



## Texas midterm primaries take spotlight

INSIDE, 3A

# TIMES RECORD

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**Southern Nazarene junior Baron Bracey tries to get around Harding senior Wesley Booker during the GAC championship game on March 9, 2025 at Southside Arena in Fort Smith.**

GEORGE 'CLAY' MITCHELL/TIMES RECORD

## Players to watch at the GAC men's tournament

### George "Clay" Mitchell

Fort Smith Southwest Times Record  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The men's bracket of the Great American Conference Basketball Championships begins Thursday at Northside Arena, with several all-conference standouts leading the way.

### Terry Coner Jr. — Junior, G

Coner, a junior guard from Birmingham, Alabama, leads top-seeded Oklahoma Baptist University (26-2 overall, 26-2 GAC).

He averages 20.2 points a game and has been named GAC Offensive Player of the Week six times this season.

As the conference's top seed enters

tournament play, Coner remains the focal point of the Bison offense.

### Baron Bracey — Senior, G

Bracey, a senior guard from San Diego, California, leads Southern Nazarene University (21-7 overall, 15-7 GAC).

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**Harding senior Stetson Smithson goes for the basket as Southern Nazarene junior James Burries tries to stop him during the GAC championship game on March 9, 2025 at Southside Arena in Fort Smith. Harding won 75-74.**

GEORGE 'CLAY' MITCHELL/TIMES RECORD

## Championship basketball tips off noon Thursday

### George "Clay" Mitchell

Fort Smith Southwest Times Record  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Great American Conference Basketball Championships are returning to Fort Smith this week, bringing an estimated half-million-dollar boost to the local economy.

The four-day tournament, which tips off Thursday at Northside Arena, is expected to draw approximately 1,300 attendees, with about 500 staying overnight, according to the Fort Smith Convention and Visitors Bureau. The projected economic impact is \$568,138, up from an estimated \$500,000 generated by the 2025 tournament, which drew just over 1,000 attendees.

The event marks the first time the GAC Championships will be hosted at the \$14.5 million Northside Arena after Southside hosted the tournament last

season. Both facilities were first used in early 2022. They were funded through a voter-approved millage increase in 2018 that generated roughly \$120 million for districtwide facility and program improvements.

A total of 14 games will be played from Thursday through Sunday, culminating in championship matchups on Sunday afternoon.

### Thursday: Top seeds take the floor

The tournament opens Thursday with four quarterfinal contests, beginning with the top two seeds.

At noon, the men's No. 2 seed, Ouachita Baptist, faces Southwestern Oklahoma State. The Tigers secured a top-two seed for the second consecutive year and swept the Bulldogs during the regular season.

At 2:15 p.m., Northwestern Oklahoma

State opens the women's bracket against East Central. The Rangers' No. 2 seed is their best finish in the GAC era. They won their first GAC Championship game last season and split regular-season momentum with ECU.

In the evening session, the regular-season champions take center stage. Oklahoma Baptist, which claimed its first-ever men's regular-season title and enters on a 17-game win streak, the third-longest active streak in Division II, faces Henderson State at 5:45 p.m. The Bison won both regular-season meetings.

At 8 p.m., Harding's Lady Bisons, the women's No. 1 seed, play Southern Nazarene. Harding has reached the finals in each of its previous three appearances as the top seed, winning titles in 2015 and 2017.

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## Foxworthy announces AMP show

### George "Clay" Mitchell

Fort Smith Southwest Times Record  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Stand-up comedian, actor, and author Jeff Foxworthy is headed to Northwest Arkansas this spring.

Foxworthy will perform at the Walmart AMP on Friday, May 15, as part of the 2026 Synchrony Concert Series. Gates open at 6:30 p.m., and the show begins at 8 p.m.

Presales begin at 10 a.m. Tuesday, March 3.

Tickets go on sale to the general public at 10 a.m. Friday, March 6. Standard all-in ticket prices range from \$53.16 to \$242.40, plus taxes. Prices are subject to change.

Foxworthy is widely regarded as one of the most successful and respected comedians in the country. He

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## 'Haunted Arkansas' Season 2 includes Fort Smith stop

### George "Clay" Mitchell

Fort Smith Southwest Times Record  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Fort Smith will once again take center stage in "Haunted Arkansas."

Alma native and filmmaker Gavin Webb is bringing his paranormal investigation series back to the city for Season 2, this time turning his cameras toward the Fort Smith Museum of History.

"We had a lot of experiences with the Clayton House," Webb said. "And Judge Parker's court is recreated in the museum, so I'm excited to see if the two will connect."

The return marks a continuation of

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