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## Hydro Hosts Groundbreaking for New Route 66 Centennial Monument



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The groundbreaking ceremony featured the largest contributors to make this project a reality. Pictured, from left: Jackie and Estate Planner Allen Entz with their two boys; Hydro Mayor Dena Black; Reese Martin for OHS; Architect Andrew Stone; Grant Coordinator Karla Jackson; Commissioners Gary Mol and Thomas Tillison; Damon and Crystal Hammon; and Edith and Roger Entz.

Allen Entz describe the bridge's history. "It came from just west of Lucille's. About 15 years ago, they took it out. We didn't know what we were ever gonna' do with it."



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Gary Mol and Thomas Tillison spent much of their time with the mic, showing gratitude for the project's many contributors, big and small.

Many Hydro residents, including students and other contributors, were in attendance for the groundbreaking.

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**Ray Wolf**

Raymond Eugene "Ray" Wolf was born April 1, 1932, in Sterling, Illinois, to Cecil Raymond Wolf and Dorothy Mae (Turney) Wolf and passed away Friday, January 31, 2025, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, at the age of 92 years, 9 months, and 30 days young.



Ray was raised in Rock Falls, Illinois, and graduated high school in 1950. He attended Bradley University where he received his B.S. in Mechanical Engineering

Ray was a member of the United States Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps. He entered active duty in 1954 at the Greenville Air Base in Mississippi and obtained his Navigator wings from Ellington Field in Houston, Texas, in 1955. He flew B-36 and B-52 bombers, C-119 cargo, and AC-119 gunship aircraft across a 20-year span, including four deployments to Vietnam where he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, among other medals.

While stationed at Clinton-Sherman Air Force Base in Oklahoma, he met Bobbie Sue Jackson on a blind date. On December 20, 1960, they were married.

Upon his retirement as a Lieutenant Colonel in 1974, they relocated to Weatherford, Oklahoma, and took a position at 3M, working as an engineer where he led several pioneering efforts in computer data storage.

Following his 22-year career with 3M, he worked in construction and Wolf Home Services where he provided quality craftsmanship for many families. He loved his family and paid most attention to the youngest in the pack.

Ray always had a smile on his face and complained not once. His kindness and patience were loved by all, and we share great joy that he is home with the Lord at last.

Ray was preceded in death by his parents; his wife Bobbie; and one great-granddaughter, Caroline Vaughn.

He is survived by his twin daughters Becky and Andy Deck of Midland, Texas, and Barbie and Kevin Deevers of Weatherford, Oklahoma; son Danny and Stephanie Wolf of Yorktown, Virginia; his brother Robert and Donena Wolf of Parker, Arizona; and sister-in-law Ruth Wolf of Sterling, Illinois; eight grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to First Baptist Church of Weatherford, Oklahoma or Weatherford Habitat for Humanity.

**Rex McAlary**

Rex Lee McAlary, 74, of Elk City, Oklahoma was born on May 22, 1950, in Vici, Oklahoma. He is the son of Denver J. and Josephine Izora (Moss) McAlary.



He went to be with his Heavenly Father on Sunday, January 26, 2025, at Great Plains Regional Medical Center, Elk City, Oklahoma, surrounded by his loving family.

Rex married his best friend Marilyn Mae Turner on July 11, 1969, in Camargo, Oklahoma. Together, they raised their family and spent fifty-five wonderful years of marriage together.

Rex was a company man in the oilfield industry and was employed by Parker Drilling, Quarles, Ram Energy, Indrex and St. Mary's for many years. In his spare time, he enjoyed off road motorcycle racing, watching the rodeos, and race cars.

He loved trap shooting, turkey hunting, and quail hunting. Rex was a member of the Amateur Trap Shooting Association, the Sayre Gun Club, and was a life member of the NRA. He had many great adventures and treasured spending time with his family and friends. He will be missed by all who knew and loved him.

Cherishing his memory is his wife Marilyn McAlary of Elk City, Oklahoma; one son Shane McAlary of Elk City, Oklahoma; three daughters: Cherrie Corvelo and her husband David of Edmond, Oklahoma, Carrie McAlary of Edmond, Oklahoma, Stacie Holly and her husband Jeff of Stillwater, Oklahoma; six grandchildren: Derek Corvelo of Edmond, Oklahoma, Damon Corvelo of Edmond, Oklahoma, Jarrett Holly of Stillwater, Oklahoma, Jorrie Holly of Stillwater, Oklahoma, Lily McAlary of Elk City, Oklahoma, Toby Perkins of Elk City, Oklahoma; and a host of other family and friends.

Rex was preceded in death by his parents, Denver J. and Josephine Izora McAlary.

