

Southwest Playhouse Production of *Oklahoma!* a Spectacle to Behold



Cast members of the Clinton Southwest Playhouse's Production of *Oklahoma!* rehearse a dance number on Amphitheater stage at McClain Rogers Park in Clinton, OK.

Provided



Provided

Gathering an ensemble cast of nearly 50 Western Oklahomans, this production will honor the Route 66 Centennial and will be an experience patrons will not soon forget.

Tell your friends! Tell your family! *Oklahoma!* The famed Broadway musical written by Rodgers and Hammerstein is coming to the Amphitheater at McClain Rogers Park in Clinton, OK. Running for three weekends in late September and early October, the production is being promoted by the Southwest Playhouse as a "once-in-a-generation theatrical event."

The production is a partnership with the longstanding Southwest Playhouse, the City of Clinton, the Clinton Chamber of Commerce and several non-profits to honor the Route 66 centennial, which runs just behind the historic amphitheater. This will also mark the first time the play has been performed outside at the Amphitheater in McClain Rogers Park in over 35 years.

This however, will not be an ordinary production of *Oklahoma!* The production team is coordinating several experiences that will accompany the musical production, such as a Chuckwagon serving whole hog meals to patrons. Preceding the performance, the production team is also offering stage coach rides, a live animal petting zoo with period accurate animals, special performances by a glow-in-the-dark roping specialist, a live orchestra, as well as several vendors. Spectacle is the best word to describe what will be happening at the Amphitheater in September and October.

"There's something patriotic about *Oklahoma!* that makes it a spectacular achievement," said Marji Anderson, the Director for this production of *Oklahoma!*, "and we have gathered together a group of actors, about 50 of them, who are excited about the journey they're on to sing and do *Oklahoma!* in the amphitheater."

Marji has teamed with Music Director and frequent collaborator Lori Park as well as Choreographer Gina Jones and Orchestra Director Briana Bull to get their huge ensemble cast in shape for their fall performances. And while the huge ensemble cast is rehearsing their musical and dance numbers a crew of carpenters is fast at work building sets.

See *OKLAHOMA!* Page 3



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OKLAHOMA! This will mark Marji's twelfth production of *Oklahoma!* and at this point she has become an expert on the production.

"Oklahoma, Nebraska, Texas and Kansas were all settled by farmers and by cowmen," said Marji "[they] came to the Midwest, [they] grew [their] families out of red dirt, red clay [...] that's how they made their living and they grew communities out of the essence of coming here to a brand new place [...] and if you had a dream, you could come to Oklahoma and do that, and that's what the show is about."

Opening night for *Oklahoma!* is scheduled for Friday, September 18th with performances occurring on September 19th - 20th, September 25th - 27th, and October 2nd - 4th.

You can purchase advance tickets for each performance as well as the chuckwagon dinner by visiting www.southwestplayhouse.com. Tickets for each performance are \$25.

"To the people that would never darken the door of a theater," said Marji Anderson, the director of the musical, "the songs are so memorable in this musical, you'll leave singing them. You'll remember them in your mind for days."

RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S

Oklahoma!

Music by
RICHARD RODGERS

Book and Lyrics by
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Original Choreography by Agnes De Mille

LIVE AT THE MCLAIN ROGERS AMPHITHEATER



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Heston Wright / WM

Ken Ellinger recently hosted a free one-day tennis camp in Weatherford. Ken is a Weatherford native who has worked with OU and Nike tennis clubs. Pictured, from left: Ken Ellinger, James Billingsly, Ethan Nguyen, Ava Pierce, Dylan Pool, Mikaela Mitchell, Regan Davis, Liam Funkhouser, Oliver Waldrop, Aiden Foust, Nathan Nguyen, Emma Nguyen, Emme Guerrero, Berkley Allard, Quinn Allard, Kerri Allard, and Matthew Kutch.



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LOCAL AND AREA NEWS



Mike Smith
News Director

Shooting Star Park Officially Opens at Stafford Air & Space Museum



Weatherford artist Bobby Marsee (pictured, left) contributed four murals for the Stafford Air & Space Museum's newly unveiled Shooting Star Park. He is pictured with Karin Stafford, daughter of Gen. Thomas P. Stafford.

