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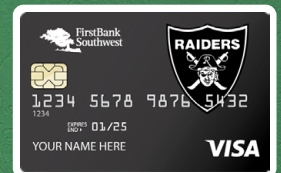
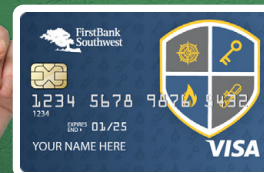
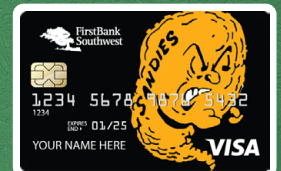
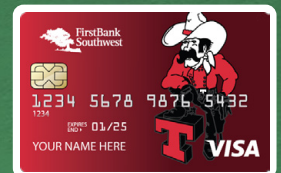
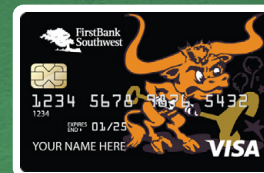



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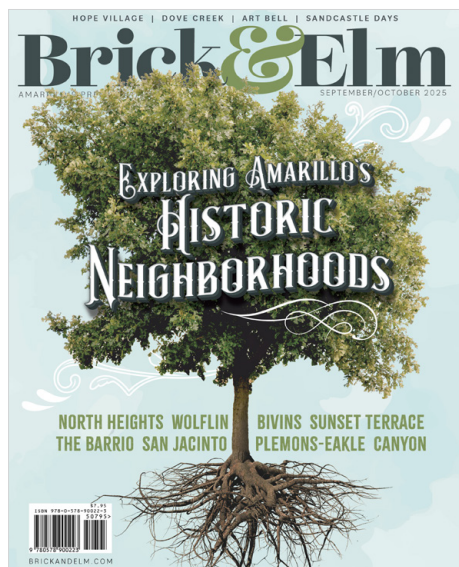
58 | STREET STORIES

An expert guide to the area's most historic neighborhoods, featuring the residents who call them home.

58



PHOTO BY OWEN BOYETT



ON THE COVER: ART BY KAYLA MORRIS

12

The Horizon

TAKE FIVE

BY THE NUMBERS

NEW IN TOWN

CONVERSATIONS

Blank Spaces

Stray Sons

Clara Sneed

THE HOT LIST

With Chip Chandler

SOCIAL SCENE

39

Food + Drink

SHARKY'S BURRITO
COMPANY

ELEVATE YOUR PLATE

With Ruthie Landelius

EAT THIS, DRINK THAT

46

THE DIRT

Get the scoop

48

MUSINGS WITH MAGGIE

By Maggie Burt



Golf



Dining



Tennis



Fitness



Pickleball



Pool

TASCOSA



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Community, Convenience, Beauty

72 | HOPE VILLAGE

Three new restaurants give valuable experience to workers with disabilities

78 | HORSES AND HEALING

How the herd at Dove Creek Ranch helps humans process grief and find joy

82 | SECRET SIGNALS

Before Art Bell became king of paranormal radio, he was a medic at Amarillo Air Force Base

72



PHOTO BY TANNER BEGGS

78



PROVIDED PHOTO

82



PROVIDED PHOTO

50
BIZ

Get up in the city's business

52
THE CHASE

With Andy Chase Cundiff

54
THE CALL

With Melodie Graves

56
LOOK UP!

With Aletta Davis-Pitre

86
HOODOO MURAL
FESTIVAL

126
SANDCASTLE
DAYS

134
BACK WHEN
With Wes Reeves

136
TAKE THE
OFF-RAMP
With Nick Gerlich

138
FINISH
Joe Bill Sherrod

PLUS:



29



96

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Dr. Ghetie is a board certified rheumatologist with more than two decades experience in internal medicine and rheumatology.

Dr. Ghetie served as Assistant Professor of Medicine at OHSU. She aims to establish a regional center of excellence for myositis and vasculitis and to continue her clinical research in these complex conditions.



Brick&Elm

AMARILLO'S PREMIER
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I often hear the phrase *There's nothing to do in Amarillo*. If you still think that after reading this issue, then I don't know what to do for you.

Our September/October issue is our biggest magazine yet, and you'll read two in-depth articles about local nonprofits making a difference in the area—one that serves disabled adults and another that heals the hearts of both horses and humans. In addition to our event list (see The Hot List on page 20), we have revamped our annual local arts section to make sure it's a yearlong resource, with the entire 2025-26 arts season at your fingertips. (See Encore on page 29.) Beyond that section, local nonprofits have filled our pages with 18 invitations to events that range from fine dining, live music, dancing and lip-sync to activities like races, walks, rodeoing, golfing and movie-watching. Surely that list offers something for everyone.

Our cover story also invites you to get out and get moving as you take our walking tour of the area's historic neighborhoods. The temperatures are finally dropping (hopefully), fall is in the air, and there's plenty to discover and enjoy in our one-of-kind city.

Join us, won't you?

Michele



In early summer, we asked our readers what they enjoyed most in our magazine, and where we could improve. We learned so much from this survey. Readers told us they feel more connected to the community when they read about local people. Our subscribers prioritize local shopping. They visit businesses and restaurants after seeing them in our pages. They depend on our arts coverage to fill their social calendar. They want more of all those things in *Brick & Elm*. We take that kind of reader feedback seriously.

So you'll notice a brand-new, 16-page section in this issue—the first major change we've made since launching our magazine. It's called The Horizon. We designed it to be an approachable, browsable introduction to local people and ideas. It contains shorter articles, including punchier entertainment coverage and interviews by Chip Chandler (Stray Sons), quality-of-life details (By the Numbers, New in Town), and profiles (Blank Spaces). These bite-sized pieces give us an opportunity to guide you through what's current right now in Amarillo/Canyon culture. We had a lot of fun putting this together, so let us know what you think of The Horizon. Emails are always welcome!

Jason

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Michelle Martinez

A MEMORY *you can't miss*

**KAYLA MORRIS**

Kayla has been designing professionally for 15 years. She was raised in the Panhandle and graduated with a design degree from West Texas A&M University.

**SHANNON RICHARDSON**

Shannon has been a commercial/advertising photographer for more than 35 years. His work can be seen at shannonrichardson.com.

**PRESLIE BENTLEY**

Preslie was raised in Amarillo and is a journalism major at Texas A&M University. She worked on features, photography and socials as our summer intern.

**WES REEVES**

Wes was raised in Wellington and has lived in Amarillo since the early '90s. He serves as chairman of the Potter County Historical Commission.

**NICK GERLICH**

Nick is the Hickman Professor of Marketing at West Texas A&M University, where he has taught since 1989. In his spare time, he travels around the country in search of vintage signage and other outdoor advertising.

**CLAYTON TRUTOR**

Clayton Trutor holds a PhD in history from Boston College and writes about American popular culture for a wide range of venues. He is the author of several books, including *Loserville* and *Boston Ball*.

**ANGELINA MARIE**

Angelina has been a photographer in the Amarillo area for 15 years, working with publications such as *Texas Living*, *Texas Tribune* and *Texas Monthly*. She specializes in commercial, creative and fine art photography.

**MEAGHAN COLLIER**

Meaghan works in communications and marketing for Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center in Amarillo and spent 15 years as an anchor, reporter and producer in local television news.



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12 PM - 2 PM

Refreshments and giveaways to
the first 100 shoppers!

COCKTAILS & SHOPPING

5 PM - 8 PM

Cocktails, hors d'oeuvres,
select merchant specials,
and door prizes!

Plus, *Art in Action* live event!

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH
Shopping from 10 AM - 6 PM

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9TH
Shopping from 11 AM - 4 PM

**PICTURES & CRAFTS
WITH SANTA**
1 PM - 3 PM

SILENT AUCTION CLOSES
2 PM



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The Horizon

Take Five

WITH PHYLLIS NICKUM GOLDEN

The daughter of a hotelier, Phyllis Nickum Golden moved to the Texas Panhandle in 1994 and spent years in local hotel operations, including the Ambassador Hotel in Amarillo. After retiring from that job, she founded Cowgirls and Cowboys in the West in 2011, a western tourism attraction that is regularly listed on Tripadvisor's top "things to do" in Amarillo. She serves on a number of community and nonprofit boards, including the Amarillo Convention and Visitor's Bureau and the Amarillo Tri-State Fair Exposition.



1. How does it feel to be the first woman in history to serve as board president for the Tri-State Fair, and what are you excited about this year?

It is a huge honor to be able to represent 102 years of women who have contributed to this great nonprofit, which does so many things to enhance our community, families and education throughout the Tri-State Area. I am truly honored and deeply humbled.

3. What has you most excited about the future of tourism in this area?

I love that all of our tourism partners have come together, with the guidance of the Amarillo Convention & Visitor's Bureau, and are making a great impact in tourism overall! The Route 66 Festival, Amarillo Film Commission, increased horse and cattle shows, and our vibrant social media are just a few of examples.

Cowboy Association would be focused, specifically, in that genre. I would be remiss if I didn't mention Cowgirls and Cowboys in the West, which I have operated since 2011. We offer a "History on Horseback" Tour and chuck wagon events.

2. Your business caters mostly to tourists and travelers. What do you hear from them about their experience in the Panhandle?

Tourists love the kindness and hospitality of the people of our area. And they particularly love our western culture.

4. Amarillo is known for its western/cowboy heritage. In your opinion, what's the most authentic example of it?

Oh my! All you have to do is look around—there are so many options! But I would say the Coors Cowboy Club Ranch Rodeo and Working Ranch

5. What's it like to live and work on the edge of Palo Duro Canyon?

It is heaven on earth.

New in Town

See what's launched and landed.

Serving Up Miracles

Tascosa Golf Club and Children's Miracle Network host a Sept. 6 pickleball tournament with Men's, Women's and Mixed divisions.
[@tascosagolfclub](#)



Christmas in October

This annual holiday market kicks off the festive season on behalf of Sharing Hope Ministries, October 24 and 25 at the Amarillo Civic Center.
[@sharinghopeamarillo](#)



Amarillo Warbirds

Arena football returns to Amarillo thanks to the Amarillo Warbirds, owned by Leif Kertis, Cathy Schick and Derek Urias. The team will play in the National Arena League.
[@amarillowarbirdsfootball](#)



By the Numbers

STREET STATS

In early summer, the City of Amarillo announced the acquisition of three new pothole patch trucks that allow for faster pothole repairs on city streets. They allowed crews to repair up to 146 potholes a day. That number caught our attention, so we checked in with local authorities to identify a few other road-related stats.

64,000
square yards

of street surface area patched or repaired in Amarillo over the past year

\$18 million

In total funding for street maintenance projects in Amarillo for financial year 2024-2025

3,400

potholes patched in city-maintained alleys over the past year



87,093

The annual average daily traffic (AADT) along the busiest stretch of I-40 in Amarillo, according to TXDOT



272

traffic signals maintained by the City of Amarillo

1,064.57

total miles of streets maintained by the city (and 511.03 miles of alleys)

4,600

potholes patched in city-maintained streets over the past year

18.6

The percentage of that AADT represented by semi-trucks

32,000
square yards

of patches and repairs in Amarillo's paved alleys over the past year

Casual Conversation

This boutique clothing store at 4004 A S. Washington St. offers curated vintage and reworked styles—along with handcrafted mocktails. [@casualconversationshop](#)



The Barfield

In August, The Barfield Hotel was dedicated by the Texas Historical Commission as an official Texas Historic Landmark. Amarillo's first skyscraper was built in 1927 and reopened in 2021. [@barfieldhotel](#)



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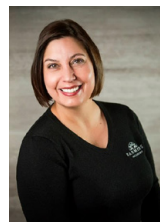


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Mural Magic

BLANK SPACES COMPLETES ITS 100TH MURAL

BY JASON BOYETT

Over the summer, as part of Amarillo's Juneteenth celebration, Blank Spaces Murals completed its 100th mural in the Texas Panhandle. The 100-foot-long public art installation stretches along the side of the Black Historical Cultural Center, injecting life and color into a historic neighborhood.

The mural itself is impressive, a typical Blank Spaces combo of realism with movement, geometric patterns, and an appreciation for storytelling. But the most impressive part of this nonprofit's story isn't about mural quantity or quality, but the people behind it.

Blank Spaces is a rotating crew of high school and college students, and has been since 2019, when Caprock art educator Shawn Kennedy and local artist Shanda Fletcher founded the organization, with the help of Dyron Howell, executive director of Snack Pak 4 Kids. That's 100 murals over six years.

In fact, the expansion of large-scale public art in Amarillo has as much to do with Blank Spaces as anything else, including the Hoodoo Mural Festival or the City of Amarillo's publicly funded Mural Grant Project. Blank Spaces has been a reliable Hoodoo participant almost from the start, and are definitely the most prolific artists benefiting from the city's mural grants.

I was the founding chair of the city's Beautification and Public Arts board and have been involved on the organization side of Hoodoo, and I'll say this: Blank Spaces is the beating heart of Amarillo's mural story. When I talk about public art in Amarillo, I talk about Blank Spaces.

It started after Howell visited the

LEFT TO RIGHT: SHANDA FLETCHER, SYDNI LOVETT, CHARLIZE MURPHY, ALLIE LOPEZ, ARIANA GONZALES, KIERRA CHITTAVONG, ZOEY NELSON, NIARA TORRES AND SHAWN KENNEDY



PHOTOS BY PRESIE BENTLEY

open-air street art of Wynwood Walls in Miami, Florida. He came back to Amarillo determined to pioneer a similar art movement here, beginning with the white exterior walls at the Snack Pak headquarters. Howell asked Kennedy to help him figure out how to put a big mural on the building. "He had the wall, and Dyron said we could use the wall," Kennedy remembers. "We had no money. We had nothing. We just had a wall and a bunch of kids that were excited."

Those kids were some of Kennedy's high school art students from Caprock. There were 12 of them at the beginning, all girls, and Blank Spaces lore remembers them as the "Founding Females." Ashley York of Snack Pak brought in one of her artist friends, Shanda Fletcher, for those early conversations. Fletcher and Kennedy had a personal connection: He'd been her art teacher during his first year at Caprock.

"We just so happened to cross paths and he's like, 'Hey, want to mentor a kid?'" she remembers.

Kennedy says Fletcher had been his "star student" back in 2006 and

2007 and was delighted they could reconnect, even if just for that one Snack Pak mural. The duo figured it out, driving students to and from that location during the summer of 2019, with all of them learning in the process. The Mural Grant Project launched that same year, and helped fund additional mural work at Snack Pak. The grants covered paint supplies and helped pay the young artists for the hours they were putting in.

Multiple art students came and went over those weeks, but the Founding Females represented the dedicated core who truly put in the work. It was a hot summer. The hours were long. Painting is uncomfortable. “They were the ones who stuck with us,” Kennedy says.

Before long, the Snack Pak building was awash in color. Other entities started to ask about murals. “We had to find our business sense in there,” Fletcher says. “It was fun and it was like this summer job. It was a good time. But then we realized really quickly, because our phone never stopped ringing, that this was a business now.”

Eventually Blank Spaces became a 501c3 nonprofit and Fletcher began working full time as project manager. Local organizations would approach them to design and execute a mural. She would take a lead role on the design side, working with Kennedy and the student artists to create the concept before paint touched any wall. Kennedy led from the administrative and paperwork side while keeping his day job with the school district.

Sometimes the Mural Grant Project would help fund the mural. Other times, the business covered all costs. And when it was time to paint, everyone got involved: Kennedy, Fletcher, and student after student. They worked nights and weekends and long summer days. The young artists got paid. Blank Spaces refers to these students as “interns,” and around 65 have now passed through the program.

The murals speak for themselves, from the creativity of the designs to the execution, Kennedy says. No one looks at a Blank Spaces mural and assumes it was painted by high school art students.

“We want [the quality] to be unexpected. We want it to be original. We want it to be exciting. But we also want it to be able to compete with major markets,” Kennedy says. As Hoodoo built its national reputation, the festival gave Blank Spaces the opportunity to create murals alongside major artists like Drew Merritt and Tristan Eaton.

“From the very beginning, when we hire them, we make it known [that] we have really high standards,” Fletcher says of the interns. Those first students came from Kennedy’s classroom, but eventually began applying from across the city, including all four Amarillo high schools. College students are now part of Blank Spaces, too, adding experience and leadership to the roster. “This is not a one-man show. We all work together. I really think setting that standard from the very beginning makes them walk in and be, like, ‘I gotta do great,’ because these people think I’m good enough to be here,” she explains.

Organizations in other states—like ArtReach San Diego—are starting to reach out about starting similar projects in their communities. And at this point, within the Amarillo art world, being part of Blank Spaces has become aspirational. “None of your friends are getting paid to do this. This is a special opportunity,” Fletcher says.

Meanwhile, Blank Spaces just keeps handing paintbrushes and spray cans and real-world opportunities to hungry young artists. One hundred-plus murals later, their efforts have transformed the city. “At the beginning, we had to convince people of how important [public art] was, and now we really don’t have to have that conversation anymore,” Fletcher says. ☺

Snapshots of Street Art

Blank Spaces has left its mark in every corner of the city. These murals showcase the breadth of the group’s artistry, evolving style and vision.

AIRBNB AT 21ST & TAYLOR (MURAL GRANT PROJECT)



DON HARRINGTON DISCOVERY CENTER (MURAL GRANT PROJECT)



RHONDA KIMBROUGH STATE FARM ON OLSEN BLVD. (MURAL GRANT PROJECT)

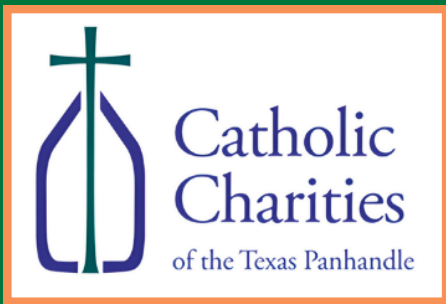


THE CACTUS COVE INN AND SUITES (MURAL GRANT PROJECT)



ACTS COMMUNITY FACING SW NINTH AVENUE (HOODOO MURAL FESTIVAL)





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BRICKANDELM.COM 17 SEP/OCT 2025

Straying Strong

BY CHIP CHANDLER

Amarillo rock band The Stray Sons rides high on the success of its new single “Don’t Count Me Out.” Members include, from left, Jonathan Guidi, lead guitar/backup vocals; Jared Golden, bass; Brad Sanders, lead vocals/rhythm guitar; Philip Cervantes, drums; and Kyle Hollis, rhythm guitar. ➔

Brad Sanders was about to give up trying to put together his own band, about to sell off his guitars and buy himself a drum kit. He was ready to hold down the line and give up on his frontman dreams—to count himself out, in other words.

Today, he's leading the up-and-coming Amarillo rock band The Stray Sons, which has been building a fanbase in town and across the region for the past three years. Now, they've dropped their biggest single yet, one with a definite message that harkens back to Sanders' earlier days. *(This interview has been edited and condensed.)*

How did you guys get together?

Jared Golden and two other fellows who are no longer with the band came to my last acoustic show. I had no idea who they were. They watched me sing, and during one of my breaks, they all pulled me to the side and said, "Hey man, we really like the way you sing. We like your voice. You know, we play with another guy right now, but we want to start something with you." It was kind of like getting asked out on a date. I was, like, "Yeah, let's try it out." And we instantly clicked and everything just took off.

How do you think you found your sound? What kind of influences come together in your music?

Well, when we first started, we leaned more towards modern-day Red Dirt with some rock influence. And of course, when certain band members leave and you gain new members, you always kind of evolve. We've had members come in that had jazz and metal influences. And I come from 2000s rock and Southern rock and gospel. We're very open to everybody allowing themselves to bleed into the songs, because this isn't "Brad Sanders & The Stray Sons," it's "The Stray Sons." We're a collective.

What's your typical show like?

Man, we start off high-energy and we end high-energy. This isn't a knock on other bands because we truly believe in our regional scene, but we don't stand there and just play the songs. We're gonna stay high energy from Song 1 to Song 24. We get the crowd going.

So, let's talk about the single, "Don't Count Me Out." Who's been counting you out, and why is that a mistake?

Man, I'm so glad you saw that. The song itself is a huge metaphor. As a band, we have had countless people tell us, man, if you were a little more country, you guys would be so much better. If you guys would just change who you are, dress a little more country, add some twang to your voice. I've been personally told that I'm too old to be doing this. People will say, to my face, "Y'all suck. F— the Stray Sons," and they mean it. So we ended up making T-shirts out of that. (Brad laughs.) So what the song is about is that we're human. We know we're not perfect. We don't have all the answers. We're going to make mistakes, we're going to stumble, and we're going to fall. But just give somebody a chance. They'll figure it out. ☺

Watch for The Stray Sons on Sept. 6 and 20 at Blind Pig, 609 S. Independence St.

AUTHOR
CLARA
SNEED



Family Feud

CLARA SNEED ON ONE OF AMARILLO'S WILDEST STORIES

BY CHIP CHANDLER

One of the most notorious feuds in Amarillo history is reexamined in a new book—one that wouldn't have happened had descendants from both sides of the feud not worked together to tell the story.

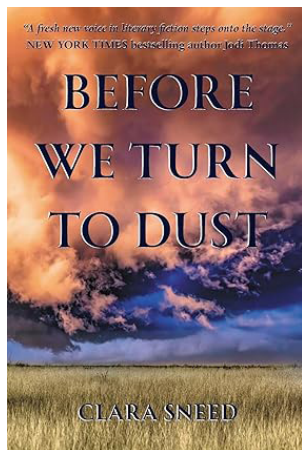
Because This Is Texas, which published in June, dives headfirst into one of the most infamous conflicts in Amarillo's earliest days—for a second time this year. Clara Sneed, a Texas native now living in California, first released the historic fiction novel *Before We Turn to Dust* in March, though she'd been researching the story for more than two decades. *Because This Is Texas*, in fact, is an expanded and updated version of an article that appeared in a 1999 issue of the *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review*. *(This interview has been edited and condensed.)*

Chip Chandler: Who were the Boyces and the Sneeds?

Clara Sneed: Albert G. Boyce Sr., who was known colloquially as the Colonel, ended up being the manager of the XIT Ranch for decades, until he retired in 1905, at which time they were breaking up the ranch and starting to sell it off. The Sneed family also has deep roots in Amarillo. My great-uncle, John Beal Sneed; his sister, Georgia Sneed Thompson; and his older brother, Joseph T. Sneed, all lived in Amarillo. J.T. Sneed ended up with a lot of property in Moore County, where they first drilled for oil and hit it big. Joe Pool, J.T. Sneed's descendent, was very, very helpful to me in my research.

I don't want to give away the ending of the book, but give us an idea what it's about.

This is a love triangle, and the families involved are all prominent, well-to-do families in Texas. Col. Boyce had retired from the XIT and bought a house on Polk Street. My great-uncle Beal Sneed and his wife, Lena Snyder Sneed, moved into town around the same time. So, the Boyces and the Sneeds were living about three-and-a-half blocks away from each other. In the fall of 1910, the Colonel's son, Albert Boyce Jr., came back to Amarillo from Montana. These people had all known each other as children ... and Lena and Al resumed their acquaintance and fell passionately in love. In 1911, right around the eve of their 10th wedding anniversary, Lena told Beal that she wanted a divorce in order to marry Al. Divorce was not completely uncommon, but it was still a very controversial subject, certainly for a woman of her background and her education. Because Beal is not willing to give her a divorce, the solution was to have her confined to a sanitarium in Fort Worth, where she was subsequently diagnosed as morally insane.



Wow, what happened next?

She sends a letter to Al Boyce, who's in Santa Rosa, New Mexico, saying, "For God's sake, get me out of this place." And on Nov. 8, with the help of her nurse, Lena went and met Al in downtown Fort Worth, and then they just vanished. Beal hired [nationally known detectives] the Pinkertons, and at the end of December 1911, they were discovered in Winnipeg, Canada.

Beal succeeded in getting Lena deported, had her meet her dad in Minneapolis and left her with her father with the understanding that she would be returned to the sanitarium. She had some diamond jewelry with her, and Beale had Al charged with stealing. That infuriated the Colonel, who had been kind of willing, in a weird way, of letting Beal go after Al. So the Colonel and his wife went to Fort Worth to fight the charges. Meanwhile, Lena has given her power of attorney to the Boyces to try to stay out of the sanitarium. The Colonel was having dinner at the Metropolitan Hotel, and Beal walks through the door. He starts firing and kills him.

And that, I would say, is just the set up.

Yeah, that will make readers want to keep going.

It's a tragic, terrible story, but it is a wild story.

When did you first hear the story?

I really don't remember not knowing some version of this story. I have a really vague recollection of somebody saying to me, "Did you know you had a relative that killed a guy?"

What changed between that 1999 piece and the full book?

I went to the XIT Ranch headquarters, and there was a picture of Colonel Boyce. [The

XIT manager] said yes, we got that from Pete Boyce in Manteca, California. Well, here I am, living in Berkeley, so I left a card and said, "Please tell him that I would really love to talk to him. I'm very sympathetic to his family, and I'm working on this book." Two weeks later, I get a call, and it's Pete Boyce, the great-nephew of Lena Snyder Sneed's lover. And do you know, within 10 minutes, he said, "Do you know we have some of her letters?" They had kept them all this time. There are

things I found out that happened because I read them in her letters, and no one else knew about them.

What an amazing discovery!

Yeah, after everything, after all the history — you know, the wounds that were caused by my family to that family. It's a remarkable, remarkable thing that both families have participated in this. ☺



CHIP CHANDLER

Chip is the city's arts and entertainment expert, having covered area events since 1998.

Look for more in-depth entertainment coverage and interviews from Chip in future issues and newsletters.

How ALT Gets Hit Musicals

BY CHIP CHANDLER

Amarillo Little Theatre is one of the first community theaters in the nation who'll get to stage *Frozen*, thanks to a process that's a lot like one of the musical's famous songs. Only instead of building a snowman, ALT has been building relationships with companies like Music Theatre International. These result not in a talking Olaf, but in opportunities that are the envy of similarly-sized theaters around the country.

"We are lucky that we have been such a longstanding theater when it comes to companies like MTI that hold the rights to

these shows," says Jason Crespin, ALT's managing and artistic director. "They've been really good about giving us exclusive early rights."

That's due, Crespin says, to ALT's established MTI affiliation, the fact that the theater doesn't have a lot of regional competition and—perhaps most importantly—the quality of ALT's work. That means Amarillo audiences are some of the first to see their local theater stage shows like *The Producers*, *Les Miserables* and *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*.

Frozen will be performed Sept. 4 to 21 on the Allen Shankles MainStage, 2019 Civic Circle. "I'm so excited in particular about *Frozen* because of how many kids we'll bring into the theater," Crespin says. "Who knows? We may be sparking a new generation of not only theatergoers but also performers. Every theater performer remembers the first show they see."

For tickets, call 806-355-9991 or visit amarillolittletheatre.org.



The Hot List

Symphony Under the Stars: The Amarillo Symphony opens its 102nd season with *Symphony Under the Stars* on Sept. 6 at Hodgetown, followed by its *Highland Fling* concert Sept. 19 and 20 and *A Fantastic Symphony* on Oct. 24 and 25, both in the Globe-News Center.



Soddies v. Rockhounds: The Amarillo Sod Poodles close out the regular season hunting for victories over the Midland Rockhounds from Sept. 9 to 14 at Hodgetown, 715 S. Buchanan St.

Tri-State Fair and Rodeo: The 2025 edition of this long-running fave runs from Sept. 12 to 20 on the fairgrounds, 3301 SE 10th Ave. Don't miss the Dancin' in the Dirt concert on Sept. 13 featuring Randall King, as well as all the midway fun and rodeo action.



Quartet +1: Chamber Music Amarillo offers Quartet +1 on Sept. 26 at Arts in the Sunset, 3701 Plains Blvd., and *Celebrating Our Seniors* on Oct. 11 at The Loft at First Baptist Church, 1208 S. Tyler St.

Hoodoo Mural Festival:

The celebration of art and music finds a new home this year, bringing about a dozen muralists to town, plus music from Rayland Baxter, Midlake, and another 18 bands and DJs. The party runs from 3 to 11 p.m. Sept. 27 at Arts in the Sunset.



AMoA Biennial: The Amarillo Museum of Art's annual show features works selected by Rachel Zebro, associate curator of collections at the Phoenix Art Museum, will be on view from Oct. 4 to Jan. 4 at 2200 S. Van Buren St.

The Marriage of Figaro:

Amarillo Opera restages the beloved comic opera at 7 p.m. Oct. 4 in the Globe-News Center for the Performing Arts, 500 S. Buchanan St.

Amarillo International Film Festival:

After a successful inaugural event in 2024, the three-day festival is back Oct. 9 to 11 at Arts in the Sunset.

Misery: In addition to *Frozen*, Amarillo Little Theatre's 98th season continues with the Stephen King adaptation on Oct. 16 to 26 in the Adventure Space, 2751 Civic Circle. ☺

Brickly

Subscribe to our Brickly newsletter for updated news and the latest events, performances and more every Tuesday. We're partnering with Visit Amarillo for continuing entertainment coverage.

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AMOA FAMILY DAY

The Amarillo Museum of Art hosted its annual Family Day on Aug. 9 at the museum. The afternoon event gave kids and adults the chance to experience indoor and outdoor activities and a gallery hunt with prizes. (Provided Photos)



26TH ANNUAL CHAMBER OPEN GOLF TOURNAMENT

The area's largest one-day charity golf tournament teed off on July 24 at Ross Rogers Golf Complex. The annual tourney hosted 284 golfers this year. (Provided Photos)



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7TH ANNUAL CHALK IT UP

Amarillo College hosted its Chalk It Up summertime art competition on July 26. Community members created large-scale chalk art for a chance to win cash prizes. This year's winners were Mallory Prucha, Jenny Inzerillo and Rayan Turner. The Fan Favorite award went to Annie Taylor. (Photos by Preslie Bentley)



30TH ANNUAL ORIGINAL HARLEY PARTY

The tradition continued on July 26 at the Amarillo National Center on the Tri-State Fairgrounds. The party featured live music, vendors and food, and benefited Family Support Services. (Provided Photos)





HALLOWEEN 5K & 1-MILE WALK

Benefiting Ronald McDonald House Charities of Amarillo

Saturday, October 25th @ 9:30AM
1501 Streit Drive, Amarillo, TX 79106
Registration: \$20-\$55



Race shirt | Finisher Medal (5K)
Breakfast | Parking Lot After Party

Get details and register now:



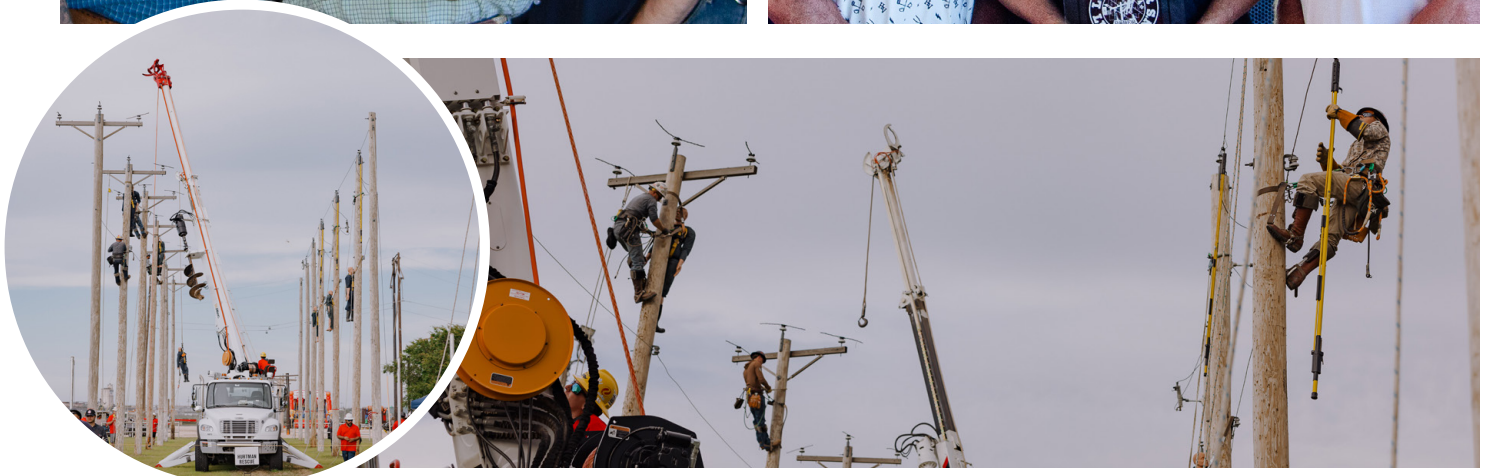
The Price
Family

ATMOS
energy



32ND LONE STAR LINEMAN'S RODEO

More than 100 Xcel Energy line workers from Texas, New Mexico and Colorado competed in the 32nd Lone Star Lineman's Rodeo in Amarillo on June 27. Competitors demonstrated the precision, strength and practical skills they use every day to restore power, maintain critical power infrastructure and deliver electric service. (Provided Photos)





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Amarillo International Film Festival

October 9-11
Arts in the Sunset



INFO / TICKETS

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ENCORE

Art and culture are woven into life in the Panhandle. What began as a search for beauty within the empty horizons of the High Plains grew into a deep artistic tradition where both the quality and quantity tend to surprise outsiders. That's why, for decades, local people have supported local museums, artistic performances and theater. The result is a vibrant and deep local arts culture. We've designed this Encore Section for readers to use as a resource throughout the coming arts season. It includes all the details you need to know about plays, concerts and art shows through 2026.