Memorials can be made to Red Dirt Shooting Club, Sayre, Oklahoma in care of Martin-Dugger Funeral Home and Cremation Services, P.O. Box 707, Elk City, Oklahoma 73648.

**Mary Hawkins**

Mary Elizabeth (Nowlin) Hawkins was born July 2, 1938, in Manzanola, Colorado, to Aubrey Newton and Bertha Telea Nowlin and passed away Thursday, January 30, 2025, at SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital at the age of 86 years, 6 months and 28 days.



Mary's family returned home to Rocky, Oklahoma, when Mary was 2, and she graduated from Rocky High School in 1957.

She was attending Southwestern State College when she met Jerry Lee Hawkins—it was love at first sight, and they married on September 14, 1958. They made their home in Weatherford where she worked alongside of Jerry on the family farm where they raised their children. Mary worked for 3-M for 17 years. She was a lifelong member of the First Baptist Church and volunteered wherever she was needed. Mary was a devout and faithful Christian that loved to read the bible and taught Sunday school classes, and made sure that all of her children were led to Christ.

Mary loved to bake—making and decorating cakes and breads; feeding the birds and animals. Mary loved being a grandmother and loved spending time with family and friends.

Mary was preceded in death by her parents and her mother and father-in-law Robert Lee and Zella Ethel Hawkins.

She is survived by her husband of 66 years Jerry Hawkins of their home in Weatherford; four children: Cris Hawkins of Weatherford, Oklahoma; Danny Hawkins and wife Darla of Weatherford, Oklahoma; Debbie Stevens and husband Daron of Custer City, Oklahoma; and Ann Staley and husband Scott of Delta, Colorado; six grandchildren: Dalton Hawkins, Dawson Hawkins, Landon and wife Brooke Stevens, Skylar and wife Katie Stevens, Kayla Kestler and partner Sean Wanzer; and Ashton and husband Michael Schlauger; and twelve great-grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to the First Baptist Church of Weatherford.

**Vivian Smith**

Vivian Smith was warm, loving and generous. At the same time, she could be tough enough to strike fear in one's heart. She was a remarkable businesswoman with expertise in oil and gas mineral leasing that rivaled that of the most successful landmen.



She was also a savvy stock and bond investor who, starting with a \$1,000.00 wedding gift, built an impressive portfolio and gave excellent stock tips. She loved going to the casinos, typically winning at slot machines.

Vivian had a passion for jewelry. And, as long as her health allowed, enjoyed traveling. Throughout her life, she delighted in her "little friends," the birds, racoons and squirrels that raided her bird feeder daily.

Vivian took her niece Waletta Newton under her wing, teaching her to drive a moped, then a tractor and, in a blue '73 Thunderbird, a car. She helped Waletta learn to cook and keep house. She also took her to the FHA Mother/Daughter Banquets.

Born on December 31, 1950 to Leo and Dorothy Newcomb Garrett in Alma, Georgia, she and her mother moved to Hammon, Oklahoma in 1965. She married John Smith of Moorewood in 1966. They made their home at the family farm where she stayed after his death in 2013, remaining as independent as she possibly could until rheumatoid arthritis overwhelmed her.

Vivian left her pain behind on January 29, 2025 at OU Medical Center in Oklahoma City, telling Waletta who was constantly by her side that she was going to be OK.

Vivian was also preceded in death by her mother Dorothy Newcomb Garrett Mosier and her four sisters, Nettie Kenline, Verla Shelton, Vina Edwards and Rosemary Sweat. She is survived by nieces Waletta Newton, Mary Graybill, Dawn Tisdale, Jan Warfield, nephews Jay Flick, John David Smith, Daniel Edwards, great-niece Amber Edwards, more loved ones and countless friends.

Donations in Vivian's memory can be made: The Johns Hopkins Division of Rheumatology or Oklahoma Wildcare Foundation in care of Martin-Dugger Funeral Home, P.O. Box 707, Elk City, Oklahoma 73648.

The family would like to invite all that could not attend to watch the service on the Martin-Dugger Funeral Home and Cremation Services website.

**Ray Brinkley**

Orville Ray Brinkley Sr., 81, of Elk City, Oklahoma, was born on July 21, 1943, in Elk City, Oklahoma. He is the son of Rheuben Quincy and Mary Francis (Musick) Brinkley. He went to walk the heavenly streets of gold with his Lord and Savior on Monday, January 20, 2025, at Great Plains Regional Medical Center in Elk City.



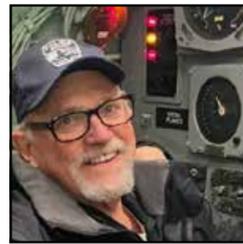
Ray enjoyed working for Davis Iron and Metal. He worked for over thirty years for them before he retired. He liked to watch sports, especially OU and the Dallas Cowboys, along with the Oklahoma City Thunder. If his teams were not playing then he would watch westerns and bullriding. He had many great adventures, to say the least. His favorite saying was "Get 'er dun," which would make people laugh and making people laugh was something Ray loved to do. He treasured spending time with his family and friends. Ray will be missed by all who knew and loved him.

