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SWOSU's Spring 2025 Graduation Ceremonies Commenced May 9-10



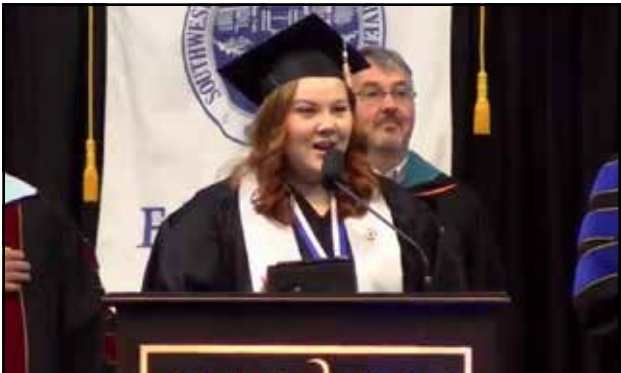
from Wright Media Commencement Livestream

SWOSU President Dr. Diana Lovell acknowledged three distinguished alumni on Saturday. Pictured, from left: Melissa “Missy” Guard, NASA’s International Space Station (ISS) Chief of Staff; Brent Gibson, an accomplished architect and home designer; and the late Rick Skinner, co-founder of the Weatherford Cabinets brand whose award was accepted by his eldest son, Ryan Skinner.




from Wright Media Commencement Livestream

Aside from Dr. Joel Kendall (Academic Affairs VP) and Dr. Diana Lovell (President), opening remarks were also given by SGA President Landry Freeman (left) and Faculty Senate President Jared Edwards (right).



from Wright Media Commencement Livestream

The National Anthem and a special music interlude were performed during all three commencement ceremonies. Pictured chronologically, from left: Kimberly Berkenbile, Madeline Mitchell, and Meghan Stevens.



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H: 86° L: 63°
Saturday

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H: 88° L: 64°
Sunday

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Monday

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Tuesday

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CASA Enrollment Opening, Volunteers Sworn In



from Kelley Schmidt Photography

Honorable Judge Michelle Kirby-Roper of Beckham County swearing in new CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) Volunteers Jeff Johnson of Sayre, Kellie Hurtgam of Elk City, and Keeley Sanders of Sayre. Each volunteer saw the positive influence that CASA Volunteers can make in children's lives in their lives and wanted to advocate for them and be a part of changing their stories.



from Kelley Schmidt Photography

Honorable Stephanie C. Jones of Custer County swearing in new CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) Volunteer Steven Parks of Weatherford. Steven and his wife Kaci (CASA Volunteer) saw the positive influence that CASA Volunteers can make in children's lives in their lives and wanted to advocate for them and be a part of changing their stories.

Tamra Misak
CASA Training Specialist

Volunteers of CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) are concerned citizens who are trained to be the eyes and ears of the juvenile court judge. These everyday heroes interview the children, their families and anyone who has information regarding the family. They read and study all reports pertaining to the families then report their findings to the court and make recommendations concerning the best interest of these children who have been abused and/or neglected.

CASA of Western Oklahoma is dedicated to improving the lives of the children in the Oklahoma foster care system in Beckham, Custer, Dewey, Roger Mills, and Washita Counties. Our specially trained volunteers strive to become a positive, stable influence for children while ensuring they have a voice in the courts and the services they need for a stable future.

Executive Director, Jackie Aaron, stated that in 2023, 69 CASA of Western Oklahoma volunteers served 200 children on 90 cases in our service area. Unfortunately, this number represents only a percentage of the children that are currently in the foster care system in our area. We are seeking individuals that might be interested in becoming a CASA volunteer to help close this gap while serving the needs of these children.

Each CASA volunteer dramatically improves the lives of children experiencing foster care by working with the child until they are placed in a safe, permanent home. CASA volunteers often become the one constant adult presence in the child's life. CASA of Western Oklahoma worked with over 200 children in 2023 and the need remains great for more volunteers.

CASA Volunteers must be 21 years of age, be willing to commit to at least a year of service, participate in a free in-depth training, and pass an OSBI and national background check. CASA volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds and circumstances. Many work full-time along with volunteering as a CASA while others work part-time, are retired, or are college students. The common thread that links all volunteers together is the desire to make a difference in the life of an abused child.

