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Western Oklahoma High School Baseball Stars Selected in MLB Draft



DRAFT

CADEN POWELL

SS
SEMINOLE STATE

6
ROUND

193
PICK

Courtesy Seminole State's Athletic Department



ROUND: 1 PICK: #25
HP | ELK CITY HS. OK

KASH MAYFIELD

ELK CITY

MAKE YOUR NOISE

Courtesy San Diego Padre's Social Media

Two standout Western Oklahoma baseball players were selected in the MLB draft this past week securing them a chance to one day play in the major league. Kash Mayfield of Elk City was selected in the first round as the 25th pick by the San Diego Padres and Caden Powell of Clinton was selected as the 193rd pick in the 6th round by the Houston Astros.

Mayfield, who was scouted as the top overall player from the state of Oklahoma as well as one of the best left handed pitchers in this year's draft class comes straight out of high school.

Mayfield was dominant on the mound for the Elks in 2024. Mayfield won 8 games while averaging a 0.16 ERA with 115 strikeouts on the year. That performance secured Mayfield his 2nd Gatorade Player of the Year in Oklahoma.

Mayfield is expected to spend sometime in the college ranks before transitioning to professional play having committed to play for the Oklahoma State University Cowboys.

Caden Powell is planning to join Mayfield on the Oklahoma State baseball roster this upcoming season.

Powell comes off an incredible hitting year in the Junior College ranks that earned him NJCAA All-American honors as well as the NJCAA National Player of the Year award. Playing with the Seminole State Trojans at short stop, Powell hit 32 homeruns with 104 RBI's and .502 batting average. With such astronomical hitting number it's no wonder why he was selected in this year's draft.

Keep an eye on these talented young men as they'll play for the OSU cowboys next year and maybe in a few years we'll see them on baseball's biggest stage.

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Margaret Robison

Margaret June Robison was born June 27, 1949, in Elk City to Donald Ray and Velma Dean (Clay) Robison and passed away Thursday, July 11, 2024, at home in Weatherford.



Margaret was raised and attended school in Lefors, TX and graduated from Pampa High School in 1967. She started her college education in the Panhandle in 1971 where she earned her Bachelor Degree in Psychology and later went to SWOSU where she completed her master's degree.

Margaret worked at 3M in the warehouse for many years. She loved her daughter Mes and the company of her dogs. She then worked for the Department of Human Services as a social worker for 12 years until retiring.

Margaret will be remembered for her stories of all of her adventures. Her hobbies were spending time with family and friends, yearly family reunions, her TV shows, reading and watching video and playing games on her kindle.

Margaret is survived by her daughter Mesa Robison of Weatherford; and two brothers: Orville Don "Butch" Robison and wife Teresa of Follett, TX and Clayton Robison of Blanco, TX. She was preceded in death by her parents.

Veda Tull

Veda Mae Tull was born in Mazie, OK in September 1935. She passed away Saturday, July 13, 2024, in Weatherford, OK, surrounded by family and music, at the age of 89 years, 9 months and 26 days.



Throughout her life, Veda was dedicated to family, friends and neighbors, touching many lives with her caring and kindness. She knew about hard work, starting with delivering papers with her family as a child, and this work ethic carried on in administrative assistant positions she held as her husband James Evertt Tull worked as a salesman. Veda and Jim were married in Tonkawa, OK on June 5, 1955, and enjoyed 54 years of marriage. They had three sons: Jeff, Steve and Jay. They lived in a variety of places including Colorado, Indiana, Ohio and Oklahoma.

Veda enriched and influenced the lives of the people she knew. As she and Jim moved with his job, she was active in the local churches. She helped people in need, ranging from a kind word to providing a place to live. Even in the nursing home, she cared for her fellow residents.

She was a talented quilter and an excellent cook, having her recipes printed in newspapers. And because God gave her sons, she taught them to cook, making her daughters-in-law grateful.

Veda enjoyed playing the piano, raising miniature schnauzers, gardening, reading and vanilla-bean ice cream.

