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## Weatherford Astronaut General Thomas P. Stafford Passes Away at 93



It is with great sadness that the Stafford Air & Space Museum announces the passing of its namesake, Lt. General Thomas P. Stafford (USAF, ret.). General Stafford passed away on March 18, 2024, in Indian Harbor, Florida. General Stafford was 93.

Thomas Patten Stafford was born in Weatherford, Oklahoma, on September 17, 1930, to Thomas and Mary (Patten) Stafford. He was raised in the western Oklahoma community of Weatherford and never forgot his roots; he was a proud "Weatherford Eagle" to the end. He often credited his hometown as the foundation for the incredible life and career that unfolded for him.

After graduation from Weatherford High School in 1948, Stafford was selected to attend the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD, where he graduated in the top 1% of his class. Ever since he was a small child, his dream was to become a fighter pilot and graduate from Annapolis which allowed him to pursue that dream. Just prior to graduation, the United States Air Force was established as a brand new, separate military department. To fill the fledgling Air Force's need for officers, outstanding graduates from both the Army and Naval academies were given the option to stay with their original branch of service, or transfer to the newly created department. Stafford knew the Air Force had the hottest,

most cutting-edge aircraft, and his choice was simple. He transferred to the Air Force and gained his silver wings.

Stafford's flying skills were quickly recognized, and he was selected to attend the elite Experimental Test Pilot School at Edwards AFB, California—a legendary facility where he would later serve as Commanding General. He graduated first in his test pilot's class and went on to test new aircraft designs, pushing them to their extreme limits. It was highly dangerous work, but Stafford thrived under its challenges. He was then chosen to become a test pilot instructor, and co-authored two books to help train test pilots, parts of which are still being used more than six decades later.

In the early 1960's, at the peak of the Cold War, the U.S. and the Soviet Union squared off in one of mankind's most competitive races—the Space Race to the Moon. On Stafford's 31st birthday, NASA announced to the world that they had selected their second group of astronauts that would spearhead the race to the moon, and Stafford was one of the nine selected. Called the "New Nine," this group established many of the "firsts" in human spaceflight. Two of the group were killed in accidents. The remaining seven commanded future space flights, including six missions to the moon.

Stafford flew in four historic space missions, including

three as commander. In December 1965, he served as the pilot of Gemini 6 with Wally Schirra. They achieved one of the greatest milestones in spaceflight history by performing the first rendezvous in space with another orbiting spacecraft—a critical maneuver necessary for humans to fly to the moon. Just six months later, Stafford commanded Gemini 9 with Gene Cernan. Many challenges were experienced during the flight, including a near fatal spacewalk by Cernan. In May 1969, Stafford commanded the Apollo 10 mission to the moon, and was the first man to pilot a Lunar Module (LM) into lunar orbit. He was one of only 24 humans to venture into deep space to explore another celestial body. During reentry, Stafford and his crew of Gene Cernan and John Young set the all-time human speed record of 24,791 mph, or nearly 7 miles/second. After more than a half century, they still hold the ultimate human speed record that may not be surpassed until a crew returns from a trip to Mars!

Following his flight, Stafford was selected by NASA to become Chief of the Astronaut Office. He later served as Deputy Director of Flight Crew Operations at Johnson Space Center where he oversaw astronaut training, mission planning, along with crew selections for the final moon landings and the Skylab Program.

(See STAFFORD, page 3)



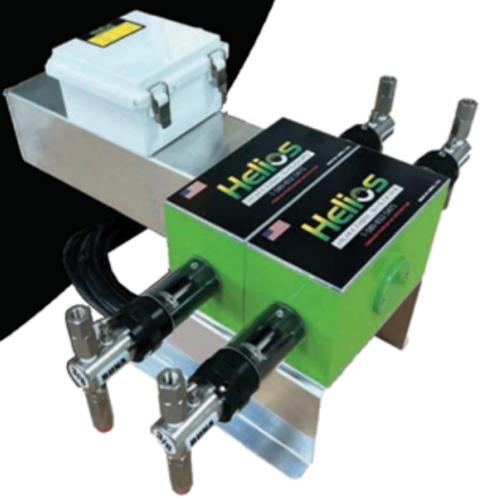
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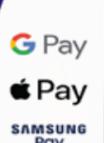
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**Lillie Martinez**

Lillie Renee Martinez (Indian name "Moose" Moeh-dah) was born June 4, 1957, in Clinton, Oklahoma, and passed away Sunday, March 10, 2024, in the Ryan Hospice House in Phoenix, AZ.



Lillie was raised in Hammon, OK where she graduated high school in 1993. She continued her education at the Pima Medical Institute and received her Certified Nurses Aid Certificate. She worked as a CNA in Mesa, AZ.

She moved to Arizona in 1994 and worked for Honeywell, and later she worked for the Salt River Project. Then she changed jobs, working for Wells Fargo from 1995 until 2000. She became very close to her co-workers, and some became family.

She married Franciso Martinez, on August 7, 1999. To this marriage she had three children: Alyssa, Alexandra, and Franciso Martinez, Jr. She became a stay-at-home mother for the next 29 years.

In Nov 2022 she was stricken with Large B Cell Lymphoma and spent time at the Mayo Clinic, and they were successful in shrinking her tumors, and she was able to move to her childhood home in Hammon, OK in June of 2023. After moving home her tumors surfaced again, and she began treatment at the Oklahoma University Hospital in Oklahoma City. Lillies children wanted her back home in Arizona to get further treatments at the Mayo Clinic. She fell ill to covid and had minor heart surgery while her cancer progressed. Surrounded by her children, all her sisters and other family members, Lillie took her journey on March 10, 2024.

She loved to play basketball, she was an avid seamstress and enjoyed doing arts and crafts and making t-shirts for her kids and family members. She was a pool player and enjoyed competing in small tournaments.