Flex Training offers flexibility and fewer hours in the classroom. Half of the training is online at your own pace and the other half is in-person. This option gives our volunteers more flexibility.

Volunteer as a CASA - Stand up for a child today. Your advocacy gives children in the foster care system a voice. Helping a child begins in your heart. For more information about becoming a CASA or other ways to help, visit www.casawok.org

HIGHER GROUND

As You Pray



Jim Morrison

This past Thursday our nation celebrated a National Day of Prayer. "If ever this nation needed to hear from God, it is the present time." I suppose that statement has been repeated almost every year. The National Day of Prayer Task force sets about to challenge every village, hamlet and church to engage in

specific, intentional prayer.

These series of prayers began in 2009 as an effort to encourage individuals and churches to "effective, fervent prayer" as James describes it in James 5:16. I have observed in my church and I suspect in most churches, prayer has been reduced to praise and thanksgiving with little intercession involved. Certainly, praise and thanksgiving are vital and biblical but as you study the prayers of Paul and others you find that the major content of their prayers are intercessory in nature, calling on God to intercede, to change hearts and lives, and to transform our character to conform to the image of Christ.

There are many examples of earnest prayer in the Scriptures but I would suggest that you study the prayers of the Apostle Paul. These are found in Eph. 1:17-19; 3:16-19; Phil. 1:9-11, and Col. 1:9-12. Note the things that are on Paul's heart. We need to learn to pray thoughtfully and Biblically. Ask yourself the question, "From what I know about God and his desire for us, what does God want to see happen in this situation, event, or person's life?" Then, pray slowly and fervently toward that end. Too often we rush through our prayers as if we need to get on to other things that are more important. Space does not permit a full study off prayer. It is sufficient to say; we are commanded to pray, God desires to hear our prayers, and it is our greatest source of power in order to live a mature and abundant life in Christ.

I read of one couple that reserved 30 minutes each Saturday evening to spend time in prayer for the Sunday morning services. They thought about each facet of the service and the responsibilities of each staff member. They remembered the different age groups, meeting to study the Scriptures and the issues that they would bring to the groups. The senior citizens, the middle age group still working, now loving on their grandchildren, each with differing struggles. The teachers of the little ones, often needing patience and the capacity to love unconditionally were held up in prayer. The youth and young people so easily distracted by their desires and things of the world much in need of divine guidance. And on-and-on.

But the primary concern was for those in the congregation who come with their problems as they listen to the preaching. I haven't heard much crying out for the power of the Holy Spirit to be poured out, that hardened hearts be softened; that repentance would come, lives changed, and a renewed passion for the lost be awakened.

Too often we come not really expecting God to do anything and we get what we expected. Would the day come that our churches would once again be known as praying churches, calling upon God to speak to our hearts, desperately seeking to know Him and see Him act in a powerful way. We need some Daniel 9:17-19 prayers: "Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servants. For your sake, O Lord, look with favor on your desolate sanctuary. Give ear, O God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city (church) that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. O my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name."

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LOCAL AND AREA NEWS


Mike Smith
News Director

Weatherford: Girls Soccer Advance, Track & Field Members Prevail



from Steve Wheeler

For the third year in a row, the Weatherford Lady Eagle soccer team has advanced to the semifinals after defeating the Catoosa Indians 2-0. Their semifinal game was hosted on Tuesday, May 13 at 7pm at Holland Hall. The game was broadcasted live and is available on-demand at wright.media/one.



from Melissa Navarre

Among Weatherford's many accomplishments at the 2025 State Track & Field Meet, Weatherford's Jace Rosenkrantz was named the State Champion for Class 4A. Additionally, Weatherford's Shyla Navarre (pictured) was named the Class 4A State Champion in the girls' pole vault.

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Robin Dean

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ELK CITY / INCENTIVE PACKAGE - Members of the Elk City Commission recently approved an economic incentive package to attract a potential manufacturing business to locate in the Beckham County Community. "It's a manufacturing company that could potentially [bring] up to 50 jobs, but we're looking probably to start off with 15 to 20," said Elk City Manager Tom Ivester, adding the facility will most likely be located "out in the Merritt Rd. area." Ivester says the company has identified some property which they are interested in using as a location. However, it's not confirmed where the prospective company will be located in Elk City.