Veda is survived by her sons: Jeff Tull of Columbus, OH, Steve and Dilynn Tull of Celeste, TX, and Jay and Barbara Tull of Weatherford, OK; a brother Guy and Lois Lyall of Tonkawa, OK; four grandchildren: Jacob Tull, Kayla Tull, Maria Hackworth, and April Tull; and three great-grandchildren: Eve LeMay, Page Hackworth and Daisy Tull; and several nieces, nephews and cousins. She was preceded in death by her husband James E. Tull; her parents Harold Charles Lyall, Sr. and Ila Alfa (Smith) Lyall; three brothers: Harold Lyall, Jr., J.D. "Cotton" Lyall, and Max Lyall; a sister Jeroldine "Bill" Hurst; and a daughter-in-law Lori Tull.

Duane Rea

Carroll Duane Rea was born November 23, 1940, in Portales, New Mexico, to Carl and Bessie (Goodwin) Rea. He passed away peacefully at home Tuesday, July 16, 2024, at the age of 83 years, 7 months and 23 days.



Duane was a polio survivor in his childhood and a cancer survivor later in his life. He grew up on a farm in Bovina, TX where his family raised pigs and grew cotton. He graduated from Bovina High School in 1958, where he was active in FFA, sports, and Speech and Debate. He went on to attend Southwestern Oklahoma State University and Seminary School, simultaneously, graduating in 1962. While attending his sister Joyce's wedding to Arlen Hamburger, he met the groom's little sister Joy Ann Hamburger, fell in love and married on June 3, 1963. The young couple started their adventure in Butler, OK where Duane was the Pastor at the United Methodist Church. Duane later chose to pursue a career in insurance. In 1972, Duane decided to make another change. This time it was not a change in occupation, but a change in location. He returned to Hawaii where he and Joy had their honeymoon. He loved it there so much, he left Joy to hold down the fort, and two young energetic kids in Oklahoma while he went to secure their future in Hawaii. One month later he had secured a position at First Insurance Company, purchased a 900 square foot condo on the slopes of Diamond Head, and a 1963 Bel Air to drive. He sent for his family, and in Honolulu he raised his girls, lived in the same condo, stayed employed by the same company, but switched out vehicles a few times until he retired in 2000. In 2004, he finally returned to the mainland eventually finding his way to Corn OK. Duane enjoyed working on jigsaw puzzles, talking theology with anyone that could keep up, playing ball with the dogs and finding neat places to eat; like White Dog Hill for his 80th birthday.

Duane is survived by his two daughters Andrea Rea of Corn and Carol Rea-Feagaiga (Scotty) of Wisconsin; five grandchildren: Joy Rodriguez (Roman) of Montana, Alix Engler (Jordan) of Guam, Briana Harris (James) of Alaska, Sabrina Smith (Krystal) and Samson Feagaiga of North Carolina; and six great-grandchildren: Lilly, Micah, Andrew, Autumn, Jacob, and Lydia. He was preceded in death by his parents; wife Joy Ann Rea; and sister Joyce Hamburger.

Twanda Page

Twanda Marie Page was born on June 16, 1939, to Vern D. Smith and Glessnell L. (Hurst) Smith and passed away on Thursday, July 11, 2024, in Weatherford, at the age of 85 years and 25 days.



Twanda was raised on a dairy farm in the Vici, Oklahoma, area. After graduating from Vici High School as salutatorian, she attended Oklahoma State University, majoring in home economics. During her junior year at OSU, she met Charles "Chuck" W. Page; they married on March 26, 1961. Their partnership lasted for 52 years until his death in 2013.

In pursuit of their educational goals, Twanda and Chuck moved to Corona, New Mexico, to teach at the local high school, and then later to Goodwell, Oklahoma, so Chuck could teach at Panhandle State University.

After several years, they then moved to Greeley, Colorado, where Twanda started her master's degree and Chuck received his doctorate degree from the University of Northern Colorado.

In July of 1970, Twanda and Chuck moved to Weatherford, Oklahoma, where Chuck became a professor of accounting at SWOSU and Twanda started teaching at Hydro High School, and later at Weatherford High School.

Twanda served as a Home Economics teacher for over twenty years. As a teacher, she was known for making hundreds of batches of her hard candy (cinnamon flavor being the all-time favorite), which sales benefitted the high school Future Homemakers of America Club.

Traveling was a passion for Twanda and she traveled to all 50 states and visited nine countries over the years. She and Chuck celebrated their 25th anniversary in Key West, Florida, 40th anniversary in Waterford, Ireland, 44th anniversary in Honolulu, Hawaii, 50th anniversary in Branson, (where they originally honeymooned), with their last trip in 2011 on a riverboat cruise around Puget Sound, Washington. She also traveled to Washington, D.C. where she participated in the White House Symposium for several years meeting senators, representatives, and George W. Bush.

