairs for Sale! Swivel, Dining, Rocking, and Patio Chairs. Call 580-613-0108 for details.

Baby Gear! Selling baby crib mattress (\$50), baby seat with mobile (\$20), and Fisher-Price Swing-o-Matic (\$45). All products are like new. Contact 580-613-0108.

23 Dinner Plates - 75 cents each. 580-613-0108.

Small Sq. Coffee Table - Good Condition. \$45. 580-613-0108.

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Furniture! 7-Piece Tiger Oak Dinette Pioneer hutch buffet table and 4 chairs. Devilled glass and mirrors fruit motif. \$2,000. Call 580-772-4297.

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8N Ford tractor - Good condition. \$1,500. Call me at 580-729-0001.

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Old Road Maps - Pristine condition. Properly stored. Call 580-393-1444.

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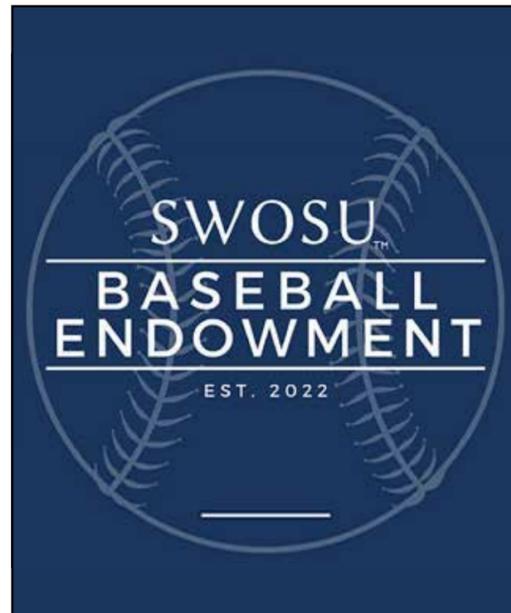
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Family of Dr. Alvarez Makes Donation to SWOSU Baseball Endowment

Dr. Rafael "Rafe" Alvarez of Elk City has made a generous gift to the Southwestern Oklahoma State University (SWOSU) Baseball Endowment. The gift represents one of the very first contributions made to the new SWOSU Baseball Endowment which was established in 2022 to provide departmental and scholarship support to the SWOSU Baseball program.

Raised in the Oklahoma Panhandle, Alvarez transferred to SWOSU as a Junior and was a pitcher for the 2009 and 2010 seasons during his time on the Hilltop. After graduating from SWOSU in 2010, Alvarez continued his education at the Oklahoma State University (OSU) College of Osteopathic Medicine where he earned his Doctorate of Osteopathic Medicine; Alvarez's time at OSU was

followed by a Diagnostic Radiology residency at the University of Oklahoma Medical Center. Alvarez is currently a board-certified radiologist for Diagnostic Imaging Associates where he practices at multiple imaging facilities throughout Oklahoma and New Mexico. Alvarez serves as the on-site radiologist at the Great Plains Regional Medical Center in Elk City, the Weatherford Regional Hospital, and the Alliance Woodward Hospital.

Alvarez and his wife, Sierra, reside in Elk City with their two daughters, Lola and Livvy.

"We are grateful to alumni like Rafe Alvarez who give back to the programs they were a part of while here at SWOSU," said Athletic Director, Todd Helton. "His gift will greatly benefit the future of our baseball program."

The SWOSU Baseball Endowment is stewarded by The SWOSU Foundation, Inc.

The project provides SWOSU Baseball alumni and friends the opportunity to make a charitable gift to the SWOSU Baseball program for the long-term growth and benefit of the program.

Gifts to the endowment will be used for scholarships, recruitment and other team needs. Giving to the endowment has already started and gifts of any size are being accepted and will be recognized.

For more information or to make a gift to the SWOSU Baseball Endowment, please contact SWOSU Athletic Advancement Coordinator Ms. Allison Hoang at allison.hoang@swosu.edu, or via phone at 580-774-6330.