MOORE / CORPORAL PUNISHMENT - A bill prohibiting the use of corporal punishment on students with disabilities recently passed in the Oklahoma House. "This does not prevent parents from deciding what's best for their kids [and] this does not prevent local control," expressed State Rep. Anthony Moore (R-Clinton), the Speaker Pro Tem and the legislation's author. "It just protects kids with Cerebral Palsy, Asperger's, or other severe conditions...from receiving corporal punishment that they don't understand, that they don't respond to. A parent still has the right to go to a school [to discuss discipline] if that's what they choose." The bill now moves to the desk of Governor Kevin Stitt for his consideration of signing it into law.

CLINTON / FRIENDS ON FRISCO - Friends on Frisco is making its way back to Clinton this summer says Clinton Chamber of Commerce President Julie Caldwell. The events will be held on June 12th and August 14th in downtown Clinton from 6PM to 9PM. "We're only going to do two [events] this year, so it'll be June 12th and August the 14th and now," explained Caldwell. "We'll have live music and lots of vendors and evening shopping." Caldwell expressed that these events offer another way to bring the community together under the summer sky.

WEATHERFORD / GPF YMCA UPDATE - Weatherford Mayor Mike Brown revealed the city of Weatherford will learn more about the drawings surrounding the new community center in Rader Park. Kelly Kay of the greater Oklahoma City YMCA will be the guest speaker at the next Weatherford Economic Development Foundation meeting. There, he will provide drawings and pictures of what the facility should look like at that meeting. Brown reported that there are some challenges surrounding the project. The estimated 60,000 square foot facility was originally quoted to cost \$25 million. However, U.S. tariffs are expected to raise the price by a currently unknown amount. Current estimates could raise the price to upwards of \$35 to \$40 million. Brown stated he expects the project to go out to bid in the last quarter of 2025, with construction beginning some time in 2026.


CLINTON / CREDIT APPROVAL - The Clinton City Council and the Clinton Public Works Authority each approved a \$1 million line of credit to the Clinton Hospital Authority. The credit will provide critical financial support as Clinton Regional Hospital transitions to new ownership under Rural Hospital Solutions. City Manager Robert Johnston addressed the funds at a recent city council meeting. "As part of this request by the hospital, [we have] moved the deadline for the asset purchase agreement from November 7th, 2025, up to no later July 31st, 2026, to keep going forward," said Johnston. "In order to get us to the finish line, the request has been that we issue this last line of credit between the two of them, totaling \$2 million." Johnston says the credit lines are a temporary, but necessary, step to keep the hospital afloat to ensure uninterrupted healthcare services as the sale process continues.

WEATHERFORD / MAYORAL CANDIDATES Weatherford Mayor Mike Brown announced he doesn't plan to seek re-election at the end of his current term. In a recent interview with Wright Wradio, Brown discussed who might be a viable candidate for the job. Brown's archetype for a suitable successor is someone who's concerned about the future of Weatherford, but not to the point that they overload the city with new projects. "I think that people have to make sure that their work schedule [is flexible]," added Brown. "The mayor's job is a little bit different in that they classify it as "full time," even though I'm not there in the Office from 8 to 5." Brad Yoder, who told Wright Wradio that he is considering running for Weatherford mayor, has also been floated as a potential candidate.

CUSTER COUNTY / BUTLER SPEEDING - Law enforcement in Custer County warned motorists not to speed in the Butler area. The Custer County Sheriff's Office has already begun to crack down on speeding near the oil fields. Sheriff Dan Day emphasized that speeding will not be tolerated, and citations will continue to be issued. Semi-trucks travelling on country roads have especially caught the ire of the office. "A couple of them could very well lose their license," expressed Day. "There's a lot of oil field activity out there, and there's a lot of semis [that are] just going too fast." Day adds that just last week one of his deputies pulled over a semi-truck clocked at 90 mph. He says the department is taking this seriously and drivers should consider this their warning.

WEATHERFORD / CUSTER STREET BRIDGE The Weatherford City Commission recently approved a bid from Central Bridge Company for just over \$522,000 for the Custer Street Bridge Rehabilitation Project. Weatherford Mayor Mike Brown announced the city has remaining ARPA funds to also help pay for the project.

WEEKLY SHOUTOUTS!