After retirement from teaching, Twanda started a new career by becoming an integral part of the family accounting business, which closed in 2009, and apartment rental business which closed in 2022.

Twanda was a cancer survivor, devout Christian, bridge/game enthusiast, supporter of Republican politics, lifelong learner, hard worker, a delightful Grammy, wonderful seamstress, and baker. Twanda lived in Weatherford for over fifty years and during that time, she enjoyed various Weatherford women's clubs, being a member of the First United Methodist Church (serving countless funeral dinners), and being very active in the numerous programs, like Tai Chi, offered by the Weatherford Pioneer Center in her 70s and 80s.

During her lifetime, Twanda had a no-nonsense approach to life with a can-do attitude that encouraged others to try new endeavors, arguing that you had nothing to lose by trying.

She is survived by son Charles "Stan" Page, of Weatherford, OK; daughter LeAnn Marie Ellis and husband Hal, of Stillwater, OK; two grandchildren: Allison Page Drummond, of Stillwater, OK, and Christine Caroline Drummond, of Oklahoma City.

She was preceded in death by her husband and parents.

Patsy Chisum

Patsy Sue (Baker) Chisum was born April 10, 1942, to Glenn "Buss" Baker and Erma (Nichols) Baker. She passed away peacefully on July 15, 2024, at Maple Lawn Manor in Hydro, OK, at the age of 82 years, 3 months and 5 days.



Patsy grew up in Butler, Oklahoma, where she began school. When she was in the 5th grade, her family moved to Wellston, Oklahoma, and she attended school in Wellston for 5th and 6th grade before the family moved back to Butler. She graduated from Butler High School in 1960. Growing up in Butler, Patsy was a team player of the Butler girls' basketball team and a member of the Butler Round-Up Club. She is a member of the Butler First Baptist Church.

The year following her graduation, she married Gary Paoli. To this union, two sons were born: Stanley Lewis and Darin Lee. During their marriage, they resided in California before returning to Clinton, Oklahoma. In 1982, Patsy married Melvin Chisum.

While living in Clinton, Patsy was employed by Dairy Queen, S & D Drug and Guthrie's Men's Wear. However, she found her true calling in becoming a farmer's wife and partner to Melvin, residing on the farm South of Hydro before they moved to town in 2018.

Patsy found great joy in returning to farm life after marrying Melvin. She cherished her time with her horses and cattle and held a special place in her heart for all her animals but especially her outside dogs Russell and Benji. She loved to watch the irrigation. Patsy even found pleasure in driving the peanut truck during harvest.

Her love for beautiful things was evident in her meticulously tended flower beds. In the kitchen, Patsy was extraordinary.

She took pride in preparing meals for Melvin, the boys, and anyone else who happened to join them at mealtime.

She rarely followed recipes. She just added what she thought it needed and the food always turned out amazing, no matter what she was cooking or baking.

Patsy was preceded in death by her parents Buss and Erma Baker.

Patsy is survived by her husband Melvin of the home; her sons: Stan Paoli and wife Michelle, of Arlington, Texas, Darin Paoli and wife Mason of Kansas City, Missouri;

Patsy is also survived by her much loved bonus children: LaDonna Maxwell and husband E.D. of Great Falls, Montana; Lynette Thompson and husband Ken of El Reno, Oklahoma, and Tyler Chisum and wife Julie of Hydro, Oklahoma. four grandchildren: Priscilla, Sydney, Jacob, and London; three bonus grandchildren: Derek, Toby, Chase; great-grandchild, Kendall and bonus great-grandchildren, Wrenlee and Oakley; her brother Terry Baker and wife Cathy of Butler, Oklahoma; her niece, Stephanie Whittington, and a nephew Jason Baker, as well as numerous cousins, extended family members, and friends.