Cherishing his memory is four sons: Little Ray Brinkley of Aurora, Missouri, Tim Gallagher and his wife Amiee, Ben Brinkley, Ryan Brinkley and his wife Maggie all of Elk City, Oklahoma; three daughters: Melody Stephens and her husband Jim of Weatherford, Oklahoma, Dianna Myer and her husband Rick of West Union, West Virginia, Tiffany Black and her husband Jason of Elk City, Oklahoma; fourteen grandchildren; five great grandchildren; two brothers: Melvin Brinkley and his wife Donna, Aubrey Brinkley all of Elk City, Oklahoma; two sisters: Christy Marshall and her husband Donnie of North Richland Hills, Texas, Mary Ruth Thome of Elk City, Oklahoma; and numerous other relatives and friends.

Ray is preceded in death by his parents Rheuben and Mary Brinkley; six brothers: Melrose Brinkley, Hubert Brinkley, Kenneth Brinkley, Troy Brinkley, Oren Brinkley, Dale Brinkley; one sisters Imogene Todd.

**Donnie Ford**

Donnie Lee Ford 73, of Cheyenne, Oklahoma, was born on August 7, 1951, in Dumas, Texas. He is the son of Jessie "Jake" Charles and Opal Faye (King) Ford. He went to walk with his Lord and Savior on Wednesday, January 22, 2025, at Baptist Integris Medical Center in Oklahoma City, surrounded by his loving family.



Donnie was a member of the Cheyenne High School, graduating class of 1969. He received his Bachelor of Business Administration Degree from SWOSU.

Donnie proudly served his country in the United States Marine Corp, achieving the rank of Staff Sergeant from 1970 to 1978 and was honorably discharged.

In 1995 Donnie married, Regena Keahey and shared life with her and her four children for twenty-four years, until Regena's death.

Donnie was the curator at the Cheyenne Pioneer Museum, Cheyenne, Oklahoma. He worked in the telecommunication industry for over forty-one years in numerous places, including Cheyenne, Oklahoma, Boston, Massachusetts, North Carolina, and El Reno, Oklahoma. He also worked for Texas Instruments from 1978 to 1982 in Garland, Texas. Donnie moved to Cheyenne, Oklahoma, in 1982 and has resided there since.

Donnie married his soul mate and best friend Sherri Jill (Jarvis) McDaniel on November 9, 2024, in Las Vegas, Nevada.

He enjoyed hunting, fishing, doing yard work, traveling, and watching old movies and westerns. He had many great adventures, to say the least. Donnie was a member of the First Methodist Church, Cheyenne, Oklahoma, the United Methodist Men's group and the Masonic Lodge, Cheyenne Oklahoma. He treasured spending time with his family and friends and will be missed by all who knew and loved him.

Cherishing his memory is his loving wife Sherri Jill Ford of Cheyenne, Oklahoma; his nine children: Bridget Ford of Skiatook, Oklahoma, Donnie Ford Jr. and his wife Kari of Cheyenne, Oklahoma; Chandra Keahey and her husband David Martinez of Marlow, Oklahoma; Jacie McDaniel and Karl Rigaud of Palmetto, Florida, and Jamie McGee of Newport Beach, California, Marisha McDaniel and her husband, Thomas of Crawford, Oklahoma, Jon Keahey and his wife Kelbi of Erick, Oklahoma, Jon McDaniel of Del City, Oklahoma, Christopher Keahey and his wife Shelby of Sayre, Oklahoma, nineteen grandchildren; one great grandchild; and a host of nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

Donnie is preceded in death by Regena; his parents Jake and Opal Ford; two sisters: Charlene Phillips and Betty Garris; and one brother Jimmy Ford.

<b>AM Snow</b>  H: 27° L: 10° Wednesday	<b>Mostly Sunny</b>  H: 33° L: 21° Thursday	<b>Mostly Cloudy</b>  H: 49° L: 36° Friday	<b>Partly Cloudy</b>  H: 40° L: 15° Saturday	<b>Mostly Sunny</b>  H: 38° L: 22° Sunday	<b>Partly Cloudy</b>  H: 54° L: 36° Monday	<b>Mostly Cloudy</b>  H: 49° L: 24° Tuesday
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*Provided by Heston Wright*

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# HIGHER GROUND

## Black History Month



Jim Morrison

This is Black History Month. Few churches will recognize or even give it a passing thought. In this time of racial strife in our country, we would do well to bring to mind just how tragic our past is and how much we still have to learn about listening, learning and feeling the pain of our black brothers and sisters.