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Happy Birthday Wishes for May 14 - Martha Buckner, Trey Chervenka, Michelle Hamlin, Melvin Lancaster, Nolan Louthan, Zitlalli Olguin, Randy O'Connell, Margaret Pebley, C.B. Perkins, Whitini Root, Tony Stobbe, Megan Ulrich; **May 15** - Taylor Boyd, Whitney Roper, Anthony Sperle; **May 16** - Ray Bagby, Chris Gregston, Buddy Holman, Katrina Howry, Carrin Klien, Jay Moore, Beth Perkins; **May 17** - Hannah Austin, Robert Crain, Deanna Davis, Andy Gonzales, Monty McCrary, Riane McNaught, Peggy Sellers, Joselyn Sperle, Susan Thomas, Elijah Yoder; **May 18** - Jenisa Atha, Tina Magpie, Florence Miller, Isaac Rhoads, Sharon Streck, Robert Toahy; **May 19** - Michael Bowman, Carol Christensem, Miranda Sebastian, Cheryl Wedel, Hath Whitefield, Noel Williams; **May 20** - Jeremy Biswell, Marlen Lehman, Addison Miller, Garrett Payne, LuCretia Schapansky, Chris Tackitt, Alexis Talamante, Elsie Thomason.

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Spam Luncheon Meat, 12oz. (All Varieties)		2 for \$7.00	Red Seedless Grapes	\$1.99 lb.
Food Club Peanut Butter, 16oz.		\$1.89	Yellow Vadalia Onions	\$0.99 lb.
Old Hearth Wheat Hamburger or Hot Dog Buns, 8ct.		2 for \$4.00	Baby Potatoes, 1.5lb. (Asst. Varieties)	\$2.99
Duncan Hines Cake Mixes (All Varieties)		\$2.19	Green Asparagus	\$3.99 lb.
Food Club Baking Chips (All Varieties)		2 for \$7.00	Broccoli	\$1.99
Hunts Snack Pack Puddings, 4 pack		2 for \$3.00	Frozen	
Kraft Miracle Whip or Mayo, 30oz.		\$6.49	Mrs. Smith Flaky Crust Pies (All Varieties)	\$5.98
Kraft Salad Dressings, 16oz. (All Varieties)		2 for \$7.00	Bella Gardens Fruit (Asst Varieties)	\$2.99
Food Club Ketchup, 20oz.		2 for \$3.00	Cravn Ice Cream, 48oz. (All Varieties)	\$2.99
Vlasic Pickles, 16oz. (Asst Varieties)		\$3.99	Food Club Texas Toast or Bread Sticks	\$2.99
Cheerios Protein Cereals, 11.2oz.		\$5.59	Mr. Dell's Hashbrowns, 24-32oz. (All Varieties)	\$3.99
Hamburgar Helper (All Varieties)		2 for \$3.00	Meat	
Idaho Instant Potatoes, 4oz. (All Varieties)		2 for \$3.00	Boneless Ribeye Steak	\$17.99 lb.
Hunts Spaghetti Sauce, 24oz. (All Varieties)		2 for \$4.00	Boneless Top Sirloin Steak	\$8.59 lb.
American Beauty Pasta, 16oz. (All Varieties)		2 for \$3.00	Boneless Pork Loin Roast	\$2.99 lb.
On The Border Fiesta Tortilla Chips, 15oz.		2 for \$6.00	Pork Spare Ribs	\$2.99 lb.
Food Club Brown or Powdered Sugar, 2 lb. bag		2 for \$4.00	Pilgrims Pride Boneless Chicken Breast	\$3.39 lb.
Dairy			Circle S German Sausage, 2 lb. pkg. (All Varieties)	\$8.79
Pillsbury Biscuits (All Varieties)	\$2.78		Opas Jalapeno & Cheddar Summer Sausage, 16oz. pkg.	\$5.99
Food Club Real Cream Topping, 6.5oz.	\$1.98		Dry Grocery	
Simply Potatoes (All Varieties)	2 for \$5.00		Charmin, 6 mega rolls	\$5.99
Country Crock Spread, 15oz. (All Varieties)	\$3.49		Dawn Dish Spray, 16oz.	\$4.99
Food Club Orange Juice, 52oz	\$3.99		Kingsford Charcoal, 16 lb. bag (All Varieties)	\$12.99
Food Club Half and Half, pint	2 for \$3.00			
Food Club Heavy Whipping Cream, 16oz.	\$2.99			



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Hydro-Eakly Attends Annual FFA Convention



On May 7, Hydro-Eakly’s Future Farmers of America (FFA) students completed the 99th Annual Oklahoma State FFA Convention with a huge success.