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OKLAHOMA

Western OKLAHOMA

SHEEP & GOAT CLASSIC

FRIDAY JULY 26, 2024

Sponsored by: Weatherford FFA Ag Boosters & The City of Weatherford

WEATHERFORD AG EXPO CENTER
Located Far North End of Rader Park

4:30 PM Cards Due
5:00 Showmanship
6:00 PM Show Begins

Show Order: Breeding Ewes, Market Lambs, Breeding Does, Market Wethers
**AOB: Will be formed with any breeds less than 5 head

Judge: Jett Smith

\$25 Entry Fee per Head

Prize Money
\$750 Grand Champions
\$500 Reserve Grand Champions
\$250 Third Overall Champions

Showmanship age divisions:
8 & under, 9-11, 12-14, and 15 & up

Trailer Reservations \$25
Pen Reservations \$10

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Western OKLAHOMA

SWINE CLASSIC

SATURDAY JULY 27, 2024

Sponsored by: Weatherford FFA Ag Boosters & The City of Weatherford

WEATHERFORD AG EXPO CENTER
Located Far North End of Rader Park

\$25 Entry Fee per Head

4:30 PM Cards Due
5:00 PM Showmanship
6:00 PM Show Begins

Breeds by Classification: Berk, Chester, Duroc, Hampshire, Hereford
Poland, Spot, York, Light Cross (no black) and Dark Cross
(5 Head to Make Breed)

**AOB: Will be formed with any breeds less than 5 head

Grand Champion Gilt & Barrow \$1000
Reserve Champion Gilt & Barrow \$800
3rd Overall Gilt & Barrow \$600
4th Overall Gilt & Barrow \$400
5th Overall Gilt & Barrow \$200

Copy of Pseudo Papers Required
Judge: Adrian Austin
Show Order: Gilts followed by barrows

Showmanship Divisions:
Peewee (8 & under) Junior (9-12)
Intermediate (13-15) Senior (16-18)

Trailer Reservations \$25
Pen Reservations \$10

Scan QR Code to access form and remit payment for trailer and pen reservations

HIGHER GROUND

God's Love Language

Jim Morrison

The five languages that Chapman referred to were:

- Words of Affirmation
- Quality Time
- Gifts
- Acts of Service
- Physical Touch

Perhaps a personal example would be helpful. Most of the Praise choruses we sing in today's worship service are simply that: praise offered to God expressing how great he is and how much we adore him. This kind of worship is found throughout the Psalms so it is certainly Biblical. But I confess most of the time they don't do much for me. They are expressions of praise to God that cause many to raise their hands and face and sway to the music, sometimes with tears of emotion.

I am moved more by hymns of action and challenge—songs that want me to go out and do something to bring in the Kingdom. "I'll Fly Away" doesn't do much for me but "A Mighty Fortress is Our God," or "Set my Soul Afire, Lord," challenges me to acts of service or sharing Christ that HillSongs choruses don't.

I may be weird or just too old to appreciate praise music but I choose to believe that it is a part of my makeup.

I can better express my love for Jesus by setting across the table from an inmate who feels his life is over and sharing the good news of the hope we have in Christ.

As I have stated before, praise is wonderful and reminds us of the beauty and holiness of God but let's not confuse the issue to make that the ultimate or highest form of worship for all people. Some people would not dare read a Christian book but I find joy in seeing how God worked mightily in the lives of the past saints of God, or in learning how to pray more effectively by reading the experiences of others.

There is a joy in giving sacrificially. Paul said it caused the church in Jerusalem to erupt with many "expressions of thanks" and "praise to God for their obedience."

II Cor. 9:13 No doubt their gifts caused people to glorify God which is our highest gift. So for some it may be "Quality time," for others, "Gifts," for some "Words of affirmation" or for others "Acts of Service." Granted, we need to be involved in all of these to some degree but for each of us one or two may be the primary way or ways that we love God. To Him be the glory.

To comment jhm82@outlook.com, 1580-302-1142

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LOCAL AND AREA NEWS



Mike Smith
News Director

69th Annual SWOSU Music Camp Concludes with MS/HS Band Camp



Courtesy SWOSU Music Camps

“Marching Fundamentals” classes were offered to campers as electives. These included: “Flag Fundamentals” led by Mamie Sprinkle-Baker (pictured, left) and Kristyna Mosqueda-Rogers; and “Marching Percussion” led by Rhonda Harper (pictured, right).



Courtesy SWOSU Music Camps

Students set up for their Concert Band Auditions, which occurred immediately after registration.