Though there is room for disagreement about methods and actions, those of us who are followers of Jesus Christ must ever be ready to listen and try to understand

Some are concerned about making our country great again. I am not sure it was ever great in God's sight. Past injustices to the Native Americans, and three hundred years of slavery and injustice to African Americans serves to dull our visions of grandeur. Oh, we are a generous people in some respects, but have much to learn about sacrificial giving. We need most to remember or even learn for the first time.

I grew up in the country and hardly knew a person of color.

To my regret, as a young teen-ager, I participated in a black faced minstrel. I thought nothing about how it mocked the culture and ways of the black community.

In the summer of 1964, the year the Civil Acts law was passed, I sold Bibles and Bible reference books door to door in Eastern Alabama. Needless to say, we didn't discuss the segregation issue in our sales talk. I went door to door, and that included the black community. I was very naïve, but I had no issues.

One of the houses I went to was a small dwelling. A young mother was present and as I was welcomed into the house I could not help but notice the flooring; it was a hard packed dirt floor, no wood or carpet. But the other thing I noticed was how neat and clean the house was. There was nothing out of order.

Jack Ogden, one of my former BSU students told me recently of an experience he had when he sold for the same company. He had a black student, Johnny Marshall, on his team.

The first order of business was to find housing. Johnny and a white student reported back that they were unable to find anyone who would rent to them because of Johnny's color. Johnny wound up staying by himself for the summer in a chicken coup-like structure. Later their team would gather for their regular Sunday afternoon meetings in a portion of a local Baptist church. This only lasted a few Sundays until the pastor met them to say that they were no longer welcome to meet there

because of Johnny's color.

It's hard to remember what it must have been like in those days. Our young people, in particular, have little understanding of the anger and hate that spilled forth from those who resisted any change in their lifestyle. Unfortunately, it came from folks of all religious persuasions.

Clergy were afraid to stand up for fear of losing their jobs and cautioned the black community to "have patience" that things would change. They had been waiting one hundred years. Martin Luther King's classic "Letters from a Birmingham Jail" should be a must read for everyone.

The first American to shed blood in the Revolutionary War was a black seaman named Crispus Attucks. Negroes were with Washington in Valley Forge. One of the team members who designed Washington, D.C. was a Negro. Few people, today have read about Booker T. Washington, the founder of Tuskegee Institute. To most people, George Washington Carver was just someone who invented Peanut Butter and know little of his background and brilliant mind. He was invited to work for Henry Ford and Thomas Edison and turned them down to work to benefit his people.

I challenge you to read some of the works of John Perkins, Frederick Douglas, Martin Luther King, Jr. Harriet Tubman, Ben Carson and others. Listen, learn and try to understand.

To comment: [Jnm77@att.net](mailto:Jnm77@att.net)

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# LOCAL AND AREA NEWS



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## CBA Academic Team Takes State Championship



*Provided by April Javorsky /*

The Corn Bible Academy's Academic Team were heralded at the State Championships for Class A schools in western Oklahoma. Pictured, from left: Cameron Moran, Samantha Rother, Luke Zybach, and August Dobrinski.

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**Samantha Tovar**  
CBA Administrative Asst.

Corn Bible Academy (CBA) recently took first place in the Class A State Academic Tournament held at Rose State College in Midwest City on Saturday, February 1st, scoring an average of 230 points per game.

Luke Zybach, Samantha Rother, Daniela Massoumi, Emma Miller, Cameron Moran, Zack Zybach, August Dobrinski, James Rother and Mia Horn were undefeated for the tournament. They played Grandfield first, then Leedey, and narrowly defeated Medford in a very exciting last minute finale. Since the tournament was a double elimination tournament, CBA had to face runner-up Leedey once more to secure the championship.

At the last quarter of the game, CBA had one minute to answer at least five questions correctly to win the game. The category was "inventors and their inventions." Everybody held their breaths as CBA answered the first five questions correctly, to win, but the time was not up so they answered four more correctly for a decisive victory, with a score of 230 to 190.

Coach Joyce Creed, assistant coach Mark Thiessen, and all their fans and parents gave a sigh of relief as they broke into applause.

Coach Creed was ecstatic over the news. "Congratulations, academic team," she said. "We know how many hours of study contributed to this goal. Well done!"

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**ELK CITY / STATION REMODELS** - Elk City continues to grow and modernize its public safety infrastructure, with a new fire station underway and the police station undergoing a significant remodel. City Manager Tom Ivester says work on both facilities is progressing smoothly with both projects expected to be completed on schedule. Both projects are part of a broader effort to invest in the city's infrastructure while ensuring the first responders have the resources they need to serve the community effectively. The estimated completion is Summer 2026.

