

BUZZ

January 2025

The massive **BUC-EE'S** in Amarillo has opened, the newest location in the chain. Located at 9900 East Interstate 40, the impressive travel center occupies 74,000 square feet and has 108 fueling positions, plus 24 EV charging stations. As noted earlier, the store will bring at least 200 jobs to the area, with starting pay beginning well above minimum wage, full benefits, a 6% matching 401k, and three weeks of paid vacation. "Amarillo is the midpoint between Chicago and Los Angeles on the fabled Route 66," **STAN BEARD**, Buc-ee's director of real estate, said in 2023. "I can't think of a better place to put a Buc-ee's."

MODERN HEALTHCARE has announced rankings for health care organizations recognized as **BEST PLACES TO WORK IN HEALTHCARE**, with **PHYSICIANS SURGICAL HOSPITALS** returning to the list for the eleventh year, ranking #32 among the top in the country. Physicians Surgical Hospitals, L.L.C. is a BSA and physician-owned award-winning surgical facility. The comprehensive healthcare organization is comprised of two surgical hospitals, **PANHANDLE SURGICAL HOSPITAL** and **QUAIL CREEK SURGICAL HOSPITAL**, a physical therapy center, **QUAIL CREEK PHYSICAL THERAPY** and an imaging center, **ADVANCED IMAGING CENTER OF AMARILLO**.

Chosen as a recipient 5 years in a row, **FIRSTBANK SOUTHWEST (FBSW)** has been named one of the **2024 BEST BANKS TO WORK FOR**. American Banker has partnered with Best Companies Group to identify banks that excel at creating positive and supportive workplaces for employees. **ANDY MARSHALL** is President and CEO of FirstBank Southwest.

UNDERWOOD LAW FIRM is pleased to announce the addition of four new associates, **MADALENA ALMANZA**, **MADISON ESTES**, **CHRIS NAJERA**, and **ALEXIS HILL** to our Amarillo office. **MADALENA ALMANZA** focuses her practice on estate planning and probate. She has experience in drafting wills, trusts, and powers of attorney. Additionally, Madalena practices in litigation helping clients navigate legal challenges in both state and federal courts.



Madalena Almanza Madison Estes

Madalena earned her law degree from Texas Tech University School of Law in 2024. **MADISON ESTES** focuses her practice on civil litigation in both state and federal courts. She works with clients



Chris Najera Alexis Hill

on a variety of matters including disputes related to business transactions as well as employment and education law issues. Madison earned her law degree, *summa cum laude*, from The University of

Oklahoma College of Law in 2024. **CHRIS NAJERA** works primarily in family law, focusing on child custody and divorce matters. Chris earned his law degree, *cum laude*, from Texas Tech University School of Law in 2024. Prior to law school, Chris worked as a paralegal, where he developed a strong understanding of the complex issues that arise in family law. **ALEXIS HILL** focuses her practice on family law, working with clients on divorce proceedings and child custody matters. Alexis earned her law degree from Texas Tech University School of Law in 2024.

As a **BANK OF AMERICA NEIGHBORHOOD CHAMPION, HEAL THE CITY** was awarded a \$50,000 grant and leadership development training, access to technical coaching and a national network of nonprofit peers. The Neighborhood Champions program is part of the bank's longstanding efforts to build thriving communities by addressing issues fundamental to economic opportunity. The invitation-only program is highly competitive, with awardees selected by a committee comprised of community leaders and past awardees. Since 2019, six Amarillo nonprofits have been named a Neighborhood Champion, and in total, the Bank has granted \$300,000 to the local community. Past Amarillo Neighborhood Champions include Family Support Services (2023), The Maverick Boys & Girls Club (2022), Opportunity School (2021), High Plains Food Bank (2020) and Amarillo Wesley Community Center (2019). Making it a full circle moment, Heal the City Executive Director **LIZ RASCON-ALANIZ** was the recipient of the first Amarillo Champion award when she held the executive director position at the Amarillo Wesley Communications Center in 2019. **W. ASHLEY ALLEN** is Bank of America Amarillo president.



