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## A WESTERN SWING DOCUMENTARY



### Tumbleweed Smith

When Mike Markwardt of Fort Worth was a student at Baylor, he had the nickname Cricket because he could make the sound of a cricket. As a youngster he sang with various groups but he put his singing talent to rest and had a career in the import business, dealing with dozens of foreign countries.

Tumbleweed Smith After he semi-retired, he revived his interest in music, especially Western Swing, the Official Music of Texas. For the last five years he has been working on a documentary film on it. "We've got to single out this genre as a stand-alone type of music," says Mike. "It is not country music. It kind of gets lost between jazz and country. It's really a mix of several genres of music. Adolf Hofner had a band called Texans and had Czech-German polka mixed with Western Swing. Cliff Brenner in Houston had a wonderful Cajun style influence on Western Swing so did Johnny Gimbel, probably the greatest fiddler of all time. Tejano had a little influence. Bob Wills, the king of Western Swing cut a number of Mexican songs. His San Antonio Rose is a classic.

"Western Swing is much more sophisticated than people give it credit. It has jazz chords. It's not just three chords in a simple song like most Nashville songs are. You've got to be an elevated musician to play Western Swing. You've also got to have a lot of feeing and be able to improvise. Western Swing is all about improvisation. Bob Wills would holler out 'take it away, Leon' or 'come in here, Alvin' and the musicians would play a solo, giving their own interpretation of the tune. Bob would always name his musicians before they went into a jazz improvisation solo. Where did he get that? Probably from Louis Armstrong. Back in the 1920s he pioneered calling out musicians' names. We owe a lot to the African Americans that developed jazz and blues. Blues is a big part of Western Swing."

Mike started a non-profit and named it COWTOWN: THE BIRTHPLACE OF WESTERN SWING.

"Bob Wills came from Turkey, Texas to the big city of Fort Worth and there he met Milton Brown. Together they formed The Light Crust Doughboys and that's how the music began." Mike hired a group of trained professionals to do the movie. Mike did extensive travel, doing 29 interviews himself. Much of the film is from archives, showing the early days of Western Swing. The 90-minute movie has had some showings in Fort Worth, Lubbock, Midland and other cities. Reviews have been sterling. Some say it is a masterpiece of music history and is Oscar worthy. It is expected to be on public television sometime in the spring.

For the last five years Mike has hosted a Western Swing Festival in Fort Worth. Occasionally, when the band plays Hoyle Nix's Big Balls in Cowtown Mike will go on stage, grab the mike and belt out the lyrics. So far there has been no requests from the audience for him to make his cricket sound.

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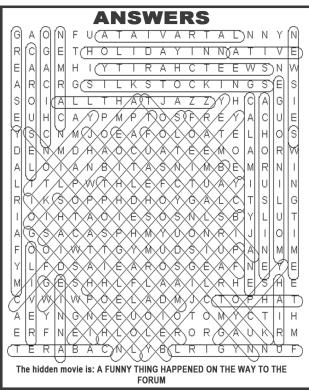
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# Sherry Kay Sinclair

Sherry Kay Sinclair, of Sulphur Springs, passed away peacefully, the morning of November 27, 2025, to be with her Lord. She was surrounded by her family until the very end. She was born on March 14, 1964, in Hope, Arkansas. Sherry had 30 years in education, starting her career in 1992 in Queen City, Texas. She then worked in Mt. Pleasant in 1997 and 1998, then moved to Sulphur Springs ISD, spending the last few years as Principal and Head Start Director at Douglass ECLC.

Sherry was a dedicated educator who loved her students and staff. Her dedication to her family was limitless. She brought joy and sunshine to a sometimes-dark world. She will be greatly missed.

She was preceded in death by her father, Jerry Don Bailey, Sr. and her brother Jerry Don Bailey, Jr. Sherry is survived by her husband of 37 years, Shawn Sinclair; son, Sawyer Sinclair; daughter, Skyler Sinclair; sister, Marla McCord, and husband Matt; mother, Edith Kay Bailey and her in-laws, Bill and Tommie Sinclair; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Services will be held at 2:00 PM on Tuesday, December 2, 2025, at the Hopkins County Regional Civic Center, 1200 Houston St, Sulphur Springs, TX 75482. Interment will follow in Forest Lawn Cemetery in Mt. Pleasant, Texas.

For those who would like, donations are strongly encouraged to be made to the Sherry Sinclair Scholarship Foundation at Guaranty Bank and Trust in Sulphur Springs, Texas. Donations will be made available on Monday, December 1, 2025.

Arrangements are under the direction of West Oaks Funeral Home. www.westoaksfuneralhome.com



# Wm. David Thompson

Wm. David Thompson born, in 1947 to Caleb James Thompson and Mary Garnet Head Thompson in Sulphur Springs, Texas. Wm. David grew up in Sulphur Springs and graduated from Sulphur Springs High School.

Wm. David married Patricia Wilkins on November 22, 1967; Patricia preceded him in death in 2016. Wm. David worked as a computer programmer since the 1970's until his retirement. He enjoyed fishing and golfing with his two sons, Scott, and Dale. Wm. David is survived by his two sons, Scott and wife, Pam, and Dale. He is also survived by his grandson, Garrett and his mother, Dawn Redd.