That day, these future farmers were awarded over \$45,000.00 in scholarships and cash awards. Congratulations to these students on their hard work in achieving their goals!

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2025 SWOSU Dobson Golf Classic Raises More Than \$110,000 for SWOSU Athletics Association



Jon Chidester
SWOSU Media Relations

Southwestern Oklahoma State University (SWOSU) alumni and friends were welcomed at the prestigious Oak Tree National Golf Course in Edmond on April 14, where 25 teams played in the Dobson Bulldog Classic.

Established in 2015, the sold-out tournament raised \$110,860 for the SWOSU Men's and Women's golf teams and other SWOSU athletic programs. This popular philanthropic event was initiated by Everett Dobson (SWOSU Class of 1981) of Edmond in partnership with the SWOSU Athletic Association.

Dobson was inducted into the SWOSU Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame in 1999. He has endowed the Everett Dobson Chairs in Business, Marketing, Management, and Finance in the Everett Dobson College of Business & Technology at SWOSU and provided the private investment necessary to construct the Everett Dobson Golf Training Facility on SWOSU's Weatherford campus. In 2015, Dobson was inducted into the SWOSU Presidential Order of Merit in recognition of his 25 years of service on the SWOSU Foundation, Inc. Board of Trustees, where he served as Investment Committee Chairman.

In addition to 44 hole sponsors, six generous major sponsors made the 2025 Dobson Classic possible (listed above).

Title Sponsor: Dobson Fiber

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Gift Sponsor: PC Promotions

Auctioneer: Corky Heard (Heard Auction)

We cannot say 'thank you' enough to the many businesses and individuals who made the 2025 Everett Dobson Golf Tournament such a success," said SWOSU Athletic Director Todd Helton. "Our SWOSU athletic programs are fortunate to have such a generous community of support, which allows all our student-athletes to perform at their very best."

The SWOSU Dobson Bulldog Classic is hosted by the SWOSU Foundation, Inc. Reservations for the 2026 tournament can be made now by contacting Aaron Jeffreys at 580-774-3122 or Aaron.Jeffreys@swosu.edu. To contribute to SWOSU Athletics, visit www.GivetoSWOSUAthletics.com or call 580-774-3267.

SWOSU's Drew Dodgion Qualifies for Nationals



Jon Chidester
SWOSU Media Relations

SWOSU Women's Golf wrapped up its season with a seventh-place finish at the NCAA Central Region Championships, competing against 18 qualifying teams from three conferences. While the team's season has ended, senior Drew Dodgion's journey continues after she tied for fourth individually.

The top four teams and two individuals not on qualifying teams advanced to the NCAA Championships. Dodgion's performance allowed her to slide into one of those two individual spots.

The senior's strong opening round on Monday helped carry her. She shot a two-under 68, thanks to six birdies, and followed up with a collective +5 over her next two rounds to maintain solid positioning on the leaderboard throughout. She finished the tournament with nine birdies, tied for second-most in the field.

Freya Sala was two shots back of Dodgion, tying for ninth overall. Sala's best round came in Monday's second round, where she shot even par 70 with three of her five tournament birdies.

She had success playing even, recording 39 pars through three rounds, tied for third-most among golfers. Sala also finished collective -4 on the nine par-5s she played.

Ashlyn Acosta edged Sala in birdies with six and had a strong showing in the second round with a 72, where she was even on the back nine. Her overall tournament score was +12.

London Wilson's 72 (+2) in the second round gave SWOSU a significant scoring boost. She sandwiched it between an 80 and 81, finishing +23 overall. Four of her five birdies came in round two. Lucia Rivas rounded out the team with scores of 81-79-84.

SWOSU wraps up another successful season, highlighted by winning the Diffie Ford/Lincoln Invitational in March and qualifying for its 11th regional tournament in 12 seasons. Dodgion becomes the second Lady Bulldog to compete at nationals as an individual and will make her second national tournament appearance after the team advanced in 2024.

The national tournament will take place May 13-17 in Boulder City, Nevada, at Boulder Creek Golf Course



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