Amarillo Little Theatre 2025/26 Season

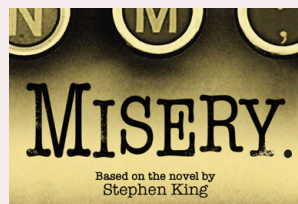


Frozen

Sept. 4-21

The hit Disney movie has been adapted into a new musical! This family-friendly musical brings the magical kingdom of Arendelle and its beloved characters to life on stage through elaborate sets, costumes and the music you know and love.

ALT Mainstage



Misery

Oct. 16-26

Misery follows successful romance novelist Paul Sheldon, who is rescued from a car crash by his "number one fan," Annie Wilkes, and wakes up captive in her secluded home. This suspenseful thriller will keep audiences on the edge of their seats.

ALT Adventure Space



Ragtime

Nov. 6-16

Set in the volatile melting pot of turn-of-the-century New York, three characters confront history's timeless contradictions of wealth and poverty, freedom and prejudice, hope and despair ... and what it means to live in America. This powerful show is sure to leave its mark on ALT audiences!

ALT Mainstage

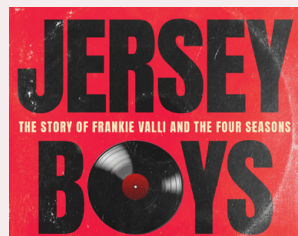


The Cottage

Jan. 8-18

Set in the English countryside in 1923, this side-splitting romp is an outrageous tale of sex, betrayal and love. This laugh-out-loud farce is written by the same playwright as ALT's hit *Clue* and all takes place in ... the cottage.

ALT Mainstage



Jersey Boys

Feb. 12 through March 1

Jersey Boys is the inspiring rags-to-riches tale of The Four Seasons. The play illustrates how a ragtag group of guys from New Jersey became music history. The smash hit showcases The Four Seasons' most iconic hits, revealing the inspiring tale behind the music.

ALT Mainstage

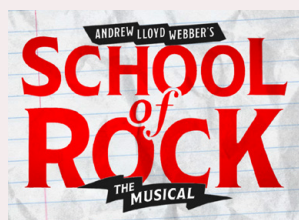


Silent Sky

April 9-19

This true story explores a woman's place in science when their ideas were dismissed until men claimed credit for them.

ALT Adventure Space



School Of Rock

April 30 through May 17

Based on the hit 2003 film, this musical features music by Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber and is the winner of the Laurence Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in Music. This talent-packed musical will rock the roof off the Mainstage!

ALT Mainstage

Plus two more Academy productions this season!

Junie B. In Jungle Bells, Batman Smells

Dec. 5-14

A hilarious and endearing tale based on the best-selling book series by Barbara Park.

ALT Adventure Space

Prince Of Egypt

March 27 through April 5

Journey through the wonders of Ancient Egypt as Ramses and Moses, two young men raised together as brothers in a kingdom of privilege, find themselves suddenly divided by a secret past. One must rule as Pharaoh, the other must rise up and free his true people; both face a destiny that will change history forever.

ALT Mainstage

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2019 CIVIC CIRCLE

ADVENTURE SPACE
2751 CIVIC CIRCLE

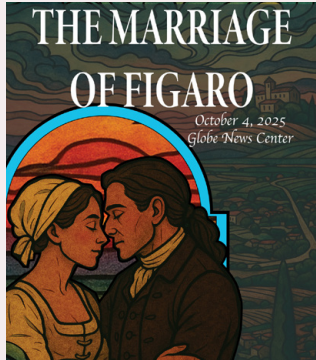
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Amarillo Opera 2025-26 Season

Celebrate the Voice

The Amarillo Opera's mission is to celebrate the voice by providing high-caliber operatic performances to the Texas Panhandle, nurturing local talent through community outreach and building passion for opera.



Oct. 4

The Marriage of Figaro

Globe-News Center for the Performing Arts



Nov. 7

Mariachi Los Camperos De Jesús "Chuy" Guzmán

Globe-News Center for the Performing Arts



Feb. 14

American Portraits

Featuring Tyrone Chambers and Jonathan Levin
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church



April 11

Pagliacci

Globe-News Center for the Performing Arts
Fundraiser to follow

SEASON TICKET PACKAGES AVAILABLE

Education and Outreach

- In-school opera performances
- Fairytale operas
- Amarillo Opera Institute
- Artist master classes
- Senior care concerts

Support the work of the Amarillo Opera at amarilloopera.org/donate



THE Amarillo Symphony

Since 1924, the Amarillo Symphony has played a leading cultural role in the Panhandle region, the State of Texas and the nation. The Symphony presents more than 15 productions a year, including concerts of Masterworks, Chamber Music Amarillo, Youth Orchestra, Happy Holiday Pops, and family concerts at Hodgetown Stadium.



Upcoming Concerts

Highland Fling!

Sept. 19-20 // 7:30 p.m.

A Fantastic Symphony

Oct. 24-25 // 7:30 p.m.

The Planets

Nov. 21-22 // 7:30 p.m.

Happy Holiday Pops

Dec. 19 // 7:30 p.m.

Dec. 20 // 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

20th Anniversary of the GNC

Jan. 16-17 // 7:30 p.m.

Romance at the Symphony

Feb. 27-28 // 7:30 p.m.

Prokofiev's Hymn to Freedom

March 27-28 // 7:30 p.m.

Brahms Requiem

April 24-25 // 7:30 p.m.

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PPHMPANHANDLE-PLAINS HISTORICAL MUSEUM
CANYON, TEXASPEDRO CERVANTEZ, *THE VIOLIN*; 1934; OIL ON MASONITEMARY LOU THOMAS, *UNTITLED [WOMAN WITH LETTER]*; NO DATE; OIL ON CANVASH.D. BUGBEE, *THE HEREFORD HERD*; C. 1923; OIL ON CANVAS

Proximity: Paintings from Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum

Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum and West Texas A&M University Art Program proudly present **Proximity: Paintings from Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum**, a compelling new exhibition that invites viewers to consider how art brings us closer to one another, to the past, and to place.

Featuring rarely seen works from the PPHM collection, *Proximity* showcases landscapes, portraits and still life paintings by celebrated Texas artists, including Isabel Robinson, Maurice Bernson, Olin H. Travis, Fred Darge and Harold Dow Bugbee. These paintings offer more than aesthetic beauty. They become vessels of identity, memory and regional connection.

"In curating this exhibition, I wanted to highlight not only the individual artists but also the relationships their work creates," says Deana Craighead, Curator of Art at PPHM. "These paintings reflect a shared geography, a shared history. In many ways, they help define who we are—then and now."

In a region shaped by wide-open spaces and close-knit communities, *Proximity* explores how art narrows distance: between artist and viewer, between history and the present, and between the collective and the personal. It's an opportunity to engage with the cultural richness of the Panhandle-Plains through works that have long been part of our story, yet rarely on public display.

Graduate students Kenedy Wheeler and Madilyn Ballew, serving as curatorial apprentices, have played an active role in developing *Proximity* as part of their coursework. Their hands-on experience included selecting artworks, contributing to curatorial discussions, conducting research, drafting extended labels, and assisting with artwork preparation and installation. Their contributions not only enhance the exhibition, but also highlight the museum's vital role in educating and mentoring the next generation of art professionals in our region.



This exhibition also marks a continued partnership between PPHM and WTAMU's Art Program, deepening the commitment to preserving, studying and celebrating the art of our region. Visitors are encouraged to explore the gallery and reflect on ways art connects us across time and space.

Open through Oct. 24

**Dord Fitz Formal Gallery | Mary Moody Northern Hall |
West Texas A&M University**

**Admission is free and open to the public during
regular gallery hours.**

For more information, visit panhandleplains.org.



The Citadelle

ART MUSEUM



Looking Ahead

There is more to experience at The Citadelle.

- Annual Waterfield Christmas Lighting | Dec. 1
- Spring 2026 Exhibition featuring internationally recognized figure artists, including Annie Murphy-Robinson, Barbara Hack, Chelsie Murfee and more
- Artist Workshops for adults coming soon

The Citadelle landmark was built in 1910 as the First Baptist Church. Now, it houses a world-class collection of art and offers a place for future generations to be inspired and find themselves surrounded by extraordinary beauty.

Fall 2025 Exhibition

Jon Flaming's Texas | September through November

There is a quiet clarity in the way Jon Flaming tells a story. What began in childhood with sketchbooks and a camera has grown into a singular style. His work speaks through bold color, graphic form and subjects drawn from the backroads of Texas.

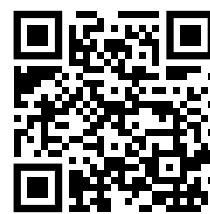
Ranch hands, diners, pickups and prairie towns all find their way into his paintings, capturing both the rhythm and soul of the land. Come see the bold, modern landscapes of Texas brought to life in Jon Flaming's fall exhibition at The Citadelle.



Also This Fall: Native American Art Market

Oct. 18-19 | During Canadian's Fall Foliage Festival

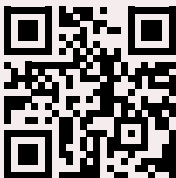
The Citadelle's annual Native American Art Market brings together artists from across the region. Visitors will explore a wide range of art forms, including pottery, beadwork, leatherwork, paintings and historic ledger drawings. It is a rare opportunity to meet the artists, hear their stories, and experience the living traditions of the Southern Plains. This event is a celebration of heritage, community and the power of art to connect generations.



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WOWW
WINDOW ON A WIDER WORLD



500 S. BUCHANAN ST.
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Window on a Wider World is committed to enhancing the knowledge of classroom core curriculum by providing experiential learning opportunities. WOWW connects schools with a vibrant ecosystem of learning partners—museums, artists, science centers and cultural institutions. We will serve 53 schools in 33 districts during the 2025-26 school year.

2025-2026 School Year Day Programs

Shark Beach: Bringing the Coast to the Panhandle

WOWW is partnering with Shark Beach Burgers Sept. 18-21 to bring a one-of-a-kind coastal experience to the Texas Panhandle during its Sandcastle Days event. More than 1,000 fourth-graders will enjoy:

- **Immense Sand Sculptures:** Crafted in real time by world-renowned artists.
- **Interactive Touch Tanks:** Hands-on encounters with coastal marine life.
- **Sandcastle Lessons:** Learn from a master sand sculptor.
- **Live Music & Entertainment:** Beach vibes in the heart of the Panhandle.
- **Educational Exhibits & Games:** Fun, interactive learning with prizes.
- **Vendor Booths & Activities:** A festive, family-friendly atmosphere.

This program will make the beauty and excitement of the Texas coastline accessible to those who may never have the chance to visit the beach. With an expected attendance of more than 1,000 students in its first year, Sandcastle Days at Shark Beach blends education, creativity and connection while offering inspiration through entertainment and cultural enrichment.

12th Annual Youth Art Show: “In Perfect Harmony: A Celebration of Art and Music”

Window on a Wider World invites the public to experience the creative talents of students in the Texas Panhandle and South Plains area at a free community art show, themed “Christmas and Music,” on Dec. 20 at the Globe-News Center for the Performing Arts. Held in collaboration with the Amarillo Symphony’s Holiday Pops concert, this event brings together two vital pillars of the arts—visual and musical—in the very venue where WOWW was first envisioned.

Why Support WOWW?

It costs WOWW \$52 per student to provide high-quality experiential learning opportunities through arts, science and cultural partners. Schools only pay \$2 per student, leaving a \$50 gap that must be covered by generous donors and grants. Last year, WOWW served 8,400 students in 50 schools across 37 rural Texas Panhandle districts. Just \$50 dollars could fully fund one student for a year of WOWW programming; \$500 could fully fund 10 students. No matter the amount you choose to give, your generosity helps cover the funding gap for the students we serve annually.



Since 1989, Amarillo Youth Choirs has been inspiring the youth of the Texas Panhandle to “Raise their Voices” in song. The choirs meet once a week, perform at professional levels and share the stage with the likes of the Vienna Boys Choir (twice!). They frequently collaborate with other local arts organizations and choirs across the globe, sharing their music with audiences far and wide.

2025-2026 Season

Sept. 13

Join us as we sing the National Anthem at the Sod Poodles Stadium.

Oct. 19

Fall Concert, 4 p.m.
Location TBD

Oct. 21

Join us! We will begin accepting new members this October.

Dec. 14

Sounds of the Season Concert
4 p.m.
Location TBD

Jan. 13

Accepting new members!

Feb. 7

Winter Vocal Camp
Open to anyone in second to eighth grades

March 13-16

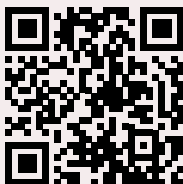
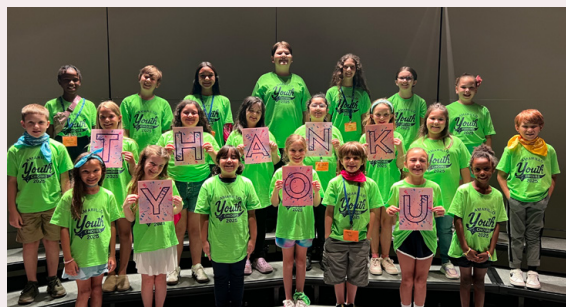
Spring Retreat

April 18

Bella Notte Dinner and Show Fundraiser

May 3

Spring Concert



Arts in the Sunset

First Friday Art Walks

Every First Friday of the month,
5-9 p.m.

Free public events featuring art shows, local music, food trucks and lots of art!

Marketown Fright

Oct. 3, 5-9 p.m.;
Oct. 4, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Shop Halloween and fall items with local artist/artisan vendors and makers.

Night Glow

Oct. 11, 6-10 p.m.

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A large, succulent piece of roasted meat, likely brisket, is the central focus of the image. It is presented on a dark, textured slate platter. The meat has a rich, dark brown crust and is garnished with fresh rosemary sprigs. In the foreground, several thick slices of the meat are neatly stacked, revealing a tender, pinkish-red interior. A large, rustic carving fork with a wooden handle and a metal head is positioned diagonally across the bottom of the slate. The background is a dark, weathered wooden surface, adding to the rustic and gourmet feel of the presentation.

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TAYLOR AND BRENT EPPS

Sharky's BURRITO COMPANY

The origins of Amarillo's original build-your-own burrito place, and how it built a cult following among local students. →

Most Amarillo residents know Sharky's Burrito Company, the locally owned build-your-own-burrito restaurant on South Georgia Street. This small location existed long before Chipotle's arrival in Amarillo, pushed out similar chains like Moe's Southwest Grill, and has cemented itself as a local institution.

But most residents may not know the Sharky's origin story connects to another local restaurant: All the Fixins. Back then, Sharky's owner Brent Epps was a partner and long-time manager at the home-cooking family eatery on Coulter Street. When it became time to move on from All the Fixins, he was able to shift some of his team members into a fresh new concept with a much smaller footprint and menu: Sharky's.

"We opened here in July of 2004," Epps says from his small office inside the restaurant. "As a matter of fact, the tables out here are still from All the Fixins."

Also from All the Fixins? Sharky himself. Loreto "Sharky" Gonzalez had been a cook at All the Fixins and a friend and mentor of Epps. Sharky helped develop the menu bearing his name—right down to the customer-favorite barbacoa—and served as a cook there until his death in 2018.

"I wanted to honor him, and there were some fun things we could do with [the name], advertising-wise," Epps adds. A painting of Gonzalez hangs inside the store.

At the time, the quick-serve, fast-casual concept was relatively new to Amarillo. It required fewer employees than a full-service restaurant and a lot less space. Sharky's took a few weeks to get going that first year, and then it just never stopped. Epps added a drive-thru during the pandemic, but the concept hasn't changed.

But the customer base has definitely evolved. The restaurant always attracted families at dinner and construction workers at lunch. Over the past decade, Sharky's gained something resembling a cult following among local teenagers. Epps can't exactly explain why. "I think it's an organic thing," he says. "The people that come in are high school kids, and then they're turning into college kids."





For the most comprehensive dining guide in the Amarillo area, turn to page 124.



They come back from school over the summer, he says, and bring college friends with them, along with their parents. “And then they go back to school and I start seeing their parents here.”

The proximity to Tascosa High School a mile west could be part of the appeal, but Epps says he’s just as likely to see students from Caprock or Amarillo High or West Plains. Some of those students become part of the rotating Sharky’s workforce, building burritos and nachos and salads for customers (and a lot of their friends).

It wasn’t long before those students started getting married. “We do a lot of wedding caters,” Epps says as the summer starts to wind down. “We’ve done 14 already this summer and have

This small location existed long before Chipotle’s arrival in Amarillo, pushed out similar chains like Moe’s Southwest Grill, and has cemented itself as a local institution.

some big ones [coming up]. That’s all it is: These kids are getting married and they’ve been coming here for years.”

Burritos remain the biggest seller at Sharky’s, but the real hero of the operation may be the spicy ranch, which itself has gained a legendary reputation across the city. “We literally made [our] spicy ranch the week after we opened the store. I’ll be honest—it was nothing special,” Epps remembers. He took the base ranch recipe from All the Fixins and modified it into what has become Sharky’s signature sauce.

Two decades of students grew up on that spicy ranch, and it keeps bringing them (and their families) back. Epps may not be able to explain why, but after 40 years in the restaurant world, he counts his blessings. “We’re blessed to be in Amarillo because they treat you differently, being the local guy. Amarillo’s just a pretty cool, local place. It’s just a different animal,” he says.

Or maybe not quite an animal. More like a toothy, predatory fish. 🐟

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The Equinox Table:

A LETTER TO FALL FLAVORS

My favorite time of the year is here. I've shared this before, and I'll share it once more: September always feels like the beginning of something new for me. I become so inspired and revitalized, from the clothes I wear to the food I cook to the pages I write. It's a time for resetting oneself. For me, it's reorganizing my kitchen, giving my salad spinner a rest, and breaking out the Dutch oven to roast fabulous Sunday dinners.

As the evenings become longer and the cool fall air reintroduces itself, it's time to reach for ingredients that hold more weight. I'm talking about the foods that feel rooted to the darker half of the year. But there is a bridge we must cross between summer and fall when one season of produce leaves and another comes in. And I like to call that bridge ...

The Equinox Table

It's the place where we create and share meals when we are smack dab between two seasons. We hold onto stone fruits, summer corn and root vegetables, all the while leaning a little more into the staples of fall: roasted things, browned butter, apples and winter squash. During this transition, we must honor the seasons through the food we prepare, blending summer's sweetness with fall's earthiness. Oh, fall flavors, I love you so.

It's no secret that Texas weather can be wildly unpredictable. One day, it's 92 degrees and I'm eating sliced peaches with salt and lime. The next day, I'm pulling on a sweater and roasting squash with maple and cinnamon. If the weather can throw us a curveball from time to time, why can't we do the same when it comes to cooking? For instance, I might add grilled plums to a summer burrata and heirloom tomato salad. Or I'll layer delicate roasted squash with arugula and a citrus vinaigrette that still tastes like August.

Weaving through the farmers markets and grocery store produce sections lets us know when prime equinox season is here. You'll see those fall fruits, and veggies will catch your eye, snagging your mustard-colored cardigan as you make a beeline to the Italian parsley. That's your hint that they're ready to start a conversation with you! Apples start showing up in different colors. Pears, beautiful squash in every shade, and sweet potatoes that don't look rushed are ready to be chosen.

A Love Letter to the Flavors That Hold Me

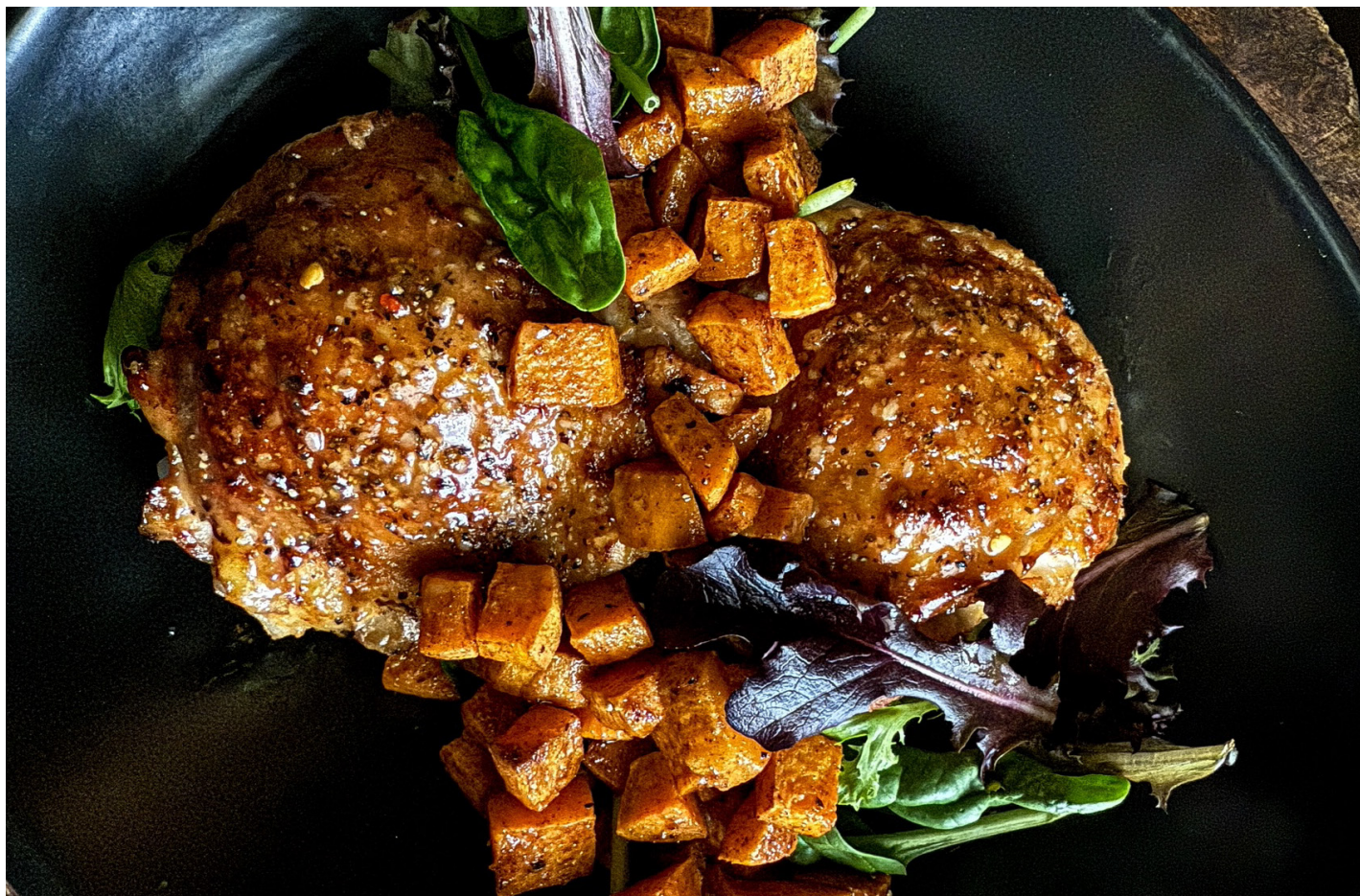
I have several favorite ingredients that carry me through fall. I don't come back to them over and over because I'm out of ideas, but because they always feel like home.

- **Apples:** Ah, my tart, crisp and endlessly useful friends. I'll roast them with onions and serve them alongside roasted chicken or slice them raw into salads with shaved fennel and pecorino. And when I have a sweet tooth, I'll stew them down with a little cinnamon and eat them warm over yogurt or toast. Sometimes, the simplest things are indeed the very best.
- **Winter Squash:** We have our pick of many varieties in the fall, including delicate acorn, kabocha and butternut squashes, each with its own unique personality. I love roasting them until the edges caramelize and letting them shine with just olive oil, a sprinkle of kosher salt and fresh cracked pepper. Sometimes, I'll toss them with a maple vinaigrette, cinnamon and fresh herbs. For my vegetarian friends, I'll fill them with wild rice, roasted mushrooms and cheese, and serve them as a gift to the table.
- **Sage and Brown Butter:** This is a pair that never fails me. I'll use it over angel hair pasta, roasted carrots, sweet potatoes and even popcorn. Brown butter tastes like the very definition of fall to me. I can only describe it as a coat I've been waiting to wear again. And when Thanksgiving hits, it's the duo that turns my cooking into a more ritualistic experience.
- **Figs:** These are a no-brainer when it comes to the things that deserve a love letter. When I can find them, I treat them like treasure. I'll split and roast them, top with goat cheese, or tuck them into a tart with honey and rosemary. Figs never last long in my kitchen. When they're there, I make sure they are loved and noticed. 🍷



RUTHIE LANDELIUS

Ruthie owns Black Fig Catering and is proprietor of a food blog at blackfigfood.com.



Peach-Glazed Chicken Thighs with Roasted Sweet Potatoes and Mixed Greens

6 bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 Kosher salt and black pepper to taste
 ¾ cup peach preserves or jam
 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
 Pinch red pepper flakes (optional, but encouraged)
 1 clove garlic, grated or finely minced
 2 large sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
 1½ tablespoons olive oil
 Kosher salt, pepper and a pinch of cinnamon or smoked paprika (your call)
 2 to 3 handfuls mixed greens
 Drizzle of good olive oil and a squeeze of lemon
 Optional: crumbled goat cheese or feta

Heat oven to 425 degrees. Toss sweet potato cubes with olive oil, salt, pepper and a touch of cinnamon or paprika. Spread on a lined baking sheet in a single layer. Roast for 25 to 30 minutes, flipping once halfway through, until golden and crispy on the edges.

While sweet potatoes are roasting, season chicken thighs generously with salt and pepper. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a large, oven-safe skillet (cast iron is great) over medium-high heat. Place chicken thighs skin side down and sear for 5 to 7 minutes until golden and crisp. Flip and cook for another 2 minutes. While the chicken sears, whisk together peach preserves, Dijon, vinegar, smoked paprika, red pepper flakes, and garlic in a small bowl. Brush peach glaze over the

top of each chicken thigh. If you're using a cast iron skillet, slide the whole pan into the oven. If not, transfer to a baking dish.

Roast at 425 degrees for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the chicken is cooked through (165 degrees internal temp), basting with the pan juices halfway through.

Toss the spring mix lightly with lemon juice and a drizzle of olive oil. On a platter or individual plates, layer roasted sweet potatoes followed by salad mix and top with peach-glazed chicken. Spoon extra glaze from the pan over everything. If you're using a little goat cheese or feta, lightly crumble it over the top.

Makes 4 servings

Eat This, Drink That

Dining-out snaps and recs from the *Brick & Elm* team.



1



2



3



4

1 / CRAB LOUIE SALAD

The Crab Louis Salad at Cellar 55 is everything a salad should be: crunchy, textured, meaty (thanks to the generous portion of lobster), and full of fresh veggies. It's my go-to at any business lunch.—*Michele McAffrey*

2 / COW

The Cream Over Waffles food truck opened a brick-and-mortar location in the old Marble Slab location on Soncy. It's the creamiest, densest ice cream in the region.—*Jason Boyett*

3 / FRIED GREEN TOMATO BENNY

OVR-EZE has expanded its dining area and continues to draw a packed crowd, but wait times are still reasonable. Its Fried Green Tomato Benny is a family favorite. The Skillet Monkey Bread is not pictured because we ate it too fast.—*Jason Boyett*

4 / CLASSIC ICED COFFEE AND CINNAMON ROLL

As soon as Hope Village opened on South Washington, I hurried to support such a worthy organization. And it's easy to do so—Palace Coffee Co. beans ensure a delicious cup of coffee, however you like it. The cinnamon roll is the perfect sweet treat as a morning pickup.—*Michele McAffrey*

5 / ZERO ALCOHOL PALOMA

It's rare to find a mocktail that doesn't taste like a kid's drink full of sugar. That's why I love the zero alcohol version of the classic Paloma at Cellar 55. It's smoky, tart, salty and very adult.—*Michele McAffrey*

6 / THAI STAR

The humble, beloved Thai place on the Boulevard is still amazing, even after its founders retired in 2023. Ten, who took over ownership, serves amazing Beef Laab.—*Jason Boyett*

7 / TOSTI AGUACHILE

We featured the whopping huge burger from Dayvosas JN in our July/August issue, but for those of us who don't eat meat, there are still plenty of options on the menu, from a shrimp burger to one of their ceviche options. I chose the "snack" (it's enough to share!) Tosti Aguachile, a tray filled with zesty Tortilla chips and topped with fresh shrimp, cucumbers, red onions, cilantro and avocado in a tangy lime sauce.—*Michele McAffrey* 🍋



5



6



7

Flavorillo

Want more dining tips and restaurant recs? Subscribe to Flavorillo, our food-and-drink newsletter: brickandelm.com/flavorillo



elcome to The Dirt. In every issue, our anonymous writer gives you the dirt on your burning questions about the Amarillo area. Got something you're just dying to know? Drop us a line at info@brickandelm.com, and our intrepid writer will dig up the answer.

It's spooky season. If I want to see a ghost in Amarillo, where should I start looking?

Did you know more than 1,000 Comanche horses are said to have been shot by the U.S. Army at the Battle of Palo Duro Canyon in September 1874? For our purposes, that would make PDC a veritable hotbed of phantom hoofbeats. But no one ever talks about horse hauntings.

The Nat, first known as the Amarillo Natatorium when it opened in July 1922, has been a swimming pool, dance hall, and home for antiques and oddities. Come for the iconic maple flooring and vague scent of chlorine, and stay (according to legend) for dancing spirits. Locals have reported seeing a young woman, a dancing couple and a few folks still swimming laps around the long-covered pool, as well as hearing echoing drumbeats and singing from visiting bands, still entertaining decades into the beyond.

The Barfield may also hold potential for wandering ghosts. The luxury hotel was built as Amarillo's first skyscraper in 1927. We haven't heard any credible eyewitness accounts, but we have definitely heard stories about the Skirvin in Oklahoma City. If their historic, refurbished, center-city hotel can have ghosts, why can't ours?

Dan Quandt, the retired senior vice president of Amarillo's Convention and Visitors Council, used to tell ghost stories about the historic Lee & Mary E. Bivins mansion on South Polk, which was previously a public library before it was refitted into office space. Once the home of the philanthropic oil and ranching Bivins family, it also served as an event center, community gathering place and neighborhood cornerstone for generations of Amarilloans. Let's just say Chamber of Commerce employees don't spend much time in the third-floor ballroom after dark.



PHOTO BY ANGELINA MARIE



PHOTO BY JASON BOYETT

Why did Amarillo people go so crazy for Long John Silvers? What am I missing?

Neighbor, the entire city had the same question. As anyone who may have experienced a summer in Amarillo (or a Friday during Lent) may know, fried fish is not exactly absent from the local restaurant scene. From upscale places like Drunken Oyster to dives like Scott's Oyster Bar, the town's tastebuds were no strangers to fried seafood.

The viral excitement may be tied less to the beloved, briny menu but to a simple case of don't-know-what-you've-got-til-it's-gone nostalgia. At one point, Amarillo was home to a whopping total of six Long John Silver's locations. The restaurants closed one by one due to lack of upkeep and troubles with management (allegedly), with the last closing its doors in 2019.

That meant Amarillo locals had to make crumblesome journeys to Lubbock or Clovis for a breaded basket. Not that the process got much easier after LJS opened its new Bell Street location on Aug. 1. For days, the line consistently stretched several blocks down the street—at times, a multi-hour wait. Honestly, we don't have a great answer. The whole thing seems, well, a little fishy. 🐟



The anonymous writer behind 'The Dirt' is a sharp observer of the Amarillo-Canyon metropolitan area. If they don't know the answer, they know where to get it and who to ask.



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A photograph of a young woman with long brown hair, wearing a white hard hat, a white tank top, and a black blazer, smiling at the camera. The background is a blurred industrial or construction setting.

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“The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you.” B.B. King

In a previous column, I expressed my aversion to New Year resolutions. It occurs to me now, there is another reason for that I didn’t mention back then. I, a teacher who was raised by teachers, live my life by the academic calendar. So, now, in the dead heat of summer, I wish a Happy New Year to all who celebrate! As we begin a new school year, learning is top of mind, but not only in the context of formal education. I am always reflecting, reading, writing, thinking and learning about myself, about how I want to live in the world, and about how I want to navigate relationships with others. When I considered various topics for this column, I had trouble narrowing it down. So, in lieu of a deep dive into one topic, I will share with you a series of things I am learning that have made my life better.

On Self

Theodore Roosevelt said, “Comparison is the thief of joy.” Someone will always be more successful, wealthier, prettier, funnier, smarter, more talented, more everything than you. (Hello, social media.) Comparison, when it is unhealthy, leads to discontent in one’s own life and resentment of others. When we are centered and content in our own lives and identities, we have no need to compare with others except to be inspired. For me, and probably for many of us, this is one of those lessons that has to be learned over and over again. This also feels like a good time to remind all of us about the unfollow button.

On Friendship

Quality over quantity. This comes naturally with age, I think. While I know and genuinely enjoy a great many people, the word *friend* is becoming more sacred to me with the passage of time. This shift hasn’t been about ending friendships, or deliberately shrinking my circle, but more about knowing which relationships are deep and lasting connections, and which are pleasant acquaintanceships. I am blessed with a collection of women who celebrate and support each other through all circumstances and seasons of life. We laugh about silly things, and we cry about serious things. We cry about silly things and laugh about serious things. I am a big believer in vulnerability, and tend to overshare, but I am learning that not every relationship merits or requires a baring of my soul. A select and trustworthy few is more than enough. And when it isn’t, there’s always therapy.