She was preceded in death by her parents, sister, Lorette Higgins, and brother Lawrence Higgins, brother in law, Dane Kauk.

She is survived by daughters Alyssa Martinez-Higgins and Alexandra Martinez, and son Francisco Martinez, Jr., all from Arizona, sisters: Bridget Higgins, Hammon, OK, Mary Jo Higgins, Clinton, OK, Jennifer Higgins, Clinton, OK, Lila Kauk, Leedey, OK, Kathrine Higgins, of CA, and Sona Higgins, Portland, OK.

She is also survived by Aunts (Mom) Irene Hayes, Hammon, OK, and Margaret Howlingwolf, Seiling, OK, adopted sisters Shannon Littleman, Veronica Candy and Alisun Little Coyote.

The family wants to give a special thank you to Veronica Candy for always being there by Lillies side during the early part of her fighting the B Cell Lymphoma, Dr. Loren of the Cheyenne Emergency Room for Lillies care and praying for her during her difficult stay in the E.R. Her Hospice nurses in Phoenix, Jessica, Michelle and Kim and Chaplain Frank and a special thank you to Troy Lee for bringing our beloved mother, sister, and aunty home to Oklahoma.

**Shirley McGoffin**

Shirley Jean McGoffin was born December 6, 1956, to Frank Junior McGoffin and Genevieve Josephine (Klein) McGoffin in Thomas, OK and passed away Tuesday, March 5, 2024, in the Integris Canadian Valley Hospital in Yukon OK.



Shirley was raised in Arapaho and graduated from Arapaho High School in 1975. She continued her education at Sayre Junior College and Southwestern Oklahoma State University, working toward a degree in Lab Technician.

She was employed at Domino's Food and Fuel Convenient Store for several years.

She also was a Bar-Tender and worked in numerous bars in the Clinton area.

Her last job was working at the Clinton Veterans Center in the Dietary Department.

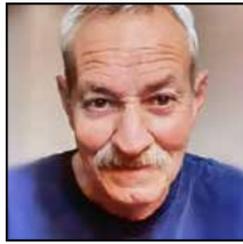
She was a member of St. Mary's Catholic Church, she enjoyed hand work, crocheting, playing cards, playing dominoes, and playing pool. She had no children of her own but was very involved in her nieces and nephews' lives and supporting them in their school activities. She also enjoyed family gatherings and spending time with family.

She was preceded in death by her parents, brothers: Dennis McGoffin, and Pete McGoffin and infant brother, Joseph and infant sister, Jennifer.

She is survived by two sisters, Debra Daggs, Arapaho and Angie Persyn, Wichita, KS and three brothers, Gilbert McGoffin, Elk City, OK, Steve McGoffin, Clinton, OK and Kevin McGoffin, Arapaho, OK.

**Russell Stewart**

Russell Keith Stewart was born March 21, 1954, to Glen Stewart and Frankie Wallace Stewart in Clinton, OK and passed away Wednesday, February 28, 2024, in the Corn Heritage Village in Corn, OK.



Russell was raised in Clinton where he graduated from Clinton High School in 1973. He moved to Henrietta, OK and was employed with the Richardson family and did heavy equipment. While in Henrietta he met and married Marsha Duncan, and to that union a son was born, Wesley Lee Stewart.

He returned to Clinton and worked for Bob Smith Dozer, the Sewell Brothers, Cornell Construction, and other heavy equipment operators.

He married Charlotte (Seright) Hanson on March 28, 1987, in Elk City. In this marriage he received three bonus daughters: Enid, Amber, and Erin. They lived in Burns Flat from 1987 until Christmas 1991. He renovated his old farmhouse into a home for six. He took pride in teaching his children about car maintenance, a practice which his son has turned into a career.

He attended the Church of Christ. He enjoyed working outside gardening, chopping firewood, and just working outdoors in general.

He was preceded in death by his parents, daughter Enid Bighorse, two brothers: Terry Stewart, and Larry Stewart, nephew, Luke Stewart, two sisters-in-law: Linda Seright and Pam Raemhild. Russell called her, "Sweet Little Pam."

He is survived by his wife Charlotte of the home, son, Wesley Stewart, Allen, TX and two daughters, Amber Bighorse, Tacoma, WA, and Erin Hanson, of Cordell, OK, sister, Kathy Stewart and her sons, Dillon and Shawn Driver and sister-in-law, Paula Stewart and her three children, Jacob, Adrienne and Jordan and nephew, Zach Stewart.

He is also survived by five grandchildren: Peyton, Joe, Jack, Adrienne and Wesley and a special niece and family Ryan Martinez and husband Greg and their children: Darius, Jaston, Brystin, Kaden, Jaelyn, Dylan, and Vance.

**Timothy White**

Timothy James White was born October 25, 1964, to James Doyle White and Norma Bacon White in Clinton, OK and passed away in the Clinton Regional Hospital in Clinton, OK on Friday, March 8, 2024.



Timothy was raised in Clinton, OK where he attended Clinton Schools. As soon as he was out of high school, he went to work in the oilfields, working over Western Oklahoma. He also was a tree trimmer and worked nine years for the Clinton Co-op. He has been employed with Wal-Mart for the past three years.

He was married to Billie Rushing on May 9, 2019, in Clinton, OK. He loved to ride his Harley-Davidson, do backyard Bar-B-Ques, he enjoyed baking and was well known for his brownies. He was an avid Oklahoma University Fan and his favorite things to do were hang out with family and friends and go to Bricktown in Oklahoma City.

He was preceded in death by his parents and a sister.

