

# BUZZ

June 2024



**THE TEXAS MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (TMA)** elected **RODNEY YOUNG, M.D.**, to the TMA Board of Trustees during TexMed 2024, its annual conference in Dallas. Along with other elected leaders, Young will help shape and implement TMA policies and deliberate various health care

issues that impact the health and lives of Texans. Young is believed to be the first Amarillo physician to serve on the TMA board. Young is a professor and regional chair of the Department of Family and Community Medicine at the **TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER (TTUHSC) SCHOOL OF MEDICINE** on the regional campus in Amarillo. He is a family medicine physician at Texas Tech Physicians Family Medicine. Young joined TMA nearly 30 years ago as a medical student. A recent member of TMA's Council on Science and Public Health, Young has chaired multiple councils and committees at TMA including the Council on Socioeconomics, Council on Medical Education and the Committee on Continuing Education. TMA is the largest state medical society in the nation, representing more than 57,000 physician and medical student members. It is located in Austin and has 110 component county medical societies around the state. "With both myself and **CYNTHIA JUMPER, M.D.**, from TTUHSC in Lubbock now serving on the board of trustees, West Texans have a clear voice in crafting and implementing those policies to effect positive changes for all of us," Young said. Young graduated from the TTUHSC School of Medicine in 1997 and completed his family medicine residency in Lubbock in 2000. He then joined the faculty of the Department of Family and Community Medicine in Amarillo so he could continue to teach while building his medical practice within the school. He was named the Amarillo campus interim regional department chair in 2003 and the permanent regional department chair the following year.

The **AMARILLO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION's** partnership Lubbock County, in recruiting **PLANT AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS**, was recognized as a **2024 TOP 16 CORPORATE INVESTMENT** project through Trade & Industry Development. The company will invest \$510 million in Amarillo alone and create more than 700 jobs.

**BSA HEALTH SYSTEM** and **BSA AMARILLO DIAGNOSTIC CLINIC** announced the opening of the **BSA CENTER FOR**

This page sponsored by:

CMMS CPAs & Advisors PLLC

atlas | 

An ATLAS Navigators, LLC Firm

Formerly Connor McMillon Mitchell & Shennum, PLLC



Gary Mitchell, CPA  
CMMS CPAs & Advisors - Partner



CMMS CPAs & Advisors PLLC - Amarillo  
801 S. Fillmore, Suite 600 Amarillo, TX 79101  
806.373.6661

## ADVANCED THERAPEUTIC ENDOSCOPY AT BSA HOSPITAL.

Located on the first floor, this state-of-the-art facility specializes in diagnosing and treating digestive system disorders. Featuring 12 pre- and post-procedure bays along with three procedure rooms, including an advanced therapeutic endoscopy suite, the center is staffed by a team of experienced, highly skilled professionals at BSA - gastroenterologists, advanced endoscopists, a pancreaticobiliary surgeon, interventional radiologists, medical and surgical oncologists, GI pathologists and nurses. BSA chief medical officer is **JON BUSH, MD.**



**STEPHANIE PRICE** is now the Senior Manager of Marketing and E-commerce at **HISTORIC HOTELS OF AMERICA AND HISTORIC HOTELS WORLDWIDE.** Stephanie is charged with leading the Historic Hotels of America and Historic Hotels Worldwide Ecommerce and Digital

Marketing efforts, including preparing the annual plan and the revenue and expense budget for digital marketing, online, and ecommerce. Historic Hotels Worldwide® is a prestigious collection of more than 300 historic treasures, including historic hotels, castles, chateaus, palaces, academies, haciendas, villas, monasteries, and other historic lodging spanning ten centuries.



**DALLAM HARTLEY COUNTIES HOSPITAL DISTRICT** announced the appointment of **MELISSA BUNDY** as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO). With nearly 24 years of comprehensive healthcare experience, including notable leadership roles, Melissa brings a wealth of expertise

and a deep commitment to rural healthcare to her new position. Prior to joining DHCHD, Melissa served as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) at Hemphill County Hospital District, where she played a pivotal role in advancing healthcare services and operational efficiency. Her background spans various fields within the medical industry, including neurology, sleep medicine, leadership, business development, marketing, and administration.