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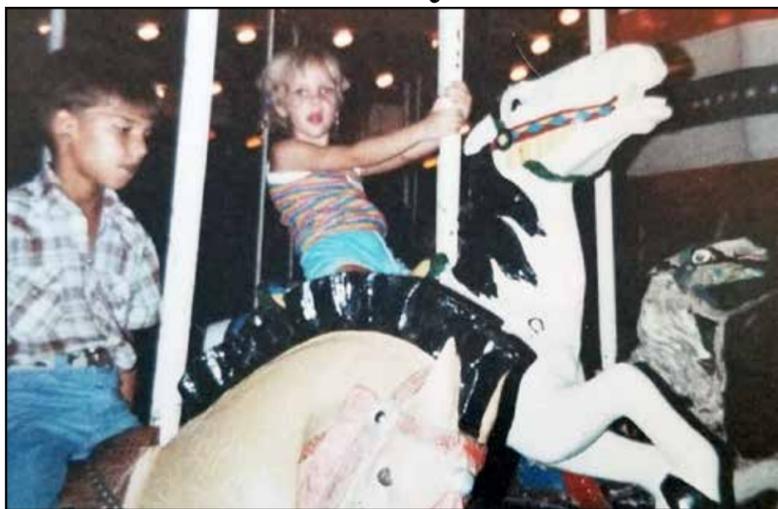
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Oklahoma History: The Monumental Rise of the Hydro Free Fair



Hydro Free Fair / Facebook

Children riding on Hydro Free Fair's oldest ride. This antique carousel was built during the "Calliope Golden Age" and has been in operation since 1919. A restoration of the deteriorating horses began in 2017, with the ride being defunct in 2019 and 2021. The ride was made operational again in 2022.



Courtesy Meridian Technology Center

Students from Stillwater's Meridian Technology Center work to renovate the Hydro Free Fair's "Century Flyer" miniature train. Work began in 2018 with the train returning with a new coat of paint in 2021.



Courtesy Burt Derryberry

Lloyd Derryberry was a regular engineer for the Century Flyer during its early years at the Hydro Free Fair.



Hydro Free Fair / Facebook

The Century Flyer miniature train began as a Createrville Amusement Park attraction in 1953. "CENTURY FLYER" is beveled above the train's headlight. During its early years of operation, each train cart was named after famous passenger trains in America. These include Frisco Railroad, Texas Special, and the Choctaw "Oklahoma Rocket."



Hydro Free Fair / Facebook

The winner of the 1987 Kiddie Tractor Pull holds his trophy (pictured above) and preparing to compete (pictured right).



Chase Wright
Staff Writer

The Hydro Free Fair has many events, rides, and games for people of all ages. Beginning in September 1904, the Hydro Free Fair is Oklahoma's oldest community fair. Back then, and known as the "Hydro Harvest Festival," the fair featured exhibits and shows from local farmers and ranchers. A few years later, the official start of the Free Fair began in 1907. The most popular attractions, according to the Hydro Historical Society, were "giant smoke balloons, a greased pole, and shooting matches with neighboring gun clubs participating." At the time, Hydro's agricultural exhibits commonly went on to win first prizes at the state fair.

People came from all over the state by trains to compete in roping contests, livestock shows, and to grab a slice of watermelon, usually provided by local farmers. Community ball games were held in the evenings and an outdoor auditorium was erected for music and entertainment. The Blue Ribbon Bakery dazzled audiences with its tantalizing 270-pound cake, and as time went on and the fair grew, more shows, games, and contests were added. When WWI broke out and the country had other

things on its mind, the fair was canceled. When the war ended, Hydro's Free Fair bounced back in full swing and quickly resumed its exponential growth. By WWII, the fair was bigger than ever and never took a break or looked back.

During the early fair days, live entertainment featured many surprise weddings at the fair. The couples would be kept secret from the crowd and part of the local fun was trying to guess who it could be. Local businesses would present the couple with gifts and good wishes. The first couple to marry at the fair was Claude Bixler and Adella Fields on September 6th, 1935. Adella taught in schools around Hinton, Hydro, Corn, Yukon, Bethany, and Putnam City, and greatly enjoyed helping Claude with his bee and honey exhibits at the fairs.