On Society at Large

Speaking of therapy, upon my very first day on the couch many years ago, a therapist told me something I still think about almost daily. The story she told was this: *You are cut off in traffic. A person in a stressed or unregulated state might get angry and have some choice words for the offender. A person who is calm and centered might think “They are really in a hurry, I hope everything is OK!”*

What a revelation. We have a choice in how we interpret the actions of others, in how we assign meaning and motivation to their behaviors. Dr. Becky Kennedy calls this the “Most Generous Assumption.” Rather than assuming the worst, or jumping to a place of victimhood, we have the option to presume that most people are doing the best they can and have good intentions. That woman who was rude at the grocery store? I’m genuinely sorry for whatever has her so stressed out. The guy who bumped into you? He could be distracted thinking about something difficult in his life. In practicing this philosophy, I have learned that it carries an added benefit: When we give grace and empathy to others, we may find it easier to give grace to ourselves. This is excellent news for a recovering perfectionist.

On Stress and Worry

This very simple, totally accessible trick has quite literally changed my life. It was shared with me by a dear friend, and I have been telling everyone who will listen. It is *that good*. As you know by now, I experience a moderate amount of anxiety and occasional panic attacks. I have heard and read a mind-boggling number of techniques for dealing with it, and this is by far the easiest and most effective I have learned. While we may not all suffer from chronic anxiety, we certainly all have fears and worries, and we don’t always have time to go for a walk or take a meditation or yoga break! The trick is this: By holding an ice cube in each hand, we can disrupt the nervous system and draw attention to a new and external sensation, distracting us from the source of negativity. Incredible. I focus on the sensation of cold, I watch them melt, I engage in mindful breathing, and I sometimes find it helpful to sing a little song. When I say “a little song,” I mean the ABCs or “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” or something. Yes, I have done this in public, and yes, it was funny. But it worked. Two minutes later, crisis averted.

As a passionate and devoted educator, it feels a little odd that this wasn’t exactly a back-to-school post, but the fact is, remembering each of these things I have learned will make me a more effective, capable and compassionate teacher, partner, friend and all-around human being. Here’s to a wonderful school year, and a lifetime of learning. ☺



MAGGIE BURT

Maggie was born into a family heritage of musicians and educators in Amarillo. She spent several years as a performer and songwriter in Amarillo and Austin, before becoming an elementary music teacher in 2019. Maggie’s column draws from her experiences in and out of the classroom.

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Xcel Energy recently announced a \$10,000 grant to **Amarillo Children's Home**, a nonprofit that provides restorative care for children in the Texas Panhandle, as part of Xcel Energy Foundation's 2025 Employee Choice Grant awards.



Laura Pratt, a member attorney with the full-service law firm of **Sprouse Shrader Smith PLLC**, has been elected to the Board of Trustees of the Texas Bar Foundation. Ms. Pratt took office on June 1, 2025.



The City of Amarillo Planning Department recently received the **Gold Award** from the American Planning Association/Texas Chapter in the category of Transportation Planning. COA took the gold for its campaign of Safe Streets for All: Action Plan for Safer Amarillo Streets.



Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center in Amarillo has received a \$50,000 grant from the **Harrington Cancer and Health Foundation** to support groundbreaking cancer research led by **Hiranmoy Das, Ph.D.**, a TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy professor of pharmaceutical sciences and director of the university's Vascular Biology and Stem Cell Research Laboratory.



Ascension Academy announced the promotion of **David Sanders** as the school's new athletic director. Sanders will be responsible for overseeing all aspects of the school's athletic program.



Raise Your Hand Texas announced the promotion of **Skylar Gallop** to senior regional advocacy director.



Physicians Surgical Hospitals recently became the first in Texas to implement the Full Excelsius Enabling Technology Platform, enabling a fully integrated and intelligent surgical suite.



John Lerma has joined **Amarillo ISD** as an extended school day site coordinator.



Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center recently earned Southern Association of Colleges and Schools **Commission on Colleges Recognition**, a distinction achieved by a small percentage of institutions.



Northwest Texas Healthcare System Heart & Vascular Center has been named by *U.S. News & World Report* a **2025-2026 Best Hospital**. Northwest Texas Healthcare System Heart & Vascular Center ranked in Heart Attack among *U.S. News'* latest edition of Best Hospitals. This year, *U.S. News* announced 504 Best Regional Hospitals across 49 states and 95 metro areas that have demonstrated superior outcomes.

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Jacob Harrison joined **BOC Bank** as its new assistant vice president, commercial lender.



Jeremy Busse has been promoted to Lieutenant at the **Amarillo Fire Department** and will be assigned to C Shift; **Kylor Williams** will be promoted to Driver and will remain on B Shift.



TxDOT Amarillo District announced that **Clint Harms, P.E.** has taken on the position of Amarillo area engineer effective Aug. 1.



The Amarillo United Methodist Church has welcomed a new pastor, **Reverend Dr. Chad Johnson**.

To highlight your business briefs, promotions or awards in this section, email a press release or your information to mm@brickandel.com.



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SIMPLE SUMMERS



It must have been sometime in the mid-'60s. My little brother, Scotty, and I knew nothing of politics, economics or social issues. We knew about baseball, tree climbing and the ecstasy of summer vacation. Mostly, what we knew about was a place called Linwood Park. It was right across Hydraulic Street from our house in Wichita, Kansas. Our folks had moved there so we could have a bit more space. Of course, they also knew what Scotty and I had yet to learn: we had a little sister on the way.

In those days, as you've heard a thousand times, things were different. Kids like us would leave the house on a summer morning and not come back until dinner, which we still called supper. Dad had a special whistle—we could hear it from anywhere in the known world. It meant *come home, now!*

Linwood Park is still there, but back in the day there was far less to it. It was only a vast, flat expanse with a few trees, a couple of sandlot diamonds, some concrete basketball courts, and a number of well-placed water fountains that dispensed magic. Nothing ever tasted as good to me as that water. Of course, kids don't factor in a 95-degree temperature along with ridiculous humidity, which was always the case in Wichita during the summer.

Oh, yes, and there was the canal. Along one border of the park, I believe from one end to the other, there was a deep drainage ditch. Everybody called it the canal. We were all strictly ordered not to go to the canal, but that is exactly where we were most of the time. That's where the crawdads, fish, turtles and frogs lived, and we were little boys.

There was a shelter in the middle of the park, and every couple of hours someone would blow a whistle, and we would go to that shelter for activities. It was a ploy to get us out of the heat for a few minutes. We gladly went, because there were always popsicles or snow cones for everybody. The shelter was only an actual shelter when it rained, or hailed. But when it came down in Wichita, that's the kind of downpour Amarillo people know well.

When it was hot, we would sing songs like "Bingo" or "The Ants Go Marching One by One," and then they turned us loose. The park activities director was a friend of our family. He was in our church, in fact. His name was Burl.

So while the music played over the park PA system—it was great music, like Motown and the Beatles—we passed that summer mostly unaware of the world's problems. They did visit home, like when our down-the-street neighbor, an active USAF man like our dad, came home from Thailand (which meant Vietnam, and everybody knew it). He spent the better part of a month in bed in a dark room, resting. I went to see him, since he was my Sunday School teacher, and the father of our best friends, Jerry and Tony. He was weak and very tired. I remember him trying to make conversation with me, though he obviously wasn't up to it.

Dad had an old pickup with bug-eyed headlights and big, rolling

fenders and a front grill with a lot of personality. Thinking back, I guess it was a late '30s model. It hardly ever ran right. Mom hated it. It was kind of a rusty purpley orange color. Dad called it the Burgundy Bandit. I thought it was the coolest thing I'd ever seen, and Scotty and myself always begged for a ride in the bed of the Bandit. "Where are we going to go?" Dad would ask, knowing the answer already. Sandy's was our local burger place, and they had ice cream cones to boot. Dairy Queen, our other favorite, was a little too far—for us kids or for the truck—so we went to Sandy's.

We got a puppy that summer, we named him Caesar. He had regal-looking eyebrows that made him seem a little pompous. We thought that was a scream. We had hamsters named Antony and Cleopatra, so our puppy's name, we figured, should be commensurate with our historical theme.

Caesar grew up to be a very big dog, and a roughouser as well, which suited Scotty and I to a tee. But that summer, he was just a tiny, rambunctious fur ball with a never-ending hunger for Ol' Roy dog food, and plenty of time to play with Scotty and me.

These memories comfort me as I write this column during a hot summer much like those of my childhood in Wichita. My little brother Scott passed away of a heart attack in September 2006. I started working on this on July 22—his birthday—without consciously realizing the significance of the date. Scott lived by Big Bear Lake in California, retired, but occasionally helping his neighbor with some renovation work. I miss him.

Though nothing of note happened that summer in the '60s, I always wish I could go back to those simpler times I enjoyed with my brother. ☺

**ANDY CHASE CUNDIFF**

Andy is an artist, singer-songwriter, music producer and musician. In every issue, his column explores the parts of his life that don't always make it into his songs, accompanied by his own illustration.

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FINDING YOURSELF AGAIN: A Journey from Self-Sacrifice to Self-Love

After a recent visit with my counselor, I started thinking about personal accomplishments—the awards I had won, the people I had helped, and the legacy I thought I had created. But as I took a deeper look, I started to understand that I am someone who just wants to be loved. This means I seek to help other people because I believe I don't have true value unless I'm adding value to someone else. In other words, I focus on others and not on myself.

During our session, my counselor asked, "What are your goals for your life? What makes you valuable? What are you going to do with your future?"

As I sat thinking about the answers to these questions, it became apparent that while I thought I had grown all I needed to, there was definitely more growth needed. Being able to take an honest look at oneself is not easy—it's not painless—but it's probably one of the most beneficial things you will ever be able to do for yourself.

The Strength in Admitting You Need Growth

Being able to accept the fact that you need to grow is brave. That's why people avoid it. We all know the cliché: *If you're not growing, you become stagnant.* My question to you is: *How many of you have become inactive, putting your dreams on the backburner?*

Maybe other people kept you from pursuing your goals. Maybe you pursued the wrong purpose. Or maybe fear kept you from reaching the next level. Perhaps it was even pride that once looked like genuine helpfulness.

Four Truths for Your Journey

This helped me recognize four significant truths:

- 1. Give without expectation.** Never expect from others what you choose to give freely and from the kindness of your heart—not for recognition, repayment or reward, but simply because you saw a need and were able to meet it for the good of those involved.
- 2. Dependency isn't always love.** How do you love yourself when you know others love you because of what you do for them? That's dependency, not love. That kind of "love" is never going to be good enough. When I figured out that my acts of service came from pride and not simply helping, I knew something had to change. Think about the last time you did something for someone: Was it because they needed it, or was it because you *needed* them to need it?
- 3. Discover what makes you tick.** Find a personality test that you trust, take that test, and look at it from all angles. I took an Enneagram Test, which sorts people into nine different personality types. I discovered that I was an Enneagram 2, "The Helper." Rather than focusing on the positive attributes of a 2, I was immediately drawn to the

unhealthy characteristics of Enneagram 2. *Am I like this?* I called my counselor in a panic, and they assured me that each Enneagram type has a healthy and an unhealthy side. We determined we'd work on taking me to a healthier place.

- 4. Find yourself before you lose yourself for good.** Imagine me asking you these specific questions: *What do you like to do in your spare time? What is your favorite food? Where do you want to travel? What does your future look like?* Do you have good answers to those questions? Would you say you don't matter? Is your focus always on others? I'm starting to learn that it's healthy to care for myself first, so I can make sure other people are OK. If I don't have the bare minimum that I need, how will I help anyone else on their journey?"

All of these involve putting yourself first in healthy ways. That may be the hardest and most important thing you will ever do. When we realize our value isn't tied to what we accomplish or our skills and talents—that our value is just in who we are—everything changes.

All that to say: I am Melodie Graves. I like to write. I like to laugh until my sides hurt. I like to provide words of encouragement to other people, and I also like to receive words of encouragement back. Don't be afraid if you see my tears, because you'll know that everything I do, I put my heart into. While I don't desire perfection, I do desire impact.

So The Call this time is to take steps of self-reflection. The type of reflection that involves looking at those dark spots within, assessing previous hurts, and examining loneliness and dissatisfaction.

Once we begin this type of self-exploration, we will begin to see our lives change. We'll begin to step into our purpose. That's when we can focus on impact instead of the imprint we will leave behind. That's when we'll start to say, *I am a good person. I am worthy of love even if I don't do one more thing or help one more person. I am enough, and that is enough.*

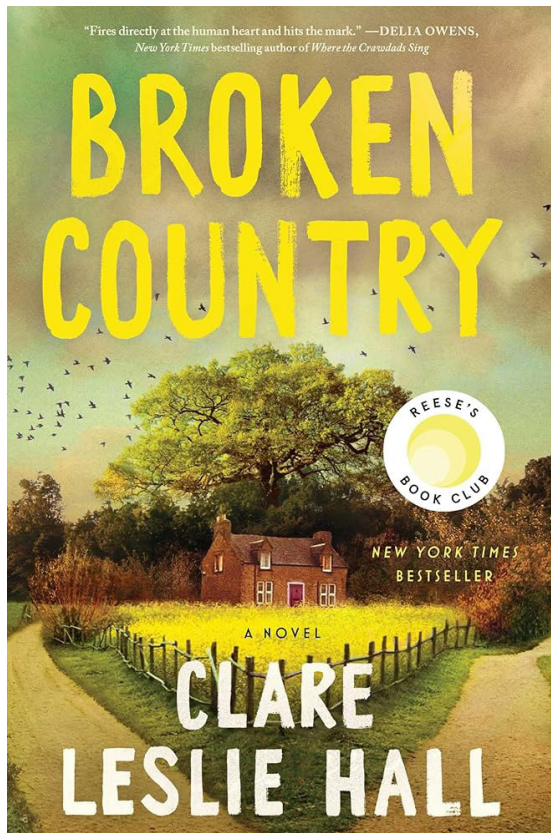
You're enough just because of who you are. Each and every one of us brings something special to the table, so please come to the table. It's time for us to be great. ☺



MELODIE GRAVES

Raised in the North Heights, Melodie is dedicated to service that goes above and beyond her career in higher education. She has worked at Amarillo College since 2010, currently serving as the Associate Director of Academic Advising, Foster Care Liaison and Justice-Involved Advocate. Melodie shares her thoughts about inclusivity, inspiration and answering The Call.

Burrowing Owl RECOMMENDS



***BROKEN COUNTRY*, BY CLARE LESLIE HALL**

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A love triangle unearths dangerous, deadly secrets from the past in this thrilling tale perfect for fans of *The Paper Palace* and *Where the Crawdads Sing*.

"The farmer is dead. He is dead, and all anyone wants to know is who killed him."

Beth and her gentle, kind husband Frank are happily married, but their relationship relies on the past staying buried. But when Beth's brother-in-law shoots a dog going after their sheep, Beth doesn't realize that the gunshot will alter the course of their lives. For the dog belonged to none other than Gabriel Wolfe, the man Beth loved as a teenager—the man who broke her heart years ago. Gabriel has returned to the village with his young son Leo, a boy who reminds Beth very much of her own son, who died in a tragic accident.

As Beth is pulled back into Gabriel's life, tensions around the village rise and dangerous secrets and jealousies from the past resurface, this time with deadly consequences. Beth is forced to make a choice between the woman she once was, and the woman she has become.

A sweeping love story with the pace and twists of a thriller, *Broken Country* is a novel of simmering passion, impossible choices, and explosive consequences that toggles between the past and present to explore the far-reaching legacy of first love.

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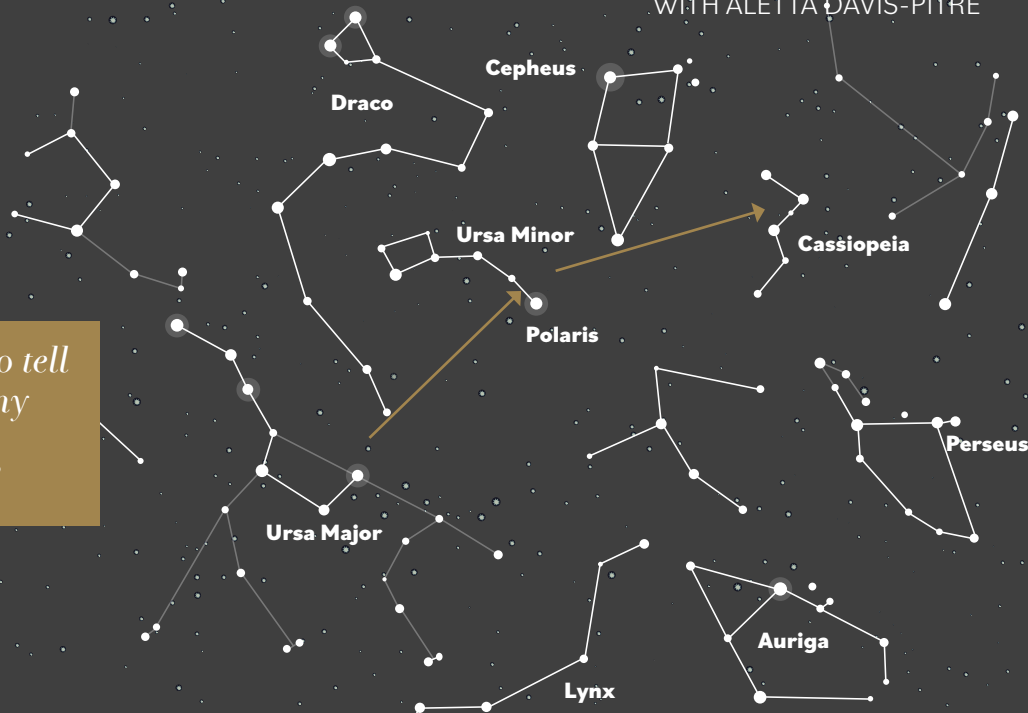


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*"Come in close, now it's time to tell a story: Long ago, and so many years before we ever were."
—Sara Bareilles, "Cassiopeia"*



When you look at the stars, you're viewing the past via light that began its journey many years ago. My best friend likes to think of his telescope as a time machine. Nothing travels faster than light, and the light we see from stars can take centuries to reach earth. For instance, the light from our sun takes just over eight minutes to reach us. When we safely view the sun through a solar scope and see flares, we see this in relatively real time. (These flares create the auroras that we've seen in our area the past 18 months.) But because of the vast distances of our universe, when you see a star shining down, you are seeing the light it emitted years or even centuries ago. When we look up, it's possible that some of the stars we see no longer exist.

Constellations are made of an imaginary pattern of stars, and though they look like they are close together when we see them, they are actually a great distance from each other. One such constellation, Cassiopeia, is made of five stars that are 55 to 610 light years away, meaning the light we see from them was emitted 55 to 610 years ago. First discovered in the second century and named after a vain queen in Greek mythology, it's easily recognizable by its distinctive W or M shape in the northern sky, circling Polaris (the North Star) throughout the year. This means the constellation is circumpolar.

Time to star hop!

Finding Cassiopeia is easy. Riding on opposite sides of a carousel, Cassiopeia is always on the other side of Polaris from the Big Dipper. First, find the Big Dipper, and then focus on the two stars that make up the edge of its bowl. From them, draw an imaginary line to Polaris, and then through to the other side you'll land on Cassiopeia. Despite light pollution, this constellation is visible even within city limits, so gaze upward next time you're enjoying an evening picnic at Medi-Park or a warm autumn night on your patio. ☺

Want to see more?

The Amarillo Astronomy Club welcomes you to our next public star parties:

Sept. 13 and Oct. 11 at Palo Duro Canyon

Sept. 20 at Caprock Canyon State Park

Oct. 18 at Alibates Flint Quarries

The club's monthly meetings resume on resume at 7 p.m. Sept. 5 at The Don Harrington Discovery Center, when we'll kick off the year learning more about auroras. Visit aacstars.org and follow us on Facebook for more information including future star parties and meeting dates.



ALETTA DAVIS-PITRE

Aletha, an Amarillo native, is a physical therapist by day, and stargazer by night. She found her stargazing kindred in the Amarillo Astronomy Club and now serves as the club's secretary. Founded in 1981, the club helps the public peer into the heavens at public star parties or safely view the sun at daytime events, and provides ongoing education about the night sky.

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An aerial photograph of a city, likely Amarillo, Texas, showing a mix of residential neighborhoods with houses and trees, and commercial areas with taller buildings in the distance. Overlaid on the image is a large, green, rectangular street sign with white text that reads "STREET STORIES". The sign is mounted on a silver pole. The sign is tilted slightly to the right.

STREET STORIES

BRICKANDELM.COM 58 SEP/OCT 2025

A Guide to Historic Area Neighborhoods

BY JASON BOYETT

Every neighborhood has an origin story. They're not accidental. They don't just happen. They may develop and evolve over years or decades, but the soul of a community has as much to do with how it started than how it's going today.

The past is visible on every block of Amarillo and Canyon's most historic neighborhoods—in the architectural details, the towering trees, and even the slow process of urban decay. From the humble homes of the Barrio to the stately residences of Wolflin, *Brick & Elm* looked into the history of our most iconic local neighborhoods, exploring the blocks that shape our community character, one street at a time.

THE BARRIO



“Many Barrio families walked, rode their bikes, or drove across Arthur Street to work on the railroad and other businesses.”

—TERESA KENEDY



One of Amarillo's oldest neighborhoods, parts of the Barrio date back to just two years after the city's founding, when the railroad companies began bringing Mexican railworkers into the United States. These laborers were among Amarillo's first residents and were critical to Amarillo's early growth. The railway still runs through the neighborhood.

“I describe the Barrio as a neighborhood full of people who are proud of their Hispanic heritage,” says Teresa Kenedy, the president of the Barrio Neighborhood Planning Committee and the author of a book about the neighborhood's history. “The history of these families goes back to 1889. They are hard-working, resourceful, learned how to build and run small businesses, and want the best for their children. They worked hard to build our railroad and continue to contribute to our city on a daily basis.”

Some of the oldest blocks in the Barrio have been home to multiple generations of the same family. Today, the neighborhood is still nearly 90 percent Hispanic.

Kenedy has been spearheading the ongoing 10th Avenue Streetscape Project, a renovation project bringing street lamps, brick pavers, ADA accessible sidewalks, trees and other amenities to a prominent arterial street. The \$6.1 million project completes this fall.

But that's not Kenedy's favorite street in the neighborhood. She's partial to Arthur Street, she says, “all the way from Third to 29th Avenue.” That street took residents to places like El Alamo Park on Roberts Street, or Our Lady of Guadalupe Church on Houston Street. “Arthur continues to be a busy street as our families and other residents and tourists travel to and from to eat, work, shop, visit and reside,” she says.

The neighborhood's homes themselves are modest, but all have stories to tell, like La Frontera Mexican Food Restaurant at 1401 S. Arthur St. Juan and Teresa Cuellar moved to Amarillo from Iowa in 1922. They owned and operated the Cuellar grocery store on Arthur until 1932, and built their home next to it. “In the 1950s, their family store was renamed the Cuellar Grocery and Tortilla Company, which was the first corn tortilla business in Amarillo,” Kenedy says. Local residents Greg and Mary Socorro Martinez repurposed it several decades ago to create La Frontera. Photos of the original Cuellar grocery are displayed inside.

As for growth, a new, 80-unit attainable housing development, the Tecovas Terrace, is being developed at 2801 S. Aldredge St., with construction to begin in early 2026.

NOTABLE RESIDENTS:

Mateo Lopez was born in Mexico in 1880 and became a horse trainer. He eventually trained one of the white stallions favored by Mexican revolutionary Pancho Villa. After the Mexican revolution, railroad work brought Lopez legally to Amarillo. He lived in the railroad's barracks until saving enough money to buy his first home on the 1400 block of South Cleveland Street. He and his wife raised nine children in the neighborhood.

PLACES OF INTEREST:

Originally built in 1916 in downtown Amarillo, the original Sacred Heart Church was relocated to the Barrio in 1920, at Cleveland and 11th Avenue, at which point it was renamed **Our Lady of Guadalupe**. Under Fr. Cesario Gutierrez, it prioritized ministry to Spanish-speaking Catholics, added a school in 1928, and emerged as a center of community life. The parish celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2020.

*TAKE A WALK:

Start on Southeast 10th Avenue, in the parking lot across from Fiesta Foods, which used to be a neighborhood grocery called Scivally's. Head east on 10th and turn right (south) on Houston Street. This will take you past Our Lady of Guadalupe and the center of the Barrio until you reach the northwest corner of El Alamo Park at Southeast 16th. Circle the park, where you'll pass the Wesley Community Center on the east side. Continue west on Southeast 16th Avenue and you'll walk by the old Dwight Morrow Elementary School (now occupied by Region 16), which served Hispanic students from 1930 to 1965. Turn right (north) on South Arthur Street and return to Fiesta Foods. You'll parallel the railroad tracks, a block to the west, as you pass the old Cuellar Grocery (now La Frontera Mexican Food). Distance: Approximately 1.6 miles.

** When walking in any Amarillo neighborhood, remain aware of your surroundings and be respectful of property. Exploring during daylight is always a good idea.*



LANDMARKS:

- Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church (previously Sacred Heart Cathedral)
- Power Church
- El Alamo Park
- Wesley Community Center
- Glenwood Elementary
- Sanborn Elementary

BIVINS

Before it became a residential development, the land for this neighborhood belonged to the Bivins family, starting with the rancher and oilman Lee Bivins and wife Mary, civic leaders during Amarillo's earliest decades. Lee and Mary built one of the city's first mansions in 1905—now home to the Amarillo Chamber of Commerce and other organizations at 1000 S. Polk St.—but also owned land west of the growing city.

A local aviation pioneer, Bivins was fascinated by what was then a cutting-edge technology. Starting in 1918, he dedicated land to establish Amarillo's first airport, the Bivins Airfield. Its original runways still dominate the neighborhood today. The wide Julian Boulevard divides Bivins before splitting into a Y shape, with North Julian and South Julian running perpendicular to each other. That's because those were originally aircraft runways. In fact, Julian itself is named after Lee and Mary's son. (Aviation remained central to the family history. Julian Bivins and his son, Billy, died in 1940 when an aircraft Julian was piloting crashed on the family's ranchland.)

In 1929, another son, Miles Bivins, along with his wife Myda, built a large Tudor Revival home on several acres of the family land south of what is now Southwest 16th Avenue. They considered it something of a country estate and enlisted the services of legendary Texas architect Henry Bowers Thomson, known

for some of Dallas's architectural masterpieces as well as the Commodore Perry Estate in Austin.

Mark Bivins, the great-grandson of Lee Bivins and grandson of Miles and Myda, enjoyed birthday parties at his grandparents' property and grew up in the neighborhood bearing his family's name. "It was essentially vacant land. That and the [Josephine] Anderson farm were the only two buildings out there," Mark says of the neighborhood's early days. "It hadn't been platted. There were no curbs, so Mrs. Anderson's cattle would get out of her fenced area and come over and eat the lawn that my grandparents planted around the house."

Miles and Myda ended up hiring a cowboy named Slim to live on the top floor of the Bivins home. He was tasked with caring for the grounds—and that meant keeping Mrs. Anderson's cattle away. (Their home is now the headquarters of the Mary E. Bivins Foundation.)

"When we were kids growing up, in elementary school, there was nothing between the back of our house and Wolflin Village," Mark Bivins says. "So we could very easily go out the back fence and walk across a vacant lot to Wolflin Village."

Construction on Interstate 40 began in 1963 and the highway opened in 1968, reshaping Amarillo's geography and creating a stark southern boundary to the Bivins subdivision. Eminent domain meant Mark's father, Lee Truscott Bivins, lost part of the family's property to the government. "I've never seen my father that mad. It was part of his land," he says.

Mark retains much better memories of the interstate. "The

“At the time they were building all those homes, I was too young to be paying attention to architecture, but now I’m quite fascinated with it.”

—MARK BIVINS



best part of the highway was when it was essentially complete but not open yet,” he says. For several weeks, the pavement had been installed but hadn’t been striped, and the expanse wasn’t yet open to traffic. “We would get our bicycles and ride on I-40 as far as we could go, then turn and come back.”

NOTABLE RESIDENTS:

After Myda Bivins passed away in 1978, legendary Amarillo philanthropist **Sybil B. Harrington** ended up buying the estate on Southwest 16th Avenue. She had recently endowed her 15,000-square-foot Harrington House (1600 S. Polk St.) for future generations as a historic home, and needed somewhere else to live.

PLACES OF INTEREST:

Across the street from the original Bivins home, the **single-story house at 2320 SW 16th Ave.** stands out from the rest of the neighborhood due to its French stucco construction and a mansard roof, commonly seen in Parisian buildings. “It was built by Malcolm and Phoebe Shelton, who had a home in Santa Barbara and saw a lot of homes [on the West Coast] in that style,” Mark Bivins says.

TAKE A WALK:

Start near the corner of Georgia and I-40, near St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church. Head north on South Bryan Street to Southwest 16th Avenue, then turn right (east). The historic Bivins property will be the large green space on your right surrounding the South Lamar Street cul-de-sac. Head toward the block-sized property of Bivins Elementary School, then turn left (north) on South Fannin Street. After two blocks, turn left (west) on Julian Boulevard. You’re currently on what used to be an aircraft runway. On your left, note the midcentury modern home at 2105 S. Julian Blvd., which was designed by the visionary Texas architect O’Neil Ford in the 1950s. Turn left (south) again on South Rusk Street or South Lamar Street and head back to your starting point. Distance: Approximately 1.5 miles.

LANDMARKS:

- The Mary E. Bivins Foundation/Bivins Estate
- Bivins Elementary School
- Julian Boulevard Park
- St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church
- St. Mary’s Catholic Cathedral

NORTH HEIGHTS

Established in 1926, the North Heights was developed for Amarillo's Black residents by legendary cowboy and community leader Mathew "Bones" Hooks, who worked with Mayor Lee Bivins and developer A.P. McSwain to purchase the high ground north of Amarillo. Before then, many of the city's Black residents lived in a district known as "the Flats," near downtown.

As a development, North Heights was immediately successful. Its existence may have been a response to segregation and systemic racism, but the neighborhood thrived. Black residents could establish roots, operate businesses and live with a sense of safety and belonging—often free from the scrutiny of predominantly white spaces.

"This community is about family. You know the people. You go to church with them," says Linda Vaughn, a retired educator. Her husband, Alphonso, was raised in the North Heights, and they've lived there since marrying in 1987. The couple's current home is across from Bones Hooks Park.

"There used to be numerous businesses in the African American community," Alphonso says. A former Potter County commissioner for 16 years and the current president of the Amarillo branch of the NAACP, he helped bring the annual Juneteenth parade and celebration to the North Heights in the 1980s. The neighborhood

once boasted its own medical clinics, dental care, funeral homes, grocery stores and much more. "We could do all our shopping and congregating here without having to go outside. It was more business-minded and entrepreneurial, until it faded."

That "fading" began in the late 1960s and early 1970s, especially after AISD's desegregation plan resulted in the closure of North Heights schools. The district began busing Black students out of the neighborhood and into other schools. "The atmosphere changed, and it hasn't come back. There was a lot of flight from the African American community," Alphonso says.

For decades, the Vaughns and other leaders have been trying to restore the once-neglected neighborhood to its former glory. The North Heights Neighborhood Plan represents an important step. Storytelling is important, too. Alphonso and Linda even help lead the Major Taylor Unity in the Community Bike Ride every summer, sharing the rich history of the Heights with participants.

They are realists about the challenges. "Hughes Street is looking pretty ragged," Alphonso says, "but we can get back to being vibrant like it used to be." That main thoroughfare doesn't tell the whole story, though. "It's like a curtain that's raised up from either side of Hughes Street and either side of [Northwest] 24th, but as you get into the inner core of the North Heights—the northeast side of the community—you'll find some really nice houses," Alphonso explains.

Many of Amarillo's most successful Black professionals, he says, can afford to live anywhere in the city—especially communities closer to grocery stores or other services—but choose to build their lives in this historic neighborhood. "We're sort of estranged in that sense,

PHOTO BY SHANNON
RICHARDSON



LANDMARKS:

- Charles E. Warford Activity Center
- Bones Hooks Park
- George Washington Carver Elementary Academy
- Black Historical Cultural Center
- Delvin's Restaurant & Catering
- North Heights Discount & Cafe



UNION BARBER SHOP

"After a stint in the Navy for five years and living in Austin, I came back to the North Heights because I've loved it all my life. There are super people in this community that are exceedingly friendly. We could have moved anywhere in Amarillo or built, but that's why we came back."

—ALPHONSO VAUGHN

but you can move here and feel comfortable,” he says.

“We love it,” Linda adds. “We want to see it get back to being vibrant like it used to be.”

NOTABLE RESIDENTS:

The two-story, white stucco home at 14th Avenue and North Hughes Street was built by **Dr. Melvin Hines**, who moved to Amarillo with his wife, Kathlyn, to practice dentistry in 1937. “It was a very prominent African American home,” Linda says. Hines was the first African-American dentist accepted into the Amarillo Dental Society and practiced in Amarillo until his death in 1988. Kathlyn, a music teacher, was the first Black member of the Amarillo Teachers Association. Hines Memorial Park, behind the Charles E. Warford Activity Center, is named for them.

