

Five Winners Named at the Grand Can Sculpture Competition



from Connections Food & Resource Center

Pitted against over a dozen other organizations and businesses, New Life Church was named 2025's Grand Can Champion for their sculpture depicting a hatching baby dinosaur.



from Connections Food & Resource Center

Lt. General Thomas P. Stafford Elementary's Pea Can Pie received the "People's Choice" award after garnering over 340 likes across various Facebook pages.



from Connections Food & Resource Center

SWOSU College of Pharmacy was awarded "Best Use of Labels" for their Barrel of Monkeys sculpture.



from Connections Food & Resource Center

Hydro Methodist Church created a massive Movie Theater that earned an award for "Best Original Design."



from Connections Food & Resource Center

A joint effort between Xpress Wellness and West Wind Salon & Spa, this pirate ship was given the "Structural Ingenuity" award.

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- Anemoi Tru Controller
 - > Safeguards against battery over-discharge
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 - > Modbus Capable
 - > Cloud Based Control Available



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TANK SIZE: 5 Gallon
WORKING PRESSURE: 150PSI Max
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H: 88° L: 64°
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Friday

Showers

H: 63° L: 51°
Saturday

Showers

H: 69° L: 46°
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Highlights from 2025 SWOSU Rodeo



Holly Wade / WM

The Bulldogs concluded the 52nd edition of SWOSU Rodeo over the weekend where the women finished third and the men finished fourth. Two from the team earned round wins—Levi Parker and Cheyenne VandeStouwe—with Parker taking home the average title as well in his event.



Holly Wade / WM

Brody McAbee got bucked about by his horse while competing in the Saddle Bronc riding competition. He finished in 4th Place with a time score of 80.0



Holly Wade / WM

SWOSU Rodeo Athletes Cadon Remington and Shyann Gates sat atop their horses waiting to assist in the night's performances along with the rest of their team.

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HIGHER GROUND

Religion or Relationship



Jim Morrison

Religion: Positive or negative. Religion is hard to define. One scholar quoted in the article defined religion as “something which defines the sacred and profane or obscene, what is and is not acceptable, to a given society.”

Webster's dictionary has a simpler statement on the subject. It says, religion is “A cause, principle, or system of beliefs held to with ardor and faith.” Another way of saying that is “that which claims ultimate authority and allegiance in one's life, calling for complete loyalty from its adherents.” With that definition, Hitler could be called “religious.” But to call him Christian is about as farfetched as saying he “loved the Jewish people.”

A number of religions are not theistic in nature. Buddhism holds to the teachings of Buddha, who never claimed divinity for himself.

He taught that “suffering is inherent in life and

that one can be liberated from it by mental and moral self-purification.” Hinduism has thousands if not millions of gods to fit every situation and need. Pantheism believes that God is in everything, plants, rocks, the wind, the earth, etc. To say that God is in everything is to say that God is in nothing. While nature is a creation of God, he is above and separated from nature in the sense that he is distinct in His power and personality; he is transcendent or “wholly other” than nature.

James, the half-brother of Jesus, in his letter to his Jewish brethren said, “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after the orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.” James 1:27.

This is at the heart of God. He is personal in the sense that he knows and cares about our pain; he desires fellowship with his children as an earthly father would, only on a deeper and more heartfelt level. His followers are commanded to “look after those” who are in need of our help. This goes beyond “self-fulfillment” being our highest calling as defined by Ayn Rand. Jesus calls us to die to ourselves for the sake of others, and the life-giving forgiveness he offers. One of the darkest periods of the history of the nation of Israel was when it was said, “Each man did what

was right in his own eyes.”

Most religions of the world are man's effort to find God, to do what they can to appease him or gain his approval. Christianity on the other hand is God seeking man. That is why we celebrate Christmas. God came down. He became man. The incarnation of the Deity allow us to see the nature and character of God. The Cross demonstrates his sacrificial love, dying a death that sinful man deserved to die, in order that we through his sacrifice might have a relationship with him that is real and personal. Therefore, Christianity is more a relationship than a religion.

Truly, all expressions of faith have had those who perverted the truths of their faith for their own gain or to justify their evil deeds. But one must go back to the Founder and examine the original documents to determine contradictions or misinterpretations of misguided followers. We must follow the Leader not the would- be followers of the movement. To the pagan Romans who saw Christians stay behind and minister to the victims of the Plague, there was no question as to what was positive or negative. They saw their selfless love and concern and it drew them like a magnet to the Savior who was the source of that love.

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CBA Names Valedictorian/Salutatorian



from Corn Bible Academy

Corn Bible Academy's 2025 valedictorian is Luke Zybach from Elk City. He is the son of Kyle and Shona Zybach. Luke is a National Merit Finalist. Samantha Rother from Corn is the salutatorian. She is the daughter of Travis and Jennifer Rother. Samantha is a National Merit Scholar. Graduation will take place in the school gymnasium at Corn Bible Academy at 22387 E 1070 Rd in Clinton on Thursday, May 8th, at 7:30 pm.

