

# Coalgate Record Register

Volume 136 Number 8 COALGATE, OKLAHOMA 74538 Coal County (USPS 120140) 50¢ Wednesday, MAY 1, 2019



**JONAH'S CHS CLASS OF 1963** — The Coalgate High School Class of 1963 gathered at the school on May 25, 2013, for a 50-year reunion. Classmates present for the photo were, from left: **(front)** - Bette Batchelor Price, Lois Keeler Livingston, Sue Farley Wheat, Freda Lanoy Sevier, Linda Stubblefield Shoemake, Frances Powell Brown, Lynette Bellettini Dalton, Donna Hulseley Brown, Jonah Barnett, Jo Ann Battles Sexton; **(back)** - David "Buddy" Salmon, Jack Yother, Billy Haworth, Jim Smith, Jimmy Hudson, Butch Smith, Harold Depasse, Carl Coffee, and Bill Wilson.

## Big Jonah to be inducted into CHS Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2019

—By Bill Wilson

Jonah Lee Barnett, Jr. is being inducted into the Coalgate High School Athletic Hall of Fame class of 2019 as an all-around sports candidate. While attending Coalgate High School, Jonah participated in all available sports. Jonah also enjoyed hunting, fishing and raising fighting roosters. He loved food and watching sports, especially OU.

Following the 1962 CHS football season, Jonah was awarded a football scholarship to Southeastern State College.

The article that ran in the Coalgate Record Register in the spring of 1963 stated, "Jonah Barnett, Coalgate High School Senior has been awarded a football scholarship at Southeastern State College, effective this fall. The announcement was made to Grover Barker, principal, by Bob Thomas, head football coach at Southeastern, on Tuesday morning. Jonah has lettered in football, basketball, track and baseball during his high-school career. He is the son of Mrs. Jewel Jones."

I was a little surprised to find this article, since Jonah's obituary stated it was a basketball scholarship. Either is conceivable.

Jonah Lee Barnett, Jr. was born in Cottonwood, OK on January 1, 1946. Unfortunately, he died in Mary Hurley Hospital in Coalgate on February 9, 2019 after an illness of more than five years, so

members of his family will be on hand for the awards and banquet.

I visited with Jonah in the hospital just prior to his death, and was able to inform him that he had been selected for induction into the Coalgate Athletic Hall of Fame.

If you knew Jonah, you might appreciate or expect his response: "What took you so long?" A little about Jonah's family.

Jonah's dad was Jonah Lee Barnett (Sr.). He was born April 22, 1914 and was a WWII veteran of the U. S. Army, having enlisted July 15, 1941 and serving with the 3rd Battalion, 32nd Armored Regiment - Infantry. While in service, Jonah, Sr. was awarded the Purple Heart

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**Coalgate Wildcats District Champions. See Page B-1**

## Green New Deal and border security discussed at Mullin Coffee and Conversations

The Green New Deal and securing the U.S. southern border were two topics that U.S. Con-

gressman Markwayne Mullin talked about during his April 25 visit to Coalgate. Approximately 25 people attended Mullin's Coffee and Conversations event held at Marcy's Place restaurant.

Mullin has staunchly denounced the Green New Deal proposal introduced by Democratic freshman Rep. Alexan-

dria Ocasio-Cortez of New York and endorsed by other Washington Democrats, including several Democratic presidential candidates.

The proposed Green New Deal, House Resolution 109 and Senate

Resolution 59, would establish a series of economic and environmental goals and projects through a 10-year national mobilization.

HR 109 calls for the creation of a Green New

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**Effective May 9, 2019  
The Record-Register will be  
.75¢ per individual copy.**

## K9 officer joins sheriff's workforce



Coal County Undersheriff Philip Magby and K9 Officer Polo. Story page B-1.

**New Coal County  
Republican Officers elected  
Page A-7**

## Coalgate Citywide Cleanup Day Saturday

Coalgate's annual Cleanup Day is Saturday, May 4.