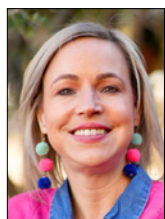
SOUTHWEST NEUROSCIENCE & SPINE CENTER announced that **PATRICK EARL PAULLUS, MD**, has joined its team of neurosurgeons. Patrick entered the Plan II Honors Program at the University of Texas at Austin and earned both a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering and a

Bachelor of Arts. He went on to earn a Master of Science and Engineering with a focus on thermal fluids from UT Austin. He earned a medical degree from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. He then completed his neurosurgery residency at the University of Arkansas Medical Sciences before practicing at CHI St. Vincent's in Hot Springs, Arkansas, where he gained extensive experience in all aspects of neurosurgery, including neurotrauma, brain tumors, and complex spine surgeries.



Now, the brothers **DRS. PATRICK PAULLUS** and **C.P. PAULLUS** practice with **DRS. BRET ERRINGTON, MICHAEL LAGRONE,** and **BRETT GENTRY** at Southwest Neuroscience & Spine Center.

To celebrate the significant milestone of celebrating its 90th anniversary, **EDUCATION CREDIT UNION** is launching several special initiatives in January: In-Branch Birthday Parties on January 15 will take place in all eleven locations. Members and the community are invited to join the festivities and pick up exclusive 90th anniversary keepsakes (while supplies last). In addition, throughout January, members and non-members alike have a chance to win a cash prize by signing up and attending at least one **FREE Financial Coaching** session. And, through the "90 Days, 900 Ways to Serve" initiative, ECU team members will collectively volunteer 900 hours in the first quarter of 2025. These hours will be dedicated to various non-profits and community service projects across the Texas Panhandle, reflecting the credit union's commitment to building a stronger community through service. **MARCUS SMITH** is CEO and President of Education Credit Union.



LAURA BOWNDS, MA, LCPAA, LPC, is the new Treatment Director for **AMARILLO CHILDREN'S HOME**. Laura will oversee the specialized childcare services that support and treat the children at ACH. She will work to ensure the success of ACH's therapeutic interventions, providing expert direction and management for the treatment programs. A Licensed Professional Counselor, Laura has a master's in counseling from West Texas A&M University.



In additional news from **AMARILLO CHILDREN'S HOME**, **TRACIE JACKSON** has been recently promoted to Director of Foster Care Homes. Tracie, a teacher and former foster mom, will lead the launch of ACH's Child Placing Agency program, aimed at placing more children in loving foster care homes within the community. Tracie holds a B.B.A. in Finance from West Texas A&M University.

BSA HEALTH SYSTEM announced the launch of its new **HIGH-RISK OB FLIGHT TEAM**, a significant enhancement to the life-saving capabilities of its Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) Transport Team. This specialized team is dedicated to improving the care provided to high-risk obstetric patients across the Tri-State region. BSA High-Risk OB Maternal Medical Director **JILL GULIZIA MD** said, "In partnership with **APOLLO MED-FLIGHT**, this specialized medical team of highly trained OB nurses is committed to ensuring mothers received the expert care necessary no matter how remote their location." Equipped with cutting-edge technology, including ventilators, monitors, and IV pumps, the team is ready to provide exceptional care during transport. Their expertise ensures that mothers with

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high-risk pregnancies receive the highest quality medical attention during critical transfers.