PLACES OF INTEREST:

The property surrounding the **Black Historical Cultural Center** at Ninth Avenue and North Hayden Street once belonged to Dr. James Odis Wyatt, who opened a full-service health clinic after being denied privileges at area hospitals. He served Amarillo’s African American community as a primary care physician starting in the late 1930s. J.O. Wyatt became the first African-American to seek public office in Amarillo after announcing his campaign for a school board seat in 1955. A few days after the announcement, he awoke to a cross burning on his lawn.

Union Barber Shop, located at 1019 N. Hughes St., is a community hub and “probably the oldest business still operating” in the

neighborhood, Linda says. Managed by Doc Smith and John Chandler, the shop dates back nearly 90 years. “I got my hair cut there in the 1950s,” Alphonso remembers.

TAKE A WALK:

Start at the northwest corner of Bones Hooks Park and head south along North Hughes Street, which serves as the heart of the community. You’ll pass the historic Jenkins Chapel Baptist Church (established in 1926) and Golden Gate Mortuary. Turn left (east) on Northwest 13th after Delvin’s Restaurant, then turn left (north) on Adams Street, which takes you past St. Martin Catholic Church and Jerusalem Church of God in Christ. At Northwest 18th Avenue, head right for a block, then turn left (north) on North Jefferson Street. After passing Greater Mt. Olive Baptist Church, you’ll turn left on Northwest 21st to make your way back to Bones Hooks. Distance: 1.6 miles.



THE HINES HOME



PLEMONS-EAKLE

“I really like Tyler, especially as you head north toward downtown. It’s a very nice gateway into the center of the city, with great views of the skyline and First Baptist Church.”

—WES REEVES

Wes Reeves, *Brick & Elm*’s own history contributor, describes the historic Plemons-Eagle district as one of the most eclectic in the city. It’s definitely one of the oldest, having been established in 1903 by Melissa Dora Oliver-Eagle, one of the most influential women in Amarillo’s history. A native of Alabama, she moved here in 1895 after inheriting considerable wealth, and built her reputation as a land developer and financier (often signing documents “M.D. Oliver-Eagle” to disguise her gender). In 1927, she commissioned Amarillo’s first skyscraper—now The Barfield Hotel—and before that began donating her substantial land holdings to developing this neighborhood.

Reeves lives in the district. “There are some very stately homes with manicured lawns and then you might have a smaller house with a Dynamite Museum sign and homemade yard art a few houses down,” he says. “My friend Allen Durrett once described it as ‘funky.’”

Reeves says he loves the variety of architecture in his neighborhood, from the large, estate-style homes to the quaint two-bedroom cottages. Some houses are more than a century old. Others definitely have a midcentury vibe. The neighborhood's growth over decades gives it an organic, lived-in feel.

"There are so many different styles of houses as opposed to more modern developments that were planned by builders," he says. "Many of the lots on our street were purchased years in advance of homes going up, so it was more of a real estate development than a housing development. There are Craftsman-style homes in the Plemons section of the historic district that date back to the early 19-teens, and we have homes farther south in the Oliver-Eagle addition that were built in the 1950s and even as late as the 1960s."

NOTABLE RESIDENTS:

It has been home to some of Amarillo's most famous residents over the years. The actress **Cyd Charisse** was born Tula Ellice Finklea to a local jeweler and grew up on South Tyler Street. *The Munsters'* **Carolyn Jones** once lived on South Harrison Street. "Another fine home a block down from our house on Harrison belonged to **Margaret Seewald Roberts**, an artist

who designed her home's interiors," Reeves says. Roberts was heavily influenced by her art teacher, Georgia O'Keeffe, who taught a few blocks north at the old Amarillo High School, from 1912 until 1914.

PLACES OF INTEREST:

There are many, but Reeves appreciates the **Craftsman-influenced house at 2123 S. Harrison St.** with a red tile roof. Built in 1920, it was designed by the Kansas City architecture firm Shepard & Wiser, which also designed the Herring Hotel and Don and Sybil Harrington's house on South Polk Street.

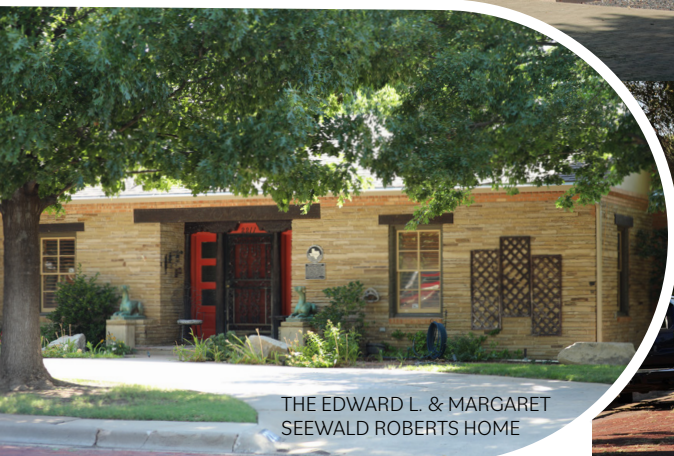
TAKE A WALK:

Start on the south side of Memorial Park, walk through the gazebo and rose garden, and exit the park onto South Jackson Street. Turn right (east) at Southwest 24th Avenue. At South Harrison Street, turn left (north) and enjoy the stretch of tree-lined brick streets until you get to Southwest 21st Avenue. Turn left (west) and then head back north along South Van Buren Street toward the park. This will take you alongside the Amarillo Museum of Art and the option of a stroll through the Amarillo College campus, back to your starting point. Distance: Approximately 1.5 miles.



LANDMARKS:

- Amarillo College
- Amarillo Museum of Art
- Memorial Park
- Oliver Eagle Park



THE EDWARD L. & MARGARET SEEWALD ROBERTS HOME





“Being a business owner in the San Jacinto neighborhood is a pleasure and an adventure. We have owned property there since 2017 and since then, we have met some of the nicest, most passionate and dedicated folks—people who care deeply about the history of the region and the city and who are willing to give time, money and creativity to its development.”

—AMY VON LINTEL



SAN JACINTO

Sixth Avenue is a centerpiece of Amarillo history, and the surrounding neighborhood a mile west of downtown—officially known as San Jacinto Heights—dates back to 1909. Trolley service began a year later, and by 1921 there were 86 homes in the neighborhood. Things really picked up with the 1926 establishment of Route 66, which brought a steady stream of cross-country travelers through this community for decades. “Residents could find grocers, fruit markets, bakeries, butchers, restaurants, dry cleaners, barber shops, beauty salons, furniture stores, restaurants, shoe repair stores, and no fewer than eight service stations,” says West Texas A&M University Art History Professor Amy Von Lintel. She owns and operates Old Tascosa Brewing Company, along with her husband, Matt Welch, in the Sixth Street Historic District.

We’re far beyond the Route 66 heyday, but this commercial strip is still a bustling tourist area, built on a reputation as something like Amarillo’s “main street.” The surrounding homes, though historic, have avoided gentrification. “The residential part of the San Jacinto neighborhood is economically disadvantaged, and folks tend to live there for the low rent and affordable home costs,” Von Lintel says, pointing out that a neighborhood that once boasted 11 food stores on Sixth Avenue between Georgia and Bellevue Streets is now technically a food desert.

That’s one reason philanthropic organizations like Heal the City and Square Mile Community Development also call San Jacinto home. The Route 66 connection brings plenty of traffic, and businesses like the The 806 Coffee + Lounge and Blue Crane Bakery are known for their neighborhood advocacy. “San Jacinto has a fiercely dedicated community of residents, workers and business owners who care deeply about its past, present and future,” Von Lintel says. Many of the buildings they occupy date back to the 1920s.

Her favorite story from the neighborhood’s history involves Cecil Bradford, the so-called “chicken-throwing grocer.” Surrounded by other grocery stores and facing economic challenges during the Depression, he came up with a plan to entice shoppers into the Bradford Grocery, which stood at what is now Inkologist Tattoo Therapy. “Every weekend, he would climb up on his roof and throw live chickens down to patrons on the street below,” she says. Chickens had numbers tied to their legs, and customers could claim prizes based on those numbers. “This event became known as the ‘San Jacinto Chicken Follies’ and to this day, people still talk about the lore around this practice. But few remember which building actually launched the poultry,” she says.

Like the North Heights and the Barrio, San Jacinto is now benefiting from a community-driven revitalization strategy. The



City of Amarillo's ongoing San Jacinto Neighborhood Plan is working to incentivize economic growth in the neighborhood while preserving its character and history. "We are proud to be part of this community, and we ask the public to pay attention to and invest in its legacy along with us," Von Lintel says.

NOTABLE RESIDENTS:

In 1926, **Cal Farley** owned and operated a tire dealership and service station known as the Wun-Stop-Duzzit tire shop along the Route 66 corridor in San Jacinto. He was the first Amarillo merchant to introduce installment-plan purchases and his business was, by all accounts, very profitable. He also ran a radio station from that location, nearly a decade before he began working with underprivileged children—which led to the establishment of the Maverick Club and Boys Ranch.

PLACES OF INTEREST:

Amarillo's Natatorium, otherwise known as "The Nat" at 2705 S.W. Sixth Ave., was designed by prominent local architect Guy Carlander and opened in 1922 as an enclosed swimming pool with a diving platform. (The city was segregated at the time, and only white citizens were allowed to swim there.) When Route 66 arrived, The Nat covered the

pool to create a ballroom and music venue. It went on to host traveling musicians including Rudy Vallée, Guy Lombardo, Bob Wills, Count Basie, Roy Orbison, Louis Armstrong and Fats Domino.

By midcentury, Black musicians even performed at The Nat, which had begun to welcome a more diverse patronage. "In one infamous event on Aug. 23, 1956, Little Richard was arrested at The Nat Ballroom for removing his shirt during a concert and apparently instigating some mixed-race couples dancing to his music," Von Lintel says. It's now a "maze-like antique mall," as she describes it, known for ghost stories, quirky treasures and a lack of air conditioning.

TAKE A WALK:

Start at The Nat and walk west almost the entire length of the best-known portion of Sixth Avenue. Your path will take you past the 806, the Golden Light, bookstores, restaurants like Smokey Joe's and Little Laos, and some of the city's most-visited Route 66 antique shops—all located in historic buildings. Near the brightly painted storage containers marking Square Mile's Sixth Street Urban Farm, the road curves left. You'll see the light blue, Route 66-emblazoned water tower. Cross to the other side of the street and head back the way you came. Distance: Approximately 1.5 miles.

LANDMARKS:

- The Golden Light Cafe
- The Nat
- San Jacinto Elementary School
- San Jacinto Christian Academy
- Generations Fellowship Church
- Square Mile's Sixth Street Urban Farm

SUNSET TERRACE

This small development south of Sam Houston Park is probably the city's least prominent historic neighborhood. It's often lumped in with San Jacinto to the north, or Westlawn to the west, but has a history all its own. Built in the late 1920s and early 1930s, it was one of the first Amarillo neighborhoods to break the city's rigid street grid, becoming Amarillo's first true outlying residential community.

Blame Amarillo architect Guy Carlander for that, says Von Lintel, a resident of Sunset Terrace. Carlander was inspired by the landscape designs of Kansas City and used curving streets and "parklets" of green space to make his development stand out.

"He believed in the beauty of his neighborhood so much that he built his family home on one of the cul-de-sacs that turns off the main circular loop of Sunset Terrace," Von Lintel says. Line Avenue runs through the neighborhood, and the stone gateway structures on either side are also Carlander's design. The avenue is named for the streetcar line that extended from Sunset Terrace to downtown. "Carlander envisioned the perfect suburb setting, with quick transport to the shopping and commerce of Polk Street," she says.

Von Lintel identifies the neighborhood's winding streets as part of its charm. "It unfolds like a journey, giving visitors and residents a break from the linear, structured grid of the main parts of the city," she says. A variety of home designs are tucked away behind mature trees, including cottage-style homes with vine-covered facades. "I do love this neighborhood with all of its quirkiness, beauty and eclectic charm."

Sunset Terrace has a dark side, though. One of those charming cottages was home to a fascinating and prominent local crime. In 1930, a well-known lawyer named A.D. Payne succeeded in killing his wife, Exa, for insurance money before running off with his mistress. The crime was elaborate: Payne first rigged a shotgun in a closet to fire when Exa opened the door. It went off and struck her, but she survived. Authorities trusted him when he explained it was an accident. After that, he planted a homemade explosive device beneath the driver's seat of the family car—not suspecting that the couple's son, A.D. Jr., would join Exa for a ride that day. The bomb went off, Exa was killed immediately, and Junior was severely injured.

"Then, because Payne was so respected in town and wily about his excuses, he escaped discovery for months," Von Lintel says. But reporters from the *Kansas City Star* came to Amarillo and broke the case, winning a Pulitzer Prize for their investigative journalism. Payne was arrested, jailed in the Potter County Courthouse, and then killed himself by sneaking nitroglycerine into his cell. Von Lintel tells this story in one of her books. "I have always wanted to design a true crime tour of Amarillo that included this house and its crazy story," she adds.



NOTABLE RESIDENTS:

Architect **Guy Carlander** moved to Amarillo in 1919 and practiced locally into the 1950s, designing everything from school buildings (Landergin School, Ordway Hall at Amarillo College) to commercial spaces like the 12-story Fisk Medical Arts Building (now the Courtyard by Marriott) downtown. He's credited with more than 60 major projects across the Panhandle, including the former Amarillo Hardware building, now home to Amarillo City Hall. Carlander also designed his family home on Fountain Court.

PLACES OF INTEREST:

The outdoor **stone stage in Sam Houston Park**—which hosts a variety of concerts and other events throughout the year—was designed by the father-son architecture firm Hare & Hare of Kansas City, who also created the layout of the Wolflin neighborhood.

The neighborhood is also filled with creativity. “The Sunset Terrace area has become a unique haven for artist-types,” Von Lintel says, “and one can find Dynamite Museum signs, abstract sculptures, and interesting yard art in front of numerous homes.”

TAKE A WALK:

Start at Sam Houston Park, then make your way south to Sunset Terrace, the thoroughfare that gives the neighborhood its name. Follow the curve of Sunset past Craftsman-style homes, cozy bungalows and mission-style homes. When you reach Waverly Street, turn left (north) and walk one block to Fountain Terrace. Turn right on Fountain and make a quick loop around Fountain Court, which will introduce you to Guy Carlander's family home, with its white stucco, asymmetric two-story design and half-timber accents. Continue on Fountain until you reunite with the northern curve of Sunset Terrace, then head left (west) toward Sam Houston Park. At the diamond-shaped Bellevue Park, head in either direction—or just walk across the green space—to remain on Sunset. Distance: Approximately 1.3 miles.



THE ORIGINAL CARLANDER FAMILY HOME

LANDMARKS:

- Sam Houston Middle School
- Sam Houston Park
- Margaret Wills Elementary
- Rock Island Rail Trail

WOLFLIN

“One of the most fun things is the shock of out-of-town visitors when they drive into Wolflin and see the brick streets and the tree canopy covering the streets,” says Richard Ware, chairman of Amarillo National Bank. “They can’t believe they’re in Amarillo.”

The Wolflin family owned the 640-acre Daylight Dairy southwest of Amarillo, and by the 1920s, the town was encroaching on it. A young Charles A. Wolflin, fresh out of college, secured a loan from the Ware family at ANB, hired Kansas City's Hare & Hare firm to design a neighborhood, and began developing the pastureland into Wolflin Place (the northern part of the neighborhood) and Wolflin Estates to the south.

Deed restrictions for several of the blocks between 30th and 32nd Avenues required two-story brick homes to be built for a minimum of \$10,000, Ware says. “That restriction was made in the 1920s, but that group of blocks have a unique, common feel.”

The development felt fresh and new, with wide brick-lined streets and the city's first traffic circle, Oldham Circle, named for Charles A. Wolflin's father, Charles Oldham Wolflin. “We have a picture of the construction of Oldham Circle, and there were mules pulling plows to cut those streets in that circle,” Ware says. Wolflin bought more than a thousand fast-growing Siberian elm trees and the family watered them with buckets. Most of the trees still stand over the brick streets.

Ware grew up on Harrison Street, but the family moved into the Wolflin neighborhood when he was in high school. Today, Richard Ware lives on Hughes Street, and his sons—the next generation of Ware family members—also live in Wolflin. Beyond the stately homes and towering trees, the community is known for its holiday hospitality, from Christmas lights to Halloween trick-or-treating.



“Everybody said the Dutch elm [disease] would get the elm trees, but they’ve lived through a lot of these problems. I think that’s a reflection on the good planning of the Wolflins.”

—RICHARD WARE



It wasn’t always that way, Ware says. In the 1960s, presumably due to the “trick” side of the Oct. 31 tradition, people avoided the neighborhood. “Wolflin was best-known for terrible Halloweens,” Ware says. “The cops always had to come to Oldham Circle. It was a war zone.” Young people would get arrested. Some years, security personnel from the Amarillo Air Base were even called in to curb the mayhem.

“Now it’s standing room only, with people lining up for candy—with no problems.” Ware says with a chuckle.

NOTABLE RESIDENTS:

Countless Amarillo leaders, attorneys, physicians and other prominent residents have made their homes in Wolflin, from multiple generations of families like the Wares to past Amarillo mayors including **Jerry H. Hodge** and **Lawrence R. Hagy**.

PLACES OF INTEREST:

Architect Emmett F. Rittenberry designed the large, **Tudor Revival-style home** at 2800 S. Hughes St. in 1928 for Alpha Wolflin—Charles A. Wolflin’s mother—and that home was used to promote the new community in early marketing materials. Other notable homes include the **Philip Tauber House** at 2612 S. Hayden St., which was designed in 1927 by New York City architect Francis W. Keally. He went on to design the Oregon State Capitol and the main building of the Brooklyn Public Library. The Tauber house appeared in a 1928 issue of *Architectural Forum*.

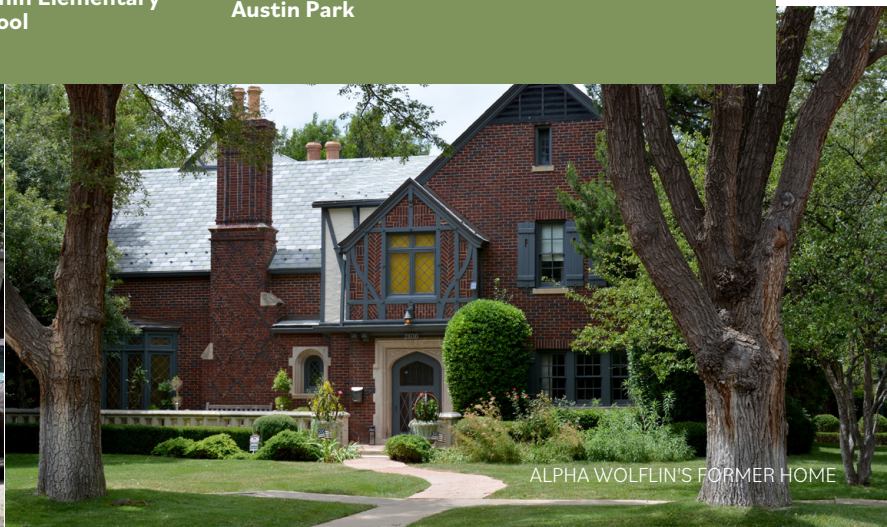
TAKE A WALK:

Start at Southwest 24th Avenue across from Amarillo College’s FirstBank Southwest Center, and head west. You’ll pass Hughes, Hayden and Ong streets before turning left (south) on Lipscomb Street. Continue for four blocks until you reach the elegant homes of Oldham Circle. Make your way around the circle before continuing east along West 32nd Avenue. Take your pick of Ong, Hayden or Hughes Streets to take you back to 24th Avenue. While some of the other streets in the neighborhood are named after Alamo heroes, these were named for early Amarillo law enforcement officers. Distance: Around 1.5 miles.

LANDMARKS:

- Wolflin Village
- Wolflin Square
- Wolflin Elementary School
- Austin Middle School and Austin Park
- The Church in Austin Park
- Trinity Baptist Church
- La Tour Apartments

PHILIP TAUBER HOUSE



ALPHA WOLFLIN'S FORMER HOME



CANYON

Named for the geological landmark a few miles east, Canyon's first residents settled here in the early 1880s. By 1889, the town had been designated the county seat of Randall County. The railway arrived in 1898 and Canyon was officially incorporated in 1906. Four years later, in 1910, West Texas State Normal College opened.

Technically, "Canyon" is not a neighborhood. Like any city of 16,000-plus, it boasts multiple neighborhoods—from Hunsley Hills to Canyon West—but its core retains a historic energy and identity. "It's a charming city. It has a lot of heart," says Stephanie Price, marketing manager for a national hospitality company. She grew up in Amarillo but has lived in Canyon for several years, and previously worked for Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum. (Also, her husband, Joe, is Canyon's city manager. "But I don't speak for the city," Stephanie insists.)

What she does speak for is the unique character of Canyon, which is distinct from Amarillo. "It has its own identity and challenges, but also its own really bright future," she says. Part of that identity reflects civic pride in the historic courthouse square. Twenty years ago, this heart of the city felt a bit timeworn. Then Palace Coffee opened on the Square in 2011, catalyzing momentum. Other shops and restaurants followed, along with new development, the Canyon Farmers Market every summer, and constant activity.

"The Square has become such a gathering place. It feels historic, but in a good way," Stephanie says. "We don't want 'old.' Old doesn't feel good, but historic feels great." She travels often for her work and has encountered dilapidated and worn-down city centers. "But Canyon is doing such a good job keeping the Square alive with business and industry. People want to be there."

The natural wonder right down the road adds appeal, not just for travelers but the city's long-time residents. "We take it for granted, but being 12 minutes away from Palo Duro Canyon, in such a flat area of the world—that's so unexpected," she says.

But the landscape isn't quite as important to Price as her neighbors. To exemplify the personality of the city, she points to the fundraising and development of the Kylie Hiner Memorial Playground at Connor Park, named for a beloved Canyon resident who passed away in 2017 at age 25. The city worked with residents, Kylie's parents and civic organizations to create a wheelchair-accessible, inclusive playground which opened in 2023. "It's such a special place in Canyon that's worth noting," Stephanie says. "It speaks of what makes a community a community."





“We’ve really seen [The Square] grow into an amazing place, where it is hopping on a Friday and Saturday night. When I was here in college in 2005 and 2006, it was really quiet down there.”

—STEPHANIE PRICE

NOTABLE RESIDENTS:

After a stint teaching art in Amarillo, **Georgia O’Keeffe** returned to the Panhandle and taught at West Texas State from 1916 to 1918. She created numerous watercolors during her time in the area—Palo Duro Canyon was a favorite inspiration—and frequently dined at the home of fellow WT professor Mary E. Hudspeth, which is now the Hudspeth House Bed and Breakfast.

The late **J. Pat Hickman**, founder of Happy State Bank, was a lifelong Canyon resident and community leader until his death in 2024.

PLACES OF INTEREST:

Though temporarily closed, **Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum** is the largest history museum in Texas. The Panhandle-Plains Historical Society was founded in 1921, and Pioneer Hall—its Art Deco gateway building—was constructed in 1932. It has been recognized as a Texas State Antiquities Landmark.

The 47-foot-tall **Tex Randall** statue on Highway 60 dates back to 1959, when Harry Wheeler built it to attract customers into his western wear business. Initially, Tex wore actual clothing, including denim jeans, but those gave way to the harsh climate. Tex got a facelift around 10 years ago and was designated an official landmark by the city of Canyon. It remains a nationally recognized roadside attraction.

TAKE A WALK:

Start near Old Main, in the traditional heart of West Texas A&M University. Head south on the campus to Fourth Avenue and turn right (west). You’ll pass PPHM. Cross 23rd Street at the traffic signal and continue west until you reach the Square. Along the way, you’ll pass Hudspeth House, First Baptist Church and First Methodist Church. Loop around the historic courthouse and head east toward the campus along Fifth Avenue, which takes you through residential blocks where some homes date back to 1920 or earlier. Cross 23rd again and return to campus. Distance: 1.8 miles. 📍



HUDSPETH HOUSE



LANDMARKS:

- West Texas A&M University
- Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum
- Tex Randall statue
- Courthouse Square
- Happy State Bank Stadium
- Palo Duro Canyon

Opening

HOPE

New restaurant concepts
give valuable experience to
workers with disabilities

BY JASON BOYETT

“It has been non-stop,” Carla Hughes says. It’s opening week for Hope Village, a transitional employment center on South Washington Street that’s home to three brand-new restaurant concepts. Behind the counter, a young woman steps up onto a stool to manage the cash register as she takes a coffee order. In the kitchen of the deli, behind large windows, employees prep vegetables for the salad bar. Next door, workers set out tubs of Blue Bell, preparing to open the ice cream parlor.

About half of those employees have developmental disabilities.

Hughes steps aside as a customer enters, allowing Tanya, an adult with Down syndrome seated by the door, to serve as the official greeter. Tanya quietly welcomes the customer, then walks over to Hughes for a hug. Her morning shift is ending.

Hughes gives Tanya her full attention. “Look at everybody smiling at you!” she encourages Tanya. Then she returns to the subject of Advo’s new public-facing businesses.

The three public-facing businesses of Hope Village—Special Blends, Jeffrey’s Deli and Scoops with Smiles—are all operated by a combination of workers. Some have disabilities and others are traditional employees.

"I'm a social worker. I'm not a restaurant person," she says. Hughes and the Hope Village team have been working hard to stay on top of the logistics of what was supposed to be a soft summer opening. It turned into what can only be described as a high-profile, community-wide launch event, weeks ahead of the official mid-August ribbon cutting.

"We certainly thought our community was going to embrace it," Hughes says. "Obviously. They paid for it! But I never in a million years thought it was going to be this."

She stops once again to greet Eric, an enthusiastic young man who was sacking groceries at United before he applied to work at the deli. Hughes then waves at Ben, a quiet man who first thought he would only be comfortable washing dishes behind the scenes, but has since begun working the cash register in preparation to work the drive-thru window.

Hope Village had been a dream of Advo Companies and the Advo Hope to Opportunities Foundation since 2012.

Hughes, Advo's founder and board president, and Jeremy Bradford, the Foundation's vice president and development officer, have been fundraising for this multi-phase project since 2018.

The public was eager to see phase one of the project—these public businesses—finally open. They arrived in droves. They brought friends. They posted on social media about it. Teachers stopped in to see former students employed by Hope Village. College students caught up with former high school classmates. Parents of young children with a disability ordered ice cream—and basked in the comfort of a place where no one stared at disabilities, and where everyone knew they belonged.

"The challenge has been having enough food. And enough ice cream," Hughes says. Blank Spaces had already completed large-scale murals throughout the campus by opening week, and thankfully most of

the kitchen equipment was in place. But some of the furniture hadn't yet arrived. Televisions and media boards weren't yet operational.

But the employees? The employees were hard at work, having a great time operating Special Blends Coffee and Tea Shop, Jeffrey's Deli, and Scoops with Smiles Ice Cream Parlor.

The Hope Village businesses are the result of nearly \$6 million in fundraising to create opportunities for children and adults with disabilities. It's part of a multimillion-dollar campaign to expand the Advo campus beyond its original vocational workshop and residential program into something much bigger: Hope Village, a daycare facility, a print shop offering screenprinting and embroidery, an athletic complex and more.

Hughes, Bradford and the rest of the team introduced *Brick & Elm* to employees and guided us through the operations.

PHOTOS BY TANNER BEGGS



“The response to our opening tells me what I’ve always known about this community, and that is that it’s an extremely generous community, because it really is. Not just are they generous, but they’re also very kind.” —**Carla Hughes**



The Hope Village leadership team includes Rick McElroy (general manager), Ashley Bennett (food service manager), Jeremy Bradford (vice president, development at Advo), Carla Hughes (president of Advo), and Richard Thorne (COO of Advo).

Special Blends is a full-service coffee bar serving coffee beans roasted locally by Palace Coffee Co., with a menu of espresso-based drinks including lattes, mochas, protein-infused products and pastries.





“We started thinking about what’s most important in our community, as far as what employers need,” Hughes says. It’s not custodial or janitorial help. It’s kitchen prep, line cooks and even public-facing positions. “They need cashiers. They need to be in the front line of working with people. And so that’s when we thought, OK, let’s do a deli.” This deli just also happens to serve as a transitional employment classroom.

Jeffrey’s Deli is named after Jeffrey Britt, son of Lewis and Jennie Britt. He could never talk or take care of himself, and doctors thought he might not live longer than 5 years. Jeffrey defied the odds and survived into his 30s. “He lived at home with his parents, but he came to us during the day. His parents were amazing. And so when we started this, they said, “We want to honor Jeffrey.”



The pace at Special Blends is noticeably slower than most local coffee shops. That’s intentional, and most customers come in with expectations calibrated for patience. Hughes points to LaShonda, who’s operating the cash register. “If she has a hard time counting out the money, they’re not pushing her, so she’s able to learn,” she explains. When customers extend grace, workers like LaShonda gain confidence and valuable experience.



The menu at Jeffrey’s Deli includes an Italian grinder sandwich and chopped barbecue brisket. The smoked meats are legit: The deli is managed by pitmaster John Blanda, one of the former owners of Nine Line BBQ. In fact, around the holidays, the deli will take orders for smoked turkey and ham.

L-R: AUSTIN, DWAYNE AND BRENDON WORK IN THE DELI KITCHEN



The 50-plus employees represent a blend of adults with disabilities and traditional workers. Some come with experience. Others undergo two weeks of concentrated training from Advo job coaches. The interest within the disabled community surprised even Hughes. “We thought we would hire everybody from Advo,” Hughes says about the weeks leading up to the opening. “We were going to hire 15 individuals with special needs, so we had a job fair and we posted it to Facebook. We had 62 people with special needs show up for our job fair.” They decided to make their team bigger, and interviewed them just like you would for any other job. “One [young man] we interviewed, I asked, ‘What are your strengths?’ And he said, ‘I like people.’ And I said, ‘Well, that’s what we need.’ It just makes your heart feel so warm,” Hughes says.



WILL



L-R: LASHONDA AND J'LENE

In its vocational workshop, Advo contracts with a number of businesses to perform labor-intensive tasks, from sorting clothing to shredding documents. It provides meaningful work and income for adults with disabilities, but it also takes place in a private, controlled environment. “It’s kind of behind the walls. This is very public,” Hughes says. “That’s exactly why we did this. Everything that happens in the workshop, we control it. We can intervene.”

The community engagement side of Hope Village removes that luxury—and it’s for the benefit of employees, who gain experience in a real-world environment characterized by unpredictable customer interactions. Hope Village puts adults with disabilities right in the center of customer interactions.

“A couple of people we have working here now have had community jobs that had been unsuccessful,” Hughes says. “The reason they’ve been unsuccessful is because of an interaction, either with a coworker or a customer, that just demolished their self-esteem. That was my biggest fear. But I think everybody coming here understands the vision and has embraced the vision. They’re coming with a different mindset.”

Scoops with Smiles Ice Cream Parlor exclusively serves Blue Bell ice cream. Don't miss the cheerful murals designed and executed by Amarillo's own Blank Spaces—including painted, ice cream-shaped ceiling panels.



THE KING FAMILY ENJOYS ICE CREAM ON A LATE-SUMMER MORNING.

Several years ago, Hughes was giving a public tour of Advo's workshop and group homes, sharing her vision. One of the visitors agreed about the need for the program, but asked, "Does it have to be this nice?" Hughes was taken aback.

Her eyes shine with tears recalling that question. "Why shouldn't it be nice?" she recalls thinking. If we want nice things for ourselves, she asks, why would we not want nice things for our neighbors with disabilities? "People don't always see the value in their contributions. They're not 'less than.' There's so much that they have to give. For too long, they've just been put in the back." ☺



TANYA WORKS A FEW HOURS EACH MORNING AS A GREETER INSIDE THE DOOR OF SPECIAL BLENDS.

BRICKANDELM.COM SEP/OCT 2025 77

BRICK & ELM LAUNCH PARTY!

Celebrate our Sept./Oct. 2025 issue at a public launch party at Hope Village (5197 S Washington St.)

Tuesday, Sept. 9, 6-8 p.m.

Small bites, food trucks, Dove Creek horses, activities, and meet-and-greets with people featured in this issue.

Horses & Healing

Rediscovering Joy at Dove Creek

BY MEAGHAN COLLIER

It's hard not to get emotional when Laurie Higgins-Kerley talks about what horses have done for her. Just listening to her describe their healing energy can feel like an emotional release.

"They really know how we feel. They're highly emotionally intelligent, and they've been on the planet for 56 million years," she says. "They're highly sensitive. They can read us so well—you know, where we are emotionally. That's why people often come here, because they're stuck."

Stuck in grief. Stuck in sadness. Stuck in dread.

Laurie found herself lost in all of those feelings after her husband died in 2008 following a journey with cancer. That heaviness—the weight that won't leave your chest—left her feeling hopeless. As weeks and months passed, she kept retreating to nature and to a small herd of horses at Dove Creek Ranch, a place she and her late husband bought in the 1990s.

"It's part of the Tierra Blanca Draw, the Tierra Blanca Creek bed that runs into Palo Duro," she says. "We call it the secret canyon because people just don't know it's here. It was very magical. When the kids and I and Bob drove down with the realtor, I was like, oh my gosh, this is gorgeous. We all fell in love with it."

She described the land's ethos as a different frequency, something inherently healing, and something she desperately needed after Bob's death.