**CUSTER CO / HUGHES** - A Wheatland woman has been sentenced in Custer County District Court to serve 7 years of a 15-year prison term after pleading no contest to falsely impersonating another to create liability. Forty-five year-old Casee Hughes cloned the Facebook account of Clinton school district teacher Ashley Kelley and sent a racial message from the account in October 2022. As a result of the incident, Kelley received threats and was placed on administrative leave from her job.

**WEATHERFORD / NEW PROJECTS** - Several projects are on the horizon for the city of Weatherford. Mayor Mike Brown outlined a few of those proposed projects during a recent community coffee gathering, focusing on the Oscar Rail building the city bought a few years ago and plans to repurpose it for a fire department substation. He also mentioned plans to partner with the National Guard on some city projects. Additionally, Brown says construction should begin soon on the new HTeaO establishment and says he is hopeful that additional construction will occur on two other vacant lots on main street.

**CLINTON / REGIONAL HOSPITAL VOTE** - Clinton voters overwhelmingly made their voices heard during a vote to sell Clinton Regional Hospital to Rural Hospital Solutions, Inc. Mayor David Berrong weighs in on the large percentage of voters being in favor of moving forward with the potential sale. "There are a lot of people that understand health care situations and the dynamic but also understand how critical our hospital is and the future," said Berrong. "They made their voices heard and it was pretty incredible." Voters approved the proposition with nearly 95% support. With the success of this proposition, the next step is for the two sides to solidify a contract agreement.

**ELK CITY / SUSPECT FOUND** - The suspect who was sought in a double homicide in Greer County earlier this week was found dead in Elk City. The Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation says Ryan David Nalley and Christine Danielle Kirtley were recently discovered deceased at a Granite residence. The name of the suspect has not yet been released by authorities.

**BLAINE CO / DELAYED FATALITY** - The Oklahoma Highway Patrol says an Edmond man has died this week from his injuries at OU Medical Center in Oklahoma City, following a two-vehicle accident January 15th on U.S. 270, 9 miles west of Watonga in Blaine County. OHP says 66-year-old Dale Whybark died from injuries, sustained in the wreck. Troopers say Whybark failed to yield from a stop sign and was struck by a pickup truck.

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**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 Feb. 12** - Lucille Boeckman, Allen Brock, Chris Crabtree, Tammy Deela, Grace Hassen, Chris Kirk, Vicky Meachum, Raegan Nestell, Julia Schantz; **Feb. 13** - Chris Sadler, Randy Ernst, Sonya Judd, Kimberly Maloney, Cole Martin, Deena Outhier, Kimberly Williams, Francis Tarr; **Feb. 14** - Bobbie Lou Allen, John Collier, Stan Eaton, Carol Eaton, Rylee Hart, Joe Merrell, Carol Henderson, Bill Leatherbury, Rod Millard, Ayden Rodriguez, Jeannie Toppah. **Feb. 15** - Edna Digby, Queta Douglas, Shawn Graves, Paisley Henley, Chester Moss, Richie Oaks, Jack Phelps, Carol Rumsey, Kimmy Sawatsky, Debbie Shepherd, Alveta Taylor, Doug Terry, Paul Thiessen, Steve Tinsley, Bobbie Kay Tompkins; **Feb. 16** - Merle Bonner, Larry Brown, Tommy Eastman, Sam Frans, Abby Goodall, Chris Kirk, Josh Kirkland, Rocky Powell, Margaret Rhodes, Andy Speck, David Tautfest, Creek Williams; **Feb. 17** - Lu Vern Chastain, Cyle Cresnoe, Shayla Davis, Larry Jones, Patt Linstead, Bob Maddox, Jake Matthes, Sydney Purintun, Amy Snider, Paula Stafford, Jaylen Williams; **Feb. 18** - Tanea Caldwell, Keith Cox, Glenn Edmondson, Sue Hajny, Beck Johnson, Rance Lax, Connie McClemore, Randi Moynihan, Tara Pope, Glen Reach, Dylan Renna, Alisha Shafer, Becky Uranek, Marty Wandrie, Amber Wilhoil, Judy Wood, John Wyatt.