Shooting Star Park, located at the Stafford Air and Space Museum in Weatherford, officially opened to the public last Saturday. Features at the park include a splash pad, rocket garden, playground, and many more activities. The new park hours are from sunrise to sunset.

In a dedication ceremony held Friday evening, Museum Director Julie Lenius welcomed guests to the grand opening of the park. "Tonight is a celebration of vision, generosity, partnership, and community," Lenius expressed. "More than anything, it's a celebration of the people who made this incredible place possible and the families who will enjoy it for generations to come."

"Weatherford is going to become a destination, because they're going to come to this park and come to this museum and tell other people about it," Mayor Mike Brown said at the event. "[This] is just the beginning of something really big in this community. We're just thankful for all those that have been a part of this that continue to strive to make Weatherford better."

Provided by Bobby Marsee

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CUSTER CO / BRYAN - A former actor on the sitcom "Home Improvement" who is charged in Custer County District Court with 2nd felony DUI is scheduled to appear via video conference for his next court date. 44-year-old Zackery Bryan will appear for a plea and sentencing in his case August 3rd. Bryan was allegedly found sleeping in his vehicle by an Oklahoma Highway Patrol trooper in October 2024 after pulling off the side of a Custer County Road. After the trooper left the scene, Bryan then got behind the wheel and drove north away from the trooper, who then conducted a traffic stop and arrested Bryan for DUI.

WEATHERFORD / HOSEY - The Weatherford Police Department says it is continuing to investigate alleged terroristic threats made in Facebook posts by Shelby Hosey. Police say officers contacted Hosey on July 19 after learning about the posts. Officials say he cooperated with officers and voluntarily went to a facility to receive assistance. After the posts began circulating widely online, detectives executed a search warrant at Hosey's home. Investigators recovered the weapon shown in the Facebook posts and determined it was a BB gun, not a firearm. Police say several other BB guns were also found, but no functioning firearms were located. The case will now be presented to the Custer County District Attorney's Office to determine whether criminal charges should be filed. Police are asking anyone with additional information to contact the Weatherford Police Department.

HINTON / GREAT PLAINS CC STABBING Officials with the Department of Corrections say an inmate-on-inmate assault occurred over the weekend at the Great Plains Correction Center in Hinton. The incident resulted in one inmate being transported and treated for injuries received during the assault. It is currently under investigation by the department of corrections office of inspector general.

ELK CITY / PS FINANCES - Elk City Public Schools are in good financial shape as the district moves into a new fiscal year. Superintendent Mike Sparks shared that the district had nearly a \$4.7 million carryover from the previous year. "We've been very fortunate, we've done a good job with our funds, and we've been able to do a lot of good things," Sparks expressed. "Our enrollment has stayed pretty steady. That is something that has helped us. I also think we did a pretty good job, especially during COVID. Some people, I think, got a lot of extra staff and some different things, and we've just done a good job with our money, I believe." Sparks added that the district is forecasted to maintain a healthy budget for 2026-27.

WEATHERFORD / HEARTLAND MUSEUM Attendance numbers have recently hiked at the Heartland of America Museum in Weatherford. "I did a comparison report on the first quarter of the year, and we have tripled in visitation and overall revenue," Director Pat Smith shared during a recent community coffee event in Weatherford. "That's a plus for me to see that happen, because I really would like to help the museum and help it move forward."

HINTON / PS SCREEN TIME - Hinton Public Schools Superintendent John Hancock recently shared his thoughts on legislation to limit screen time in Oklahoma schools to one hour per day for grades Pre-K through Grade 5. "I think it's a positive aspect for our legislators. So much screen time has kind of cut down on our students' learning. There's even been, it's crazy to think, national studies on this, that from every generation for the longest time, the capacity of thinking and creations and so forth, we were growing. Once we implemented technology in the school, we've kind of been on a decline in that thinking and so forth." Hancock added that he supports the use of pen and paper to help students learn rather than electronics.