He is survived by his wife Billie, of the home, three daughters: Crystal Brewer-Whitekiller and Trent Whitekiller, Ft. Smith, AR, Dani Matheson, Clinton and Angel McDaniels and husband Michael, of TX, two sons: T.J. White, Clinton, David Peters and wife Felicia, Wheeler, TX, two sisters: Shanna Precure, Weatherford, and Tara Willaim and husband Chris, Mustang, OK; 17 grandchildren, seven nieces and nephews and nine great-nieces and great-nephews.

**Johnnie Phelps**

Johnnie Lynn Phelps, Weatherford resident, was born August 28, 1949, in Cordell, OK, to Johnnie William and Marie (Wade) Phelps and passed away Thursday, March 7, 2024, at his home in Weatherford, at the age of 74 years, 6 months and 9 days.



Johnnie was raised and attended school in Colony where he graduated in the Class of 1967. He attended Cameron University and continued his education at OSU, graduating in 1971 with his Bachelor's degree in Animal Science and Agricultural Economics. He enjoyed traveling and competing with the Livestock Judging Team during college. Johnnie married Mary Alice Paton; they lived in Colony and later on a farm north of Cowden. He raised wheat, cotton, pigs, and cattle.

Johnnie worked many years at the Cordell National Bank. When Johnnie was young, he showed steers. He shared his love of showing animals with his daughters and worked alongside them as they raised and showed pigs and sheep at livestock shows. He valued hard work; he was able to use livestock showing and farm work to instill that important value in his children.

Johnnie was a loving father to his daughters and their families. He loved to laugh while sharing stories and telling jokes to his friends and family, and he was always sure to make you laugh. He enjoyed watching rodeos, working with his cow dogs, and spending time with family and friends.

Johnnie is survived by his two daughters Sherri Anderson and husband Brad of Kemah, Texas and Kerri Kirby and husband Kevin of Weatherford, Oklahoma; one sister Janice Richardson of Granbury, Texas; and four grandchildren: Josh Kirby, Sarah Reynolds and husband Nolan, Ava Anderson and Abigail Anderson.

He was preceded in death by his parents Johnnie and Marie Phelps.

**Patty McDougle**

On March 11, 2024, at 9:33 pm, Patricia "Patty" Janet McDougle, surrounded by loved ones, went to be with the Lord, at the age of 78 years, 5 months and 28 days.



Patty was born September 13, 1945, in Avenal CA. She was adopted by Bill and Lola (Carmichael) Kehoe, and moved to Lost Hills, CA where she graduated from Wasco Union HS.

In the late 60's, after being away for a few years, Patty moved back to Lost Hills, CA and fell in love with the local cool-guy... a motorcycle-riding Billy Joe McDougle. Billy and Patty were married in 1969 in Las Vegas, NV and made their home in Bakersfield, CA.

In 1976 they adopted William J. McDougle, and moved to Keno, Oregon, where she gave birth to Sean P. McDougle in May of 1980. Bill and Patty raised the boys in Oregon and stayed until 2022 when they moved to Weatherford, OK to be closer to family.

On Sundays, you would find Patty in a church pew singing her heart out, and afterwards, having conversations with everyone there. This energy symbolizes everything she was. Caring, full speed, loud, and a social butterfly. Patty was dedicated to the Lord, displayed a red-headed fiery unapologetic will, and a calling to help others. She loved her grandchildren and cherished her time with them. She had a special place in her heart for all kids which led her to work for the Klamath County School district as a teacher's aide until 2006. She loved her friends, rooting for the Oregon State Beavers, playing bunko, traveling, and most of all...her family.

Patty is survived by her husband of 54 years Billy McDougle of their home in Weatherford, OK; two sons: William McDougle and wife Kimberly of Leland, NC, and Sean McDougle and wife Amber of Oklahoma City, OK; nine grandchildren, Bryant, Dylan, Jillian, Brooklyn, Ryan, Taylor, Olivia, Addison and Liam; one brother Bill Kehoe and wife Alice of Stockton, CA; and two sisters: Darlene Kirkland and husband Ted of Bakersfield, CA and Sharon Brown and husband Alan of Bakersfield, CA. She was preceded in death by her parents Bill and Lola Kehoe and her parents-in-law, Joseph and Vivian McDougle. Sam exes simin num

**Lu Ann Bearbow Monroe**

Lu Ann Bearbow Monroe was born August 14, 1956, to Calvin Bearbow and Cordelia Morton in Clinton, OK and passed away Sunday, March 10, 2024, in the Clarity Hospice of Baton Rouge, LA.



Lu Ann was raised in Clinton and Arapaho, graduating from Arapaho High School in 1975. She married John Monroe on February 15, 2009, in Maurepas, LA. She has made her home in Louisiana for the past several years. She was a homemaker and traveled with her husband on his job.

Her past time was listening to music and spending time with family and friends, and she loved dogs.

She is preceded in death by her dad, mother, Cordelia Bearbow, dad, Calvin Bearbow, three brothers, Ronald Bearbow, Stephen Bearbow and Jeffery Bearbow.

She is survived by two daughters: Samye Adams and husband Marc of Grangeville, LA; and Patrica Whynot and husband Steve of Allen, TX; son Doug Kodaseet and Taryn O'Neal, Hutchenson, KS; and sister Sandra Sam of OKC, OK.

She is also survived by numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

<b>Partly Cloudy</b>  H: 72° L: 48° <b>Wednesday</b>	<b>AM Showers</b>  H: 62° L: 46° <b>Thursday</b>	<b>Partly Cloudy</b>  H: 69° L: 47° <b>Friday</b>	<b>Partly Cloudy</b>  H: 66° L: 53° <b>Saturday</b>	<b>AM Showers</b>  H: 70° L: 47° <b>Sunday</b>	<b>Rainy</b>  H: 57° L: 32° <b>Monday</b>	<b>Partly Cloudy</b>  H: 46° L: 31° <b>Tuesday</b>
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## STAFFORD

Continued from Page 1

During this time, Stafford received his first star with his promotion to Brigadier General, the first astronaut to obtain that rank. In 1975, General Stafford co-commanded the final Apollo mission named Apollo-Soyuz, a mission that brought a U.S. crew together with a Soviet crew in orbit to help diffuse the tensions of the Cold War.