WEST OK / SALES TAXES – Sales taxes for the month of February appear to be down in multiple western Oklahoma communities. The city of Clinton was down 12.7%, collecting just over \$464,000. Elk City also had a decrease of just over 1.5%, collecting \$1.168 million. Weatherford saw an 8.12% decrease, collecting around \$946,000.

MOORE / VIRTUAL DAYS - A new bill aims to tighten regulations on virtual learning days in Oklahoma. Some lawmakers are pushing to ensure students are physically in classrooms unless remote learning is absolutely necessary. The legislation, authored by State Representative Anthony Moore of Clinton, would prevent schools from counting virtual days toward their annual instructional day requirement unless the day is pre-approved for specific reasons like severe weather or building maintenance. “There are school districts that had 43 days or more virtual days last year,” said Moore. “That is not a way to increase the education of our students. That is not a way to increase the outcomes in our state.” The bill has passed the house committee with only two lawmakers voting against it.

ELK CITY / RACETRACK - A bid proposal surrounding the racetrack west of Elk City was a hot topic for the Elk City Commission. City Manager Tom Ivester talked about the outcome, stating Elk City is looking for new bids after the previous operators’ renewal was rejected by the city commission. Ivester says he has been directed to have the lease of the track rebid.

CUSTER CO / BRIC PROGRAM CLOSED FEMA has recently addressed changes to the “Building Infrastructure and Communities Program,” commonly known as BRIC. Custer County Emergency Management Director Mike Galloway recently explained that Custer County heavily relies on BRIC’s Hazard Mitigation plan in case of natural disaster. “Safe rooms are (provided by) a different program than BRIC, but with the BRIC Hazard Mitigation plan, you can ask for up to \$50 million for a major infrastructure mitigation project. The feds have canceled it for this year.” Galloway said he's continuing to knock on doors, working hard to secure grant approval for the construction of saferooms throughout Custer County.

WEATHERFORD / STABBING - Two people were treated and one juvenile was arrested as the result of a house party stabbing on the outskirts of Weatherford. The Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation is not releasing names of those involved since many of them are juveniles. The cause of the incident remains under investigation.

WEATHERFORD / SHOOTING STAR PARK Colton Parkinson, the Executive Director of the Stafford Air & Space Museum in Weatherford was the guest speaker at a recent economic development meeting to provide updates surrounding the museum and Shooting Star Park. Parkinson says the 13,000 square foot expansion is making progress. The Shooting Star Park project is expected to wrap up later this year.


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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 April 16 - Hadley Graybill, Deb Hanson, McHayla Howry, Randy Switzer, Ashley VanDeBurgh, Johnny Wall; **April 17** - Louis Flowers, Shannez Garcia, Carol Godwin, Garnita Hamilton, Atom Hampton, Braden Huff, Alicia Humble, Chad Kimble, Braeton Kimble, Linda Pitt, Lauren Smith; **April 18** - Dayton Altland, Kennedee Cox, Lane Goodman, Dana Green, Gus Hunojosa, Brian Jackson, Kenneth Richardson, Patty Scott, Haley Spradlin, Miranda Toney; **April 19** - Chenchi Alvarez, Dulce Borjas, Brady Boyd, Zipporah Conway, Anna Cobb, Blake Goodman, Ariel Hawthorn, Taylor Neidy; **April 20** - Lyndee Black, J'Lene Holley, Tracey Kelly, Bailey Murray, Ed Neufeld, Jordan Ralston, Barbara Steiner, Debbie Stewart, James Syzmore; **April 21** - McKensy Coit, Mary Dodgen, John Flaming, Donita Folsom, James Gee, Gary Hays, Pat LoVecchio, Amber Morlan, Michelle Ruhl, Pat Strum, Stephanie Tompkins; **April 22** - Christie Belmer, Tad Boone, Adalyn Daniels, Tip Farris, Jarrett Isch, Zach Lowrance, Ashley Nickels, Danielle Schmidt.

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For over 15 years Dr. Randi Day has served the citizens of Western Oklahoma by providing personalized eye care with a hometown touch. And this past May, Dr. Day embarked upon a new journey by opening her own eye care practice, Peek Eye Care, which is committed to providing patients with the quality of life they deserve.

Dr. Day, who was born in Clinton and graduated from Clinton High School as well as Southwestern Oklahoma State University, understands and passionately cares for the people and community she serves. “A lot of times I’ll see patients out and about and we’ve grown so close from just a short experience together that we’ll hug each other and you know, I just feel like it’s growing my personal sense of community.” said Dr. Day.

