Beloved Western Mascot Celebrates 5th Birthday

April 4, 2014 marks the fifth birthday of everyone’s favorite WOSC student, Pioneer Guy. Western’s iconic mascot enrolled at the college many years ago but his current incarnation, Pioneer Guy, was created due to an unfortunate turn of events that left the previous version of Western’s all-around student, lost in the hallowed halls of the institution. The history of the Western’s mascot started in 1971, while Western was still known as AJC and students voted on the selection of a mascot for the college. Donna Clancy won the contest for choosing the name Pioneers. Her reasoning was, “Because Pioneers like my grandmother pioneered and settled Oklahoma.” Later in 1973, Western Art Instructor from 1967 to 1983, Dorothy Maffry, was commissioned to create a caricature of the pioneer that later appeared on various college publications. “Altus Al” was Maffry’s rendering of the icon. By 1978, the Pioneer mascot, “Wes Western”, became a part of the new activities organized by the Office of Student Services along with the college cheerleaders and the Pioneer Dolls. Pioneer Guy, the mascot’s current and official title, was named in 2009 after a campaign sponsored by the WOSC Alumni Association. The campaign aimed to reinvigorate the mascot’s image with a costume redesign and new name. Students voted on what the beloved Western rep should be called. He was christened Pioneer Guy. Reagan Felker was the Director of Alumni and Development at the time. He says, “I got the idea that it would be a great project for the Alumni Association for the year. The cheerleading coordinator loved the idea so, the Alumni Association took on the project.”Stacey Shive Cox, Alumni Board Member and 1983 Western graduate, sketched a design for the proposed costume for Pioneer Guy and Facemakers, Inc. tailored the costume. The Alumni Association funded the project with the help of contributions from its members and Glen Winters of Jackson County Farm Bureau, who agreed to provide the balance of the costume cost. Pioneer Guy, as he is known today, emerged from this cooperative.

Pioneer Guy’s Birthday will be celebrated April 4, 2014 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Pioneer Point, the student recreation area, at the college. Students, Western staff, alumni and patrons are invited to join the party and give three cheers for the Guy. Cupcakes and punch will be served and a birthday raffle be held for party goers.