General Stafford received a nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize, and the success of that mission is still considered by many as the beginning of the end of the Cold War. Nearly a half century later, he remains the first and only active General to fly in space.

Following his Apollo-Soyuz mission, General Stafford resigned from NASA and returned to the Air Force where he earned his second and third stars. The Air Force assigned him to be the Commanding General of Edwards AFB, and its Experimental Flight Test Center where new aircraft models were tested, and test pilots trained. General Stafford oversaw and participated in the final testing of some of the most important aircraft ever flown—many still on America's front lines today, including the F-15, F-16, A-10, B-1B, and prototypes for the C-17. He was also in command of Edwards when NASA conducted all the initial Space Shuttle ALT test flights. Few people know that during this time, General Stafford was the Commanding General of "AREA-51", one of the world's most top-secret test facilities, located in the Nevada desert. There he received his first glimpse of the new, little known experimental technology called Stealth. General Stafford instantly recognized the promise of this infant technology and how it might dramatically alter the history of warfare. During his tenure at Area-51, and later while at the Pentagon as head of Air Force Research & Development, and Acquisition, General Stafford wrote the specs and established the program that led to the development of the F-117 Stealth Fighter, and later, the B-2 Stealth Bomber. Today, he is referred to as the Air Force's "Father of Stealth." He also led efforts to create the AGM-129 Stealth Cruise Missile and established the roadmap for the development of the F-22 Stealth Fighter.

By the end of his NASA and military career in 1979, General Stafford was the first member of his Naval Academy Class of 1952 to earn his first, second, and third stars as a general officer. He had spent nearly 508 hours in space, including two and a half days orbiting the moon. His career had enabled him to fly nearly 130 types of military aircraft, four different spacecraft, and ride on three different types of boosters into space.

Shortly after retirement, the newly elected President Ronald Reagan asked General Stafford to join his presidential transition team as primary defense advisor.

General Stafford also entered the private sector, co-founding a highly successful aerospace consulting firm that worked on numerous projects for the Department of Defense, NASA, and various aerospace contractors. He went on to serve on the Board of Directors of numerous Fortune 500 corporations.

In June of 1990, Vice-President Dan Quayle, and NASA Administrator Dick Truly, asked General Stafford to form and become Chairman of a team to independently advise NASA on how to carry out President Bush's Space Exploration Initiative, his vision to permanently return astronauts to the moon, and then go on to explore Mars. This endeavor produced a comprehensive study that still serves as a guideline to return humans to the moon and, one day, on to Mars.

When the Hubble Space Telescope was launched with a potential fatal flaw in its mirror, NASA Administrator Dan Goldin asked General Stafford to form and chair a committee to find a fix. They did, and the Hubble went on to become one of the most revolutionary scientific research instruments ever built.

As Chairman of NASA's Advisory Council, General Stafford was instrumental in involving the Russians with the design, construction, and operation of the International Space Station (ISS). His vision not only led to American astronauts being able to fly to the Russian Space Station, "MIR", on nine different missions, but also enabled the U.S. to continue its missions to the ISS aboard Russian Soyuz spacecraft

after the Space Shuttle Program was cancelled in 2011.

After the Space Shuttle "Columbia" and its crew were lost on reentry in 2003, General Stafford co-chaired the oversight committee that ensured all necessary safety changes were made before the Shuttle was allowed to fly again. General Stafford continued to draw upon his experience and provide engineering expertise in the designs of future manned spacecraft. At the time of his death, at the age of 93, General Stafford still chaired NASA's key Space Station Oversight Committee for ISS safety, preparedness, and operation.

General Stafford's career spanned from propeller driven, World War II training aircraft, through the earliest days of jet fighters, to pioneering mankind's first excursions into space and to the moon. He helped demonstrate how two bitter enemies of the Cold War, the U.S. and Russia, could work together in peace in space, a collaboration that was instrumental in bringing the first Cold War to an end. Even today, as another Cold War looms between these same great nations, General Stafford's legacy lives on as American and Russian astronauts tirelessly work in harmony aboard the International Space Station, making new scientific discoveries that will help all mankind. General Stafford spent his life as a tireless visionary for his country.

As the late Senator and astronaut, John Glenn, once said about his good friend: "Few people have ever matched Tom Stafford's endearing impact on this nation, and we are a safer and better nation for it."

General Stafford is survived by his wife Linda of the home. They have two sons: Michael Thomas and Stanislav "Stas" Patten. His first marriage was to the late Faye L. Shoemaker. From that marriage came two daughters: Dionne Kay and Karin Elaine, and two grandsons: Thomas P. Stafford II and Andrew Alexei Harrison. Linda has two children from a previous marriage: Kassie Neering and Mark Hill, and four grandchildren, Sloane, Lee, Marcus, and Tara.

Services and internment will be in Weatherford. Final details will follow. For a representative in Weatherford, contact Teresa Schoonmaker or Max Ary of the Stafford Air & Space Museum at 580-772-5871.



Creek Williams (left) and Jayden Bunce (right) have been named as the Weatherford Rotary Students of the Month for March 2024. Presenting the award is Principal Garrett Smith.

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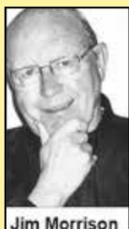
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## HIGHER GROUND

### Praying Like Paul



Jim Morrison

Have you heard this before? In the almost 15 years I have been writing these posts I'm sure I have been guilty of repeating myself, but one of the tools of learning is repetition, so let it be.