That community was born from Dr. Day’s diligence and passion for staying on the cutting edge of eye care and helping her patients however she can. Winning the Young OD award in 2015 and having served as President of the Oklahoma Association of Optometric Physicians in 2022, Dr Day certainly knows where the field of Optometry is headed.

Dr. Day at Peek Eye Care is able to provide primary eye care, including routine eye exams for glasses and contacts, as well as other specialized medical eye exams and procedures. “Any medical condition that a patient needs managed and monitored closely, I do that here,” said Dr. Day. Whatever your eye condition may be Dr. Day is prepared to assist you so that you can enjoy your life and your vision to the fullest.

“I just want to thank everybody for allowing me to take care of their eyes. It feels like the whole community is a cheerleader for me and they want to see a hometown girl do well, and it feels great to have that support from my community,” Dr Day said.

Peek Eye Care is located at 818 Frisco Ave in Clinton, OK and you can schedule an appointment with Dr. Day by visiting www.drrandiday.com or clicking or tapping the Peek Eye Care photo on the right.



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SENIOR LIVING

HEALTH SERVICES

Sunrise Adult Respite Center Provides Weekly Activities for Loved Ones

Sunrise Adult Respite Center is a new ministry of the First United Methodist Church in Weatherford, with its purpose being to provide enrichment, interaction, and community to adults with mild to moderate dementia.

Sunrise Respite was started in 2023 by Mrs. Nancy Horton, alongside her husband Rev. Chuck Horton. With this ministry, they hope to provide attendees with an engaging environment for several hours, which also gives a respite for their main caregivers.

“We noticed a need for temporary care we didn’t feel was being met and wanted to provide that service for some of our own members, but also to the community at large,” explained Ministry Director Bailey Hanes.

Hanes, who graduated with a degree in Music Therapy from SWOSU, has a team of dedicated

volunteers who have a keen desire to provide care for this community of people, including Stacy Cummins, Marianne Price, Bridgett Sims, and SWOSU’s Director of Music Therapy, Dr. ChihChen Sophia Lee.

Though the specific activities vary week by week, Sunrise respite advertises arts and crafts, worship, puzzles, games, and more. Dr. Lee also helps supervise music therapy session for participants.

Sunrise Respite takes place on Tuesdays from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. with lunch provided. The weekly cost for each individual participant is \$25.

If you are interested in your loved one joining, you can click, tap, or scan the QR code for a printable forum. If you are interested in volunteering or have any questions, please email SunriseRespite@gmail.com or call the church at (580) 772 - 5565.



The Sunrise Adult Respite Center is a ministry of FUMC of Weatherford that provides enriching activities and a sense of community for adults with dementia.

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SENIOR LIVING

HEALTH SERVICES

King Legal Wants You to be Aware of National Healthcare Decisions Day

As National Healthcare Decisions Day approaches on April 16th, local estate planning attorney Carissa King warns that too many families face healthcare decisions without proper guidance or legal authority. After decades of helping families navigate medical crises, Carissa King has seen firsthand how proper advance planning can mean the difference between family unity and lasting heartache.

"The most difficult conversations I have aren't with families in the hospital – they're with families weeks later, when they say through tears, 'We thought we had more time,'" said Carissa King, founder of King Legal, PLLC. "National Healthcare Decisions Day reminds us that tomorrow isn't guaranteed, but what we can guarantee is that our families have the guidance they need in a time of crisis."

Through years of estate planning practice, Carissa King has observed that while 80% of Americans believe having conversations about healthcare wishes is important, fewer than 33% have actually documented their preferences through advance directives and healthcare powers of attorney.

"In my practice, I've seen how this preparation gap devastates families in crisis," Carissa King explained. "Without proper healthcare documents in place, even simple medical decisions can become sources of intense conflict. I've watched siblings

argue over different conversations they remember having with their parents, and spouses struggle to separate their own emotions from their loved one's actual wishes."

The consequences of not having proper healthcare documents extend beyond family conflict. "Many people don't realize that without a legally designated healthcare agent, medical providers must follow state laws about who can make decisions, even if that person isn't who the patient would have chosen," King noted. "I've seen families forced to seek court approval just to help with basic care decisions – a process that wastes precious time during medical emergencies."

"This isn't just about completing legal documents," King emphasized. "It's about transforming 'I think this is what they wanted' into 'I know this is what they wanted.' That clarity makes all the difference for families during critical moments."

"After helping hundreds of families through this process, I can say with certainty that the best time to discuss and document your healthcare wishes is now, while you're healthy and can think clearly about your choices," King expressed. "It's one of the most loving gifts you can give your family."

King Legal is dedicated to helping families create comprehensive estate plans that protect what matters

Based on decades of experience helping families through healthcare crises, **Carissa King recommends these key steps:**

- Having detailed conversations about healthcare preferences while healthy
 - Choosing the right person to serve as healthcare agent
- Creating legally valid healthcare directives that clearly express wishes
 - Ensuring documents are accessible when needed
- Regularly reviewing and updating healthcare decisions

most. Our office guides families through healthcare planning, asset protection, and legacy preservation, ensuring wishes are honored and families are protected.