**J. RICH SPARKS** of Amarillo has been named a key account manager working with **XCEL ENERGY's** large commercial and industrial customers in the company's Texas and New

J. Rich Sparks



Mexico service area. Sparks is a native of Big Spring and earned Bachelor of Science and Master of Business Administration degrees from West Texas A&M University. He served

as director of operations at the First United Bank Center at WTAMU and in 2015 joined the WTAMU Foundation as an officer. Sparks began his service with Xcel Energy in 2019 with the Texas-New Mexico Government and Regulatory Affairs department.



The **ALEX O'BRIEN TENNIS FOUNDATION** announced **RENE'E STOVALL** has rejoined the organization as its Executive Director. Stovall previously served as the organization's

Executive Director from January 2016 to December 2021 but took time off to pursue a doctoral degree. She recently completed her Doctorate of Philosophy degree in Leadership Studies, with a Minor in Student Services, from the University of the Cumberland. While previously at the foundation, Stovall built and implemented numerous programs, supervised the junior tennis program, and earned recognition such as the United States Tennis Association Chapter of the Year in 2019, achievements she hopes to build on. She plans to restart the foundation's elementary school outreach efforts, increase participation levels, and add more free or reduced-cost camps and workshops for the Amarillo community.

**PHYSICIANS SURGICAL HOSPITALS**

announced it has been selected by Modern Healthcare as one of the **2024 BEST PLACES TO WORK IN HEALTHCARE**.

The **BAIN ATHLETIC COMPLEX** addition on **WEST TEXAS A&M's** campus is almost completed. The new facility will have team meeting rooms, a weight room, nutrition rooms, locker rooms and offices. The building is an investment into WTAMU's student athletics programs and unites athletes from every sport. The athletics departments will move in before the fall semester.



**FAITH CITY MISSION** hosted a ribbon cutting event recently as they opened up their **WOMEN'S OVERNIGHT SHELTER**. Faith City Mission is located at 600 N. Tyler in Amarillo.

**FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES** is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a grant of \$10,000 from the **TEXAS BAR FOUNDATION**. "This funding will enable us to offer crucial support to survivors seeking legal representation for matters such as divorce, child custody, protective order hearings, and other essential resources to ensure their safety and well-being throughout legal proceedings," says **KRISTINA NEAL**, Legal Advocate. Supported by members of the State Bar of Texas, the Texas Bar Foundation is the nation's largest charitably-funded bar foundation. The Foundation's mission is to improve the administration of justice, foster respect for the law, and advance the legal profession through grants and initiatives that benefit the public and legal community. The Texas Bar Foundation recently awarded **CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF THE TEXAS PANHANDLE** a \$12,000 grant to help legal immigrants and refugees in Amarillo and the upper 26 counties of the Texas Panhandle who are unable to afford attorney's fees.

**TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY** Regents voted unanimously today to approve a land deal in Amarillo that will help to build the only state hospital for inpatient mental health care in the Panhandle. **JOHN SHARP**, Chancellor of The Texas A&M University System said, "Working together, the city of Amarillo, the state and The Texas A&M University System are solving one of the Panhandle's most vexing health care dilemmas today." The deal involves leasing a 10-acre tract of land the Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory formerly occupied at 6610 W. Amarillo Blvd. before it moved its lab to the West Texas A&M University campus. TVDML is leasing the Amarillo site for \$1 a year to the Texas Health and Human Services Commission to construct a 75-bed mental hospital. HHSC plans to break ground on the hospital late this summer and begin admitting patients in fall 2027. The 88th Texas Legislature provided \$159 million to build the hospital but directed the Health and Human Services Commission to work with local stakeholders to find the land for it. Without any state mental health hospital in the Panhandle, anyone in a mental health crisis is sent to Wichita Falls or a farther state hospital for care, Potter County Judge **NANCY TANNER** said. And there's a long wait for a bed. "By the time a bed becomes available, the patient has been medicated and released from either the Pavilion here or any other hospital in the region," Tanner said. "Usually, they do not do well because once they are released, they get off their meds and the cycle starts all over." With the new hospital, patients experiencing mental health crisis will be able to get the help they need faster and closer to home.