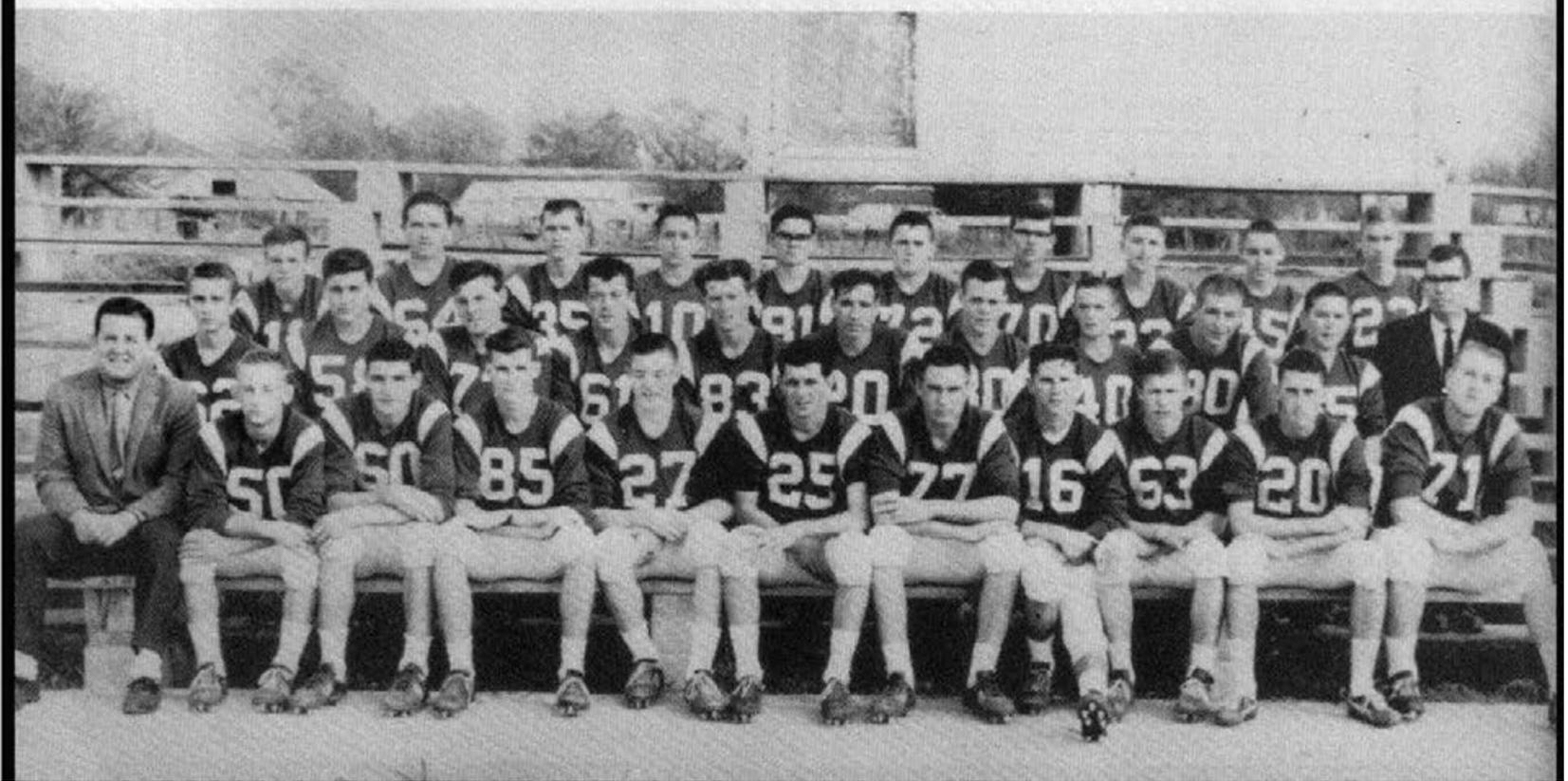
Cleanup Day is an opportunity for you to get rid of old refrigerators, stoves, furniture or other items you don't want. It's the one day of the year when you can dump your

junk at the convenience center without paying a fee. Located behind the Coal County courthouse, the center will be open Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

If you don't have a way to haul your stuff to

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*Wildcats — '62*



**1962 CHS FOOTBALL TEAM** — From left (front) — Coach Jim Wills, Jack Yother, Loyd Loudermilk, Stanley Hickman, Bill Wilson, Paul Leaird, Larry Wolfe, Jimmy Glasco, Jimmy Hudson, Jimmy Hobgood, Jonah Barnett; (center) — Billy Carl Martin, Danny Brown, Johnny Franks, Gary Hobgood, James Boyd, J.C. Stiles, Alan Casey, Paul Horn, Steve Cody, Tom Mayer, Assistant Coach Grover Barker; (back) — Carl Hill, Leon Lampkin, Tommy Vechnak, Eddie Hillhouse, Mickey Williams, Don Glasco, Shannon Crow, Owen Summers, Steve Cooper, Guy Strunk.