TERRY CAVINESS, of CAVINESS BEEF PACKERS, an area cattleman whose family-owned business has evolved into a worldwide industry leader was presented an honorary doctorate last month by **WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY**. The honorary Ph.D. is in agriculture business

from WT's Paul Engler College of Agriculture and Natural Sciences. Caviness Beef Packers was founded in 1962 and is currently led by second- and third-generation family members. The company has grown from harvesting a handful of cattle in the early days to processing 4,700 head today as the sixth-largest beef packer in the country. "Terry's leadership and expertise in growing and evolving the beef packing industry in the Panhandle is worthy of recognition and distinction," WT President **WALTER V. WENDLER** said. Earlier in 2024, Caviness was inducted into the Meat Industry Hall of Fame, and he and sons Trevor and Regan were given the Pinnacle Award by WT at the annual Celebration of Donors. Caviness and his family have provided significant support to WT, including the state-of-the-art Caviness Meat Science and Innovation Center inside WT's Agricultural Sciences Complex, and the Caviness Davis Distinguished Chair in Meat Science with Dr. Gordon W. Davis, a Lubbock businessman and former educator.



CONNIE WOOTTON, the longtime head of school at St. Andrew's Episcopal School and a statewide leader in private education, was presented with an honorary Ph.D. in education last month from WTAMU's Terry B. Rogers College of Education and Social Sciences. Wootton

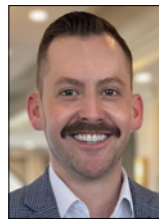
earned undergraduate degrees in English and biology education and a master's in mid-management / educational administration from WT. She served as head of school at St. Andrew's from 1981 to 2002, when she was named executive director of the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools, a six-state regional association of more than 100 Episcopal schools. She retired in 2015 and worked as an event planner for the NAIS Accreditation Commission and an event planner and bookkeeper for the Independent Schools Association Network until retiring in 2017. She then served as interim executive director of the Turn Center, an independent nonprofit pediatric therapy

center in Amarillo, from 2019 to 2021. Wootton was recognized as a distinguished alumna of WT in 1999. She currently serves on the boards of directors for the Amarillo College Foundation and the Waite and Genevieve Phillips Foundation. She and her husband of 52 years, Dwayne, live in Canyon.

A prominent civic leader and his wife have established a new distinguished professorship at West Texas A&M University. Dr. Justin Moeller now holds the **NANCY AND KEL SELIGER DISTINGUISHED PROFESSORSHIP IN GOVERNMENT** in WTAMU's Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice in the Terry B. Rogers College of Education and Social Sciences. "It is an honor to be associated with the Seliger family, who, for more than 30 years, has exemplified a commitment to the region and public services," Moeller said. "As mayor of Amarillo and Texas senator, Kel Seliger served with distinction, integrity, and a consistent commitment to Panhandle values. Nancy, in her own right, has been a remarkable civic leader, as well." Moeller, who also serves as director of the political science program and pre-law adviser, earned a bachelor's in political science and public administration from the University of Wisconsin, a master's of political science from San Diego State University and a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Georgia. Moeller's research centers on civil rights, voting rights, and American political development. The distinguished professorship was

established following a \$250,000 gift from the Seligers. Kel Seliger, a former partner in Lake Steel, served on the Amarillo City Council from 1989 to 1993, then as Amarillo mayor until 2001. From 2004 to 2021, he served in the Texas Senate, eventually rising to chairman of the higher education committee.

ASCENSION ACADEMY announced the addition of 5th grade to its school model. Since its founding in 2000, the school has served students in grades 6-12. Beginning in the 2025-2026 school year, Ascension Academy will welcome 5th-grade learners into its private, college-preparatory community. Ascension Academy's Head of School is **TIM ODITT**.



JAKE JENKINS, the newly appointed General Manager of the **AMARILLO CLUB**, has been a dedicated member of the team since May 2021. His rapid ascent from bartender to Food and Beverage Director, and most recently, to General Manager, is a testament to his exceptional leadership and operational skills. As Interim General Manager for the past six months, Jake has not only seamlessly managed daily operations but has also been instrumental in driving the Club's continued growth. *AW*

NOW ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS

COURTNEY CARTEL, DDS

MANDIE BOOTHE OLLINGER, DDS



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