"It was hard to know how to go through grief. I didn't have any practice with that. Going through the ups and downs and trying to still be a mom," she shares. "But I would find solace out here, and every time I left over the two years that I came out, I would have hope." Grief is an arduous journey, she explains, and it's easy to get lost. "I don't think our culture has taught us a lot about how to move through grief as a community, how to support people."

Laurie didn't grow up around horses. A city-adjacent girl from Mississippi, she had been a competitive swimmer. Then she married Bob and bought her first horse. "I was about 26 years old. Ever since then, I've had horses. I'm going to be 68 this year, so I've had them a long time."

That relationship would change her life forever, even after Bob's death. Frequent trips to Dove Creek Ranch got her through that painful loss, and as the months turned to years, she started to feel more like herself. She credited her four-legged companions at Dove Creek.

"Something happens when you're with horses, and this has taken me years to understand and experience, but they help us truly get to our heart's desire," she says. "We have so many mental patterns and how we think about things, but [horses] really help us bypass that and get to our heart. I just remember feeling like they had done some deep healing, and I want others to know them this way. I also wanted to help them as a population."

Surrenders and Safety

Horses are large and expensive animals. Estimates indicate that tens of thousands of horses become unwanted each year in the United States, when owners are unable to provide the financial or physical care they need. Job loss, illness, death and relocation are among the most common reasons. In 2012, Laurie founded Dove Creek Equine Rescue with the purpose of reducing the local unwanted horse population, transitioning her ranch into a place where horses are rescued, rehabilitated, retrained and rehomed.

The process of turning a ranch into a rescue took time, shaped by lessons learned and mentors who left their mark. Today, Ali McEwen directs rescue operations and volunteers at Dove Creek. She also oversees barn management, equine intake, health care and adoptions. To date, 261 animals have lived at Dove Creek and 180 have been adopted.

"It's such a moving time for the horse and the human," Ali says of the adoption process. "We've watched them come from the lowest and get to the best. Of course, we form a relationship with them, but the goal is for them to find their forever home. When they're ready, we do a close interview and try to make the perfect match."

When they know, they know, she says. "It's happy tears for sure. What makes it easier for volunteers is that we've established great relationships with our adopters, so we

PROVIDED PHOTO



LAURIE HIGGINS-KERLEY WITH SHILLELAGH



EVA SEVERANCE AND BELLA



NOVA, WHOSE STORY HAS GONE VIRAL ON SOCIAL MEDIA, WITH ALI MCEWEN AND VOLUNTEER NATALIE FULLER



still get to see the success stories. We update everybody, we let them know where the horses are and what they're doing. I think we get to give them their second chance and stay with them the rest of their lives as well."

Many horses at Dove Creek have been surrendered by owners who want a safe landing place for their animals. But others are seized by county officials for cruelty or neglect.

"We just got custody of 11 horses. We lost two to death while we were waiting on the warrant to be served," Ali says. "There's nothing like standing on the other side of a fence watching an animal pass away when you can't do anything. Those are the hard things."

Thanks to a volunteer team of more than 35 people and supportive veterinarians, Dove Creek can overcome many of those hard things. Volunteers from middle school to college age provide essential care for the ranch and the horses, and depending on the animal's condition upon arrival, the average turnaround from intake to adoption takes about a year. Severely malnourished horses require more time to rehabilitate, but the goal is almost always to prepare them for a permanent home.

"The biggest thing for me is to walk into every scenario with a nonjudgmental heart. I may see some really skinny horses. I may see some really bad situations," Ali says. "There are situations where we've saved horses, and in reality, it was the owner who was suffering. In their hardest times, it's hard to let go of the one thing that loves you unconditionally and that you love unconditionally. Sometimes, not all the stories are good, but to me, that's how we help the horses and the humans too—to make sure that they know there is a safe place and they can go get the healing they need and get back on their feet and they did what was right by the animal."

Letting Horses Lead

As of late summer, 15 horses are permanent residents of the ranch, working in an equine-assisted learning and coaching program called Led By Horses. EAL is an experiential journey where interactions with horses help provide immediate insight into relationships with self and others. Activities for individuals and groups are facilitated by an equine-certified coach.

"There are three of us who primarily coach," Laurie says. "A lot of people come when they're stuck in transition. We've had many women say, 'I'm stuck in life, I need some direction, and maybe some practices to help me move forward.' That's exactly what we offer."

Their work now reaches far beyond individual coaching. This year, they are wrapping up a grant-funded program for first responders. "We've had one of our coaches work with them individually, and it's been powerful," Laurie continues. "They're in front of so much trauma — police officers, firefighters—PTSD is a very real challenge. I hope we can keep doing it even after the grant ends."

Women's retreats are another cornerstone, each with a unique theme—like boundaries and finding your voice, claiming your space. "Some people are just in survival mode," Laurie says. "But I believe you can still dream even in the tough times. Dreams give us hope and aspiration, and that helps us get through."

The team also offers led meditations with horses and recently began working with women veterans through the Veterans Resource Center, many of whom also live with PTSD.

Beyond Grief

While the program began with a focus on grief, it has grown into a broader therapeutic mission. "Grief is one piece," Laurie says, "but there

are so many challenges people face where horses can help.”

One of the deepest lessons comes from observing herd dynamics. “The true leader of a herd is the one who cares the most and is most present. It’s not about dominance or power—it’s about compassion,” she says. Horses also model “leading from behind,” she says. Their quiet, encouraging style builds confidence in others so they can step into leadership when needed.

“That’s the leadership model I want to bring into the human world,” Laurie says. “We’re moving into team-building more and more, and that’s my favorite thing.”

Ali has also seen the impact horses can have on workplace dynamics. “We’ve worked with businesses where they’ve got great employees, but there’s conflict. We bring them down here, and the horse works the magic. They see what it looks like when you’re not working together as a team. When the horses start to cooperate, they start to feel like a team again.

“A lot of people don’t want to get help because they don’t want to sit in front of someone and talk about it. It’s an uncomfortable place, but being with a horse, with someone gently guiding you, lets you work through emotions with this giant, forgiving, nonjudgmental creature,” she says. Horses, for instance, are good at teaching boundaries. “You take a woman who’s been abused or pushed around all her life, and she’s up against a horse that’s trying to do the same thing, but they love the animal, so they find the courage to stand their ground, to set boundaries, to see that they can overcome. It’s life-

changing in so many ways. You can talk about it all day, but when you see it and feel it, that’s what makes the difference. It happens so organically.”

It’s been 13 years since Laurie set out to change the lives of horses and people alike. In that time, Dove Creek Equine Rescue has become one of the region’s most prominent rescue operations. Now a part of the ASPCA’s The Right Horse initiative, Dove Creek can expand its adoption efforts to reach potential homes nationwide.

This work takes the support of the philanthropic community. Each year, Dove Creek’s Sunset Dinner serves as its major fundraising event. This year’s themed event—“1923: A Western Elegance Affair”—is scheduled for Oct. 18, giving participants an opportunity to see Dove Creek, meet its horses, and enjoy music under the stars. The dinner serves as a conduit to bring together supporters to raise essential funds and tell the story of the therapeutic impact of equine-human partnerships. For Laurie, it’s a story that started with grief and ended, perhaps unexpectedly, in profound joy.

“And I have to say, I’m happy we’re the ones doing this,” Laurie says. “It’s the deepest journey of the soul. The one thing we teach here is that we must honor our grief journey because you’ll gain so much. This is how I truly found joy. On the other side of grief is joy. When you’ve gone through it, and honored it and listened to it, I think people do understand. It’s hard to find this kind of healing.” ☺

“On the other side of grief is joy. When you’ve gone through it, and honored it and listened to it, I think people do understand. It’s hard to find this kind of healing.”

—Laurie Higgins-Kerley



DOVE CREEK



AMARILLO'S SECRET SIGNALS



The local pirate radio roots of paranormal legend Art Bell

BY CLAYTON TRUTOR

If you've ever turned on the radio in the middle of the night and heard free-flowing discussions of ghosts, Bigfoot and crop circles, you've probably tuned into *Coast to Coast AM*. The long-running paranormal radio program stretches for five hours, seven nights a week. It has been the country's most popular overnight radio show for nearly 30 years, and it has Amarillo roots.

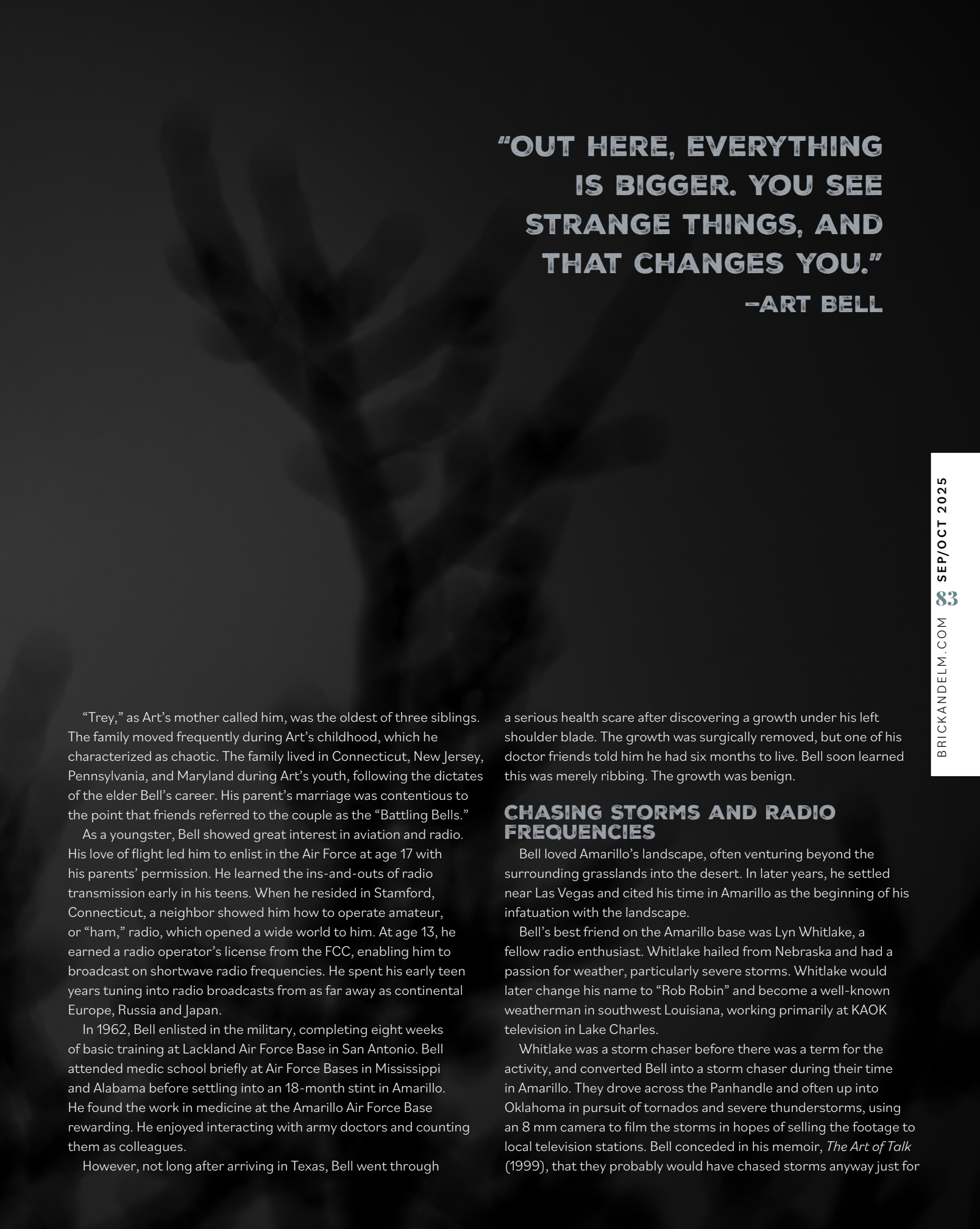
The program was created and hosted for decades by Art Bell, who got his start in the local radio business in an unusual and illegal manner.

While serving as a medic in the Armed Forces, Bell started a pirate radio station in his barracks at the Amarillo Air Force Base. For a time, KMED, as Bell dubbed the unlicensed station because its disc jockeys were all medics, was one of Amarillo's most popular frequencies. It operated commercial-free in the early 1960s, without approval from the Federal Communications Commission. Complaints from the city's commercial radio stations brought KMED to an end, but the experience served as the starting point for one of the most unique careers in broadcasting history.

ORIGIN STORIES

Arthur William Bell III was born on June 17, 1945, at the family hospital at Camp Lejeune, the massive Marine Corps base in Jacksonville, North Carolina. His parents were both Marines. His father, Arthur William Bell Jr., came from a well-to-do family in Stamford, Connecticut. He served as an officer in the Marines during World War II, surviving the six-month long campaign on Guadalcanal in the Pacific Theater. Bell retired from the Marines as a colonel. Art Bell's mother, Jane Lee (Gumaer) Bell, served in the Marine Corps Women's Reserve.





**"OUT HERE, EVERYTHING
IS BIGGER. YOU SEE
STRANGE THINGS, AND
THAT CHANGES YOU."**

—ART BELL

"Trey," as Art's mother called him, was the oldest of three siblings. The family moved frequently during Art's childhood, which he characterized as chaotic. The family lived in Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland during Art's youth, following the dictates of the elder Bell's career. His parent's marriage was contentious to the point that friends referred to the couple as the "Battling Bells."

As a youngster, Bell showed great interest in aviation and radio. His love of flight led him to enlist in the Air Force at age 17 with his parents' permission. He learned the ins-and-outs of radio transmission early in his teens. When he resided in Stamford, Connecticut, a neighbor showed him how to operate amateur, or "ham," radio, which opened a wide world to him. At age 13, he earned a radio operator's license from the FCC, enabling him to broadcast on shortwave radio frequencies. He spent his early teen years tuning into radio broadcasts from as far away as continental Europe, Russia and Japan.

In 1962, Bell enlisted in the military, completing eight weeks of basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio. Bell attended medic school briefly at Air Force Bases in Mississippi and Alabama before settling into an 18-month stint in Amarillo. He found the work in medicine at the Amarillo Air Force Base rewarding. He enjoyed interacting with army doctors and counting them as colleagues.

However, not long after arriving in Texas, Bell went through

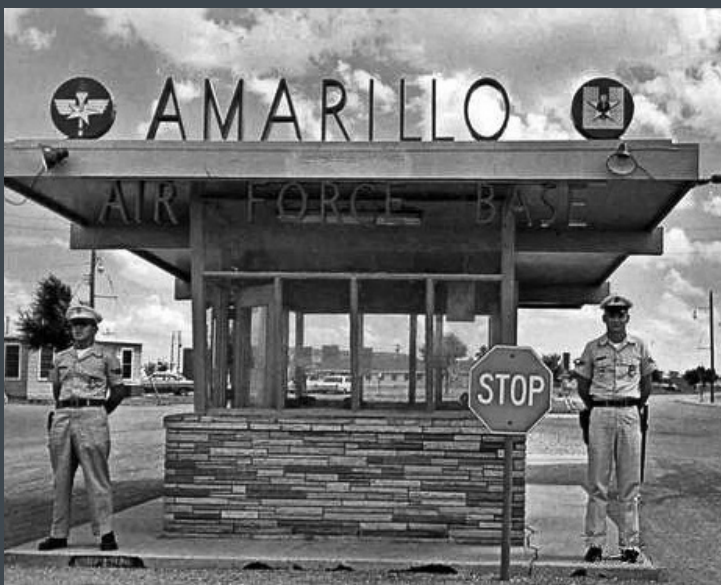
a serious health scare after discovering a growth under his left shoulder blade. The growth was surgically removed, but one of his doctor friends told him he had six months to live. Bell soon learned this was merely ribbing. The growth was benign.

CHASING STORMS AND RADIO FREQUENCIES

Bell loved Amarillo's landscape, often venturing beyond the surrounding grasslands into the desert. In later years, he settled near Las Vegas and cited his time in Amarillo as the beginning of his infatuation with the landscape.

Bell's best friend on the Amarillo base was Lyn Whitlake, a fellow radio enthusiast. Whitlake hailed from Nebraska and had a passion for weather, particularly severe storms. Whitlake would later change his name to "Rob Robin" and become a well-known weatherman in southwest Louisiana, working primarily at KAOK television in Lake Charles.

Whitlake was a storm chaser before there was a term for the activity, and converted Bell into a storm chaser during their time in Amarillo. They drove across the Panhandle and often up into Oklahoma in pursuit of tornados and severe thunderstorms, using an 8 mm camera to film the storms in hopes of selling the footage to local television stations. Bell conceded in his memoir, *The Art of Talk* (1999), that they probably would have chased storms anyway just for



the thrill of it, even if there hadn't been a financial motivation.

During his hurry-up-and-wait base life in Amarillo, Bell figured out another way to amuse himself.

"One day, I was bored. I missed using my ham radio, which had been my passion for many years," Bell wrote in *The Art of Talk*. "Just for the hell of it, I started poking around the base to see what I could find."

In the barracks, he located a Heath Kit Variable Frequency Oscillator device, which could be used as a radio transmitter on the AM frequency. Bell and Whitlake put it to work, launching their careers in pirate radio.

The duo sat in Bell's room and started playing cuts from his collection of 45 records, commenting on news events of the day in irreverent fashion, and even providing a weather report. Another friend, Paul Gerrard, became a third disc jockey on the impromptu station. Each disc jockey covered a two-hour shift each evening.

"Most of the guys loved it. They tuned in their radios and every night for quite some time they got music without commercial interruption," Bell wrote in his memoir.

It didn't take long for Bell's superiors to get wind of his pirate radio station. The unit's commanding officer called Bell and Whitlake in for a meeting to discuss the matter. Bell assumed that was the end of the station, but the meeting went quite differently than he expected.

His commanding officer said he didn't want them broadcasting from the barracks, perceiving it as a potential source of disorder. Instead, he told them he would contact the base's Military Amateur Radio Station unit and ask him to give the three enlisted men space to do their broadcasts. Typically, MARS operations on bases consisted of communications with other military installations and official communications for base personnel. Bell's commanding officer had no professional context for understanding what was happening at his facility.

"Neither the commanding officer nor anyone else for that matter had any concept of commercial broadcasting, what was legal or illegal. They just wanted to get the situation handled," Bell wrote in *The Art of Talk*.

The next day, Bell, Whitlake and Gerrard started building an illegal pirate radio station in the base's MARS building.



FROM AMARILLO TO OKINAWA

Bell and his crew built a complete studio in two rooms, equipping it with a soundboard, turntables, microphones and all manner of noisemakers for on-air silliness. They gained access to a military-grade radio transmitter and erected a 300-foot-long antenna. The station could be heard not only on the base, but across Potter County, including the entirety of the city of Amarillo, which had approximately 137,000 residents in the early 1960s.

Listeners discovered KMED rapidly. Unlike the city's commercial stations, KMED was an ad-free home for the popular music of the day. KMED remained on the air for more than a year. The end came when the annual Arbitron radio ratings were released for the Amarillo market. Like Nielsen ratings for television, Arbitron was based on what people report listening to during the course of their days.

As it turns out, KMED had become one of the city's top-rated stations. The city's commercial radio stations protested to the FCC, and Bell's commanding officer shut down the pirate station immediately.

Several months after KMED's demise, Bell was transferred to Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines, where he treated soldiers who had been wounded in Vietnam. Bell would spend several months "in country," serving at a medical facility in Da Nang, where he had even closer contact with casualties from the growing conflict.

Bell mustered out of the armed forces in 1966, beginning a two-decade-long odyssey as an itinerant radio engineer and disc jockey.

For a time, Bell served as a disc jockey at KSBK in Okinawa, Japan, the only civilian English-language radio station in Asia at the time. While at KSBK, Bell broke a world record by remaining on the air for five straight days without sleep. He then spent a few years as a disc jockey in Anchorage, Alaska, along with several other markets across the continental United States.

He continued building pirate radio stations wherever he lived, setting up shop illegally in several markets during the intervening years.

NIGHTTIME CALLERS

By the late 1970s, Bell found himself transitioning into the increasingly popular talk radio format, delving initially into politics and the events of the day. Listeners appreciated the open forum Bell provided for discussing controversial topics such as foreign policy and gun control.

It was during the late 1980s that Art Bell found the niche that made him famous. In 1988, he took over the overnight slot at KDWN in Las Vegas, a 50,000-watt station that could be heard across large stretches of the American West. Bell's program, known initially as *West Coast AM*, delved increasingly into the paranormal—a longtime interest of Bell's which rarely got airtime anywhere else. Discussions of UFOs, the occult and crop circles

became the coin of the realm on his program. Guests and callers alike, many of them making wild claims about extraterrestrials, cryptozoology and conspiracy theories, created a highly theatrical radio program that functioned more as a source of entertainment than edification.

Bell was not an activist for the ideas expressed on the show. Instead, he positioned himself as a presenter of ideas that would otherwise not find a platform, anticipating the Wild West of podcasts and social media. As much as anyone, Art Bell was the father of the free-flowing, democratized digital public square that has come into being over the past quarter-century.

Bell never screened his callers. Instead, the calls came directly to the host, who was also the show's producer and engineer. Every night, Bell demonstrated that a large audience existed for seemingly fringe ideas, and that audience was ready to participate in the creation and evolution of these ideas.

After developing a large and loyal Las Vegas area audience, the program went into syndication, rechristened *Coast to Coast AM*. It became the nightly soundtrack for millions of insomniacs, shift workers and over-the-road truckers. By the late 1990s, Bell's program could be heard on more than 500 radio stations in the United States and Canada. In 1997, the Associated Press called *Coast to Coast AM* the country's most popular late-night radio show. Bell reached as many as 15 million listeners each evening.

In addition to his standard fare of alien abductions and hauntings, Bell situated the show firmly within the context of current events. During the show's 1990s heyday, as the news cycle shifted, topics jumped from the militia movement to apocalyptic cults to Y2K.

Bell introduced *Coast to Coast AM* each evening as taking place in the "Kingdom of Nye." Nye County, Nevada, to be exact. Bell had set up shop deep in the Nevada desert, more than an hour west of Las Vegas near Death Valley. He hosted the program in a trailer next to his modest home in Pahrump, Nevada, population 12,000.

Locals protected Bell's privacy, refusing to reveal his whereabouts to curious fans who came to town. Bell and his wife Ramona took long walks in the desert, just as he had with Lyn Whitlake decades earlier in Amarillo. The couple was known to pick up the garbage they found to keep the landscape pristine.

Bell hosted the original *Coast to Coast AM* from 1988 until 2002. *Coast to Coast AM* remains a late-night radio staple, overseen for many years now by George Noory. From 2003 until his death in 2018, Bell returned to the air periodically, hosting weekend editions of *Coast to Coast* as well as other iterations of his signature program.

Bell died on April 13, 2018, just short of his 73rd birthday. Ten years earlier, Bell had been inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame in 2008, acknowledging an influential radio career that got its start in Amarillo, Texas. ☺



HOODOO MURAL FESTIVAL

Take a look inside this year's Hoodoo Mural Festival as it makes its move to Arts in the Sunset. Now in its sixth year, Hoodoo has become a vibrant celebration of art, music and community in Amarillo. The festival brings together local and national talent, showcasing large-scale mural installations alongside a dynamic lineup of live music. With its new location comes new opportunities for interactive art experiences, expanded vendor markets, and a fresh way for attendees to connect with creativity.

ADVERTISEMENT





Whether you're a music fan, an art lover or just looking for a great time, this year's Hoodoo Mural Festival has something for everyone.

The 2025 festival will feature two music stages with performances from both local favorites and nationally touring acts, offering a genre-spanning soundtrack to the day.

On the mural side, attendees can watch five, large-scale murals come to life, alongside 10 to 15 smaller-scale murals scattered throughout the venue.

**SEPT
27**



**3-11
PM**

HOODOO

MURAL FESTIVAL

MUSICIANS

RAYLAND BAXTER
Midlake
Quaker City Night Hawks
 Gabo Payuca • Blue Johnnies
 Bardown • DJ Roro • DJ Antonio
 Turnkey Tyrants • Grant Fitchen
 Ri Wolf • Derek Porterfield
 Plemons Bridge

SILENT DISCO DJ'S
 Gemini • VICES • DJ Dan-E
 Bomb City Sound • DJ G
 Mix Master Mark



MURALISTS

DAVID SWARTZ
birdcap • Dan Black
Floyd Mendoza
 Blank Spaces • Raela Ornelas
 Clayton Spaulding • Emma Webb
 Braxton Bjork • Kamden Slough
 Kara Speedy • Niara Torres
 Irv Perex • Talia Sandoval

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ALL AGES WELCOME! HOODOOMURAL.COM 10 & UNDER GET IN FREE!

**AMA
TX**



A silent disco adds a unique twist, inviting guests to throw on a pair of headphones and dance to curated playlists in a shared, but personalized experience.

Local food trucks will serve up everything from street tacos to sweet treats.

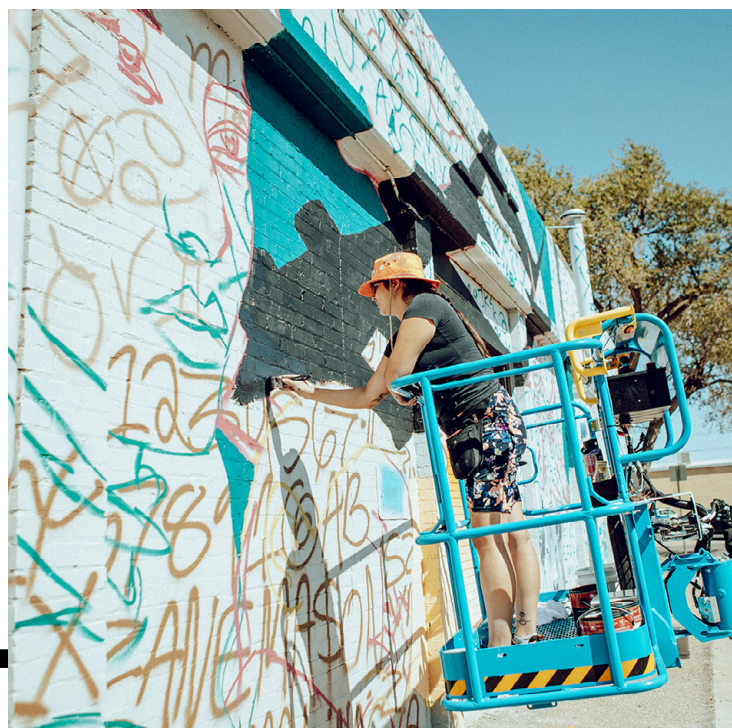
A curated market of local vendors will showcase handmade goods, art and more.

Interactive art activations, including hands-on painting, button-making and family-friendly creative zones, invite guests of all ages to jump in and make something of their own.

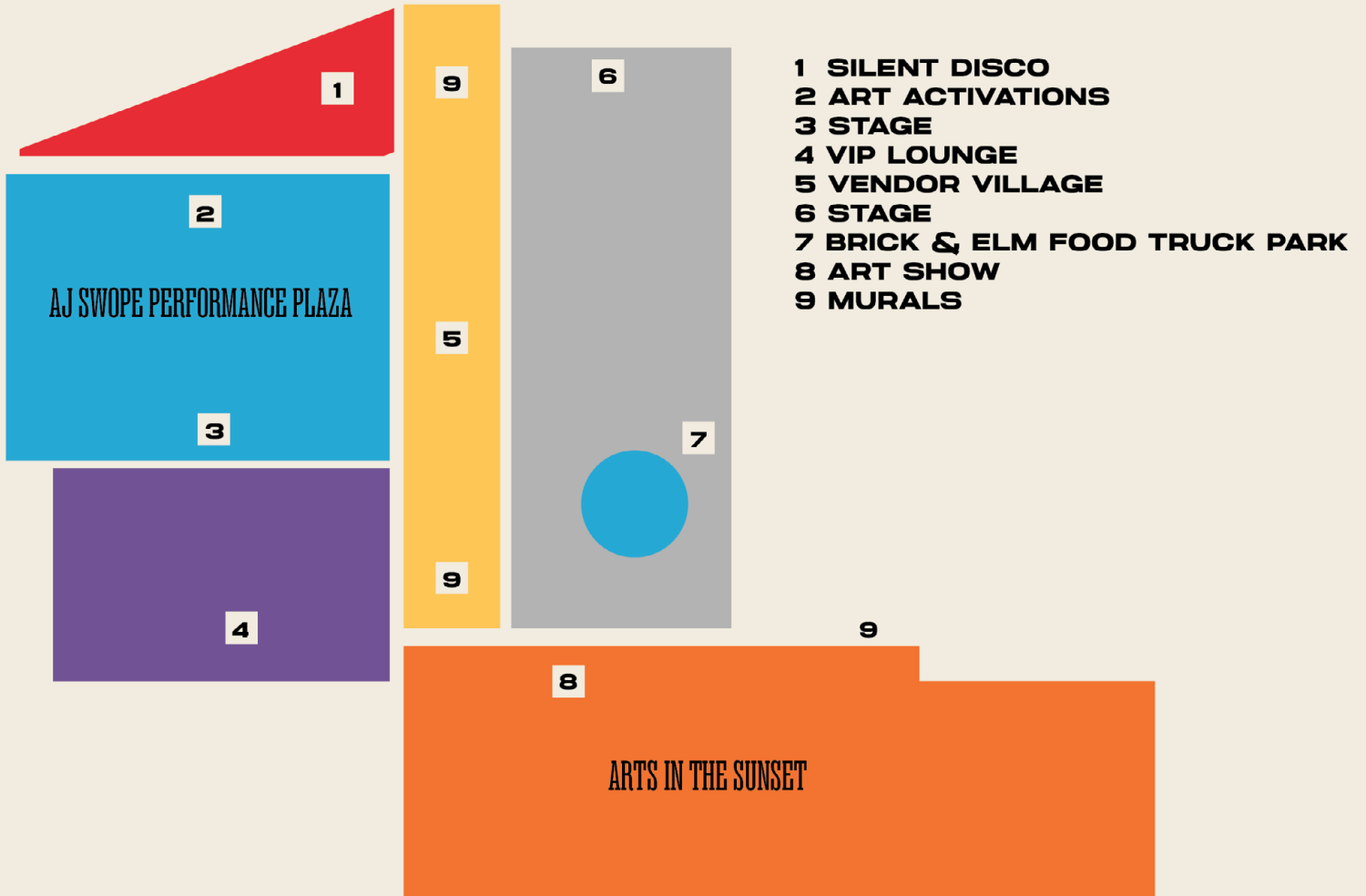
Guests can also cool off and take in even more creativity at indoor art shows, featuring works by regional artists.

For those looking to connect more deeply with the festival community, a special artist meet-and-greet will take place the Wednesday before the festival, Sept. 24, offering a chance to mingle with the muralists and celebrate the creative spirit that makes Hoodoo so unique.

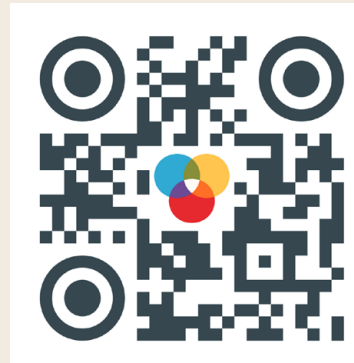
With so much to see, taste, hear and experience, Hoodoo continues to grow as a one-of-a-kind celebration of creativity in the heart of Amarillo.



NORTH



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TICKETS



SCAN FOR
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BRIAN BAILEY OF
SHARK BEACH
BURGERS



SANDCASTLE DAYS

From South Padre to the High Plains

BY RYAN MCSWAIN

“It’s hard to get people to understand it, because they’ve never been to a sandcastle event,” says Brian Bailey of Shark Beach Burgers. That’s right: The local entrepreneur is bringing a legitimate sandcastle-sculpting event to Amarillo this September. If you haven’t been to Shark Beach, which is the best beach and pretty much the only beach near Amarillo, you’re about to have a great reason to shake the sand out of your boots.

Shark Beach Burgers, in collaboration with Neptune’s International Sandsculpting Championship and South Padre Island Sandcastle Days, is hosting the Panhandle’s inaugural Sandcastle Days at Shark Beach. The free event boasts world-renowned master sand sculptors, food trucks, live music, hands-on experiences with ocean life, and much more.

The professional sand sculpting competition will take place throughout the week of Sept. 18 to 21, with the first Shark Beach Sandcastle Days winners announced Saturday night. The event also features amateur competitions—including sand sculpting—along

with fishing rod casting, RC truck racing, and lifeguard games.

The idea of a sandcastle event in the land-locked Texas Panhandle invites questions: First of all, why? Also, what does it take to bring oceanfront fun to the High Plains? Where do you find professional sand artists, and how will they demonstrate their skills? How do you create a beach out of nothing, anyway? Grab your best pail and shovel, because we’ve got answers.

THE BEST OF THE BEST

Founded in 1974, Neptune’s International Sandsculpting Championship hosts the most respected sand sculpture competition in the world. It’s the Super Bowl of sandcastles. In 2024, it hosted 32 master sculptors from 15 countries. And this year, several of these sandmasters will fly to Texas a week early to take part in Shark Beach’s Sandcastle Days before continuing on to Virginia Beach.

Bailey, who brought his family to Amarillo from South Padre in early 2020, has heard all the questions. “They ask, ‘Aren’t



PHOTOS BY PRESLEE BENTLEY

the sandcastles going to blow away?” No, because these are sandcastles,” he says. Competition sand sculptures each contain over a dozen tons of sand and are often the size of a pickup truck.