# Big Jonah to be inducted into CHS Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2019

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for wounds received in combat and the Good Conduct medal. Prior to his honorable discharge on June 4, 1945, Jonah, Sr. married Jonah's mom, Jewel Washburn, in California on February 15, 1945.

"Little" Jonah, Jr. made his appearance on January 1, 1946. It seems kind of strange to think of Jonah as "little," because ever since I have known him, he was "BIG."

Sadly, Jonah, Sr. did not live very long afterwards — he died April 19, 1950 in Oklahoma City, when Jonah, Jr. was 4 years old.

On May 7, 1955, Jewel married another WWII veteran, Richard Harvey Jones, a retired Marine Master Sergeant. Richard was present in Jonah's life from about age 10. Richard retired from the OK Transportation Department as a heavy equipment operator and died October 31, 1994, at age 73.

Richard and Jewel were parents to Naomi Jones Nichols.

Jonah retired after 30 years with the Department of Corrections, specifically the Mack Alford and Howard McLeod Correctional Centers in Stringtown as a welding instructor.

On April 25, 2000, Jonah married Beverly Caballero in Cottonwood, where she continues to reside in their home. Other survivors included: Kristy Hamilton and husband John of Atoka;

Jonah Lee Barnett III; Naomi Nichols and husband Eric and their sons Keith and Shane of Cottonwood; grandchildren, including Kristopher Wade Powell; Garrett Hamilton and wife Jaycie; Johnny Lee "Tre" Hamilton III; Gracee Hamilton; and nine great-grandchildren, one niece and six nephews.

Jonah's mom, Jewel Washburn Jones, died October 10, 2002, at age 75.

Believe it or not, there was a time, long ago, when the kids from Coalgate and Cottonwood were not well acquainted with each other.

I will never forget the first time I laid eyes on Jonah Barnett. I was 10, going on 11. It was at the Wigwam Theater, our local movie house, when, at a Saturday afternoon matinee (mainly for kids under the age of 12 with 10 cents for admission), I saw this kid I didn't know, and he was huge.

Had to be older than 12, right? Did he really pay only a dime instead of 35 cents? I was always a little squirt until my junior year of high school, and I wasn't too awfully large even then. I found out later the big kid was Jonah Barnett, and not only was he in my same grade, he was actually five months younger than me.

That was in the summer of 1956, a long time ago, but only if you measure in terms of years. Seems like only yesterday that we were living in this small town called Coalgate, where there were only about eighteen hundred people, but to

me, and others I knew, it was the whole world.

When Cottonwood kids finished the 8th grade, then as now most of them come to Coalgate High School, and Jonah was no exception. Jonah was good at all sports, particularly basketball, since Cottonwood didn't play football then.

In the 1960 Wildcat yearbook, there is a photo of the 1959 CHS football team that included only two freshmen, and neither was from Coalgate. One was Larry Wolfe from Lehigh, and the other was Jonah Barnett from Cottonwood. Both were