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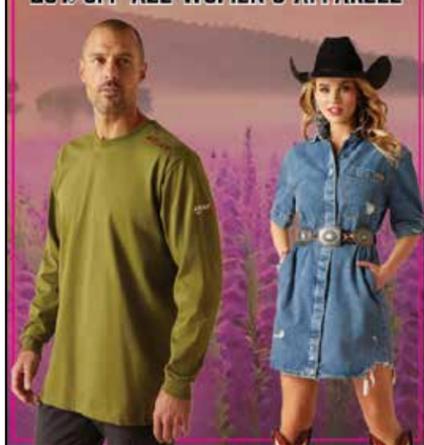
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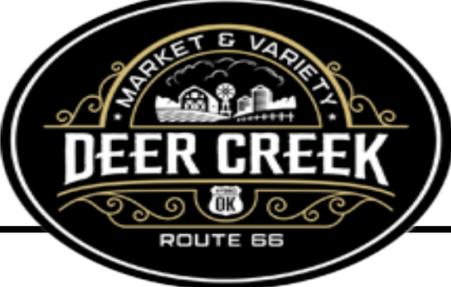
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# Oklahoma History: Clara Luper & Demonstrations Against Doe Doe Park



Courtesy AP Wirephoto

This photo was taken on Saturday, June 18, 1966, and published in the Daily Oklahoman (now The Oklahoman) two days later. An accompanying caption with the header "Demonstrators Want In" read as follows:

**"Demonstrators, who marched and rode 100 miles from Oklahoma City, demanding that Doe Doe Park, a privately owned Lawton amusement park, open steel gates to allow negroes to swim. The park remained closed to them but an agreement to negotiate the dispute ended the march this evening."**



Courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society / YouTube

**Pictured above: A still from the film adaptation of Clara Luper's "Brother President: The Story of Martin Luther King, Jr." Pictured below: Clara Luper greeting the audience in the film's prologue, who adapted her work to film due to the stage play consistently selling out.**



**Chase Wright**  
Staff Writer

The summer of 1966 saw another defining moment in Oklahoma's civil rights movement. On July 4, Clara Luper and 88 activists set out on foot from Oklahoma City to Lawton, determined to break racial barriers at Doe Doe Amusement Park, one of the last remaining segregated public spaces in the state.

Doe Doe Amusement Park had been a centerpiece of Lawton's entertainment scene for years. Opened in August 1945, the park provided a variety of attractions, including a large swimming pool, a wooden skating rink, carnival rides, a small zoo, and food concessions. For many families in Lawton, Doe Doe was the go-to destination for leisure and recreation.

However, like many public and private facilities in the South at the time, it enforced strict segregation policies, barring Black residents from using the swimming pool and other amenities.

Doe Doe's management refused to integrate the pool, maintaining the long-standing practice of keeping Black families from enjoying the same recreation as their white counterparts.

The park's racial restrictions were particularly significant in Lawton due to the presence of Fort Sill, a major U.S. Army base that had long played a role in both military training and local community life. Fort Sill, founded in 1869, had trained thousands of soldiers, including Black service members, who served their country only to return home to a city where they were still treated as second-class citizens. Where they could sacrifice together but not swim together.

The march to Lawton wasn't just about integration—it was also a tribute to Willie J. Cole, a former NAACP Youth Council member who had been killed in Vietnam in early June.

His death added urgency to a movement that had already transformed much of Oklahoma's public life.

Clara Luper, already a veteran of sit-ins and protests, saw the march as a way to bring the injustices of segregation to the forefront.

The march began at the Oklahoma State Capitol, where activists gathered to sing "From Clouds to Rainbows," a song that had become a symbol of hope and perseverance within the movement. Spirits were high as the group took their first steps toward Lawton.

That optimism was tested quickly. Later that evening, rain began to fall, soaking the marchers as they made their way along Highway 62. With no shelter, they pressed on until reaching a Mobil service station, where they laid down and slept on the ground. Morning brought a renewed determination. The group ate a simple breakfast before continuing west along Highway 37. They walked past cars with license plates from all over the country, their presence a spectacle for onlookers. Some drivers honked in support, while others stared in silence.

As the marchers approached Chickasha, the atmosphere shifted. Instead of indifference or hostility, they were met with an incredible display of support.

Black residents had gathered near the halfway point, singing Freedom Songs and cheering as the marchers entered town. Luper, known for her unwavering composure, was so overwhelmed that she hid behind a truck and cried.

The community had prepared for their arrival. Tables of food and cold drinks were waiting, a gift from people who understood the struggle and wanted to help in any way they could. Some had traveled from across the state to show solidarity.

One supporter even brought a swimsuit for Luper, a symbolic gesture that carried the hope that, by the end of the march, she would be able to swim in Doe Doe's pool.

After resting and gathering their strength, the group resumed their journey. The hospitality of Chickasha had lifted their spirits, giving them the resolve to finish what they had started.

By the time the marchers reached the outskirts of Lawton, exhaustion had set in. Yet, despite the toll of the journey, they found even more supporters waiting for them. Some local residents had prepared food and drinks, a continuation of the kindness they had received in Chickasha.

But at the gates of Doe Doe Amusement Park, police were waiting. Although the original group of 88 marchers had grown into the hundreds, law enforcement stood firm. Clara Luper, undeterred, led the group forward.