For more information or to schedule an interview, contact: King Legal, PLLC at 580-302-5282 or visit our website at www.kinglegalkok.com

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Levi Parker & Shallen Mershon Awarded Latest Bulldogs of the Week

BULLDOGS OF THE WEEK



Rodeo
Levi Parker



Softball
Shallen Mershon

Jon Chidester
SWOSU Media Relations

Levi Parker & Shallen Mershon 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.

Parker (Sayre) and his partner, Kyle Thomas from NEO, won the average in Team Roping over the weekend at the 52nd Annual SWOSU Rodeo. He earned his first round win in the Short Go, claiming the average victory after they were second in the Long Round. The duo clocked times of 6.2 seconds (long) and 6.1 seconds (short) for their second win in the average this year.

Mershon (Sulphur) was the hero on Saturday for Softball after she delivered the game-winning home run in extra innings to help lift the Bulldogs to a 4-3 victory and a road series victory against Ouachita Baptist. She played in both ends of the doubleheader, hitting 3-for-7 with the home run and a double and a pair of both RBIs and runs scored as SWOSU went on to defeat the Tigers twice to claim the pivotal series victory.

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SWOSU Clinches Senior Day Series vs Ouachita

Jon Chidester
SWOSU Media Relations

SWOSU Baseball racked up 18 hits, including four home runs, in a 15-5 run-rule over Ouachita Baptist on Senior Day. The Bulldogs clinched a second consecutive GAC series in the process.

SWOSU fell behind 2-0 in the first inning but answered emphatically in the bottom of the first when they scored eight runs on eight hits. Ty Eastwood spark plugged the inning when he belted his first home run of the season – a three-run home run – which jumped the Dawgs back on top 3-2 just four batters into the inning. From there, SWOSU scored another five runs before Ouachita finally switched pitchers to stop the bleeding.

Starting pitcher Ayden Page, in his first start of the year, threw four straight scoreless innings after the first to settle the Tiger offense down which allowed the Bulldogs to keep all momentum. Page faced resistance throughout his outing but found ways to get out of innings and ultimately earned the win. He finally ran out of gas in the sixth and was relieved by Sebastian

Diaz (1.2 IP) who threw the rest of the way.

All nine starters in the batting lineup had at least one hit on Saturday. Seven had at least two hits, highlighted by Connor Jeffers and Eric Foufoulas who both finished 3-for-5 at the bottom of the order. Gage Gaunt homered in the third inning, extending SWOSU's lead at the time to 10-2.

In the sixth, Campbell Sullivan and Jeffers both hit long balls to answer Ouachita's three-run scoring inning in the top half.

The game reached the run-rule in the bottom of the seventh thanks to RBI doubles from Eastwood and Reece Burke, and it ended in walk-off fashion when Jeffers singled up the middle.

SWOSU now sits 22-17 overall on the year and 11-15 in GAC play. They'll seek revenge over USAO in an upcoming home midweek game before traveling across state lines to face Henderson State in next weekend in continued conference play. 19 seniors played their final game in Weatherford. They were honored prior to Saturday's game.

Fifth Inning the Difference for SWOSU Softball

SWOSU Softball led Ouachita Baptist 4-1 early, but a five-run fifth by the Tigers upended the Bulldogs in an 8-5 game one loss.

The two teams will go at it again on Saturday (April 12) in a doubleheader beginning at noon in Arkansas.

Riley Lusk hit two home runs in the game, helping build SWOSU's early lead. She went yard in the first inning for a three-run bomb before belting a solo home run in the third inning in her next at-bat. Lusk finished 2-for-3 with four RBI and two runs scored.

With the Dawgs up 4-1, Ouachita got a run back in the fourth before grabbing the lead for good in the fifth when they pieced together five consecutive hits. They added one more run for insurance in the sixth.

SWOSU got a run back in their half of the seventh inning and brought the tying run to the plate, but could not continue the rally. The Tigers outhit the Dawgs 11-5. Alexis Taylor suffered the loss in the circle, striking out five without a walk in 4.1 innings of action. She avoided the big inning until the fifth when Ouachita finally gave her trouble. Jaycee McKee threw the final 1.2 innings in relief.

from SWOSU Athletics

SWOSU Baseball senior outfielder Gage Gaunt was named the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association (NCBWA) Central Region Player of the Week, announced Wednesday by the organization.

It's Gaunt's second honor of the week after he earned GAC Player of the Week recognition on Tuesday. He becomes the first Bulldog to earn regional player of the week honors by the NCBWA since Enzo Bonventre was recognized in 2022.

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