Courtesy SWOSU Music Camps

Honor Students practice for their Friday concert under the direction of Christina Muncey. Watch the full concert at [YouTu.be/rZy7pSeh6bg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=berZy7pSeh6bg).

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WATONGA SCHOOLS / PROJECTS - Many building projects are nearing completion in the Watonga School District, says Superintendent Kyle Hilterbran. These include a new basketball gym, end zone facility, cafeteria, wrestling facility, and sports locker rooms. All of these projects are expected to be finished before 2025. Hilterbran says the community passed a \$20 million bond to help make the projects happen.

CLINTON / MIDTOWN TRAVEL INN - Clinton City Council, acting as the industrial authority, has decided how to proceed, surrounding the Midtown Travel Inn property. City attorney Ryan Meacham told the authority that it can request proposals for the property. The authority has decided to allow city staff to seek those proposals.

CLINTON CC / MITIGATION RATES - Clinton City Council approved an ordinance, establishing and implementing mitigation rates for the deployment of emergency and non-emergency services rendered by the Clinton Fire Department. Fire Chief Brett Russell explained how the city will benefit, stating that insurance companies will pay the city for providing emergency services. The council also approved a service agreement with Fire Recovery USA to conduct the billing function on behalf of the city of Clinton.

WASHITA CO / SILVER ALERT - The Oklahoma Highway Patrol recently issued a Silver Alert to find 73-year-old James Pearce. However, that alert was canceled after his body was found deceased at an oil field site north of Burns Flat. Authorities have not released any additional details surrounding Pearce’s cause of death.

WEATHERFORD / NEW DIRECTOR - Colton Parkinson, a former Stafford Scholar, will succeed Max Ary as the Director of the Stafford Air & Space Museum in Weatherford.

MOUNTAIN VIEW / DAMAGE - Clean-up has begun, following a downburst from straight-line winds last week which left damage throughout the town of Mountain View in Kiowa County, says Emergency Management Director Daniel Fantinelle. An estimated 20 structures suffered damage in the community.

WEATHERFORD SB / CARRYOVER - During his first school board meeting, new Weatherford Schools Superintendent Mark Harmon spoke about the carryover for the district. Harmon estimates the general fund carryover at \$3.7 million. The building fund carryover will be around \$1.3 million. The district is ineligible for stimulus fund carryover, which was \$1.2 million in 2023.

WEEKLY SHOUTOUTS!

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Christian Free Store – Donations of school supplies, clothes, shoes, etc. are needed or if you are in need. Please call (580) 637-2345 or (580) 291-3875. **Alfalfa, OK, Community Center** “Bible Study,” Every Monday Night from 7:00 to 8:00 Hwy 58. Five miles South of Hwy 152. For more information contact (405) 643-9211. Free and Open to the Public. **OK Parkinson’s Alliance**, monthly support group meeting the second Thursday of each month, excluding December, at 5:30 p.m. at Weatherford’s Pioneer Center, 1000 Gartrell Place. Patients, caregivers, family or friends are welcome. Questions? Contact OK Parkinson’s Alliance (405) 810-0695 or info@OKpa.org. **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 July 24 - Megan Beasley, Hanna Boas, Kasey Boas, Sue Britton, Brandi Burazza, Charlotte Colby, Catie Disney, Tamara Hetherington, Mildred Jones, Rebecca Lynn Kubrak, Ashley LaGrange, Darrin Matz, Marvin Monaghan, Karen Stucker, Allan Taylor, Roxanne Ward; **July 25** - Randy Dowell, Christy Hall, Kenneth Keil, Robert Waldrop, Dylan Ward; **July 26** - Kathy Badalamente, Billy Bailey, Lance Carney, Jennifer Deffenbaugh, T. Kay Harrelson, Sherrill Lovelace, Joey Meyers, Josh Pitchford, Lisa Seibold, Dale Snider; **July 27** - Nicole Curtis, Bert Goodwin, Rylan Moore, Raul Perez Jr., Michelle Russel, Skyler Weaselbear; **July 28** - Kasey Barton, Pamela Burton, Brian Exenia, Brad Fry, Kalie Kerth, Mattie Mortimer, Jonathan Pigg, Rick Webster; **July 29** - Rene Bickle, Ryan Folks, Cammie Hodges, Dana Matlock, Lindey Smith, Aimee Stobbe, Stacy Twins; **July 30** - Tommy Holt, Ruth Mejia, Don Mullennix, Chester Walker.