One great student of prayer said the best way to learn to pray fervently is to pray and listen to others pray. Our knowledge of the Bible is enhanced by our prayer life and certainly our prayer life is strongly influenced and deepened by our study of the Bible—particularly by the prayers of the great saints of the Scriptures. I'm glad God made available the written prayers of Moses, Nehemiah, Solomon, David, and particularly those of the Apostle Paul of the New Testament. They provide insight into the heart of biblical prayers. And our prayers ought to be of all things Biblical in nature.

One of my favorite prayers of Paul is to be found in Col. 1:9-14. It is a little difficult to tell where Paul's prayer ends and teaching begins but I share this

passage and let you decide.

"For this reason, since the day we have heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life that is worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves. In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

Paul is writing to a church he has never visited. Sometimes we are guilty of only praying for our circle without considering the world-wide scope of the Kingdom. Those in countries of persecution tell us that the greatest need they have is to know that others are praying for them—that they are not alone and not forgotten.

Paul first prays that the believers be filled with the knowledge of God's will. We often think of God's will in reference to who we should marry, a vocational decision, a purchase, etc. While that is not wrong, the most important part of the will of God is in the

area of obedience. Our greater need is in the area of performance. The Psalmist says; "Teach me to do your will, for you are my God..." (Psalm 143:10) If we are honest with ourselves we will recognize that our greatest problems in living for Christ is not in knowing what we ought to do but in the discipline of doing it.

Loving the unlovely, praying for those who use or speak slanderously of us, seeing people through the eyes of Christ; these are the hard teachings of Jesus that we are commanded to exercise. We find it easy to trivialize those things that are important and magnify those that are trivial.

Paul goes on to share four characteristics of a life that is pleasing to God. We should bear fruit in every good work. We are saved by grace but we should radiate a lifestyle that is "created to do good works that God has prepared in advance for us to do." (Eph. 2:10)

Then, we are to grow in the knowledge of God. The prime meaning of the word "disciple" is that of a "learner" or apprentice. In my experience with college students, I tried to expose students to men of deep, godly character and stature—men who had a life of experience of walking with God in obedience and sacrifice. One of the sins of today is that of "self-sufficiency." May God help us to not be too proud to accept help.

To comment: [jnm82@outlook.com](mailto:jnm82@outlook.com), 580-302-1142

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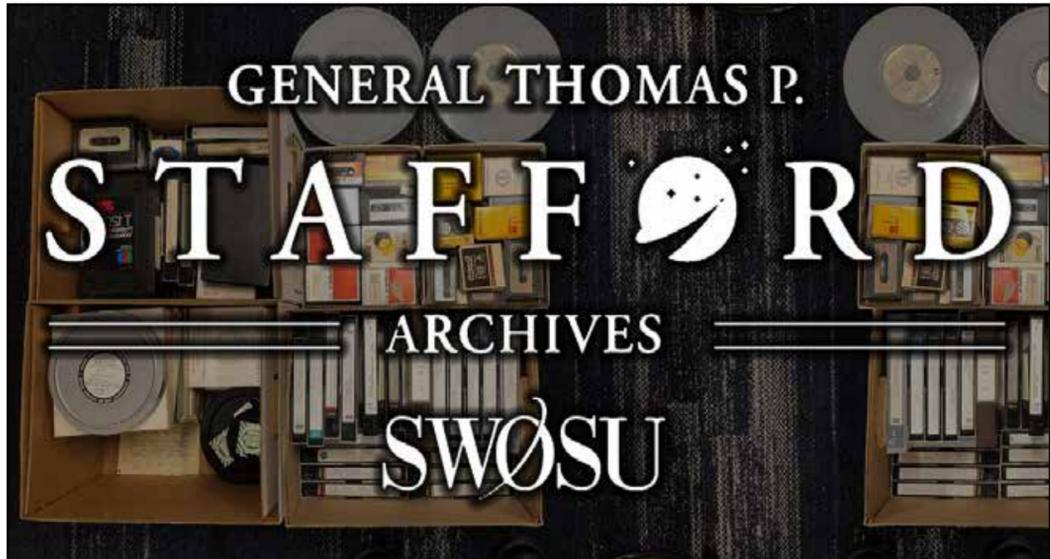


**Mike Smith**  
News Director

## SWOSU Stafford Archive Awarded Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant



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**J. Boone Clemmons**  
SWOSU Media Relations

The Al Harris Library at Southwestern Oklahoma State University (SWOSU) in Weatherford was awarded an Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant by the Oklahoma Historical Society.

SWOSU received \$19,557 for a project titled "Digitization of Special Collections," where nearly 200 analog media assets were digitized from the Thomas P. Stafford, SWOSU Music Department, SWOSU Athletics, and University History Collections. This project not only digitally preserves information, but it provides public access to images and recordings not publicly viewed in decades. The completion of this project is part of the long-term goals associated with General Thomas P. Stafford Archives, digitizing all analog media held within these collections.

"This project will not only digitally preserve information from analog assets documenting the university's history, but it will provide public access to images and sounds recorded nearly 50 years ago from the Gemini Missions under the command of General Thomas P. Stafford," said Jason Dupree, director of libraries at SWOSU.

The mission of the Oklahoma Historical Society is to collect, preserve and share the history and culture of the state of Oklahoma and its people. Founded in 1893 by members of the Territorial Press Association, the OHS maintains museums, historic sites and affiliates across the state. Through its research archives, exhibits, educational programs and publications the OHS

chronicles the rich history of Oklahoma. For more information about the OHS, please visit [okhistory.org](http://okhistory.org).