During that week in September at Shark Beach, master sand artists from all over the world will take several days to work on their entries. Each competitor will have two local volunteers helping them pack the sand to finish in time for judging.

While you’ll certainly see literal sandcastles at Sandcastle Days, there will be plenty of variety in the sculptures these artists choose to craft. They are fierce competitors and professional artists. Their massive sand creations will rival sculptures of bronze or marble.

“They’re the best of the best,” says Bailey. “And it’s really important for them to win here because it’s the very first one.”

A FIELD TRIP THEY’LL REMEMBER

The public will get to see these creations in person—and so will local students. From Sept. 14 to 18, buses will bring local elementary school students to Shark Beach for an ocean adventure.

By partnering with Window on a Wider World, Shark Beach will share the fun of Sandcastle Days as a field trip destination for fourth-grade students. The event will provide a variety of hands-on educational opportunities for Panhandle youth, with plans to entertain and feed more than a thousand students.

Visiting students will receive sandsculpting lessons from master sculptors Lucinda Wierenga and her husband, José Sánchez. They’ve won international competitions and appeared on TV. Bailey says, “It’s like asking, ‘Hey, want to learn how to throw a football? Here’s Troy Aikman.’”

Along with small-group lessons, students will experience large touch tanks containing all manner of saltwater creatures. These touch tanks will allow young students to get up close and personal with ocean life—often for the first time. Presentations will include facts about the aquatic critters and their environment, which all

apply to Texas fourth-grade educational standards.

The student experience at Sandcastle Days will rely heavily on volunteers. “We’ve been begging for volunteers,” says Bailey. “There are plenty of opportunities to help out.”

Advo will also be bringing adults with disabilities to Sandcastle Days to enjoy the sandsculpting, games and hands-on touch tank experiences.

HOW TO BUILD A BEACH

Shark Beach Burgers and the Baileys didn’t create a beach paradise overnight.

Brenda Bailey’s mother, Charlotte Schroeter, the owner of Gram’s Burger Farm on the Claude Highway, passed away in 2019. The Baileys arrived in the area in 2020 after selling their business on South Padre Island. The family intended to sell the land inherited from Schroeter and figure out their next step. The pandemic lockdown kept them here longer than expected.

Brian recalls the inspiration for transforming Gram’s Burger Farm into something a little more like the part of Texas they’d left behind. “Brenda said, ‘You need a purpose.’ I asked, ‘What do you miss?’ And she said, ‘I think the beach would be a good idea here.’ So, as a family, we decided to bring the beach to Amarillo.”

They started with a small, roofless stage and a familiar name to *Brick & Elm* readers. “We had Andy Chase come out, and he would sit in a steel chair and play in the sun,” says Bailey. “And we expanded!”

Then came the sand. It takes an enormous amount of sand to create a beach in the middle of the High Plains. “We brought in about 100 tons of sand first. Then we brought in about 250. Then we brought in about 400. Now we have about 900 tons,” Bailey says.

While red dirt is plentiful here, quality beach sand proved more difficult to acquire. The first batch of sand was too fine, and the harsh Panhandle winds just blew it away. The second batch of sand

had a different problem: it turned to clay at the first rain. “The third time,” says Bailey, “it was red! We said, ‘Where’s this from? Oklahoma? That’s not going to work.’”

They finally found the right color and composition of sand. The wind hasn’t blown the beach away, and it continues to bounce back—even from the plentiful rain this summer. “It’s the closest we can find to beach sand,” says Bailey. He’s bringing in another 200 tons for Sandcastle Days.

In the meantime, Shark Beach has established itself as a serious venue for local music, performing around 80 free concerts a year, along with ticketed tribute band concerts on the venue’s big stage.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Neighbors and customers alike have bought into the Shark Beach vision, and Brian Bailey is grateful. “The people of Amarillo really got behind us. They supported us, spoke words of life about us. They give us grace,” he says. For instance, Sandcastle Days wouldn’t be happening without the sponsorship of local businesses. The first massive sculpture built by the master sculptors will honor these sponsors who helped make this event a reality.

The idea for the event isn’t new. In fact, it dates back to the very beginning of what became Shark Beach. “When we moved here, my wife said, ‘Wouldn’t it be neat if we could bring Sandcastle Days here?’” Bailey remembers. Brenda happens to be close friends with Wierenga, the master sculptor and co-founder of South Padre’s celebrated Sandcastle Days. “Lucinda has been the driving force behind us getting this thing going,” says Bailey. “She is just instrumental.”

As for the Baileys, they are driven by a desire to repay local kindness, using Sandcastle Days to honor the generosity and support they’ve received since making the High Plains their home. “This community is very important to us,” says Brian Bailey. “This is our way of giving back.”

For more information, including a full schedule of events, visit sharkbeachamarillo.com/sandcastledays. ☺

SANDCASTLE DAYS CHECKLIST

- ☐ Professional Sand Sculpture Competition
- ☐ Amateur Duo & Quad Sand Sculpture Competitions
- ☐ Touch Tanks with Real Ocean Creatures
- ☐ Karaoke
- ☐ Live Music
- ☐ Food Trucks
- ☐ Prize Games
- ☐ Fishing Rod Casting Lessons & Competition
- ☐ Shark Mascot Photo-Ops
- ☐ Tug of War
- ☐ Sandcastle Lessons for Kids
- ☐ Shell Hunt Competition
- ☐ Build a Shark Necklace
- ☐ Lifeguard Games & Drill Show
- ☐ Musical Chairs
- ☐ Water Balloon Toss
- ☐ Luau Dance Lessons
- ☐ Food Eating Challenge
- ☐ Raffle Prizes
- ☐ Sandball Games



PROVIDED PHOTOS



PANHANDLE COMMUNITY SERVICES

60 Years of Fighting Poverty and Fueling Hope

This year, Panhandle Community Services proudly celebrates 60 years as the Texas Panhandle's steadfast champion in the war on poverty. For six decades, PCS has been more than a nonprofit—it's been a lifeline, a neighbor and a voice for those who too often go unheard.

The seeds for PCS were planted in the mid-1960s, when local citizens grew deeply concerned about the crippling effects of poverty they saw in their neighborhoods. In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared the War on Poverty in his State of the Union address, signing the Economic Opportunity Act into law. By 1965, a dedicated committee in the Panhandle had secured EOA funding to create a Community Action Agency—boots-on-the-ground, locally led and determined to meet the needs they knew best.

Under its first executive director, Argus Burnett, PCS expanded to all 26 counties of the Panhandle, launching programs that continue to shape lives today: the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, housing assistance through HUD, Department of Labor youth initiatives, HHS-supported daycare services, and TXDOT transportation projects. Many beloved programs—like Head Start and Meals on Wheels—first took root at PCS before

branching out into the wider community.

One of PCS's earliest success stories came in 1967, when the Collingsworth County judge requested help for Wellington. That small request became PCS' first rural service center, which soon provided daycare and nutrition for more than 70 children, feeding them two hot meals a day. By summer, local teens were working in nonprofits through the Neighborhood Youth Program, earning wages that brought much-needed relief to their families. It didn't take long for other counties to notice. Soon, PCS centers were established in 14 counties across the Panhandle.

From its very first grant of \$120,000 to now distributing more than \$36 million across 26,000 square miles, PCS has never stopped evolving. Its programs are designed not only to meet immediate needs, but to create long-term stability for generations. That commitment has been tested and proven in recent years, from responding to the largest wildfires in Texas history to the tornado that devastated Perryton. When disaster strikes, PCS is there, on the ground, restoring hope and rebuilding lives. Its specialized trauma response team recently aided a sister agency in Kerr County following the deadly flood of July 4, 2025.

Desegregation Ideas To Be Mulled at Meet

By LOU ANN GARRETT
Staff Writer

A variety of proposals regarding the Amarillo School Board's desegregation plan — ranging from a League of Women Voters of Amarillo report to a plan for using Hilltop Elementary School — will be considered Monday at a board meeting scheduled for 7:30 p.m. in the School Administration Building, 910 W. 8th.

The board also will see final architectural plans for additions to Caprock High School, discuss recommendations from its Citizens Advisory Committee on Human Relations, act on personnel changes and consider bids on school materials and equipment.

Mrs. Lee Harris of 6713 Elmhurst, president of the League of Women Voters, has requested that her group present their consensus paper on school integration, agreed upon by league members after a study that ran last August.

Several recommendations of the desegregation plan adopted — which includes busing some 1,100 students across the

are included in the report, Mrs. Harris said. Among them is a program in which mothers near the schools would be integrated would be assigned to one of the children being bused to help them in case of any emergencies. The proposal for Hilltop School — one of those to be closed in the desegregation plan — comes from the Texas Panhandle Community Action Corp. (TAPAC), here. This group re-

Language Program Shows Promise, School Board Told

By LOU ANN GARRETT
Staff Writer

An oral language development program now being used with Spanish-speaking students and two elementary schools here is showing great promise in improving the youngsters' use and comprehension of the language, the Amarillo School Board learned Monday night at a regular board meeting.

The District Language Program being used with both Spanish-speaking children and Anglos with impoverished language backgrounds at San-

measuring 99—or about average—rose to 120, which is considered quite intelligent. Another student, had proven himself at least average by scoring 100 seven months later. Another, adopted by the board because it "places the responsibility and inconvenience on one portion of the city," the league has agreed to support the plan as a beginning step toward citywide integration, Mrs. Harris said. Upon a motion by Mrs. Betty Kritzer, board member, the board gave approval.

But even as it celebrates six decades of service, PCS faces new challenges. "Fighting poverty is ongoing," says Executive Director Magi York. "Many of the programs making a significant difference are at risk of being eliminated." Chief among these is the Community Services Block Grant, a cornerstone of anti-poverty work that supports housing stability, job creation and crisis prevention—especially in rural communities. "Cutting CSBG wouldn't save much federally, but it would devastate communities," York warns. RSVP funding is also on the line, putting at risk the contributions of more than 500 senior volunteers who collectively donate thousands of hours to local nonprofits.

From its earliest days, PCS has been about neighbors helping neighbors. In 1972, when Hilltop Elementary closed as part of a desegregation plan, PCS transformed the building into the Hilltop Learning Center—offering adult education, skills training, daycare and community programs. In 1978, PCS broke barriers again, training women in nontraditional fields like truck driving, welding and surveying. This empowered single mothers to earn living wages.

That spirit continues today. Earlier this year, Weatherization Specialist Vania Esparza was honored at Amarillo College's Women in Industry event. Vania knows PCS not just as an employer, but as a lifeline—her own family received PCS assistance when she was a child. She has overcome addiction, homelessness and hardship, and now uses her skills to make homes energy-efficient for low-income families. Her journey is a living testament to PCS's mission: helping people help themselves—and each other.

Panhandle Community Services warmly invites you to the annual event, The Festival of Trees, on Nov. 21, 2025—an unforgettable evening filled with holiday sparkle, community spirit and joyful giving. Step into a winter wonderland where local organizations and talented individuals showcase stunning, professionally decorated Christmas trees, each more dazzling than the last. At the end of the night, these works of art will be auctioned live, with proceeds benefiting neighbors in need.

"This truly is one of the most fun events of the year," shares event chair Cheryl Malcolm of Chicago Title. "It's a night that brings people together and makes a real difference for our community." Come for the beauty, stay for the laughter, and leave knowing you've been part of something extraordinary.

For 60 years, PCS has stood as proof that when a community comes together, it can weather any storm, rebuild after any loss, and create opportunity where none seemed possible. And in the Texas Panhandle, that fight—and that hope—continues.

HUD grants agency \$8 million for single-parent pilot program

By SCOTT DONLEY
Staff Writer

Panhandle Community Services has received an \$8 million Housing and Urban Development grant for a pilot program designed to help single parents become self-sufficient.

The money will be awarded to 100 families in the Panhandle sometime during next year, said Ronnie Van Baugh, director of housing for Panhandle Community Services.

Those accepted for the program will receive assistance for college or vocational education plus funding for a stable living while they receive the job training.

Applicants must be highly motivated to become free of social service programs, Van Baugh said.

"They can work up as an employee or vocational program help them stay in it by basic needs," he said. "The point is to get them out of the system."

More details for the program

ed for "Project Self Sufficiency." Panhandle Community Services received the largest appropriation. The second-largest award went to Travis County, which will get funding to assist 100 families, Van Baugh said.

The three-year demonstration program will receive further funding if it proves successful. The concept is expensive but will prove valuable if it reduces dependency on social services, Van Baugh said.

"When you think about the savings for 100 families over a 10-year period, you're talking about a lot of money," he said. "If we can help them become self-sufficient."

Basic guidelines require participants to be single parents who are either unemployed or underemployed. Psychological and aptitude tests will be among selection criteria along with recommendations from regional task forces and county judges.

Panhandle Community Services will be ready to accept applications for the assistance around the first of January. Selections will be made throughout the year, the date depending largely on school schedules, Van Baugh said.

Basic guidelines require that all selected by the end of the year and their to be reasonable and those that are not are not considered.

Grant awarded ... From left, Steve Vernon, Panhandle Community Services chairman, Samuel R. Pierce Jr., secretary of Housing

the help they need," Van Baugh said. "We are saying we must be careful in our selection because it is such a tremendous opportunity for them."

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Grant awarded ... From left, Steve Vernon, Panhandle Community Services chairman, Samuel R. Pierce Jr., secretary of Housing



Grant awarded ... From left, Steve Vernon, Panhandle Community Services chairman, Samuel R. Pierce Jr., secretary of Housing



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EXPERTS

Expertise is personal in the Texas Panhandle. Rarely does anyone blindly hire a provider. You ask your friends and family. You check in with colleagues. You only trust expertise after it's been recommended to you. In a close-knit region like ours, readers turn to professionals who bring both skill and community connection to their work. In this section, we showcase local experts whose knowledge, dedication and community ties make a daily impact. Need a service and skillset you can trust? Start here.

INVESTMENTS

Amarillo National Bank

RUSSELL FIELDS, CFP®
AVP & INVESTMENT OFFICER

Tell us about ANB's area of expertise: Our team manages investment portfolios for individuals, trusts, retirement accounts, foundations and endowments. We take time to get to know our clients, their needs and long-term goals, then we build investment strategies and financial plans that fit. Simply put, we help people reach their dreams.

How does ANB develop and grow the expertise of its team members? We have more than 100 years of combined experience in finance, economics, risk and investment management. ANB encourages team members to keep learning and earn top industry certifications like CFP®, CFA and CTFC. We also have access to a wide network of data and contacts from across the financial world. Staying up to date on market and economic trends is a big part of our process, and we always look for new opportunities through careful analysis. Growing and learning are built into our culture.

What have been the biggest challenges to growing ANB's influence in the Amarillo market and beyond? We have a lot to offer, but not everyone knows how much we can help. Our skills, experience and professionalism really set us apart, and we want more people to see the difference we can make.

What is the most important aspect of a healthy business culture? Customer service. When we put service first, the business takes care of itself. At ANB, we're all about creating great experiences for our customers. It's a core part of our culture, from leadership all the way through the organization, and it consistently leads to strong results for our clients while building a positive, supportive environment inside the bank.

How does ANB use technology to grow? We use technology to provide a great customer experience, and to help business operations and logistics flow smoothly. This helps us run efficiently so we can spend more time focused on providing great service and building strong relationships.

What's on the horizon for ANB? To continue to do everything we can to deliver the service our customers expect and deserve. We want to understand our clients' needs, meet them where they are, and help them achieve their goals. If we do that, everything else falls into place.

ANB.COM



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PRIMARY CARE Northwest Physicians Group

SHYLA ARISMENDEZ, MD
FAMILY MEDICINE PHYSICIAN
NORTHWEST PHYSICIANS GROUP

Tell us about your organization's area of expertise: At Northwest Physicians Group, we believe great care starts with great relationships. From pediatrics to teens to adult and senior care, our primary care physicians are here for your wellness journey to great health.

How does Northwest Physicians Group develop and grow the expertise of its team members? At Northwest Physicians Group, physicians and other providers are deeply committed to developing our expertise. We are committed to educating our patients about their disease management and encouraging annual visits. We find many in our community do not have a primary care provider; they often do not feel the need since they feel healthy or only get the annual cold/flu. Establishing a relationship with our patients helps us learn more about their family history, including critical factors they may not have considered. We are committed to delivering exceptional healthcare that helps our community thrive.

What have been the biggest challenges to growing Northwest Physicians Group's influence in the Amarillo market? One of the biggest challenges has been shifting longstanding perceptions and increasing community awareness of the high-quality care we offer. Most people do not realize the importance of having a primary care physician in their younger years, but this is very important to establish early so we can know relevant factors of a person's health history. We focus on building trust with our patients and consistently delivering excellent outcomes to demonstrate our value in our community.

What is the most important aspect of a healthy business culture? The most important aspect of a healthy business culture is a shared commitment to teamwork, accountability and patient-centered care. We foster an environment where the patient and physician support and empower one another. This helps our patients have the best outcomes.

What's on the horizon for Northwest Physicians Group? We continue to look into better offerings for technology to assist in monitoring patients. Healthcare technology is growing so quickly, and we look forward to how this will improve patient care.

NWTPG.COM

Disclaimer: For language assistance, disability accommodations and the nondiscrimination notice, visit our website.





Northwest Physicians Group

BREAST HEALTH BSA Harrington Breast Center

NATALIE HALL, DIRECTOR OF BSA HARRINGTON CANCER CENTER

How does BSA Harrington Breast Center develop and grow the expertise of its team members?

At BSA Harrington Breast Center, we believe our people are our greatest strength. We invest in ongoing education and advanced training to ensure every team member is equipped with the latest knowledge and skills in breast health care. We're committed to giving our staff the tools they need to provide high-quality, compassionate care.

What have been the biggest challenges to growing the Center's influence in the Amarillo market?

One of our greatest priorities is educating women in our community about the importance of annual mammograms. Early detection saves lives. That's why we focus on outreach, education and community events that make breast health approachable, convenient and top of mind. Every conversation, every event and every screening we provide is a step toward saving more lives.

What is the most important aspect of a healthy business culture? For us, everything begins and ends with the patient. A healthy culture is one where women feel supported at every step of their journey—from the moment they walk in for their first appointment, through diagnosis and treatment, and into survivorship. We prioritize a patient-centered approach that blends advanced medical care with compassion, empathy and personalized support.

How does BSA Harrington Breast Center use technology to grow? We're proud to offer advanced imaging technology, including 3D mammography, which provides clearer, more accurate images for early detection. Our 3D Mobile Mammogram Coach takes that same high-quality technology on the road, bringing breast health screenings to communities across the region. This combination of innovation and accessibility helps us reach more women and break down barriers to care.

What's on the horizon for BSA Harrington Breast Center? We're thrilled to host our Annual Mammo Party from 8 a.m. to noon Saturday, Oct. 11, at the BSA Harrington Breast Center. This isn't just a screening event—it's a celebration of women's health. Guests can enjoy a welcoming atmosphere, educational resources and opportunities to connect with our care team. It's our way of making mammograms a little less intimidating and a lot more empowering.

1310 WALLACE BLVD.
806.212.1905 | BSAHS.ORG



COMPREHENSIVE DOG DAY CARE **Good Dog Pet Ranch**

Tell us about Good Dog's area of expertise: Good Dog Pet Ranch provides lodging, day care and obedience training for dogs of all ages, sizes and breeds. We love dogs and our approach is to treat each dog as our own. We understand how significant dogs are in the lives of our clients, and we strive to make sure each dog is not only safe, clean and cared for, but also has fun and lots of human interaction while staying with us.

We can also pick up and drop off your dog in our Good Dog Express vans, making it convenient for you, and safe and comfortable for your dog.

How does Good Dog develop and grow the expertise of its team members? We have excellent leadership at Good Dog Pet Ranch: Cara Walker is our manager and Jaycie Cox Hendricks is our dog trainer. Both have significant experience dealing with dogs—including providing basic care, observing health conditions, and training dogs in basic obedience. We hire people who are passionate about caring for dogs, and we provide training so they know the policies and procedures of our company. New employees quickly learn our daily routines and also enjoy the culture of caring and fun at Good Dog.

What have been the biggest challenges to growing Good Dog's influence in the Amarillo market? Since we opened in 2019, we have steadily grown our client base. New customers often tell us they heard about us from a friend or family member. We appreciate new clients and know their dogs will let them know if they're happy staying with us! Repeat customers say their dogs get excited as their cars approach, realizing they're going to see their friends at Good Dog.

What is the most important aspect of a healthy business culture? One of our favorite things to do at Good Dog Pet Ranch is to celebrate! We send report cards every day to our pet parents to show them what their dogs did during the day. We have birthday parties for dogs staying with us, and we celebrate just about every holiday we can think of. Our staff has been known to dress up as ghosts for Halloween, turkeys for Thanksgiving, and, of course, Santa and his helpers for Christmas—and the dogs love it.

Employees are constantly reminded that we exist to provide a safe, loving environment for dogs. That's our whole purpose. And a loving environment for dogs includes fun.

How does Good Dog use technology to grow? In house, we rely on leading industry software to keep track of all the details necessary for each dog: vaccination records, feeding preferences, required medications, and any other documentation that helps us provide individualized care for each dog.

We also love sharing photos of our guests on social media and use it as a way to connect with clients.

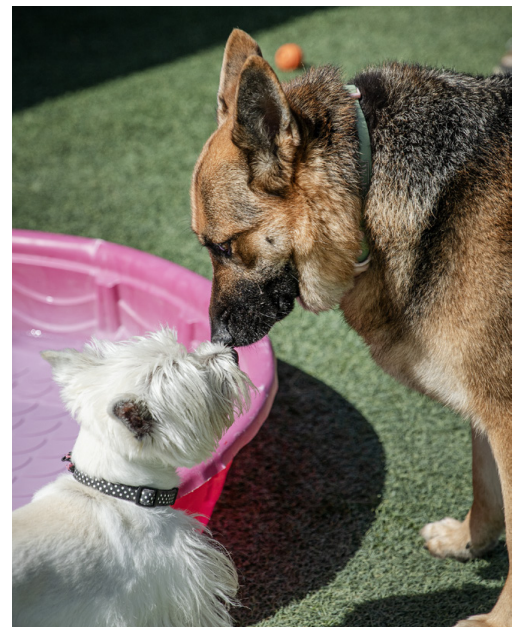
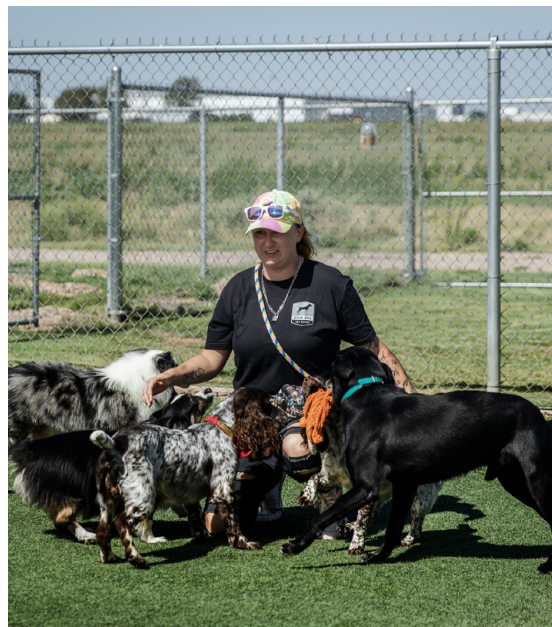
What's on the horizon for Good Dog? We've recently added a new Good Dog Express van to expand our capacity to pick up dogs. Many clients rely on our day care program so they can work throughout the day with the reassurance their dogs are having lots of fun and interaction at Good Dog. Clients are welcome to drop off their dogs at any time during the day, or they can take advantage of Good Dog Express for convenience.

Our training programs offer lots of flexibility to suit each client and their dog. We can provide a Lodge and Learn experience where dogs stay with us for two or more weeks to receive training, or Day School training where they come home to you each night. We also have private lessons to address any specific areas of concern or to reinforce previous training.

And, of course, we offer overnight lodging and can customize the care your dog receives while staying with us. Our customer portal through our website is an excellent way to let us know your preferences, but you can also talk to our experienced front desk employees to provide additional information.

160 S. PULLMAN ROAD
806.310.9999 | GOODDOGPETRANCH.COM





PATIENT-CENTRIC DENTAL CARE **Full Smile Dental**

Tell us about Full Smile Dental's area of expertise: Full Smile Dental provides patient-centric dental care for our community. It is the core of who we are. Our services span the full spectrum of dentistry, including prosthodontics, orthodontics, periodontics, pediatric dentistry, oral surgery and endodontics. This ensures our patients receive every level of care under one roof, delivered by experts who communicate closely to create the best outcomes. Beyond clinical excellence, we create a welcoming, personalized experience designed to make every patient feel valued, understood and at ease.

How does Full Smile Dental develop and grow the expertise of its team members?

We believe that when our team grows, our patients thrive. That's why we've cultivated a culture where learning never stops and every individual has the opportunity to reach their highest potential. From hands-on mentorship to leadership development and advanced clinical education across specialties, we invest in our people so they can continually elevate their skills.

What have been the biggest challenges to growing Full Smile Dental's influence in the Amarillo market? One of our greatest challenges has been overcoming assumptions tied to our rapid growth. It's easy for people to associate expansion with a corporate mindset, but that changes the moment they meet us. As a clinician-led group, every decision we make is rooted in the well-being of our patients, not business metrics. In Amarillo, building trust and demonstrating our authentic, relationship-driven approach takes time, but it's also the very foundation of the lasting impact we aim to create.

What is the most important aspect of your business? The answer is simple: people. Every smile we create is the result of collaboration between clinicians, staff and patients working toward the shared goal of better health and confidence. Whether it's a child's first visit with our pediatric specialists, a complex procedure with our prosthodontist, or restorative care with our general dentists, we place as much value on the relationships we build as we do on the results we deliver.

How does Full Smile Dental use technology to grow? Technology is one of the most powerful ways we enhance patient care across all specialties. From advanced imaging that allows for precise orthodontic planning to digital scanning that streamlines prosthodontic and restorative treatments to minimally invasive techniques in periodontics, we're constantly integrating innovations that make dentistry more efficient, comfortable and effective. For patients, this means shorter visits, less invasive procedures and more predictable results.

What's on the horizon for Full Smile Dental? We're especially excited about initiatives designed to better serve patients with disabilities. Everyone deserves access to compassionate, tailored dental care and we're investing in specialized training, resources and technology to make that a reality. By expanding these efforts, we're reinforcing our commitment to inclusivity, ensuring that every patient—regardless of their unique needs—can feel safe, understood and cared for in our offices. Stay tuned for what's ahead!

STANDING (L-R):
DR. MIGUEL RANGEL, GENERAL
DENTIST; DR. DAVID PURDY,
GENERAL DENTIST

SEATED (L-R):
DR. WILLIAM OSBORN,
ORTHODONTIST; DR. VICTOR
MONCADA, PROSTHODONTIST;
DR. IVETTE M. PLATA,
PERIODONTIST; DR. MEHDI
PEIKAR, ORTHODONTIST



FULLSMILEDENTAL.COM



HEALTHY LIVING Tascosa Golf Club

Tell us about Tascosa Golf Club's area of expertise: Tascosa Golf Club brings together accomplished golf and tennis professionals, certified pickleball instructors, former NCAA players and coaches, and professional trainers with years of success. Our **Fitness** and **TGC Athletics Team** connects people of all ages to active, healthy living through expert training and personalized support within an upscale, welcoming environment. Everyone on our team has at least a bachelor's degree, and many of our directors have master's degrees. Plus, our staff has a range of certifications in nutrition, sports performance, and coaching. Marc Cornell is a Certified Conditioning Specialist, Blue Baggett holds a Sports Performance Coach certification, and Cori Burns, TGC Athletics Director, has additional certifications as a professional coach. Whether it's healthy aging, injury recovery or peak performance, we blend education and experience to help clients reach their goals.

How does Tascosa Golf Club develop and grow the expertise of its team members? At TGC Athletics, our leadership team is deeply committed to the ongoing growth and development of our professionals and staff. We continually reinvest in our people by providing meaningful opportunities for mentorship, access to national conferences, and connection with leading industry experts.

Beyond professional development, we prioritize individual support to help team members achieve not only their career goals, but also their personal aspirations. We consistently pursue specialized education and, more importantly, foster a culture rooted in a growth mindset—with a clear expectation of excellence. At TGC Athletics, being the best isn't just a goal; it's the standard we strive for every day.

What have been the biggest challenges to growing Tascosa Golf Club's influence in the Amarillo market? People tend to have outdated perceptions of what a "private club" is, and we are constantly working to challenge those ideas. We want everyone to feel like they belong here. We're proud of being an approachable, inclusive club and a vibrant, active community—but we know we still have to break through those old stereotypes and show people that our doors are wide open to anyone who wants to live well, stay active and feel connected.

What is the most important aspect of your business? Building a community where families, athletes and individuals feel supported and inspired. It's not just about workouts or drills—it's about building confidence, creating healthy habits and connecting

people to each other in the process. We use evidence-based training and nutrition support to help people achieve real results, while also making fitness social and fun. It's easier—and more fun—to keep up a healthy lifestyle when you're surrounded by people who are in it with you. That community approach is why many clients become part of our extended team.

How does Tascosa Golf Club use technology to grow? From smart scheduling and communication tools to performance tracking and data insights, technology helps us keep things running smoothly behind the scenes—so we can focus more on the people we're working with.

A huge part of what sets us apart is our state-of-the-art \$3.5 million fitness and training facility. Designed for both functional and traditional training, it connects directly to our outdoor trails and golf course. Training in that kind of environment, within a lifestyle-driven club like Tascosa Golf Club, adds tremendous value.

What's on the horizon for Tascosa Golf Club? We're incredibly excited about what's ahead at TGC Athletics. While we've always trained athletes across a wide range of sports, we're now focused on developing well-rounded, multi-sport athletes—individuals who perform at their best, whether they're competing or playing recreationally. Our goal is to help every athlete thrive—not just on the field, court or course, but in life.

To support this vision, we're expanding our performance programs for all ages and continuing to innovate across all areas of wellness and recovery. Recent additions like our Fire & Ice contrast therapy studio and on-site massage at the TGC Tennis Center are already enhancing recovery and performance. And we're just getting started.

Coming soon: creative new group workouts, walking and running clubs, music-driven classes and innovative training formats designed to keep things fresh, challenging and fun.

In addition, we're expanding our commitment to whole-person development with enhanced nutrition services and life and wellness coaching. Our internal team has long benefited from the leadership of our director, whose decades of coaching experience span businesses, corporate leaders, professional athletes and individuals navigating life transitions. Now, we're excited to bring that same high-level coaching to our broader community—helping our members grow in clarity, confidence and purpose both on and off the field.

TASCOSAGOLFCLUB.COM



L-R: BLUE BAGGET, PROFESSIONAL TRAINER, LAUREN MARLER, PROFESSIONAL TRAINER, MARC CORNELL, GM TGC FITNESS AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINER AND COLETTE VOGT, PROFESSIONAL TRAINER

INSPIRED FLORAL DESIGN Avant Garden

Tell us about Avant Garden's area of expertise: Avant Garden is a floral and gift boutique known for creating unique, memorable designs for weddings, events and everyday moments. From bold statement arrangements to thoughtful, ready-to-gift pieces, we focus on making flowers and gifts that leave a lasting impression.

How does Avant Garden develop and grow the expertise of its team members? Our team is made up of talented designers who love what they do. We encourage creativity, share ideas and learn from each other every day. By working together on a variety of styles and projects, we keep our skills sharp and inventive.

What is the most important aspect of your business? For us, it's all about the experience. We're committed to bringing fresh, inspired ideas so every event feels truly unique. Our clients are cared for from the very first conversation to the final finishing touches—from creative concepts to executing even the most imaginative visions. Whether it's an intimate bouquet or a grand celebration, we approach every project with exceptional quality, artistry and attention to detail.

What have been the biggest challenges to growing Avant Garden's influence in the Amarillo market? Amarillo is full of talented creatives for customers to choose from, which pushes us to keep raising the bar. For us, that means going beyond beautiful flowers. We focus on delivering exceptional customer service and a seamless experience from start to finish. By combining standout designs with genuine care, we ensure every client feels valued and every order feels special.

How does Avant Garden use technology to grow? We use social media to give people a true sense of who we are—our personality, our style and the creative process behind our designs. By sharing our work and the joy that goes into it, we help people fall in love with our flowers and our team before we've even worked together. Our online store then makes it simple for them to turn that connection into an order.

What's on the horizon for Avant Garden? We're always dreaming up new ways to bring beauty to our customers. That includes more workshops, fresh seasonal collections, and new ways to make gifting and flower delivery even easier. Our goal is to keep inspiring our customers while making life a little more beautiful every day.

2475 W. I-40 | 806.322.3598
AVANTGARDENAMARILLO.COM







COSMETIC RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY **Advanced Dentistry of Amarillo**

DR. TREY MILLER

Tell us about Advanced Dentistry's area of expertise: At Advanced Dentistry, we are experts in cosmetic smile rejuvenation (full mouth and cosmetic veneers), treating and correcting TMJ joint and bite misalignment issues, and treating obstructive sleep apnea. My primary focus is staying up to date with the very latest in the field of cosmetic restorative dentistry. We focus on working with smiles that have been worn out and broken down to restore them back to masterpieces of esthetics and function. We want our patients to keep a healthy dentition that they are proud of for a lifetime.