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Happy Birthday Wishes! **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; **July 31** – Carol Sue Almon, Billy Gentry, Robbie Gilbert, Jerry Hardin, Loyd Lasley, Russell Lee, Sherri Martin, Kassidi Rice, Rosa Sinclair, Eric Stoney, Ray Sutton, Daniel Tallbear, Barbie Trebay, Bryce Waldrop; **August 1** – Todd Brunner, Jennifer DeGarmo, Ally Dobbs, McKenna Gentry, Joey Lacy, Beranna Leon, Jamie Moody, Larry Joe Scott, Christian Sharp, Randy Sloan; **August 2** – Dena Bass, Cashlyn Hamons, Chance Hanson, Lana Kible, Winona Madison, Bobby Ringler, Darrell Stehr; **August 3** - Judy Armstrong, Sammy Dudgeon, Mercedes Estes, Nicole Horn, Lorrie Howry, Koby King, Allen Lackey, David Lasley, Debrah Musick, Doris Payne, Deirik Riley; **August 4** - Dustin Devine, Shanda O'Neile, Kim Renison, Jacoby Smith.

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Food Club Cottage Cheese, 24oz.	\$3.48	Charking Wood Pellets, 20 lb. (All Varieties)	\$6.99
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Food Club Heavy Whipping Cream, 32oz.	\$4.39		
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H: 102° L: 75°
Wednesday

Partly Cloudy

H: 101° L: 78°
Thursday

Mostly Sunny

H: 101° L: 72°
Friday

Sunny

H: 102° L: 78°
Saturday

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H: 99° L: 72°
Tuesday

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NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO AMEND
EXISTING PERMIT TO USE GROUNDWATER
PERMIT NUMBER 2007-523B

Notice is hereby given that Jack Mitchell and Karmita Jewell Warkentin, 9384 North 2420 Road, Hydro, OK 73048, under the authority given in Oklahoma State Law, Title 82 § 1020.7, has filed an application with the Oklahoma Water Resources Board, pursuant to Board rules, to amend groundwater permit #2007-523B to withdraw and use an additional 49.73 acre-feet of groundwater for a total of 96.44 acrefeet of groundwater per calendar year.

Further, the application requests to remove the industrial use (petroleum refining) and add irrigation (grass and grazing crops) and sale for mining (primary completion of oil and gas wells). The total land dedicated to the permit is 48.22 acres along with three (3) wells located as follows: one (1) in the SE NE NW and two (2) in the NE NW NW of Section 14, T14N, R14WIM, Custer County. All other aspects of the permit remain the

same, viewable at oklahoma.gov/owrb. Wells and dedicated lands are located over the Rush Springs Sandstone groundwater basin. Use of groundwater is governed by Sections 1020.1 and following of Title 82 of the Oklahoma Statutes and rules of the Board, Oklahoma Administrative Code (OAC), Title 785, Chapters 4 & 30.

Protests to the application must be in writing and received by the Board at the address listed below and by the applicant at the address listed above no later than August 31, 2026, and contain the following: (1) name, address, and telephone number of the interested person; (2) the particular application number to which the protest relates; (3) specific information to show how approval of the application proposed may directly and adversely affect legally protected interests of the person filing the protest; and (4) a statement of the relief sought by the interested person.

A person who sends a letter containing only a general objection or comment will not be deemed to be a party, but the letter will be made part of the permanent record. A hearing on this application will be scheduled and the applicant and protestant(s) shall be advised of the hearing date upon receipt of a proper protest. Protesting parties or their representatives must appear at the hearing and present the protest in order that it may be considered. Hearings are governed by Section 309 of Title 75 and Section 1020.8 of the Title 82 of the Oklahoma Statutes, and the rules of the Board, OAC Title 785, Chapters 4 and 30. If you have any questions, please contact Sharon Robinson at (405) 530-8800. Board mailing address: Oklahoma Water Resources Board, Water Rights Administration Division, 3800 N. Classen Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73118-2881. Board fax number: (405) 530-8900.

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WORKlahoma Returns to Clinton October 7th

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Job Fair



Work Ready Oklahoma has announced its next WORKlahoma Job Fair will take place at Clinton’s Frisco Conference Center (101 S 4th Street) on Wednesday, October 7, from 11AM - 2PM.

WORKlahoma seeks to prepare job seekers by giving them some essentials for the job market, including free headshots and resume assistance. The event will also provide an “application station,” stocked with applications for available jobs in the areas, as well as on-the-spot interviews with businesses in attendance.