These digital copies have been placed on the university's repository, SWOSU Digital Commons, which are viewable by the public at the following URLs:

**Audio recordings, Stafford Collection:**  
[dc.swosu.edu/staf\\_aud/](http://dc.swosu.edu/staf_aud/)

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**HYDRO-EAKLY / SB BIDS** – During a recent meeting of the Hydro-Eakly School Board of Education, the board approved bids for some upcoming projects, says Superintendent Jeremy Bussey. The approved projects aim to upgrade the school network and security. Bussey says the projects are being funded through various grants.

**WEATHERFORD SB / PROJECTS** - Weatherford Interim Schools Superintendent Richard Brownen provided an update on the press box remodel project at the football field. "We've got all of the rough inner-electrical done there, and the sheetrock is hung," explains Brownen. "We've got the flooring, which is not installed yet, but it is (physically) in (the Press Box)." Additionally, Brownen says construction of the agriculture building is also underway.

**SWOSU / SAUNDERS** - Elissa Saunders has been appointed as the Chair of the Department of Nursing within the College of Nursing and Health Professions at Southwestern Oklahoma State University. As Chair, Saunders oversees four nursing program tracks, including the new LPN to BSN online option.

**CADDO CO / PECK** - A former Hinton wrestling coach has pleaded not guilty in Caddo County District Court on a charge of child abuse. Thirty-four-year-old Jacob Peck of Mangum allegedly grabbed a female student around her throat in a choke-style manner following wrestling practice. An investigation revealed that two other juvenile victims came forward alleging similar encounters with Peck. A jury trial date for Peck is set for September 23.

**KOONS / COURT APPEARANCE** - A former Ringling High School principal and head football coach has been allowed to withdraw his blind plea in Jefferson County District Court. Phillip Koons, who also previously was the head football coach at Clinton, is charged with misdemeanor outraging public decency after seven Ringling students accused him of verbally abusing them and using racial slurs. Koons says he did not understand the consequences of the blind plea he entered into, and attempted to withdraw the plea on January 31st, but collapsed inside the courtroom. The next court date for Koons is May 7.

**CUSTER CO / ROAD GRINDING** - Custer County Commissioner Wade Anders says District 1 work crews plan to start grinding E 990, E 980, and N 2220 next week, weather permitting. The project has been in the works for "several months," but projects like these unfortunately "take a lot of time to (actually) do." Anders says crews will be working on those road projects east of Arapaho over the next several months. "We want people to be careful driving (on these roads). There's going to be delays for people going through, so if you're in a hurry, you're going to want to take a different route."

**WEATHERFORD / PRE-K** - Weatherford Schools Interim Superintendent Richard Brownen provided an update on the remodeling of the former West Elementary building. "The flooring is almost installed and the painting is basically done," says Brownen. "We're down to doing some systems checks. I'm hoping we get teachers in their classrooms by June 1." The building will be home to pre-kindergarten classes in the future. The board recently voted to name the building "Weatherford Early Childhood Center."

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**Happy Birthday Wishes for March 20** - Letha Bentley, Hayden Billings, DaLynn Brinkley, Spring Cordes, Maxine Crissman, Barbara Deevers, Scott Guthrie, Oma Hicks, Nicholas Janning, Bryale Johnson, Lena Leatherbury, Don Morris, Trevor Ridgeway, Adam Rogers, Savana Schmidt, Bethany Shannon, Denny Smith; **March 21** - Mary Ellis, Aspen Martin, Mustafa Sami, Kay Sewell, Presley Sperle, McKenzie Sprowles, Jim Wahnee, Nina Wilhoit; **March 22** - Jan Britton, Lana Jones, Mallory Miller, Clyde Rawson, Felipe Rodriguez, Holly Stotts, Randy Thompson, Chase Turney, Linda Wilson; **March 23** - Candy Davis, Rhonda Holden, Luke Jacobsma, Geneva Koch, Joe Koop, Kenny Lee, Armando Lira, Violet McClanahan, Dylan Taylor; **March 24** - Matthew Brown, Bridget Crowder, Jared Dillta, Linda Wilhelm; **March 25** - Nick Bryson, Sheila Davis, Alec Goerend, Carolyn Koop, Marty Lockstone, Jennifer Prophet, Betty Richardson, Sarah Ruiz, Kaprice Skinner, Mary Thomas; **March 26** - Scotty Adams, Terry Hook, Glenna Johns, Katie Lacy, Mike Patrick, Sarah Rinehart, Richard Rivera, Johnny Rosales, Sally Sappington, Bryan Speck, Ava Tourian, Andrea Unruh, Kay Weast;

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# Weatherford East Elementary Students Celebrate DARE Graduation



Provided

5th Grade students at Weatherford's East Elementary recently completed a nine week DARE Program under the instruction of the Weatherford Police Department to help teach students how to make good decisions during their lives. Pictured above are the students, their teachers, and the Weatherford Police Department following the ceremony.

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## Remembering November 22, 1963



Max McCullough

I truly believe that everyone of a certain age remembers where they were on November 22nd, 1963, when President John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

The details of that day are a little fuzzy for me, but I do remember where I was, and the shock and confusion we were all feeling.

I was a 30-year-old mother of three who had decided to return to college to finish my degree in education. I was going to be a teacher. I had been out of the college experience for eight years.

As I recall, those college years before had been somewhat joyous and fun. Nothing that I took too seriously. Now it was all business. I was a woman on a mission. Get an education, get a job. It was an hour each way from my hometown to

SWOSU where I was attending classes. On that day—Friday, November 22nd, 1963—I had just finished a class and was going into the student union for a break until my next class.

As I remember it, at that time there was a bookstore just left inside the west entrance of the student union. I noticed a group of students gathered around a small TV. I asked what was going on and was told the president had been shot during a parade in Dallas.