How did you develop and grow your expertise? I received my undergraduate degree in Biology and Chemistry at Texas Tech University College of Arts & Sciences and Honors College. Afterwards, I attended the University of Texas School of Dentistry, graduating as the top student in the department of Operative Dentistry. After dental school, I furthered my specialty education in cosmetic dentistry at the Las Vegas Institute of Advanced Dental Studies, where I hold a Fellowship. I have also taken many courses through the SPEAR Center in Scottsdale, Arizona, the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry, and the world-renowned Kois Institute in Seattle, Washington. I also hold a Fellowship through the Academy of General Dentistry, an achievement held by less than six percent of all U.S. dentists.

What have been your biggest challenges to growing your business? Maintaining the highest level of quality and personal attention while scaling demand. As more patients seek out premium, life-changing smile transformations, ensuring every case receives the same artistic precision, emotional care and clinical excellence becomes both the challenge and the standard. We've been fortunate to attract patients from across the region, but growing without compromising our boutique experience requires careful hiring, continual training and an unwavering commitment to excellence.

What is the most important aspect of a healthy business culture?

Alignment: making sure every team member shares the same values, vision and commitment to excellence. In a cosmetic practice, every detail matters, from how we greet patients to how we finish a case. When the entire team is aligned in purpose, it creates a positive environment where patients feel genuinely cared for, and where excellence becomes the standard. The key to maintaining a positive culture in our office is centered on our desire to always be learning and implementing the very latest in cosmetic dentistry. It is never boring here! We are always on the cutting edge of what cosmetic dentistry has to offer.

How do you use technology to grow? Cosmetic/restorative dentistry is an ever-evolving field. There are constantly new technologies coming onto the forefront of use. We are committed to investing in new technology as it becomes available to ensure the Panhandle always has the same access to the highest levels of dental restoration as one would find in any large city. We have 3-D imaging, 3-D jaw tracking, EMG analysis, digital dental scanners, and the latest version of every type of dental laser available. All of this is done to ensure that every smile restoration is the best it can be. Our patients select our office because they know we have the best technology in the area.

What's on the horizon for your business? We've just completed a major remodel of our practice, transforming our space into a truly luxurious, state-of-the-art environment that reflects the level of care we provide. It's modern, calming and designed with every detail in mind to elevate the patient experience. Looking ahead, we're focused on expanding our cosmetic offerings, integrating the latest digital technology, and continuing to raise the bar for smile design in Amarillo and beyond.

6834 PLUM CREEK DRIVE
806.358.8021 | AMARILLOSMILES.COM

HEALTH CARE EDUCATION Amarillo College



JOHN SMOOT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, HEALTH SCIENCE SIMULATION CENTER

Tell us about your organization's area of expertise: Amarillo College's Health Science Simulation Center, located on the West Campus, has undergone a major renovation and is set to open this fall. This state-of-the-art facility will serve as a future-focused training hub designed to transform health care education in the Panhandle. The Center now features hospital-grade simulation rooms, flexible training spaces, advanced audiovisual systems, and a fully immersive "virtual hospital" environment. These spaces allow health care students to work in realistic, team-based settings. The Center also includes a 110-seat auditorium that can be subdivided to host multiple events. At its core, the HSSC is built for flexibility—designed to meet the evolving needs of students, faculty, health care providers and community partners.

How does your department develop and grow the expertise of its faculty? Faculty at the Health Science Simulation Center bring a strong mix of real-world health care experience and a passion for education. In this innovative space, they are challenged to continuously evolve—adopting new technologies and teaching strategies to enhance student learning. Ongoing professional development is key as they integrate simulation-based training into their curriculum.

What have been the biggest challenges to growing HSSC's influence in the Amarillo market? One of our primary challenges has been expanding capacity to train more health care workers to meet regional demand. The Health Science Simulation Center

directly addresses this by enabling Amarillo College to train hundreds of health care professionals annually. In turn, this broadens our impact in the community.

What is the most important aspect of a healthy learning environment? A healthy learning environment is essential for student success and professional growth—especially in health care. At Amarillo College, we emphasize psychological safety, active learning, clear expectations, supportive relationships, and equitable access to resources. Our faculty and leadership have built both a team and a space that reflect these priorities. The collaborative setup encourages students to build community, communicate openly and adopt a growth mindset.

How does Amarillo College use technology to grow? Technology is at the heart of the Health Science Simulation Center. With access to high-tech tools and realistic training scenarios, our Health Science education programs are better equipped to grow and adapt. This technology enhances hands-on learning and ensures students are well-prepared for the modern health care workforce.

What's on the horizon for Amarillo College's HSSC? From lifelike birth simulations to high-stakes emergency response training, the HSSC is revolutionizing how we train health care professionals. But beyond skills and scenarios, it's reshaping students' beliefs about what they can achieve. This Center is about building confidence, ensuring safe practices, and preparing students to respond with compassion, competence and teamwork when patients need them most.

ACTX.EDU/SIM-CENTER



SHELDON SNYDER
AND HADLEY
PERKINS

PRODUCTION AGRICULTURE REAL ESTATE **Clift Land Brokers**



Tell us about Clift Land Brokers' area of expertise: Clift Land Brokers delivers expert solutions for production agriculture real estate across the Texas and Oklahoma Panhandles, Eastern New Mexico, and beyond. With decades of experience in complex land transactions—from irrigated farms to large ranches and commercial sites—we handle everything from traditional listings to multi-parcel auctions. Our team's deep roots in farming, ranching and rural communities ensure we can help landowners make confident, informed decisions, whether they are lifelong producers or first-time buyers. This is a service industry, and our service goes beyond cookie-cutter experiences and checking boxes for real estate transactions. We are sounding boards and idea creators for families and businesses.

How does Clift Land Brokers develop and grow the expertise of its team members? We believe in growing together. We encourage continuing education and support our team in attending industry events, professional development workshops and hands-on learning opportunities. Within the company, experienced brokers mentor newer team members and share hard-earned insights. Just as important, we rely heavily on collaboration within the company, where experienced brokers mentor newer team members and share hard-earned insights. The teamwork among our extensive network of dedicated sales agents is vital to the continued knowledge growth of our team members and service of our clients.

What have been the biggest challenges to growing Clift Land Brokers in the Amarillo market? Production agriculture is seasonal and sometimes unpredictable. When markets move or weather is unfavorable, real estate activity can be volatile. Additionally, we must balance our identity as a truly rural and agriculture-first company with the evolving needs of the Panhandle. As the region develops,

we're adapting our messaging to speak to a broader audience while staying true to our agricultural foundation. Clift Land Brokers is headquartered in Amarillo with a large geographical footprint, including satellite offices in Dalhart, Stratford, Perryton, Pampa, Littlefield and Clovis, New Mexico.

What is the most important aspect of a healthy business culture? Trust and communication. We want our internal culture to reflect what we strive to build with our clients: honesty, responsiveness and mutual respect. Our team genuinely enjoys working together, and that shows in the way we support and celebrate one another. We are proud members of our communities and show our appreciation by giving back to nonprofits, sponsoring local events, and investing in youth programs.

How does Clift Land Brokers use technology to grow? From drone video and mapping tools to social media strategy and digital marketing platforms, we use technology to elevate the way our listings are seen and sold. Internally, we've streamlined systems for listing management and communication to stay agile and organized as we grow.

What's on the horizon for Clift Land Brokers? We're focused on expanding our presence across our service area while strengthening our relationships and proficiency. With a younger generation stepping into the agricultural space, we're also investing in new ways to educate, connect and serve both longtime and first-time landowners. We've been committed to the cutting edge since our inception in 1997, while also staying grounded in the land and people we love to serve.

905 S. FILLMORE ST., SUITE 102
806.355.9856 | CLIFTLANDBROKERS.COM

MEMBER EXPERIENCE Education Credit Union

B&E | EXPERTS



Tell us about Education Credit Union's area of expertise. At Education Credit Union, our expertise lies in providing personalized, values-driven financial services that empower our members to thrive. Founded by educators for educators, our mission has always been rooted in helping people learn more, live more and achieve financial prosperity. From savings and checking accounts to loans and free financial coaching, we offer a full range of products and services designed to meet the unique needs of our members. Our commitment to financial literacy, service excellence and community engagement continues to set us apart in the Texas Panhandle.

What have been the biggest challenges to growing Education Credit Union's influence in the Amarillo market? One of our biggest challenges has been awareness—ensuring that people outside the education field understand ECU is here for everyone. While we're proud of our educator-based history, we want all Texas Panhandle community members to know they're welcome at ECU.

What is the most important aspect of a healthy business culture? At ECU, we believe a healthy business culture starts with shared purpose and mutual respect. When employees feel connected to our mission and valued as individuals, they naturally bring their passion and integrity to work. One of the ways we foster that connection is by giving our team members opportunities to engage with the community. Whether it's volunteering with local organizations or helping deliver Pocket Change Grants to deserving

teachers, employees can feel proud to be a part of something meaningful through their work at ECU.

How does ECU use technology to grow? Technology plays a vital role in helping us deliver modern banking experiences without sacrificing our personal touch. We've embraced digital tools to make banking more accessible and efficient, including our mobile app and online banking, with amazing features like real-time mobile deposit capture, card control and a budgeting tool called Money Management. Behind the scenes, we use data-driven systems to better understand member needs. But we also understand that technology is only as good as the people behind it, so we pair every tech upgrade with human support, ensuring our members can get help when they need it.

What's on the horizon for ECU? As we wrap up our 90th year in service, we're excited about the future. ECU is continuing to grow, both in terms of our reach and our impact. We're expanding financial education efforts through schools and community programs and deepening partnerships with local organizations. As always, our goal is to support and uplift our community, not just with great financial products, but with real care and commitment.

806.358.7777
EDUCATIONCU.COM

COMMERCIAL LENDING FirstBank Southwest



MATT MATHIAS, FBSW AMARILLO MARKET PRESIDENT

Tell us about FBSW's area of expertise: At FirstBank Southwest, we're proud to be the kind of bank where we know your name, understand your needs, and work alongside you to reach your goals. We serve both businesses and individuals with a full range of financial services, always putting relationships and community connection at the heart of what we do.

How does FBSW develop and grow the expertise of its team members? We believe the best way to serve our customers is to invest in our people. That means ongoing training, professional development, and creating opportunities for team members to grow their careers right here at FBSW.

What have been the biggest challenges to growing FBSW's influence in the Amarillo market? Amarillo has a strong and resilient economy, but we've all felt the effects of changing inflation, interest rates and job markets. The good news? FBSW has been part of the Texas Panhandle since 1907—we've weathered both the highs and the lows, and we're still here, committed to serving our neighbors.

What is the most important aspect of a healthy business culture?

For me, it all starts with trust and transparency. When people feel valued, respected and informed, they're more motivated to work together and give their best every day.

How does FBSW use technology to grow? We use technology to make banking easier and more convenient for our customers. From digital banking tools to mobile business solutions, our goal is to keep the personal connection while giving people the flexibility to bank when and how it works best for them.

What's on the horizon for FBSW? We're excited about the future. That means continuing to serve our communities and recognizing the hard work of our employees. We're also passionate about programs like our Banking Advisory Council, which helps us connect with and support the next generation of customers.

[FBSW.COM](https://www.fbsw.com)

RESIDENTIAL
REAL ESTATE
**Horton Neely
Realtors, LLC**



B&E | EXPERTS

HALEY SUTTER, REALTOR®

Tell us about your area of expertise: I specialize in getting homes sold—plain and simple. I work with sellers, buyers and investors, but my strongest skill involves navigating high-stakes or complicated situations: divorce sales, inherited properties, foreclosure prevention. I'm not the agent who sticks a sign in the yard and hopes for the best. I bring strategy, market insight and marketing that actually works. My clients hire me to get results, not sugarcoat things.

I also hold multiple designations, including ABR®, GRI, PSA, e-PRO®, CLP, SFR, and I'm a Certified Residential Real Estate Divorce Specialist. When you're trusting someone with one of the biggest financial decisions of your life, experience matters.

How did you develop and grow your expertise? While finishing my business degree, I realized I'd already done everything it would qualify me to do. Around that same time, I had a stressful personal experience with buying and selling a home, and saw how much difference the right guidance could make. A massage client who was a REALTOR® encouraged me to give real estate a shot. I got my license in 2018 and jumped in with both feet. I closed my massage business six months later.

I treated it like a business from day one—spending hours a day on the phone, investing in coaching and flying to California three times for hands-on training. I closed 17 homes my first year, 35 the next and 67 in year three—all as a solo agent. I'm now nearing 300 total transactions, with most of my business coming from referrals and repeat clients.

What have been your biggest challenges to growing your business? At first, it was just getting people to take a chance on me. I had to earn every client through trust and follow-through. Later, the challenge became maintaining a high level of service as the business grew. I've been intentional about how many clients I take on, so no one ever feels like just another transaction.

What is the most important aspect of a healthy business culture? Since I work independently, culture is personal. It's about how I show up every day. Discipline, consistency and staying connected to my goals keep me grounded. I've built my own structure by establishing systems and routines, celebrating wins and learning from challenging deals. Being at Horton Neely REALTORS® gives me the freedom to run my business my way, with support when I need it. In this work, you have to create the kind of culture you want to live in, rooted in purpose, professionalism and growth.

How do you use technology to grow? I rely on technology that adds real value—targeted ads, video marketing, and social media to get listings in front of the right buyers. On the backend, I use systems to automate follow-ups and keep transactions smooth and clients informed. These tools help me stay consistent, visible, and efficient, without sacrificing quality.

What's on the horizon for your business? I'm focused on expanding in a way that offers more options for clients. My husband is a real estate investor who helps sellers needing fast, off-market solutions. I handle traditional listings and full-service sales. Together, we can meet people wherever they are, whether they need speed or top dollar.

We're also growing our rental portfolio, with a long-term goal of owning 100 doors and reaching financial freedom. I'm focused on tightening systems, strengthening relationships and building a business that gives us freedom and flexibility—on our terms.

600 S. TYLER ST., SUITE 1800
806.231.1065 | SOLDBYHALEY.COM

(L-R): KENDALL HAY,
TAYLOR KELLEY,
EVAN JOHNSON AND
CAROLINE STOUT

BROAD SPECTRUM PRACTICE Sprouse Shrader Smith PLLC

**Tell us about Sprouse Shrader Smith's area of expertise:**

Sprouse Shrader Smith has a long history of excellence in the legal community, offering full-service, client-centered legal solutions across a broad spectrum of practice areas. While we started out as a firm that emphasized litigation and still pride ourselves in our expertise within that sector, we have grown to encompass several practice areas—from business transactional services and oil and gas, to renewable energy and wealth planning. With specialties in real estate, agribusiness, bankruptcy and creditor's rights, family law, nonprofits, water law and rights, personal injury, governmental entities, and commercial industries, we cater to the diverse needs of our clients with unparalleled expertise.

How does Sprouse Shrader Smith develop and grow the expertise of its members? We recognize the ever-evolving legal landscape and provide ongoing training and educational opportunities to ensure our team members possess the latest knowledge and skills. The firm cultivates a collaborative environment that fosters a culture of learning and growth, allowing our attorneys to expand their expertise through interaction and teamwork. We support our attorneys and staff with their Continuing Legal Education and encourage internal practice group collaboration to discuss changes in the law or prospective concerns on the horizon. Our team regularly attends conferences,

speaks on panels, and actively researches client industries to be the most knowledgeable and well-equipped attorneys.

How has Sprouse Shrader Smith grown its influence in the Amarillo market and beyond? Sprouse Shrader Smith continues to expand its services through experienced attorneys and staff who share the firm's dedication to providing effective legal services to its clients. Applying their wide-ranging services and multi-disciplinary knowledge, our lawyers continue the Sprouse Shrader Smith tradition of excellence through leadership in various bar associations and professional organizations. Involvement in the communities we serve is important to us. Our members, associates and staff contribute their time, knowledge and talent to the community by serving a variety of nonprofit and civic organizations.

What's on the horizon for Sprouse Shrader Smith? Sprouse Shrader Smith is looking toward continued growth through strategic hiring and expansion. We will continue to maintain our focus on key practice areas, serving our diverse client base, and expanding our offices across Texas. Our goal is to never lose sight of what our mission is, which is to provide efficient, ethical legal services in a safe and respectful environment. Our motto is to "spoil the client," and we intend to continue doing just that.

701 S. TAYLOR ST., SUITE 500
806.468.3300 | SPROUSELAW.COM

AUTO FINANCE EXPERTS Street Toyota



B&E | EXPERTS

HAMID JALALI, FINANCE DIRECTOR

Tell us about your area of expertise: I manage the financial health and performance of our dealership, which pertains to overseeing all financial operations as it relates to our Sales Department. My duties play a crucial role in sales programs, along with training within the Finance and Insurance Department. Outside of my professional duties, I've also taken over the dealership's comedy, keeping up morale and maintaining a fun environment at Street!

How did you develop and grow your expertise? The biggest way I've grown my skills is by simply being in the automotive industry for the past 26 years. However, working at Street Toyota is where I have learned the most! Our team believed in me enough to enroll me in Dale Carnegie Training, as well as other leadership courses, such as Leadership Amarillo. These have taught me plenty of management skills and techniques, but also how to treat employees with the utmost respect and dignity they truly deserve!

What have been your biggest challenges to growing Street Toyota's business? Within the Finance and Insurance Department, we face multiple key challenges daily, including evolving regulations and adapting to technological advancements, customer wait times, complex paperwork, and our latest change, the new Texas license plates. However, we tackle these challenges head on and learn the best possible ways to combat, exceed and provide the best possible care of our individual customers' needs.

What is the most important aspect of a healthy business culture? A healthy business culture begins from the example set by its leaders. The most important key to maintaining a healthy business culture is treating customers and employees with respect, empathy and kindness. It's so easy to do when you have great examples in our owner, Joe Street, and our general manager, Cory Dupriest.

How do you use technology to grow? In the rapidly changing and evolving automotive industry, technology plays an increasingly crucial role in the Finance Department's growth and success. Our dealership, along with our lenders, are leveraging various innovations to streamline operations, enhance our customers' experiences, and manage risks.

What's on the horizon for Street Toyota? With the growth of artificial intelligence and automation, these will continue to grow our industry and its efficiency. We predict that leasing will become a larger form of car purchasing with the high prices of vehicles and even higher interest rates. Affordability is arguably one of the most important factors of purchasing a car today, and leasing offers consumers alternative ways to afford payments. Our goal is to continue to provide customers with the assistance they need to understand and participate in this ever-changing and evolving industry.

4500 S. SONCY ROAD
806.355.9846 | STREETTOYOTA.COM

PROACTIVE IT CONSULTANTS **Runbiz**



L-R: JOHN MCKEE, TYLER WINGO, TOBY GIDDENS AND BOB TALLEY

Tell us about Runbiz's area of expertise: At Runbiz, we specialize in delivering proactive, strategic IT solutions for businesses, higher education institutions and nonprofits across Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and beyond. Our team is comprised of dedicated professionals who lead with integrity, excellence and a servant's heart. We take pride in providing joyful, expert support that helps our clients use technology to adapt and thrive.

How does Runbiz develop and grow the expertise of its team members? Growing our team's skills is part of who we are, especially when it comes to working together. We encourage ongoing learning through certifications, hands-on cybersecurity training, and mentorship from our more experienced engineers. All of this helps ensure that our staff not only keeps pace with change—but leads it.

What have been the biggest challenges to growing Runbiz's influence in the Amarillo market? In the past, our growth was largely driven by word-of-mouth and client referrals. While that's a testament to the trust we've built, we've recognized the need to be more intentional. Now, we're taking a more proactive approach by reaching out to businesses that share our values and view IT as more than just support, but something that can drive growth and help their teams thrive.

What is the most important aspect of a healthy business culture? For us, a healthy business culture starts with living out our core

values, not just displaying them. Kindness, integrity, excellence, a servant's heart and teamwork shape how we treat one another and how we serve our clients. These values aren't just aspirational—they're the lens through which we put others first, support one another, and show up every day with a genuine desire to help.

How does Runbiz use technology to grow? Technology is at the core of everything we do, and we embrace its constant evolution to drive growth—for both our company and our clients. We continuously evaluate new tools and strategies to strengthen cybersecurity, streamline operations and improve efficiency. Our goal is to ensure that our clients' IT systems are secure, optimized and aligned with their business goals—so technology becomes an advantage, not a burden.

What's on the horizon for Runbiz? Our passion is empowering people to do what they do best. As we continue to grow, we want this to be true, not just for our clients, but for our team, as well. This means vetting and investing in new technologies while developing our team to continue to serve our neighbors in the Panhandle and beyond.

9515 W. AMARILLO BLVD.
806.322.2150 | RUN.BIZ

ART GALLERY White Shirt Art Gallery

B&E | EXPERTS



LEAH MCLAIN, GALLERY MANAGER

Tell us about your area of expertise: White Shirt Art Gallery is owned by Jim J. Brewer, a lifetime art collector. Gallery Manager Leah McLain curates local artists to feature alongside an ever-changing collection of individual pieces by nationally known artists offered for purchase.

Our gallery is a visual delight for art lovers. Guests can browse seven rooms full of paintings, including fine oil paintings, vibrant acrylics, encaustics, oil pastels and watercolors. The subject matter ranges from highly realistic renderings to playful abstracts. The work offered at White Shirt Art Gallery includes 19th-century English paintings and paint-still-wet recent pieces. In between, we have art by classic American illustrators, as well as fresh, creative offerings by new artists. Our collection is large and constantly changing.

How did White Shirt Art Gallery develop and grow its expertise?

White Shirt Art Gallery began with an overflowing private collection being offered to the public. From there, it has grown to include the works of featured local artists as well as ongoing curation of prized pieces available for viewing and purchase.

McLain's background includes studies in art history and years spent as a working artist and art restorer. Her studio for art restoration sits within the gallery and is useful for ensuring that paintings are clean, properly installed and protected.

What have been your biggest challenges to growing White Shirt Art Gallery? Our gallery might be the quintessential "hidden gem" as it is a little difficult to find the first time. We're located in the Atrium Plaza, the office building attached to the OHMS restaurant

on Tyler, between Sixth and Seventh Avenues, in downtown Amarillo. Once people find us they return again and again, and they're usually surprised by the quality of artwork they find here. More than once we've heard people say how excited they are to have us in Amarillo.

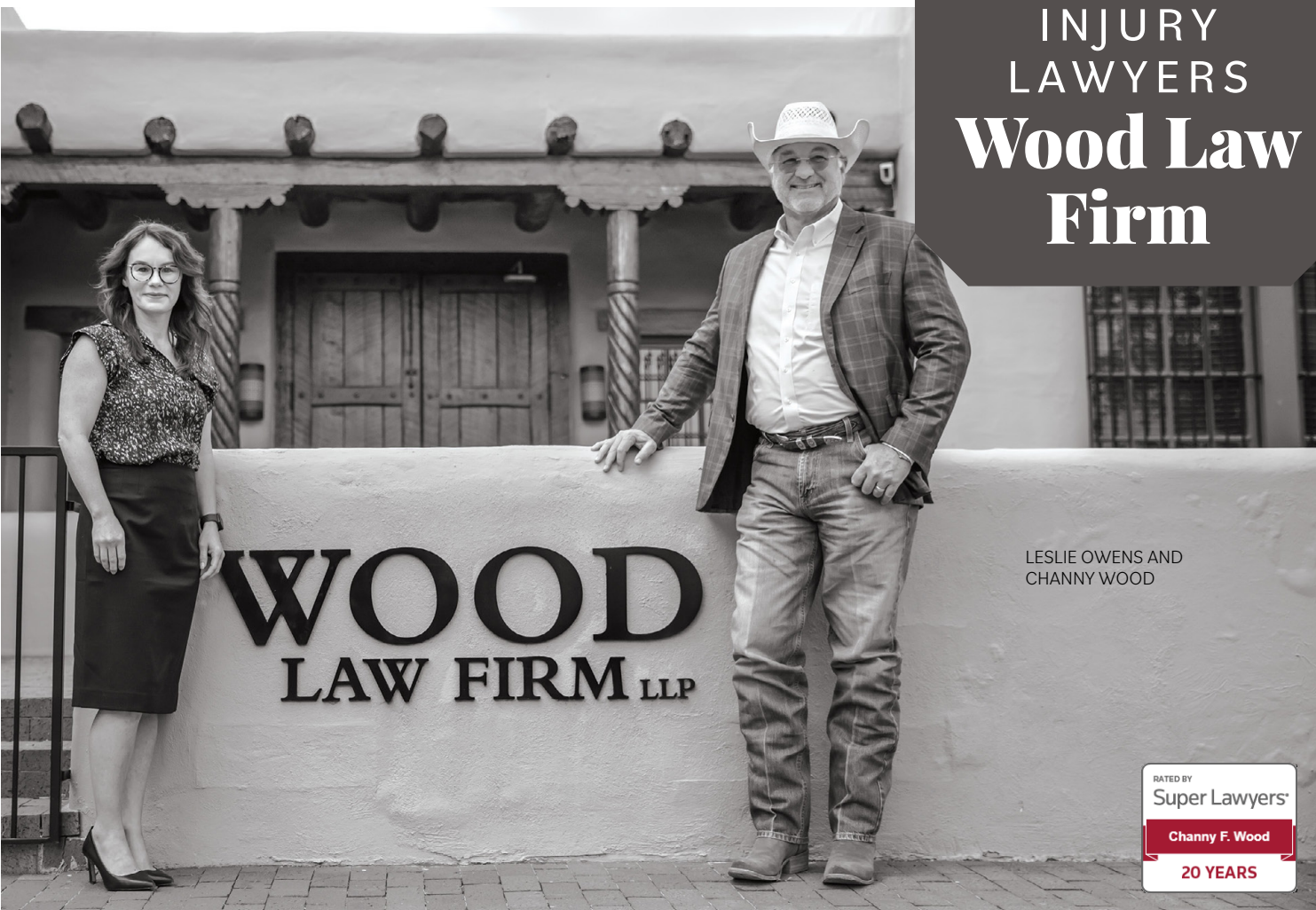
What is the most important aspect of your business? We love our clients and Amarillo's deep appreciation for art, and we respect their taste and preferences. Amarillo art collectors know what they like, and we try to provide many options for them. We enjoy seeing faces light up as the perfect art piece is chosen, and we're happy to help in any way we can to make that happen.

How do you use technology to grow? Since we're new and our location is a little out-of-the-way, we have built our business mostly through word of mouth and social media. We recently launched our website, featuring select pieces from the collection available for purchase online, extending access beyond the Amarillo community.

What's on the horizon for White Shirt Art Gallery? We look forward to connecting with many new clients. Each year we host four receptions, usually featuring our latest installation, and everyone is welcome to attend. We are also available anytime to see the collection; we're open most mornings and you can call 806-567-0393 for an appointment to browse at your leisure. For those who aren't on our mailing list, information on our openings is always available through Instagram or Facebook.

619 S. TYLER, SUITE 110 | 806.567.0393
WHITESHIRTARTGALLERY.COM

PERSONAL INJURY LAWYERS **Wood Law Firm**



LESLIE OWENS AND
CHANNY WOOD



Tell us about Wood Law Firm's area of expertise: Wood Law Firm, LLP, is a personal injury law firm dedicated to representing individuals whose lives have been forever changed by catastrophic injuries or losses. Our clients often include those injured or bereaved due to 18-wheeler crashes, workplace accidents or serious motor vehicle collisions.

How does Wood Law Firm develop and grow the expertise of its team members? We are active members of national and state organizations providing advanced training for attorneys who represent victims of catastrophic injuries or wrongful death caused by negligent commercial carriers or industrial employers. Channy has held leadership roles in these groups, and both Channy and Leslie have served as invited speakers at industry seminars.

Both are graduates of Gerry Spence's invitation-only Trial Lawyers College, which hones trial skills for holding wrongdoers accountable through the jury process. Channy also holds board certifications in Personal Injury Trial Law (Texas Board of Legal Specialization) and Civil Trial Law (National Board of Trial Advocacy). These credentials ensure our clients' cases can be effectively and confidently tried to a jury when necessary.

What have been the biggest challenges to growing Wood Law Firm's influence in the Amarillo market? We choose not to advertise

on television or radio, relying instead on referrals from other attorneys, friends and past clients. While this limits exposure, our reputation for personalized service and the willingness and ability to take cases to trial has allowed us to thrive in Amarillo and beyond.

What is the most important aspect of a healthy business culture? Personal relationships. We stay accessible to our clients and maintain strong, respectful connections with colleagues and coworkers.

How does the Wood Law Firm use technology? More than 25 years ago, we were early adopters of courtroom technology, using TrialDirector for presentations and RealTime transcripts during depositions. Today, we continue to lead with advanced trial presentation software, AI tools and custom-built case management applications to streamline processes using Excel, Word and Adobe.

What's on the horizon for Wood Law Firm? We plan to continue helping people navigate the challenges of catastrophic life events, holding wrongdoers accountable, and fighting for the underdog.

610 SW 11TH AVE.
806.372.9663 | WOODLAWFIRM-TX.COM

OUTDOOR LIVING Champion BBQ Supply

B&E | EXPERTS



L-R: JAMES TEACHOUT, TIM GONZALES, ROBBIE AND JENNIFER STAGGS, AND BRAD JONES

JENNIFER AND ROBBIE STAGGS

Tell us about Champion's area of expertise: We have been in the barbecue industry since 2017, competing in barbecue competitions and now sponsoring 40 cook teams that represent our company across the country. This allows us to bring the most current and popular seasonings, sauces and techniques to our customers at both of our storefronts in Amarillo and Oklahoma City.

How does Champion develop and grow the expertise of its team members? Our team tests our skills in various competitions, and the entire team is passionate about all things barbecue. From staying on top of the latest trends to grilling the best barbecue in the neighborhood, we pride ourselves on being able to educate our customers on all of the different barbecue techniques. Continuing education on our products and consistently interacting with other barbecue experts helps our team stay on top of industry changes.

What is the most important aspect of a healthy business culture? Helping our customers cook better, whether it be backyard grilling,

competitive cooking or designing an outdoor space for the family. We want to make sure we are always taking care of the customer's needs and helping them achieve their goals.

How does Champion use technology to grow? We now have the ability for you to sit in our outdoor kitchen showroom, design your kitchen with multiple materials, choose practically any manufacturer and create it to your exact specifications—no contractor needed. We can show you a drawing of your space before you leave the store. DIY kitchens are the hottest thing going right now. We can get you everything you need to create that outdoor space.

What's on the horizon for Champion BBQ Supply? Keeping new, fresh products and teaching the most current barbecue techniques to all our customers, along with designing outdoor kitchens and living spaces year-round.

7306 SW 34TH AVE., SUITE 10
806.418.6647 | CHAMPIONBBQSUPPLY.COM

(L-R): PHOEBE PLEMING, EARL GRIFFIN, JR.
AND ALEXIS HERNANDEZ

MEDIATION **Marble Mediation Group**

**Tell us about Marble Mediation Group's area of expertise:**

At Marble Mediation Group, our specialty is helping people find respectful, practical and lasting resolutions through mediation. With many years of experience working together in a law office, we've seen firsthand the emotional, financial and relational toll that drawn-out legal battles can take. Mediation offers a more collaborative, cost-effective and private path forward, whether it's for family matters, estate issues or multigenerational disputes. Our work is about creating space for open dialogue, understanding and solutions that work for everyone involved.

How does Marble Mediation develop and grow the expertise of its team members? Our expertise comes from a unique blend of hands-on experience, continuous education and a deep commitment to doing right by our clients. We've spent decades in the legal field, but we're always learning. We work to stay current on mediation best practices, communication techniques and legal changes that impact our clients. We also learn from every case we handle, constantly refining our approach so we can guide people through even the most challenging situations with skill and empathy.

What have been the biggest challenges to growing Marble Mediation in the Amarillo market? Amarillo is a place we truly love, and like any community, relationships matter here. The biggest challenge has been building awareness. Not everyone understands what mediation is or how much it can help. Our approach to growing our influence has always been centered on trust: earning it, keeping it and proving our value through exceptional service. Every interaction is an opportunity to build a relationship and show the difference mediation can make.

What is the most important aspect of how Marble Mediation Group does business? Without a doubt it's trust, relationships and providing exceptional service. Our clients come to us during some of the most sensitive moments in their lives. They trust us to listen, guide and protect the dignity of the process. That trust is built not only on our skill as mediators, but also on our commitment to fairness, neutrality and respect for everyone at the table.

How does Marble Mediation use technology to grow? Technology gives us tools to make mediation more convenient and accessible. We use it for scheduling, document sharing and even hosting virtual sessions for clients to meet remotely when needed. But technology will never replace the value of human connection. The heart of mediation lies in listening, understanding and guiding people toward resolution.

What's on the horizon for Marble Mediation Group? We're passionate about increasing awareness of mediation and its benefits. In the future, we want to reach more people in Amarillo and surrounding areas, continuing to provide high-quality, personalized service while helping the community see mediation as a first option, not the last resort or the requirement of a court order. Our vision is to make mediation a well-known, trusted and accessible solution for resolving conflict, preserving relationships and moving forward with dignity.

AMARILLO:
600 S. TYLER ST.,
SUITE 2205

CHILDRESS:
127 AVENUE B NW
P O BOX 842

844.664.7687

MARBLEMEDIATION.COM

PLASTIC SURGERY Proffer Surgical Associates



B&E | EXPERTS

DR. PATRICK PROFFER

Tell us about your area of expertise: I specialize in plastic surgery of the face and body. It's a wonderful, challenging surgical art that combines careful planning with creativity and imagination to help patients accomplish their goals.