At this moment, the park's owner, Ben Hutchins Sr., stepped forward. Unlike past confrontations, he signaled a willingness to negotiate. The mayor of Lawton also arrived, bringing news that a newly formed human relations commission was preparing an ordinance that would end segregation in all public spaces within the week. The pressure from the march had forced the issue into immediate action.

The march from Oklahoma City to Lawton was a defining moment in Oklahoma's civil rights history. It was a public demonstration of endurance, sacrifice, and determination that helped accelerate the desegregation process in the state.

Though Doe Doe Amusement Park eventually shut down after years of now shared community joy, the memory of the march endures. Clara Luper's leadership ensured that the fight for justice didn't stop at lunch counters or schools. It extended to parks, pools, and every aspect of public life.

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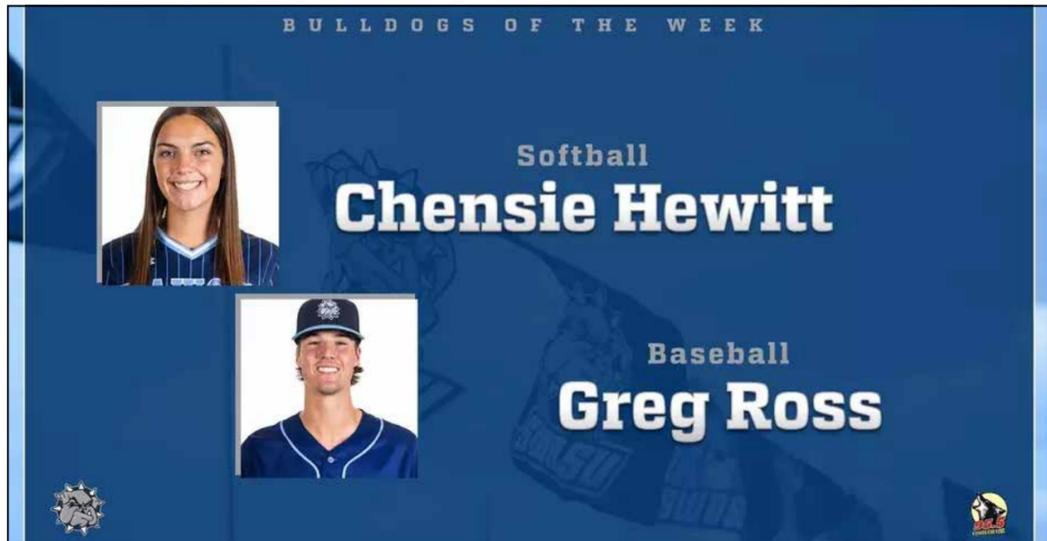


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# Chensie Hewitt and Greg Ross Named as Latest Bulldogs of the Week



**Jon Chidester**  
SWOSU Media Relations

Chensie Hewitt and Greg Ross have been named the latest Bulldogs of the Week, brought to you by Wright Media – the home for SWOSU athletic livestream events and radio broadcasts.

Hewitt (Delaware, Okla.) was the hero against Cameron on Saturday when she delivered a walk-off triple, helping SWOSU Softball finish 3-1 at the Mustang Round-Up in Wichita Falls, Texas. She went 5-for-15 at the plate on the weekend with two triples and a double and had a hit in all four games of the tournament.

Ross (Ontario, Canada) earned two saves in SWOSU Baseball's four-game sweep of Adams State. In both of his appearances, he entered prior to the final inning -- picking up a save in both. He pitched 4.1 innings without allowing a run and did not surrender an extra-base hit.

# Holiday Match to Help Provide 9 Million Meals to Hungry Oklahomans



**Austin Prickett**  
RFBO Marketing Manager

The Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma's annual Holiday Match raised more than \$3 million to help fight hunger in the state. All donations, up to \$350,000, were matched thanks to presenting sponsor APMEX along with support from the Cresap Family Foundation. KOCO 5 News partnered with the Regional Food Bank as the official television partner throughout the match.

"The Holiday Match is crucial to the Regional Food Bank's work each year. We are so thankful for the response the match receives from our generous donors and sponsors," said Stacy Dykstra, chief executive officer of the Regional Food Bank. "The match is even more important to the Oklahomans we serve and it will help provide millions of meals to our partners across 53 counties in central and western Oklahoma."

Donations to the Regional Food Bank were matched from November 15 through January 15.

This is thanks to generous gifts from presenting sponsor APMEX and with support from the Cresap Family Foundation. Overall, the match raised \$3,030,790 to support the Regional Food Bank.

"APMEX is committed to fighting hunger through both volunteer efforts and financial support. We have been impressed with the Regional Food Bank and the various ways they support our community, always putting individuals in need front and center," said Ken Lewis, chief executive officer of APMEX. "We are proud to support their impactful work."