Wm. David passed away on November 21, 2025. Memorial Services will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 13, 2025, at West Oaks Funeral Home. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service at 1:00 p.m.

In Lieu of flowers the family requests you make donations in memory of Wm. David Thompson to the charity of your choice.

Arrangements are under the direction of West Oaks Funeral Home. www.westoaksfuneralhome.com



# Shirley Evans

A funeral Service for Shirley Evans, age 84 of Farmersville, Texas was held at 1:00 PM on Saturday, November 29, 2025, at Tapp Funeral Home. Visitation was held from 12:00 PM until 1:00 PM. Mrs. Evans passed away on Thursday, November 20, 2025, at Lexington Medical Lodge in Farmersville, Texas.

Shirley was born November 10, 1941, in Sulphur Springs, Texas to Luther and Fenton (Fisher) Gibby.

Shirley was a Texas State Basketball Champion in her Senior Year of High School. Shirley also enjoyed playing High School Softball. After High School she married the love of her life, military man, Robert Evans, on December 23, 1959. Shirley was an active member of Southside Church of Christ. She enjoyed playing games with her friends and spending time with her family.

Shirley is survived by her daughter Pam Albanese and husband Doug; son Paul Evans and wife Mendy; brother, Jerry Gibby and wife Peggy; 8 grandchildren; and 7 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Robert; son, Perry Evans; and one sister Venita Hinkle.



## Mark Friddle

A funeral service for Mark Friddle, age 75 of Yantis, Texas was held at 11:00 A.M. on Tuesday, December 2, 2025 at Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home with Mark Garrett officiating. Interment followed at Greenpond Cemetery. Visitation was held one hour prior to the service. Mr. Friddle passed away on November 26, 2025 at Rock Creek Health and Rehab.

Mark was born on September 1, 1950 in Sulphur Springs, Texas to C.B. and Drucille (Harris) Friddle. He graduated from Yantis High School. Mark was a dairy farmer who also grew watermelons. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, and watching westerns. His greatest pride was his watermelon farming.

He is survived by his daughter, Amy Landers and husband, Jon; sons, Mark Friddle and wife, Jennifer, Clay Friddle and wife, Kelci; nine grandchildren; two great grandchildren; sisters, Elaine Bentley and husband, Mike, and Jonelle Watson; brother Paul Friddle; numerous nieces and nephews.

Mark was preceded in death by his parents; brothers, Dwight, Dan, Harold, and Ronald Friddle; sister, Annis Bonice Friddle.

# Cozy Season Wellness: Simple Ways to Stay Healthy and Energized All Winter

Winter invites quiet mornings and cozy evenings but it also brings a rise in cold and flu season. As temperatures drop and daylight shortens our bodies often need a little extra care to stay balanced and energized. Wellness in winter is less about drastic changes and more about mindful steps that support immunity and vitality. From nourishing daily habits to modern options like IV therapy and vitamin injections there are many ways to help your body stay strong and resilient.

One of the simplest ways to support winter health is by focusing on hydration. Cold air holds less moisture and indoor heating can dry out skin and nasal passages. Drinking enough water and eating hydrating foods like soups citrus fruits and leafy greens can help keep mucous membranes healthy. These membranes are part of the body's first line of defense against viruses. Warm herbal teas are another comforting option offering relaxation and additional fluids during the day.

Nutrition plays a major role in staying well during the colder months. Winter often encourages heavier comfort foods but balancing them with nutrient rich choices keeps your immune system functioning smoothly. Foods rich in vitamin C zinc and antioxidants like berries broccoli garlic and nuts can help your body fight off seasonal illness. Listening to your appetite and choosing whole foods when possible can make a noticeable difference in energy and overall well being.



Gabriela Camacho

Sleep is also essential. Shorter days can disrupt your circadian rhythm making you feel sluggish or restless. Creating a calming bedtime routine such as reading or stretching can improve rest quality. Consistent sleep strengthens immune cells and helps your body recover from daily stressors. Even small adjustments like dimming lights earlier or avoiding screens before bedtime can help you feel more restored.

Many people also explore wellness therapies such as IV infusions and vitamin injections during winter. These treatments are designed to deliver nutrients directly into the bloodstream which can support hydration and help correct deficiencies more quickly than oral supplements. Common options include vitamin C infusions B complex injections and blends that support energy mental clarity and immune function. Some individuals find these therapies helpful when they feel run down or need support during a demanding season. It is important to consult a qualified healthcare provider to determine what is appropriate for your body and health goals.

Physical movement remains important even in the cold. Gentle exercise like walking yoga or light strength training boosts circulation and mood and supports immune health. Fresh air can also reduce stress and improve mental clarity. If outdoor activity is uncomfortable try creating a simple indoor routine that keeps your body engaged and warm.

Finally prioritizing emotional wellness is just as important as taking care of your physical health. Winter can bring feelings of fatigue or isolation especially when daylight is limited. Staying connected with loved ones practicing gratitude and taking short breaks during the day can lift your spirits and build resil-

Winter wellness is about nurturing yourself in small thoughtful ways. With supportive habits and mindful options like IV therapies or vitamin injections you can help your body stay balanced and healthy throughout the season.



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