How did you develop and grow your expertise? Two things are most important for developing surgical skills: training and experience. I loved my six years at Wake Forest University getting world-class training. And the people of the Panhandle and surrounding areas have been so trusting and generous to give me the opportunity to practice for the past 20 years.

What have been the biggest challenges to growing your business? Plastic surgery is a challenging field because of all the outside noise. It's now so common for providers without proper training to open aesthetic spa practices or to market themselves as cosmetic surgeons. I often spend a lot of time talking to patients about overly marketed trends and fad procedures. It's important for patients to know the risks and benefits of all procedures available—not just a new technology that over-promises and under-delivers.

What is the most important aspect of a healthy business culture? A healthy business culture is based on mutual respect. My staff is like family to me. It is critical to have common goals and appreciation for each other when taking care of surgical patients. Surgery can be a high stress, very emotional time for so many people. We have to be flexible and understanding in how we care for patients, and that's why everyone is a VIP in my office.

How do you use technology to grow? Technology has made our practice much safer and efficient. Electronic medical records give us all the information we need instantaneously and help avoid mistakes in prescribing, scheduling and communications. Virtual consults allow patients much more convenience. Nothing replaces human touch, but we're able to deliver a higher quality of care because of technological advancements.

What's on the horizon for Proffer Surgical? The future is exciting for us. As I've refined my practice to the areas I enjoy the most, it opens the door for new options like expansion or new surgeons. And our Matrix Sexual Health and Wellness Program continues to fill an important need in our patient population. We'll soon be expanding to a corporate-focused program for businesses.

1611 WALLACE BLVD.
806.354.4900
DRPROFFER.COM

THE 806 COFFEE + LOUNGE

Art meets coffee—and a surprisingly delicious vegetarian and vegan menu—at this locally owned, atmospheric shop on Sixth. (The brunch is especially good.) Time it right and you'll catch live music or an art show. If you're ready to ditch the minimalist coffee scene, start here. 2812 SW Sixth Ave., 806.322.1806, the806.com \$

9TH INNING BREWS & BITES

Billing itself as "Amarillo's Newest Sports Bar," this west-side location represents the rebranding of what once was J's Bar & Grill in the Shops at Soncy. It offers 57 TVs, dozens of draft beers on tap, a reliable pub-style menu and a family-friendly environment for watching the game. 3130 S. Soncy Road, Suite 100, 806.358.2220, 9thinningsportsbar.com \$

ABUELO'S MEXICAN RESTAURANT

This longtime chain has its roots in Amarillo and an incredibly dedicated local clientele. The Tex-Mex is flavorful but the true draw is nostalgia. Also: margaritas. As a bonus, Abuelo's offers some of the best event room and catering deals in the city. 3501 SW 45th Ave., 806.354.8294, abuelos.com \$\$

ASIAN BUFFET

This diverse 34th and Bell offers pickup, delivery and extra sanitization practices. Not interested in a buffet? The Mongolian Barbecue feature—prepared fresh, right in front of you—is unique to Amarillo. 3347 Bell St., 806.803.9588, amarillobuffet.wixsite.com/asianbuffet \$

AY CARAY

Serving traditional Mexican plates, the restaurant strives to keep the authenticity and culture of Mexico through their food, staff and style. The tacos are popular and can be topped with your preference from their fresh salsa bar. 1508 S. Grand St., 806.699.1057 \$

THE BAGEL PLACE

This beloved breakfast and lunch spot introduced bagels to the Panhandle years ago, and locals have been grateful ever since. Grab a fresh bagel to go and choose from a variety of cream cheese flavors. Or try the oversized homemade sweets. (Look, everything here is delicious.) 3301 Bell St., 806.353.5985, bagelplace.net \$

BEEF O'BRADY'S

The typical spot for post coach-pitch baseball games, this Irish joint is the perfect family spot to throw the kids in the arcade area while the adults debrief at the bar with a game on. Known most for their wings, they have 18 different sauces and dry rubs to choose from. 7306 SW 34th Ave., Suite 7, 06.437.1419, beefobradys.com/amarillo \$\$

THE BRUNCH TRUCK CAFE

Open until late afternoon, this hidden brunch spot serves breakfast, lunch and specialty drinks. Almost everything on the menu can be made vegan or gluten free. All of the kitchen sink items are popular, especially the breakfast burrito. 213 SW Seventh Ave. 373.4199, thebrunchtruckamarillo.com \$

BUFFALO WILD WINGS

If you love wings, this has always been the spot. It is also the ultimate sports fan hangout spot at an affordable cost with weekly Tuesday night specials. On Thursdays, boneless wings are buy one, get one free for takeout and delivery. 5416 S. Coulter St., 806.359.4386 / 9511 E. I-40, 806.335.2204, buffalowildwings.com \$\$

BULSHO SOMALI RESTAURANT

Off of the Fritch highway, this halal restaurant serves Middle Eastern and East African meals. Make sure to get there before 2 p.m. before they run out of rice and meat dishes. 2380 Fritch Hwy. \$\$

BURRITO STOP

A mainstay for downtown workers, this small restaurant between Taylor and Polk offers special pricing for teachers and first responders, pre-order dinner packs and downtown delivery. The tortillas are always fresh and the breakfast burritos are some of the best in town. Open early for breakfast. 114 SE Ninth Ave., 806.418.2705, burrito-stop.square.site \$

CASA JALISCO

Open for breakfast until late lunch, this river road Mexican restaurant has a chill and casual atmosphere. The chile relleno and chilaquiles with homemade tortillas are some of their most popular dishes. 5608 River Road, 806.803.2827 \$

CATTLEMAN'S CAFE

Open 24 hours a day, this ancient restaurant has a reputation for one of the cheapest and best breakfasts in the city, with daily specials from 6 to 11 a.m. Expect to spend around \$10 for almost everything. The portions are plentiful and the smoking section will make you feel like you've stepped back in time. 3801 E. Amarillo Blvd., 806.383.4818 \$

CHARLIE'S BURGERS AND BREW

Featured in our July/Aug. Burger Tour, Charlie's has possibly the spiciest burger in town that requires a waiver before eating. There are tons of other burger options that won't catch your tongue on fire though. To finish off the meal, they offer delicious desserts specials that change daily. 4515 S. Georgia St., 806.678.8647 \$

This is not a comprehensive list of local restaurants. From issue to issue, we will try to include a wide variety of dining options based on the space available. If you notice an error, please email mm@brickandel.com.

\$ Most entrees under \$10
 \$\$ Most entrees \$11 to \$20
 \$\$\$ Most entrees over \$21

29TH ANNUAL
AMARILLO★CHAMBER
**GOOD
TIMES**
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AMARILLO-CHAMBER.ORG/BARBECUE-COOK-OFF | 806.373.7800



CHUY'S

With a colorful inside full of palm trees and wall art of comical dogs, this chain restaurant serves Tex-Mex dishes. The “big as yo face” burritos can be stuffed and drenched with items of your choice and they really might be bigger than yo face. The creamy jalapeno on the side could be eaten with a spoon it's so addicting. They now offer alcoholic beverages such as their margaritas and mojitos to-go. 8400 W. I-40, 806.310.0900, chuys.com \$\$

CRACKIN' CRAB

With locations in Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Amarillo—not exactly obvious seafood destinations—this growing seafood boil chain brings Cajun flavor to the southwest. The house oysters are spicy and the servers are friendly. Locals recommend ordering the bread to soak up all the butter and delicious seasonings. 3350 Soncy Road, 806.437.1555 / 2207 S. Western St., Suite 70, 806.803.1325, crackincrab.com \$\$

CREAM OVER WAFFLES

Holy COW! After starting as a food truck, Cream Over Waffles is now open in the old Marble Slab location. Serving more than just homemade ice cream, the shop uses waffles from scratch instead of just grabbing them from a box. Sweet and savory are the perfect combination and COW nails that with their fresh panini sandwiches. 201-M Westgate Parkway West, 806.877.1485

CRUSH WINE BAR & GRILL

A fixture of fine dining downtown, Crush serves great steaks, pasta and shareable appetizers in an upscale, modern environment. We love the bar area downstairs as well as the rooftop bar, which overlooks a busy Polk Street and occasionally hosts live music. On weekends, enjoy a street-side brunch. The service is consistently great and the wine menu extensive. 627 S. Polk St., 806.418.2011, crushamarillo.com \$\$

DAYVASOS JN AMARILLO

As our cover of the July/Aug. issue, Dayvasos JN in Amarillo is a chain that started in Chihuahua, Mexico and has to be one of the cleanest restaurants ever. With something for everyone, you have to snack and try multiple things. The drinks themselves could be an entire meal—topped with protein, fruits, vegetables, tomato juice and a drink. 1104 E. Amarillo Blvd., 806.632.7243 \$\$

DELVIN'S RESTAURANT & CATERING

After opening in 2015, this North Heights restaurant quickly gained a diverse, dedicated clientele from across the city thanks to its generous portions and made-from-scratch flavors. (The buttermilk pie is worth a trip by itself.) 1300 N. Hughes St., 806.310.9410, delvinsrestaurant.com \$

DILLOS CRAFT BURGERS

Being on the iconic and historic Route 66, of course they have flavorful burgers that are stamped with their logo on the buns. Not only do they have great burgers, the “crack” fries are served with the house seasoning and the sweet potato sweets just got sweeter with toasted marshmallows. 2806 SW Sixth Ave., 806.356.0024 \$\$

DIRTY DOUGH COOKIES

Rapidly franchising across the country, Dirty Dough Cookies is now baking treats on Western. They feature a rotating menu each week with different cookie flavors. Looking gorgeous on the outside, they are stuffed with mouth-watering layers, mix-ins or fillings on the inside too. 2201 S. Western St., Suite 60, 806.318.3011, dirtydoughcookies.com \$

DJ'S BURGERS

From the inside and out, this old-fashion restaurant is known for their cooked to order cheeseburgers, huevos rancheros breakfast and the California burrito. 2309 SW 3rd Ave, 806.372.3134 \$

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Set the Table: Eras
October 16, 2025 | 5:00-7:30pm

Step into a world of style and storytelling as our talented sponsors transform tables into stunning snapshots of history — each one inspired by a different “Era.” Sip, mingle, and stroll through the rooms filled with creative designs and unforgettable décor.

This event will benefit Heal the City, so bring your friends and family and enjoy a night of creativity, fun and giving back!

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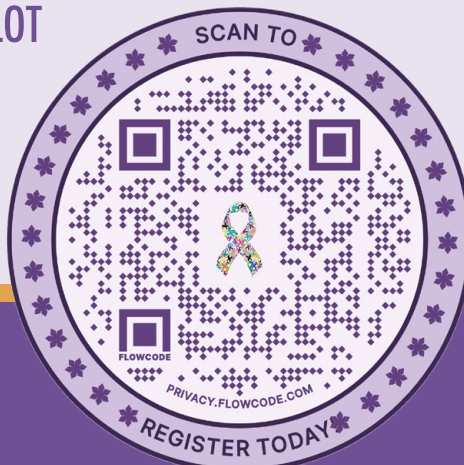
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An event of the Harrington Cancer and Health Foundation

DREAM CHASERS CAFE

Located in the medical district by Contagion Athletics, Dream Chasers is open to the public serving Palace coffee, protein shakes, energy juices, hydration drinks and snacks. Being a great addition to the gym, it is also easy to access through their drive-thru. 8210 W. Amarillo Blvd., Suite B, 806.599.4201, contagionathletics.com/pages/cafe \$

EL RINCÓN DE LA CRUDA

First things first: The name is Spanish for “the Hangover Corner.” That’s intentional. The owners hail from Arandas, Mexico, and designed the traditional menu of this restaurant/bar to offer rich dishes to help out with hangovers. And if that doesn’t work, delicious drinks will help put off dealing with the feeling. 2706 S. Osage St., Suite 105, 806.681.4327 \$\$

THE FALCON

With the Bushland community growing, The Falcon is a great addition to the area. Known for their ground brisket patties, the restaurant also serves loaded baked potatoes, tacos, sandwiches and chicken platters. You cannot have a burger without one of their special shakes or malts. 2300 Wells St., Bushland, 806.803.0219, thefalconinbushland.com \$

FEED ME

Occasionally, vegan food has low expectations. Feed Me “redefines expectations” with 100% meatless and dairy-free meals such as burgers, hot dogs, chicken wings and sandwiches. Not only are they a casual eatery, but they are also a cozy coffee shop. 3407 W. Amarillo Blvd., 806.600.0986, veganrestaurantamarillo.com \$\$

FENG CHA BUBBLE TEA

Tea is a big deal in the Panhandle, but this isn’t just another place for blueberry green iced tea. Feng Cha offers bubble tea and milk foam teas with decidedly not-quite-Texan flavors like cream cheese, matcha, taro and durian. Add-ins include boba, lychee jelly, grass jelly and more. Enjoy the sleek Instagrammable atmosphere, and try the dessert menu. 5611 Gem Lake Road, 806.437.1556, fengchausa.com \$

GOLDENLIGHT BEER & WINE GARDEN

GoldenLight has to be one of the most well-known and iconic restaurants on Sixth street. Their delicious burgers are prepared upside down like they always have been and cannot be enjoyed without a side of the cheese fries to share. They often host live music on the weekends in the Cantina. Now there is a location on Hillside that will have the same menu as the Sixth Street location. 6014 S. Western St., 806.221.2337 \$

GOOD DAY BURRITOS

The name fits perfectly. You’re bound to have a good day with one of their burritos and service. Overall great value for your money, the burritos can be built with more than just your typical breakfast meat and eggs. They are more than just a burrito restaurant though—they have other breakfast platters and even lunch. 3609 SW 45th Ave., 806.358.8226 \$

GRANDPA’S DONUTS

Everyone has a go to donut shop that they have gone to since they were kids. But no one cooks as good as grandpa. Grandpa’s donuts have two locations in town—one off of Gem Lake road and the other on Grand. Serving donuts, pastries, kolaches and other breakfast items, their apple fritters are flat and crispy on the outside with fresh apples. 2700 S. Grand St., 806.418.4994 / 5512 Gemlake Road, Unit 11, 806.803.0660 \$

GREEN CHILE WILLY’S GRILL

This iconic location on I-27, tucked away between Amarillo and Canyon, is worth the short drive if you’re a fan of chicken-fried steak, country music, and a homespun family restaurant feel. The green-chile gravy is amazing, as are the hand-cut grilled steaks, burgers, and grilled chicken. 13651 I-27, 806.622.2200, greenchilewillys.com \$\$

HACIENDA MECHE

Sixth Street and the Boulevard are known for their delicious and authentic Mexican food. But people often forget about downtown. If you’re a fan of spicy salsa, then this is your place. The shrimp tacos also come recommended in this fun atmosphere. 626 S. Polk St., 806.236.4288

HOME PLATE DINER

Everyone knows about Home Plate Diner. This nostalgic baseball-themed diner has a simple menu with burgers, sandwiches and hot dogs. All the comfort foods. Affordable and family-friendly. 5600 S. Bell St., 806.359.4444 \$

HOOK & REEL

This Cajun/Creole seafood franchise offers mix-and-match seafood boils, allowing customers to pair a favorite catch (think crab legs, lobster tail or crawfish) with their favorite sauces, spices and add-ons. The breaded-and-fried baskets are also made to please, including fresh flounder, catfish, oysters and more. 5807 SW 45th Ave., Suite 310, 806.803.3133, hookreel.com \$\$

INDIAN OVEN

Tikka bite at this long-standing Indian restaurant, where everything—from the homemade naan to each item in the lunch buffet—is worth a try. The samosas are crispy, and the chicken vindaloo tangy. A number of meals are offered as vegan options. 2406 Paramount Blvd., 806.335.3600, indian-oven.com \$\$

JORGE’S MEXICAN BAR & GRILL

The always packed popular Tex-Mex restaurant is known for the chips and queso, fajitas, margaritas. They have great service with their owners serving and managing during hours. Despite always being packed, they have a separate bar area for waiting or dining. 6051 S. Bell St., 806.354.2241, jorgesmexican.com \$\$

JOURNEY POLK ST. COFFEE

As an inviting and comfortable space for a coffee break or study spot, Journey downtown has hot, iced or frozen lattes with a plethora of pastries and snacks. Need an extra boost? Order something from the espresso bar section. 817 S. Polk St., Suite 102, 806.403.2900 \$

K-N ROOT BEER DRIVE-IN

This legendary, traditional drive-in opened in 1968. And while it lost its iconic covered parking in a windstorm, the wonderful burgers, shakes and floats are still around. And the root beer is served in a frosty cold mug! As the sign used to say, it's "truly a bargain at today's prices." 3900 Olsen Blvd., 806.355.4391, knrootbeeramarillo.com \$

KOP-JAI THAI-LAO STREET FOOD RESTAURANT

One thing that Amarillo does not lack is Thai restaurants. In the best way. People rave about their noodle options—especially the Pad Thai. For a different twist to the typical Thai Lao, this new restaurant has a street food section with short ribs, chicken wings, and sausage with sticky rice. 6014 S. Western St. \$\$

LA MEGA MICHOCANA

Now this place knows how to turn fresh fruits and vegetables into sweet and savory treats—popsicles, ice cream, agua fresca and other crazy looking snacks. Kinda hidden but located in a red shopping center on the Boulevard. 802 E. Amarillo Blvd., 850.602.5219 \$

LOTIS BAKESHOP

Open Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Lotis is known for their buttery and flaky croissants. They don't just have plain ole croissants though—they also have nutella, apple pie, ham and cheese, brisket and more. Wow. Treats can be ordered online. 7028 S. Western St., 806.231.6500 \$

NORTH HEIGHTS DISCOUNT & CAFE

If you've ever thought twice about dining inside a convenience store, this will change your mind. This place serves some of the best soul food in the city. It's known for huge portions—the nachos probably weigh three pounds—as well as its ribs, pork chops, fried catfish and breakfast items. 1621 NW 18th Ave., 806.418.6751 \$

PESCARAZ ITALIAN RESTAURANT

This locally owned Italian place is very involved in the community, has a full bar, and serves up the most irresistible free bread twists in the city. You'll eat so many, you won't be able to finish your pasta, pizza or calzone. In the evenings at Pescaraz, you'll almost always hear live music. 3415-K Bell St., 806.350.5430, pescaraz.com \$\$

ROCKET BREWS

Seemingly made for Instagram, this Boulevard location quietly built a loyal clientele. Then it got featured in Season 14 of the *Texas Bucket List*. Head there for to-go micheladas and daiquiris with Jalisco-style snack trays and bowls. Locally owned by Palo Duro grads. 1506 E. Amarillo Blvd., 806.350.7830, rocketbrews.com \$



4TH ANNUAL FARM TO TABLE

Join us for a casual evening with locally sourced heavy hors d'oeuvres from Black Fig Food

**COCKTAILS
IN THE
GARDEN**

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Thursday | 5:30 PM
The Farm at St. Peter's
Episcopal Church



ROOSTERS CAFE

This coffee, breakfast and lunch stop near 34th and Bell is quietly one of the best dessert places in the city. (That apple pie: Whoa.) But the quiche, sandwiches, soups and salads are also worth an order. Be advised: The dining room fills up quickly for lunch, but we love the cute outdoor area. 3440 S. Bell St., Unit 110, 806.353.7309 \$

SAM'S SOUTHERN EATERY

This Louisiana-based chain offers big portions and low prices for shrimp or crawfish po'boys, catfish, crab, seafood platters, shrimp and more. Our city may not be known for seafood, but Sam's is. 4317 Teckla Ave., 806.437.1349, samssouthernamarillo.com \$\$

SIX CAR PUB & BREWERY

One of the best things to hit downtown since the Sod Poodles, this Polk Street restaurant is known for its craft beers, amazing outdoor patio and rooftop, and its trendy vibe. The Nashville chicken sandwich is one of the best in the city. Like IPAs? Make Good Choices. 625 S. Polk St., 806.576.3396, sixcarpub.com \$\$

TEDDY JACK'S ARMADILLO GRILL

With a vast, no-frills menu, this regional restaurant concept was created by former NFL safety and Texas Tech standout Curtis Jordan, who turned to the food biz after retiring in the 1980s. The outdoor area is great and so is the brick-oven pizza. A fun place to watch the big game. 5080 S. Coulter St., 806.322.0113, teddyjacks.com \$\$

WESLEY'S BBQ

River Road restaurants aren't always on the radar of every local resident, but Wesley's has been around forever and deserves its legendary reputation. Loyal customers return again and again for the genuine Texas-style barbecue, especially the baby-back ribs, brisket and—yep—the beans. 6406 River Road, 806.381.2893, wesleysbbq.com \$

YELLOW CITY STREET FOOD

It started as a "food truck without wheels" and now this street food experiment is one of the city's favorite restaurants, and one of the only vegan/vegetarian places in town. Definitely try the animal fries and diablo shrimp tacos. The burgers, craft beer and wine list are all wonderful. 2916 Wolflin Ave., 806.353.9273, yellowcitystreetfood.com \$

YOUNGBLOOD'S CAFE

An Amarillo classic, where you can grab a hearty breakfast starting every day at 6 a.m. or wait a few hours to try its illustrious chicken-fried steaks. Our favorite thing at Youngblood's? It's gotta be the free banana pudding for dessert (while supplies last). 620 SW 16th Ave., 806.342.9411, youngbloodscafe.com \$\$

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PANHANDLE-PLAINS HISTORICAL MUSEUM

LIONS AND TIGERS AND ... KANGAROOS. OH MY!



When I tell people I grew up in Wellington, I'm often reminded our high school mascot was the Skyrockets. Then I'll be asked why. My best answer is Wellington did not play a direct role in the evolution of rocket science but maybe you'll think we did and you won't mess with us.

Likewise, if you're down in Kress, you might play it cool because grass-fed and swole kangaroos could really be a thing.

Most area schools have had their mascots so long that the meaning behind them, if there was any at all, is often lost to time. The burning question that remains is: Can my mascot whoop your mascot, if it comes down to it?

The word "mascot" is a fairly recent addition to the lexicon. Most sources point to an 1880 comic operetta called "La Mascotte" about a farm girl who brought good luck to those around her. The word itself has its origins in the Provence region of France, where a Romance language called Occitan is still spoken. "Mascotto" in Occitan is a word for witch.

So it's possible we're dabbling in sorcery just a little bit when we pay homage to our team mascots, which is only problematic in Dumas, where the mascot is a demon. Hopefully the devil just has naming rights and nothing more. It's possible a wildcatter hoping for a quick strike made that deal way back when and the devil has forgotten about it anyway. I've looked and can't find any documentation.

What I can find is a lot of information on Amarillo High School because its alums talk a lot about their school. In the early 1920s, the AHS football team called themselves the "Savages." Then one day at baseball practice in the spring of 1922, Coach A.S. Douglass was impressed by the raw power of a sudden dust storm that swept the field (spring sports in the Panhandle have been insufferable for decades). According to official Amarillo High alumni records, Coach Douglass rubbed the grit from his eyes and renamed his team the Golden Sandstorm, soon to be shortened by sportswriters to "Sandies."

Wellington's blood rival, Memphis, was also inspired by swirling dust and chose a Cyclone as its mascot. Windy mascots like these required a bit of imagination to paint on run-through signs every Friday, but cheerleaders learned to depict a funnel-shaped cloud with a mad face on it, often sprouting stubby arms complete with clenched fists, and it worked.

Here's one nobody came up with, though: The Blue Northers. The next high school that gets built in the area can have that one and can thank me for it. It might be hard to illustrate—maybe just a horizontal puffy blue line with a scowl.

In all likelihood, though, if someone chooses a new mascot it will probably be something with fur on it. The vast majority of Panhandle mascots are some kind of deranged-looking varmint that bites, stings, scratches or uses hooves and/or bony skull protrusions in some offensive way. You've got the felines covered with the Panhandle Panthers, the Wildcats of River Road and Canadian, and the Bobcats out in Dimmitt, Childress and Sunray. McLean has the Tigers, and Spearman came up with the Lynx (or

is it Lynxes?). The subfamily Caninae turns up in Dalhart with the Golden Wolves (which on their helmets are painted purple) and then there's the plain ol' Wolves of West Plains High. Our Cervidae brethren are well represented by the Stratford Elks and the Bucks in White Deer (they really had no choice with that one).

Let's not forget about the pets and livestock gone wrong such as the Borger Bulldogs and Gruver Greyhounds. Vega and Caprock have the Longhorns, Hereford the Whitefaces and Farwell the Steers, though I'd be more threatened by a bull. Claude and Wheeler chose Mustangs, which "runnoft" when nobody was looking, and Clarendon's Broncos might runnoft with you still on their back. Then there are the large-taloned avian variety such as the Falcons in Bushland, the Owls in Silverton and Hedley and the Eagles in Canyon and Sanford-Fritch. And let's not ever forget the famed Phillips Blackhawks.

Tulia is a bit of an outlier, repping the phylum Arthropoda with its hornet, which can cause more damage just trying to get away from it.

Rounding out the Panhandle mascot categories are short-fused hominids with stressful jobs such as that Harvester in Pampa, who swings a mean sickle. He's probably brawled with those associated with the ranching industry such as the Roughriders at Boys Ranch and the white-hat-wearing Tascosa Rebel guy who looks a little like Sam Elliott. The Perryton Ranger fights on horseback but appears to be capable of lariat tricks as well. Happy is represented by a moody bronc-riding cowboy.

Some are a bit more fanciful. Landlocked Lefors chose a Caribbean pirate for their mascot. And when Palo Duro High School opened in the 1950s, they chose a Spanish nobleman with a pencil mustache who can slice you nine ways to Sunday with his shiny rapier.

Finally, we've got a few mascots that represent people groups such as the Friona Chiefs, Miami Warriors, Booker Kiowas and West Texas High Comanches. Shamrock went with an agitated Irish fellow because, like White Deer, nothing else would've made sense. His name is Lucky, by the way.

Man or beast, all these characters are compulsively driven to be the best. Maybe a little OCD but very likable. Ultimately, though, success this fall will have a lot more to do with how many big ol' boys we've got on the line and how loudly our crowd roars. But if the home team loses, odds are our mascot will forever be a winner. And Panhandle Friday nights will always shine a bit brighter in our memories because our mascots were there with us when we needed them the most. 🐾



BREAKING BURQUE



ormally in TV and film, the A-list actors get their names in large fonts, with everyone else scrolling by, barely visible. At the end of the closing credits, a small note might thank a city for their cooperation in filming.

But rare is the day when a city becomes an uncredited cast member as important as the stars. Vince Gilligan pulled that off in *Breaking Bad* and Albuquerque. As creator, primary writer and executive producer of the series, as well as its prequel *Better Call Saul*, Gilligan made the Duke City a star in its own right.

The result is a destination filming location that attracts thousands of visitors each year who want to see the houses, businesses and other iconic structures that appeared in both series. It has spawned two businesses, the Breaking Bad Store ABQ (2047 S. Plaza St. NW) and Breaking Bad RV Tours (breakingbadrvtoursabq.com).

At only four hours from Amarillo, Albuquerque is an easy getaway to do some location stalking of your own. Take your pick. Choose the organized RV tour, conducted in a vintage early-'80s motorhome just like the one seen in the show, or craft your own using my custom map. (Visit brickandelm.com for Nick's map.)

Perhaps the most iconic of locations is the Walter White house (3828 Piermont Drive NE). Little did the owners know in 2007, when

filming began, that their house would become a pop culture icon. They have since had to erect iron fencing to keep people off the property, and from tossing a pizza onto the roof (as seen in Season 3, Episode 2).

An important thing to remember is that while these locations are iconic, most were only used for exterior shots. A soundstage at Q Studios was used for interior shots. There are exceptions, though, like the famous Los Pollos Hermanos (Twisters Burgers and Burritos in real life, 4275 Isleta Blvd. SW), where ruthless drug kingpin Gus Fring ostensibly worked a legit job serving chicken. The food is great at Twisters, and there's a great Los Pollos photo op on the wall.

Speaking of Gus, he "lived" in the house located at 1213 Jefferson St. NE where he was the sole resident, practicing his culinary skills. Again, only the exterior was used.

But the car wash where Walt moonlighted—and which he and wife Skyler later bought—was used inside and out for filming. Originally part of the Octopus chain, it was the A1 Car Wash in the show. It is now a Mister Car Wash (9516 Snow Heights Circle NE), and sells *Breaking Bad* items to visitors. Get your car washed and have an A1 day.

Walt and Jesse got their start at a remote location in To'hajiilee, a community in the Navajo Nation. Access is by I-40 West, a paved road north, and then dirt roads. Multiple scenes in both the early



take the off-ramp

WITH NICK GERLICH

and late episodes of *Breaking Bad* were filmed there. Punch these GPS coordinates into your mapping app for directions: 35.10218, -107.13706.

Then there's Jesse and the large house he inherited from his aunt (322 16th St. SW). The grisly basement and bathtub scenes were shot on a soundstage, but it's hard not to associate them with the actual house. The same goes for the duplex at 323 Terrace St. SE that Jesse shared with Jane in Season 2, where Walter watched her die.

The Super Lab in which Walter and Jesse cooked meth was supposedly a subterranean complex beneath a commercial laundry. In this case, the building exteriors used in filming were actually a commercial laundry (1617 Candelaria Rd. NE).

At the corner of Central Ave. NE and I-25 is the Crossroads Motel, which brother-in-law Hank Shrader called The Crystal Palace. It was a hub of illegal activity, and where Wendy the streetwalker hung out.

As the series wound down, Walt and Saul Goodman sought the services of "The Fixer," a man who ran a vacuum repair shop (2714 Fourth St. NW) as a cover for his big money exploits in creating new identities. The arranged meetings were at the John B. Robert Dam at the intersection of Osuna and Juan Tabo on the northeast side of town.

Sadly, the passage of time has not been good for fans, because several filming locations have been torn down. The Denny's in which Walt found himself after returning from New Hampshire was torn down for a small strip shopping center. The Nazi Compound has long been demolished.

All of this makes for a great weekend escape into the fantasy land of TV. I recommend hotels near the airport. Hit the breweries for more fun. And buy a pork pie hat at the *Breaking Bad* store to put on your best Heisenberg look. ☺



Dining Bad

Numerous establishments were featured in the show, and can be experienced today.

Loyola's Family Restaurant (4500 Central Ave. SE) is in a vintage Denny's building, and appeared in both series.

Dog House Drive In (1216 Central Ave. NW) appeared in both series, and is an Albuquerque icon in its own right.

Java Joe's (906 Park Ave. SW, #3045) is a popular coffee shop with food, occupying the first floor of the building which housed *Tuco's* upstairs hangout.

Taco Sal Restaurant (9621 Menaul Blvd. NE) was featured in three episodes.

As always, check for days and hours of operation, and have a BAD time!

JOE BILL SHERROD

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, VICE PRESIDENT OF INSTITUTIONAL
ADVANCEMENT, AMARILLO COLLEGE FOUNDATION

The best advice I ever heard is: *Make your bed every morning before you leave the house.* My mom always made my bed when I was growing up, but her action (and her gentle admonishment about order) instilled in me the strong message that an unmade bed is not only unsightly, but also unclean. As an adult, rarely has my bed been left unmade. At some point, probably in my 40s, I began to correlate made-up beds with accomplishment. When I came home feeling as though I had not accomplished much during the day, I had a made-up bed to remind me that at least I started my day with an achievement.

My three most recommended books are: Marianne Williamson's *A Return to Love*, Lynne Twist's *The Soul of Money* and Richard Rohr's *Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life*.

To me, success means: I grew up believing that success was defined by performance, until I began to meet very successful folks who didn't fit this model. Happy, secure, high-performance, leadership people driving the wrong car? Living at the wrong address? Yes! So, success for me has come to mean "the achievement of a surrendered, balanced life created by a diminished need to take one's life so seriously."

People who know me might be surprised that I: cannot answer this! I rarely surprise anyone.

My biggest pet peeve is: people who drive in the far right lane of an interstate and never exit. This is literally an epidemic in Amarillo.

Everyone in Amarillo needs to experience: the left lane. Seriously, maybe just the middle lane. And you don't have to leave the right lane entirely, just be willing to move to the left enough to let those coming from the on-ramp the chance to get onto the expressway. Perhaps this is all metaphorical and we simply all need to experience something different from that with which we have grown comfortable and helps us feel safe. Let me see your turn signal and we can both move over a little.

If I could change any one local thing it would be: to diminish the need for political control in order to make an attempt to foster a servant leadership model committed to civil discourse and respect for all points of view.

This city is amazing at: letting those who move here become part of the fabric of the community. I will forever be grateful to the many people in this community who agreed to an appointment with me when I moved here in 1989 as a young insurance agent. I knew no one in Amarillo at that time, nor did I have much experience as an agent. I would never have lasted 20 years if people had not welcomed me.

My favorite place in Amarillo is: downtown. I moved here 36 years ago. In that timeframe, downtown has radically transformed into something of which we should all be very proud. What we do in downtown Amarillo in 2025 does not resemble that which could be done in 1989. It is a beautiful sight to see.

A local organization I love right now: So many local organizations are doing such incredible work, which makes this a very difficult choice. But I am going to go with the one that refreshes my spirit and feeds my soul each time I walk through the doors. We are a lucky community to have the wonderful Amarillo Museum of Art. ☺



PHOTO BY PRESLEE BENTLEY

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