This event isn’t just for those seeking employment, but also for local business owners; This opportunity will connect employers with the talent they need to

grow their business. This includes complimentary booth setup, lunchtime catering, and direct access to a room full of active, local job seekers.

“This is your chance to meet enthusiastic, local job seekers face-to-face and build your team,” said Shandi Coleman, the Program Manager for Work Ready Oklahoma. “We want to make this event as easy and productive for you as possible.”

To register, please scan the QR Code above or visit form.jotform.com/261936125163153. The event is free to the job-seeking public. For more information, please email Shandi Coleman at shandi@wro-weatherford.com or visit their main website at WorkReadyOklahoma.com



Lucky Star Casino of Elk City’s groundbreaking marked a new development milestone in western Oklahoma. Pictured, from left: Elk City Mayor Micah Kilhoffer, Cheyenne-Arapaho Gov. Reggie Wassana, and Cheyenne-Arapaho Lt. Gov. Hershel Gorham.



First Baptist Church of Weatherford’s 6th grade VBS recently volunteered to help out at the Connections Food & Resource Center of Weatherford. They brought all of their energy to help us serve our neighbors, get us caught up on stocking and warehouse work.

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SWOSU Volleyball Earns Third Straight AVCA Team Academic Award



Jon Chidester
SWOSU Media Relations

The SWOSU volleyball team has earned the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) Team Academic Award for the third consecutive year, the organization announced Thursday. In addition to the team academic award, the Bulldogs also landed on the AVCA Team Academic Honor Roll for the second straight year, placing among the top 20% of NCAA Division II programs in team GPA.

The AVCA Team Academic Award recognizes collegiate and high school volleyball teams that maintain a year-long grade-point average of 3.30 or higher on a 4.0 scale. SWOSU surpassed that mark with a 3.83 team GPA during the 2025-26 academic year, improving for the third consecutive season after posting a 3.81 GPA in 2024-25.

“To be recognized with the AVCA Team Academic Award for a third straight year and earn a spot on the honor roll again is a great reflection of our team's commitment in the classroom,” Head Coach Josh Collins said. “Our student-athletes continue to set a high standard by pursuing excellence both academically and athletically, and I'm incredibly proud of the work they've put in.”

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Bulldog Football Picked 7th in Pre-Season Poll



Jon Chidester
SWOSU Media Relations

SWOSU Football was picked to finish seventh in the 2026 Great American Conference Preseason Coaches' Poll, released Tuesday in conjunction with GAC Football Media Day. Defending conference champion Harding was the unanimous preseason favorite, receiving all 11 first-place votes after winning its third consecutive GAC title and advancing to the NCAA Division II National Championship Game last season. Ouachita Baptist was picked second, followed by Southern Arkansas and Henderson State.

The Bulldogs finished just one point behind East Central in the poll as the highest-ranked Oklahoma school. SWOSU went a perfect 5-0 against in-state opponents during the 2025 season.

Head coach Andrew Rice enters his third season leading the Bulldogs after guiding SWOSU to its first winning campaign since 2015 a year ago. The Bulldogs finished 6-5, set a new program record with 2,347 rushing yards, and placed a school-record 12 players on All-GAC teams.

Seventeen starters return for the Bulldogs in 2026, including First Team All-GAC wide receiver Baylor Nash; Second Team selections Red Martel (running back), John-Paul Louie (offensive line), and Ethan McBee (kicker); and Third Team honorees Braydn Henry (offensive line) and Shane Armstrong (linebacker).

The 2026 season opens Thursday, Sept. 3, with a road matchup at Arkansas Tech before the Bulldogs host Harding in their home opener on Thursday, Sept. 10. SWOSU will play six home games this season, including Homecoming against Arkansas-Monticello on Oct. 31 and SWOSU Saturday against Northwestern Oklahoma State on Nov. 14.

Day two of GAC Football Media Day continues Wednesday, July 22, at FireLake Arena, with SWOSU scheduled to appear at 2 p.m.

Head coach Andrew Rice will be joined by Baylor Nash and Wyatt Rohmer. GAC Commissioner Will Prewitt will open the day's coverage at 12:45 p.m., and the event will be streamed live on the GAC's YouTube channel.

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