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Military Jeep Hood. Roughly 30"x30." \$250 580-330-1437.

2014 Ford Focus - \$6,500. 580-330-3489.

2001 Honda 600CC - Navy Blue. 16k miles, \$2,000. 405-892-8301

2003 Chevy Trailblazer - good tires. \$5,750. 580-330-3489

4-Michelin used passenger tires - 20 inch. 580-393-1444.

Motorized Mountain Bike - Comes with detachable 1-wheel trailer. Lots of extras. Low miles. \$600. 580-890-9442.

2009 Mercury Grand Marquis LS - \$3,750 OBO. 580-330-3489.

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Widescreen TV - 93" CRT. Mitsubishi. \$499. Contact at 580-772-7997.

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Coil roofing air nailgun - like new, with 3 boxes of coil nails. \$250. 580-330-1437.

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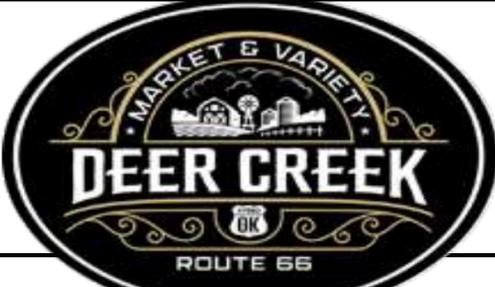
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Food Club Chunk Cheese 16 oz. All Varieties	2 for \$7.00	Saran Wrap 100 ft.	\$1.79		
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WHS Athletics-Training to Host 2nd Annual Cornhole Tournament

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Alexander Shook
WOK Contributor

Weatherford's Athletic Training Program is hosting its "Back to School Cornhole Tournament," made possible by Hydro's "H2O Baggers."

The Tournament will feature two separate brackets depending on players' skill levels: The Novice Category is for players who are looking for a more "recreational" experience. This bracket is geared towards first timers. The Competitive Category is for organized league players looking for a challenge. Competitive is capped at 15.5 points per round.

This is a Both brackets will have their own cash prizes, with 1st Place receiving \$300, 2nd receiving \$200, and 3rd receiving \$100. Various gift cards will be given out as well.

Last year's tournament brought in 30 teams and eight sponsors. All proceeds went to Weatherford student athletes, both funding equipment and any sports-related injuries that occurred during the 2023-24 school year. This year will be no different.

The links to register are listed below. Please note that you will need to create an active ScoreHolio account for each participating player.

Competitive.....share.scoreholio.com/yAzu9d8fLb
Novice.....share.scoreholio.com/or6qgKT7fLb

More information about this event can be found by visiting facebook.com/WHSatc or by emailing Grant Schamburg at gschamburg@wpsok.org.



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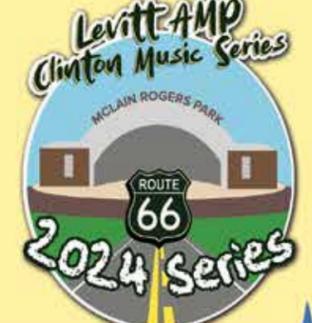
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Thomas Native Jared Deck is an Oklahoma-based folk/americana singer, winner of the Woody Guthrie Folk Festival songwriting contest.

Deck sings of hard work and hard luck, harkening upon his days as an outsourced factory worker, an oil field roughneck, and a full gospel church musician.

Like roots in the ground, Deck sets his feet firmly in Americana and the traditions that inspired him to pick up the pen and write.



ESPIRAL7
LATIN FUSION BAND

Espiral7 is a band rooted in the rhythmic patterns prevalent in the Colombian Pacific. It was formed by Harlinson Lozano and Andrés Sánchez in 2017.

Espiral7 is the product of more than 20 years of musical exploration and research. The band sports a cinematic, forceful and energetic sound with high quality compositions that fuse Latin pop, rock, salsa, and Afro-Latin music.