By 1925, the fair raised enough money to build an exhibit hall, and the fair was moved to the city park. The new change of scenery was a major success, boasting more room and more fun. Following its success, the town constructed pens and sheds for the livestock and a community building for additional programs and exhibits; completed in 1935, the new sanctioned location and amenities bolstered

the fair's numbers to become the largest in Caddo county and its neighbors.

In 1955, the Hydro Amusement Company was formed to handle all entertainment aspects of the fair. With this step, the fair was now completely and officially run by Hydro residents – citizens and local businesses built and worked stands, ran food vendors, constructed rides, and hosted games.

With each passing year, the fair brought in more and more visitors, and during the 1980's added the famous Green Machine, Octopus, and various kiddie rides. Concessions and token games were added, and the fair quickly required year-round attention.

Weeks of planning and hard work go into making sure the 3-day fair is the best it can be. In 1997 with the addition of the Hustler, the fair became the must-stop spot for many Oklahomans as they get ready for the Fall season.

Today, the Hydro Free Fair features prominently on travel guides and destination polls and is one of the biggest and best fairs to attend in Oklahoma. Attendance remains free for all and tickets for the rides/games are available at the fairgrounds.

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Federal Reserve Speaker Discusses West OK Economics at Stafford Air & Space Museum



CHAD WILKERSON
KANSAS CITY FEDERAL RESERVE VP

Hydro Free Fair / Facebook

The Senior Vice President and Branch Executive of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City was in Weatherford to talk about the economy, both nationally and locally. Chad Wilkerson says jobs in Custer County have yet to fully recover since COVID, but unemployment has been back to pre-pandemic lows since late 2021. Wilkerson says the gross domestic product in Custer County grew by 3.2% from 2011-2015 and grew by one-half percent from 2011-2021.

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Local Edward Jones Financial Advisor Katie Bartmann Recognized by Forbes

Edward Jones Financial Advisor Katie Bartmann of Weatherford has been named to the 2023 Forbes Top Next-Gen Wealth Advisors Best-in-State ranking by Forbes/SHOOK® Research.

Edward Jones Financial Advisor Katie Bartmann of Weatherford has been named to the 2023 Forbes Top Next-Gen Wealth Advisors Best-in-State ranking by Forbes/SHOOK® Research.

The list is comprised of more than 1,460 financial advisors nationwide, all under age 40. Bartmann ranked No. 2 in Oklahoma. Bartmann has served area investors for the past 11 years.

"This is an incredible honor, one I could never have achieved without the tremendous support from my branch team. And I am forever indebted to my clients for the trust they have put in me and the relationships we've built as we work toward the financial goals that give them the freedom to live life on their terms," Bartmann said. "This work inspires me because I know that, for years to come, I can make a meaningful difference in the lives of my clients and colleagues, and in my community."

Forbes Ranking Methodology

The Forbes Next-Gen Wealth Advisors Best-in-State rankings, developed by SHOOK® Research, are based on an algorithm of qualitative criterion (mostly gained through telephone and in-person due diligence interviews) and quantitative data.

Those advisors that are considered have a minimum of four years' experience, and the algorithm weighs factors like revenue trends, assets under management, compliance records, industry experience and those that encompass the highest standards of best practices. Portfolio performance is not a criterion due to varying client objectives and lack of audited data. Neither Forbes nor SHOOK® receive a fee in exchange for rankings.

About Edward Jones

Edward Jones is a leading financial services firm in the U.S. and through its affiliate in Canada. The firm's nearly 19,000 financial advisors serve more than 8 million clients with a total of \$1.7 trillion in client assets under care at the end of March 2023. Edward Jones' purpose is to partner for positive impact to improve the lives of its clients and colleagues, and together, better our communities and society. Through the dedication of the firm's approximately 52,000 associates and our branch presence in 68% of U.S. counties, the firm is committed to helping more people achieve financially what is most important to them.

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