We all just stood around, not knowing what to say or do. Then came the official announcement that the President of the United States was dead and Lyndon B. Johnson would be sworn in as president as soon as possible.

Later, I returned to my next class. There was a short discussion and the class was canceled until further notice. An assembly was held on the campus the next day which my friend and I attended.

Now, that is not quite the end of the story.

The following day or maybe two, I was standing in my living room at home, staring at our small TV. I had just heard they were moving Lee Harvey Oswald, the man accused of killing the president, from one area to another.

Officers stepped into the crowd with Oswald, a man steps from the crowd and shoots him. Shoots him! Kills him! They say the man's name is Jack Ruby. What's going on in this country!? Someone just assassinated the president of the United States, and I just saw a man shot and killed in real time on my small living room TV. I'm just a small-town wife, mother, and student. How am I supposed to unpack all this and make sense of it?

There's a multitude of theories out there as to why the president was killed and who killed him. This article is just an account of what I remember of that fateful day. I can't think of a clever ending to this so, just pick a theory, I guess.

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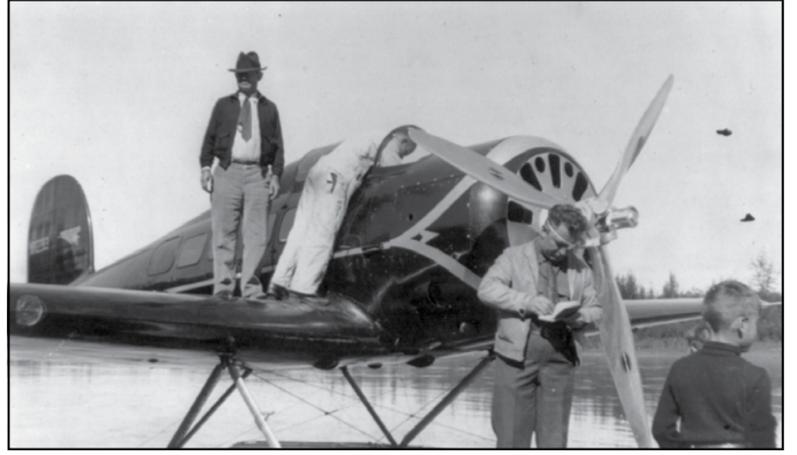
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# Wings of Time, Volume V: Wiley Post, Will Rogers, Speed and Innovations



Courtesy Smithsonian National Air & Space Museum

The Winnie Mae on display at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum.



Courtesy Library of Congress

Will Rogers standing on the wing of a sea plane, facing slightly left; with Wiley Post at Fairbanks, Alaska.

**Chase Wright**  
Staff Writer

Our quick run through aviation history is nearing completion. This second to last look into the past will highlight the life and impact of the aviator we met alongside Pearl last week, Wiley Post. On November 22nd, 1898, Wiley Post was born in Corinth, Texas, a modern-day ghost town located near Canton, Texas. When he was five years old, Post's family moved to Oklahoma and settled on a farm in Maysville, Oklahoma. In the early 1920s, Post grew up fascinated by airplanes and wished to serve as a pilot in WWI, but the war ended before he completed his training. To make ends meet, he did a variety of oilfield work in Oklahoma until he was severely injured in an oil-rig accident when a metal shard pierced his left eye permanently blinding it. Embracing the injury, Post began to wear an eyepatch and started what would become his iconic look.

As a side gig during his oilfield days Post performed a parachute act with the flying circus Burrell Tibbs and His Texas Topnotch Fliers as part of the daredevil tricks performed by stunt pilots during the "Roaring Twenties". After his metal shard accident, Post bought his first aircraft with the settlement money and became the personal pilot of two wealthy Oklahoman oilmen, Powell Briscoe and F.C. Hall. In 1930, Hall bought a high-performance single-engine craft he dubbed The Winnie Mae after his daughter. The Winnie Mae would go on to become one of the most famous record-breaking aircraft of the '30s. Hall let Post use the plane in several competition derbies, gaining Post national notoriety when he won the National Air Race Derby – from Lost Angeles to Chicago. While gaining notoriety, Post met the Oklahoman Will Rogers when he flew Rogers to a rodeo. They became quick friends and would be avid supporters of each other's work throughout the next 10 years.

Post's fame and confidence grew over that year in 1930, and on June 23rd, 1931, F.C. Hall let Post and his navigator, Harold Gatty, take The Winnie Mae on their signature voyage around the world. Their flight plan would take them through Harbour Grace in Canada, Flintshire in England, various cities in Germany and Russia, to Alaska, back into Canada, and finally through Cleveland, Ohio on their way back to Roosevelt Field in Long Island, New York. After multiple stops involving propeller repairs, the pair arrived on July 1st having traveled 15,474 miles in a spectacular 8 days, 15 hours, and 51 minutes. Alongside their awe-inspiring speed, they also managed to be the first to successfully circumnavigate

at high levels of the atmosphere. The next year, Post flew from Burbank, CA to Cleveland, OH in this new jet stream pushing his 180-mph aircraft to speeds just over 340-mph. The official understanding of the jet stream did not come around until multiple pilots in WWII reported high tailwind speed when traveling certain directions. Post is often credited as one of the few to discover its existence. For the next 60 years, his pressure suit was a major inspiration and grandfather to the same suits that allowed humanity to walk on the moon.