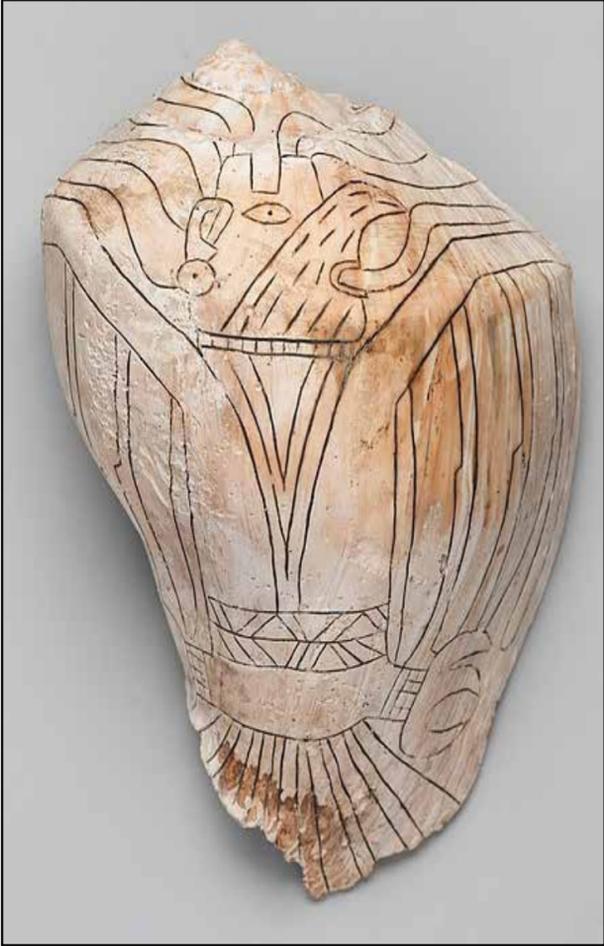
Jared Deck / Carolina Grace - August 2, 7pm
Espiral7 / Dawn and Hawkes - August 9, 7pm

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Oklahoma History: The Detailed History of the Spiro People / Mounds



Courtesy Brooklyn Museum

Courtesy Woolaroc Museum

Pictured, left: Engraving on a conch shell depicting a falcon warrior in a beaked mask and cloak. Mississippian tribes traveled to the coast during the spring to gather these shells for ceremonial cups that they used to connect their warrior spirits to the realm. The line displays are believed to be the cleansing of their bodies as they form a transformative prayer, and the residue found in these shells revealed a caffeinated tea for their rituals.

Pictured, right: This Spiro mound artifact is on display at Woolaroc Museum, near Bartlesville, featuring a prevalent spider motif at the center, with a circle of hands with shell bracelets. Roughly 3 in x 3 in.

Chase Wright
Staff Writer

Oklahoma has a mighty influence on the world of art, communication, and culture. If we travel to the eastern edge of the state, along the southern bank of the Arkansas River, we'd find in front of us a complex of twelve mounds, layers of dirt systematically placed between the period of A.D. 850 and 1450. Around the mounds, were ceremonial areas and one of the greatest cultures and cities the world would see. There, at the site of those mounds, we can get a glimpse into the past – a glimpse into the Spiro Mounds.

Located seven miles outside Spiro, Oklahoma, the mounds' site is rich with history and listed by the Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) as "the only prehistoric American Indian archaeological site in Oklahoma open to the public". The site is home to the Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center which preserves the site and delves deep into the history of the "Vatican City of the West".

The Spiro Mounds were created by the prehistoric Spiro people, who built a sophisticated culture featuring an extensive trade network, religious center, and political system. Off of the Arkansas River, the burial mound site was the center-point for the Spiro people to spread their influence, an influence like their speech, which has roots in the modern Wichita, Kichai, Caddo, Pawnee, and Arikara speakers. With a uniform understanding of each other, the region formed a culture called the Mississippian Culture. This culture featured leadership from many language groups and supported several million people. Their trade routes went from the California Coast to the Gulf of Mexico and linked Oklahoma to the other regional mound centers. At the time, the mound regions were: the Cahokia (located in East St. Louis), Moundville (Alabama), Etowah (in Georgia), and the Spiro Mounds.

Spiro is set apart from every other U.S. prehistoric site because it also was the origin and influence of its own form of language. The language feature simple picture-based forms of iconography with no

major outside influence. Iconography is considered a base language involving clear imagery and is a typical precursor to the next stage of language - hieroglyphics. Spiro was holding two thirds of the U.S. 's conformed communication across the Mississippi Valley.