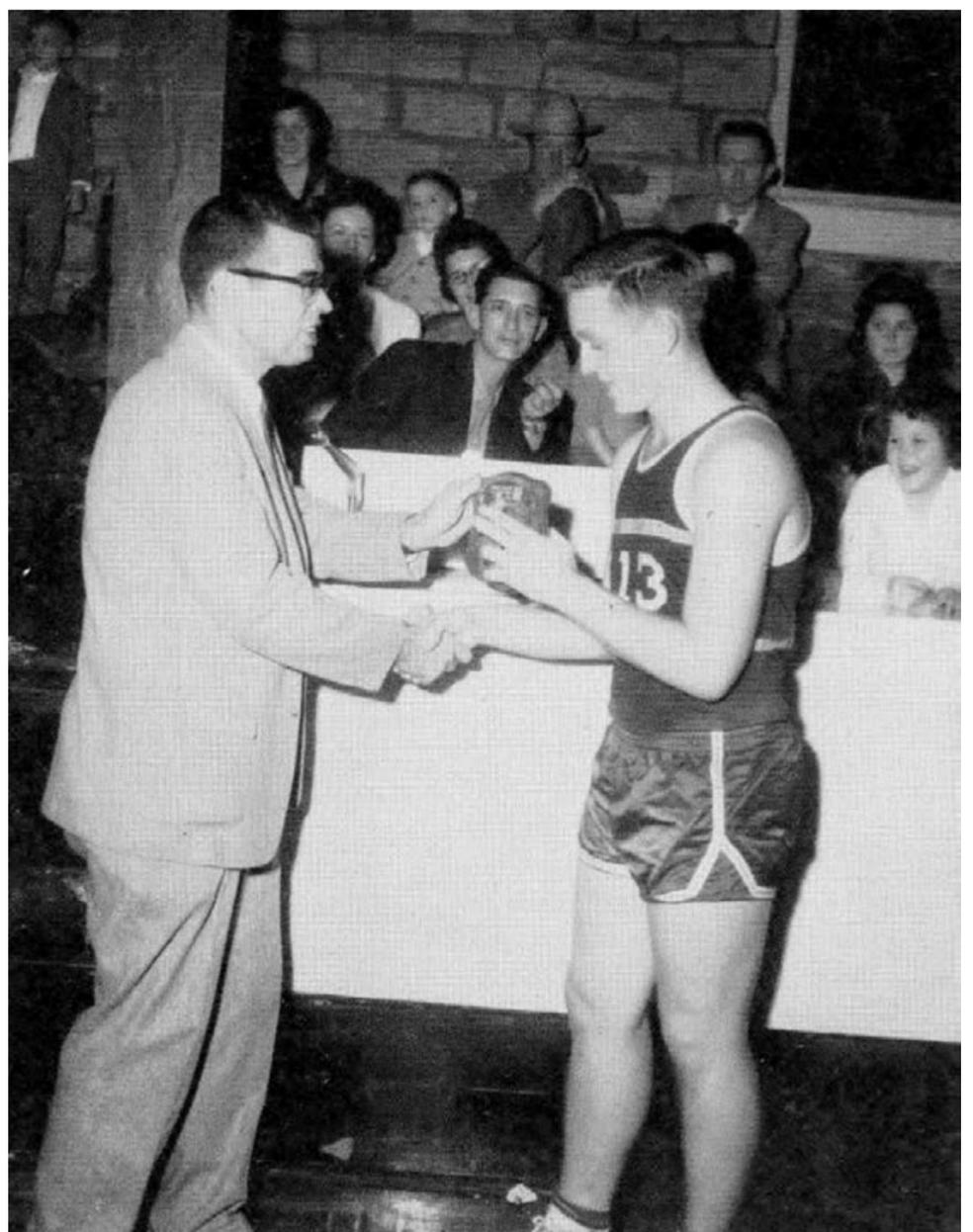
big kids for their age. I always wondered why there were so many of us little squirts in Coalgate. Good question, but we eventually caught up (some), and by the 1962 season we had an excellent football team.

In doing a sports participation background on Jonah, according to the 1960-63 Wildcat yearbooks, Jonah lettered all four years of high school in both football and basketball. In addition, in '61 and '63 he lettered in baseball; and in 1963, his senior year, he also lettered in track, where he did the shot put and

discus. Jonah was a natural athlete in spite of his size — good speed for a big man, good hands for catching anything in football or basketball, with good strength and power.

In 1962, we had one of the best football teams Coalgate had in years. We finished 9-2-1, with our only losses to Atoka when we had several people out with injuries or illnesses, and to Hennessey in the second round of playoffs. The tie was with Maysville, probably the worst game

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Jonah Barnett is awarded a trophy for top individual player in the 1962 Coalgate Invitational Basketball Tournament.

# Big Jonah to be inducted into CHS Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2019

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we played all year.

On offense, Jonah played right tackle and was good at helping open holes for the running backs, as were all the linemen.

That line was outstanding and consisted of: Left end, James Boyd; left tackle, Steve Cody; left guard, Jimmy Hudson; center, Loyd Loudermilk; right guard, Gary Clemens; right tackle, Larry Wolfe; and right end, Jonah Barnett.

The backs included quarterback, Jimmy Glasco; left halfback (flanker, usually), J. C. Stiles; fullback, Alan Casey; and right halfback, Jimmy Clemens.

James Boyd was a true wide receiver with sprinter speed that could jump, and excellent hands for downfield passes from Glasco. On the other side, in effect Jonah was really another tackle playing tight end,

helping to open holes on the right side for the running backs.

He also happened to be eligible for pass receiving, so, of course, we had a specialty play where, after the snap and a run fake, Glasco would raise up and hit Jonah over the middle with a look-in pass. It nearly always came as a surprise to our opponents, who were not used to a big player eligible for a pass wearing #71. We hit that play for big gainers at least twice in every game.