Donations from the Holiday Match will help the Regional Food Bank provide more than 9 million meals to Oklahomans living with hunger. Including Oklahomans like Amy. She shops for food at the Regional Food Bank Food & Resource Center in Moore. Amy is a mother of three and has enjoyed raising her kids on her own. Two of her children are grown, but Amy is happy to still have her 16-year-old daughter home with her.

Amy was recently diagnosed with a terminal illness and is unable to work.

"Knowing that there's places like this that exist are just a miracle to me," Amy says. "I cried the very first time I came here when my trunk was completely full of groceries."

KOCO 5 served as the official television partner of the Holiday Match featured the impact of the Regional Food Bank's programs throughout the match with news coverage and on-air promotion.

"We feel blessed to serve our community through our partnership with the Regional Food Bank. Additionally, I'm thankful to our viewers who never fail to open their hearts and their pocketbooks to help Oklahomans in need," said Brent Hensley, president and general manager of KOCO 5. "This food drive changes lives each year and we love being able to support this good work."

Learn more about the fight against hunger at [rfbo.org](http://rfbo.org).

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# SPORTS

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## Lady Bulldogs Overcome Early Deficit to Take Down Henderson State



**Jon Chidester**  
SWOSU Media Relations

SWOSU Women's Basketball completed the season sweep over Henderson State, overcoming a 14-point deficit to win 64-60.

The Lady Bulldogs trailed 36-28 at halftime, shooting 12-36 (33.3%) from the field and 1-12 (8.3%) from beyond the arc.

After falling behind by 14 points with three minutes remaining in the first half, SWOSU went on an 8-2 run to close the gap.

The final 20 minutes began with a Henderson bucket, followed by a 5-0 run by SWOSU. With less than six minutes left in the third quarter, the Reddies led 42-34.

The third quarter ended with Henderson State leading by one point. After SWOSU managed to pull off a 10-0 run in two minutes, briefly taking a 44-42 lead.

In the fourth quarter, SWOSU faced a 56-50 deficit with five minutes remaining. However, Mason Jones provided the boost the Lady Dawgs needed, going 3-3 in the final minutes with two three-pointers for eight points. This propelled the Lady Dawgs to a 64-60 win over the Reddies, completing the season and weekly sweep.

The final statistics showed SWOSU shooting 23-66 (34.8%) from the field and 6-26 (23.1%) from deep, while converting 12-19 free throws. The Reddies shot 22-58 (37.9%) from the field and 7-23 (30.4%) from beyond the arc.

Jones had 16 points on 7-11 shooting, while collecting a career-high four steals. Layni Zinn had her first double-double with 15 points and 12 rebounds. Averi Zinn contributed 10 points and a team-high five assists.

The win places SWOSU (12-10, 8-8 GAC) sixth in a tightly contested conference race with six games remaining in the regular season.

The Lady Bulldogs will soon host Northwestern, who sits one spot above them in the standings, on Thursday at 5:30 pm inside the PEC where they boast a 7-2 record.

## Bulldogs Basketball Takes Down Reddies with a Strong Second Half



**Jon Chidester**  
SWOSU Media Relations

The SWOSU Men's Basketball team used a 45-point second half to overtake the visiting Reddies in a 78-72 win, splitting the season series between the two teams.

Early on, the Dawgs created a seven-point separation leading 17-10. The Reddies responded with a spurt to take an eight-point lead at 29-21 with five minutes left in the first half. The Dawgs trimmed the deficit to two points after a deep Kray Rogers

three-pointer with just under 30 seconds remaining.

Henderson State controlled their lead for the first 10 minutes of the second half before SWOSU broke through to take a 51-50 lead.

Tucker Shephard scored 13 points in the final 10 minutes, including two three-pointers and seven of eight free throws, to hold off any Henderson State run.

SWOSU's largest lead in the second half came from the final score, a six-point win at 78-72. The Bulldogs scored 45 in the second half, tied for their highest points in any half for conference play.

The Bulldogs shot 23-54 (42.6%) from the field and 5-22 (22.7%) from three-point range. The visiting team shot 25-66 (37.9%) and 5-19 (26.3%) from beyond the arc. SWOSU shot 27-33 (81.8%) from the free-throw line, their highest attempts of the season.

Elijah Williams had a team-high 20 points and nine rebounds (season-high), while Tucker Shephard (15), MJ Warrior (13), and Tobias Roland (11) all scored in double figures.

SWOSU (10-11, 7-9 GAC) went 2-0 this week and is now 8-2 at home. They will host Northwestern on Thursday, Feb. 13th at 7:30 pm, seeking to avenge a loss to the Rangers earlier in the season.



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