The Spiro Mounds consisted of one burial mound, two temple mounds, and nine house mounds. The burial mound, named "Craig", gained world renown as incredible pieces of art and artifacts were extracted from the site. Its cavity created an almost perfect preservation of fragile artifacts and trinkets like those made from freshwater pearls, conch shells, wood and copper. The state of the conditions also allowed fabrics and perishables like animal fur, lace, feathers and several stone statuarys like those made from flint clay and Mill Creek chert bifaces.

Spiro was the only prehistoric place with large pieces featuring cotton in the U.S. Made from woven lace threads, the patterns were intricate and believed to be used for ceremonies at the center mound. More fabric is preserved at Spiro than anywhere else. While there were many communities and centers of art and craftsmanship, Spiro was the largest center of prehistoric art found in North America.

The burial mound has been referred to as the "Great Mortuary" and has been called "King Tut of the Arkansas Valley" by the Kansas City Star in 1935. Archeologists believe the near-perfect condition of the chamber was a result of earth minerals coming up through the mound and hardening within the cedar log walls, which made them resistant to decay and protected the artifacts.

The fall of the Spiro mound network and civilization came after a drought cycle in 1300 AD. The region, typically blessed by a long growing season and consistent rainfall suddenly saw a shift in the timelines. It began to receive 6 months of rainfall in just a couple of months. The growing season now only lasted from late Spring through early Summer. Spiro's cultural success was built on the back of their spiritual leaders, and with the sudden change to livelihood and production,

communities began to fall under an impression that they were being divinely punished. Without proper guidance, the spiritual center declined and ultimately became abandoned by 1450 AD. In the early 1800's, Choctaw settlers cleared the site for their own use, but continued to preserve the site's exposure to the outside.

Unfortunately, between 1933 and 1935, the Craig Mound was excavated through a commercial enterprise and while tunneling into the mound, they tore through one of the log walls breaking fragile artifacts and causing others to immediately begin to disintegrate after being exposed to the change in atmosphere. The largest prehistoric art center in the U.S. was suddenly discovered and thousands of its rare and priceless objects were sold to collectors. Once the excavators finished, they dynamited the burial chamber. Some artifacts have been returned through donation and others have been found and documented by scholars.

The sheer boom of artifacts coming out of Spiro gained the attention of archeologists and cultural leaders and soon the Oklahoma Legislature passed a licensing requirement to protect the site which stopped all future commercial excavation from 1935 onwards. In 1936, the University of Oklahoma began a scientific excavation, uncovering six hundred complete or partial burials with thousands of other artifacts. Archeologists oversaw the Works Progress Administration (WPA) until its end in 1941 due to World War II.

The land became privately owned and farmed until the 1960s when it was purchased by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and eventually turned into the Spiro Mounds Archaeological State Park in 1978. The mound was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1969 and transferred under the Oklahoma Historical Society in 1991.

Today, the expanded Interpretive Center at the Spiro Mounds hosts exhibits, programs, nature trails, and large group and school tours. Their guided tours allow visitors to learn about one of the most prolific art and cultural discoveries of the nation's past.

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SWOSU Volleyball Earns 2024 Academic Award & Honor Roll Status



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Jon Chidester
SWOSU Media Relations

SWOSU Volleyball earned the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) Team Academic Award, announced Wednesday by the organization. The Bulldogs also achieved the additional distinction of AVCA Team Academic Honor Roll, which signifies the program lands in the top 20% of GPAs in NCAA Division II.

The academic award, sponsored by INTENT, recognizes teams from all levels of collegiate and high school volleyball that maintain a year-long grade-point average of 3.30 on a 4.0 scale. SWOSU finished with a 3.64 team GPA throughout 2023-24.

"To not only earn the team academic award but also be placed on the honor roll list is a testament

to this group's focus, discipline, and effort in the classroom," said head volleyball coach Josh Collins. "It's great their hard work is able to be recognized by the AVCA and I couldn't be any prouder of them."

The American Volleyball Coaches Association's mission is to advance the sport of volleyball with AVCA coaches at the epicenter of leadership, advocacy, and professional development. The membership includes more than 9,500 collegiate, professional, high school, club, and youth volleyball coaches—primarily in the United States.

The AVCA represents women's volleyball, men's volleyball, and beach volleyball coaches, and works to increase exposure and recognition for the sport of volleyball.

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