Post's last flight would be with his good friend Will Rogers during their testing for mail-and-passenger air routes. Post was interested in the potential investment of two-part air routes between the U.S. and Russia. Rogers, who was looking for new material for some of his radio shows and books, was eager to join him. The pair made several stops in Alaska in a modified floatplane until the engine failed on takeoff at low altitude. The low speed caused the nose-heavy plane to lose control and plunged into the lake; it quickly became inverted, leaving them under. The tragedy hit the nation hard, with many giving them honorary burials, celebrations of life, and dedications in their name. Post was buried in Memorial Park Cemetery in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The Winnie Mae, its innovative jettisonable landing gear, and Post's pressure suit are on display at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

Over his life, Wiley transformed the lives of many with his jovial attitude, determination, and courage. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross by act of Congress and the Collier Trophy in 1932. In 1934, when debuting his "Man from Mars" pressure suit, he received the International Harmon Trophy and the Gold Medal of Belgium. He was later inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame and the Oklahoma Aviation Hall of Fame. In 1970, Post was enshrined into the First Flight Society's First Flight Shrine at the Wright Brothers National Memorial. Later, he was inducted into the International Air & Space Hall of Fame, and two monuments were commemorated at the crash site – the site itself is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Wiley Post truly lived under the spirit of aviation, a spirit of pioneering and innovation. Not only did he steer The Winnie Mae to push the boundaries of human capabilities, but he also helped set the track we'd follow to explore the final frontier. Next week, we'll embark on a journey from Oklahoma soil to lunar orbit with Thomas Patten Stafford.

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## SWOSU Softball Drops Three Games in Series Finale vs. the Bisons



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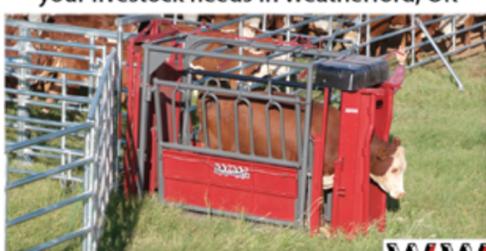
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**Jon Chidester**  
SWOSU Asst. AD

SWOSU Softball fell in the series finale against Harding on Sunday by a final score of 4-0. The Bulldogs, 9-16 overall and 6-8 in GAC play, host Arkansas Tech this weekend.

that lasted until the fifth inning. After retiring the side in order, Harding shelled SWOSU for four runs, six base hits, and two extra-base hits.

**Game 1 - Harding 7, SWOSU 1**

Harding led from the jump in the opening game of the series. They scored two runs in the first inning and added single runs in the fourth and fifth before three more in the sixth put the game out of reach. The Dawgs managed four hits in the game including Rebeca Fajardo's fifth inning home run. Courtney Hill suffered the loss in the circle. She threw 5.0 innings before being relieved by Lauren Bratcher in the sixth. Harding finished with 13 hits in the game but had just one extra-base hit.

This explosion gave HU their first lead of the game, one they never relinquished for the remainder of the outing.

**Game 2 - Harding 7, SWOSU 1**

In game two of the day, SWOSU got in front off the rip. Three base hits, including a double from Dani Carmo, scored two runs for the Dawgs in the first half inning of the game. The Lady Bisons responded in the third with a single that brought home a run of their own to trim the lead down to one, but SWOSU matched that run in the fourth. Two Harding errors allowed a runner on and scored Rebeca Fajardo for a 3-1 Bulldog lead

One run was put up on either side of the scoreboard in the sixth to send the game to the top of the seventh, where SWOSU failed to reach a base and ended the game.

Jadyn Hook and Katie Boline both batted 2-4 and scored a run for SWOSU. Shallen Mershon, Dani Carmo, and Chesnie Hewitt all batted in a run.

**Game 3 - Harding 4, SWOSU 0**

Harding scored two runs in the second inning, a solo home run and an RBI single, and added another two in the fifth with two outs.

The Bulldogs had five hits in the game. Harding seven. SWOSU had a chance to answer Harding's first batch of runs in the fifth but stranded two in the frame.

Trailing 4-0 in the seventh, the Dawgs stranded another two runners after Riley Lusk and Skyla McPhillips had back-to-back singles to lead off the inning.

McPhillips finished 2-3 to lead to lineup. Courtney Hill threw the entire way but was handed the loss.

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## Bulldog Baseball Blanked by Harding Bison



**Jon Chidester**  
SWOSU Asst. AD

SWOSU Baseball dropped a pair of tight games to Harding to close out the series, falling 4-3 and in extras of the series finale, 8-5. The Bulldogs, now 15-11 (7-8 in conference play), suffer a series sweep for the first time this season.

paused action. Zane Leonard threw after the delay for three innings, followed by Philip Sanders and Tyler Fortin who threw one scoreless inning apiece.

In game one, The Bulldogs trailed 4-0 before scoring three runs late. Eric Foufoulas singled to lead off the seventh followed by a Ty Eastwood double, eventually bringing the score 4-2. An inning later, Jackson Syring doubled to lead off the eighth and scored to cut the deficit to 4-3. However, for a second consecutive inning the Dawgs stranded a runner in scoring position.

In game two, SWOSU's offense managed just five hits. Harding finished with nine. Eastwood led the lineup with two hits including a double. The Bisons tied up the game in the seventh inning to force extras and won it in the eighth. Tied 5-5 heading into bonus baseball, Harding took the lead on a first and third play to make it 6-5 and added additional room to breathe with a two-run home run shortly after.

Harding's closer put the game to bed with a three-up, three-down ninth. The Bisons jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the third inning with a two-run home run off starting pitcher Josh Fluet. They tacked on additional solo runs in the sixth and seventh to grow their lead. Fluet (L, 1-1) threw 4.0 innings before the rain delay

The fifth inning saw both teams hold a lead. Harding plated three runs on three hits and took advantage of a pair of errors to grab a 4-3 lead. SWOSU then responded with two runs in the home half thanks to free base runners following a Jackson Syring hit by pitch and a Reece Burke walk. They led 5-4 after five. Geoff Marlow hit a solo home run in the first inning and doubled in another run in the third. An error in the fourth inning gave the Dawgs another run.

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