One of my favorite memories is seeing several smaller defensive backs on the other side "taking a ride" and hanging on for dear life as Big Jonah plowed downfield. He usually had two, and sometimes three, defensive backs hanging on, trying their best to bring him down.

In basketball, we had a decent team, but nothing to compare with football.

In looking back on it, we had decent talent, but

the powers that be were trying to save money, so they made Jim Wills, our football coach, do basketball as well. He did okay by us, but it was really not his primary interest, and seems to me he was going through the motions.

We had decent talent – Jonah and Steve Cody in the middle with good height, the two Jimmys, Clemens and Glasco, out front, and James Boyd playing everywhere. That boy could really jump. I just wonder how much better we could have been with a specialist basketball coach instead of an added extra duty for the football coach. Such is the way of small-town sports.

Jonah did well on the basketball court – good hands made for a good ball handler, dribbler and passer, with a pretty good left-handed hook shot. He took up a lot of space, so the other team's players tried to deny him

the ball. If Jonah got it down low, that left hook shot was going in the basket.

When asked about Jonah Barnett, Jimmy Hudson, right guard in the '62 season said, "Oh, I don't know, I'm not very good at stuff like this, so just put down whatever you want. I will say this, though – we were just a good team overall because we started mostly seniors. There were only three juniors on the starting offense, Alan Casey at fullback (inducted into the 2017 Hall of Fame), Gary Clemens at right guard and Steve Cody at left tackle.

"Jonah was by far the biggest man on the squad, and while he was a decent blocker, what separated him from others were his hands. For a big man he was well-coordinated, and when he caught a pass and headed downfield, he was a load!"

Jimmy Clemens related pretty much the same story about the "look-in" pass as being one of the best plays we ran.

"We must have run that same play to Jonah three or four times every game, and the other teams were never quite ready for it. What made it so effective was we had such a good running game, so the defenders usually sucked up to the line for run support, and then the pass was wide open over the middle. Jonah had good hands, and for a big man he could really run!"

Clemens also recalled Jonah's days as a basketball player.

"Jonah was a big man, so he played center on the team made up of himself, Steve Cody, James Boyd, Jimmy Glasco and myself. Really, basketball might have been Jonah's best sport. He was so well coordinated, particularly for a big man, and had good hands. I remember times when the other team started a full-court press on us, and since Jonah was the best dribbler on the team, believe it or not, he was the one who could actually bring the ball up-court against any. Jonah was the best ball-handler on the team, by far."

Clemens recounted Jonah's baseball skills this way:

"We really didn't play a lot of baseball games back in those days, but when we did, Jonah would make his presence felt. He was a southpaw, so a man that big on the mound pitching left-

handed struck fear into a lot of batters who seldom saw a lefty. When not pitching, Jonah was an excellent fielder, moving around first base really well. And then there was his hitting! Jonah had a good eye – and when he connected, that ball would really travel."

Jimmy also mentioned that Jonah did pretty well in track with the shot and the discus, but neither he nor the team ever really went anywhere with it.

Hall of Famer Alan Casey welcomed the addition of Jonah Barnett to the CHS Hall of Fame.

"It's good to have another member in the Hall of Fame from the 1962 CHS football team. We had a team in the true sense that was very good, overall, and had several players who were awfully good.

"Jonah was a big man for that day and time, and for someone that was 6' 4" and weighing 230 pounds he could really move. In addition to foot speed, Jonah had awfully good hand-to-eye coordination, and made catching passes look easy. He never really looked like he was working that hard, but the results speak for themselves.

"Jonah may have been a better basketball player than football, which got him the scholarship offer. He had really good ball skills, including shooting, dribbling and passing, and was good around the basket, both rebounding and scoring. Not to take anything from Jim Wills, our football coach, but he was made to do basketball as well, which was not his strength. If we had a real basketball coach, instead of a football coach doing extra assigned duties, no telling how good Jonah and all the rest of the team could have been."

I ran across some photos of the 50th anniversary of our group, the CHS Class of 1963. Our class got together on Memorial Day weekend 2013 at Coalgate High School, and there was really a good group of us present.

I knew Jonah was having some issues, so I was glad to see him there with Beverly, outfitted in his OU ball cap he always wore, even if he was in a wheelchair due to issues with his health. That was the first time I really realized he was having serious issues.

RIP, big Jonah. You will be missed.



## May is American Stroke Month



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