**WTAMU** officially kicked off the construction phase in a project that's resurrecting one of WT's most iconic landmarks—the **GENEVA SCHAEFFER EDUCATION BUILDING**. When the \$32-million project is complete in fall 2025, the building will house the WT Graduate School and an instructional design space to advance digital learning, in addition to offices for student support and success departments.

**AMARILLO ANGELS**, a leading nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting children, youth, and families experiencing foster care in the Amarillo community, announced its 7th anniversary and the grand opening of its new office location at 112 SW 8th Ave, Suite 610 in Amarillo. Amarillo Angels' mission is to walk alongside children, youth, and families in the foster care community by offering consistent support through intentional giving, relationship building, and mentorship.

**BORGER HOPE GALA** recently presented a very generous gift of \$130,000 to the **HARRINGTON CANCER AND HEALTH FOUNDATION** and **CHILDREN'S MIRACLE NETWORK OF AMARILLO AND HIGH PLAINS REGION**. These funds go directly to assisting those affected by a cancer diagnosis, as well as sick and injured children in Hutchinson County, impacting the lives of those in your community!

Amarillo Girl Scout **JENNIE SMITH** has earned the most prestigious award in **GIRL SCOUTING** – the **GOLD AWARD GIRL SCOUT**. To become a Gold Award Girl Scout the scouts use everything that they have learned in the program to help fix a problem in their community or make a lasting change in their world. That is exactly what Jennie Smith, Gold Award Girl Scout, did when she saw an opportunity to make a safe and secure environment for the pole vaulters at her high school, **ASCENSION ACADEMY**, to practice and compete. "The pole vault pit and it was really small," Smith said. "It wasn't big enough for some of the jumpers to land on it. We had some jumpers fall off the back of it. It was held up by wooden pallets and tires and the wood rotted and started to break. So what I did was I had a concrete mat that I put under it and then I got a new pit that is bigger and nicer. We put it in and we got some tie-down straps so the pit would stop blowing away in the wind. It feels really good knowing that my teammates from high school now have a safe place to jump where they are not going to get hurt or fall off the back end of it," she said. Jennie Smith is the only Girl Scout in Amarillo to earn the award this year. Smith was recognized by the Girl Scouts of Texas Oklahoma Plains at a ceremony in Fort Worth.

Officials with **THE 100 CLUB OF THE TEXAS PANHANDLE** celebrated paying out a total of \$505,000 to 32 volunteer fire departments after a series of wildfires occurred in

the Panhandle. According to The 100 Club of the Texas Panhandle, these donations aimed to help departments regroup after fighting record breaking fires. Officials said after receiving a list of over 50 fire departments in the area that worked the fires, they planned on gifting them all. There are 81 total departments in the top 26 and we would love to keep this wave of generosity going until they all receive a gift, said 100 Club of the Texas Panhandle officials. "That might seem like a "pie in the sky" goal but when this started, we were going to be thrilled to help 4-5 VFDs and here we are at 32! God is good all the time."

**THE FREEDOM IN THE 806 ANTI-TRAFFICKING COALITION** proudly announces the **806 SHOT**, which empowers individuals to discreetly signal for help in potentially dangerous or uncomfortable situations at local bars. "This is a specially designated drink that patrons can order when they find themselves in need of assistance or intervention," said **AZELIN ROBERTS**, Freedom in the 806 Co-Chair and Family Support Services Volunteer Advocate Coordinator. "Bartenders and staff members will be trained to recognize the signal and discreetly assist the individual by offering support, calling for help, or arranging for a safe exit." Local bars and establishments are encouraged to participate in the **806 SHOT INITIATIVE** by displaying flyers and training their staff members to recognize the signal and respond appropriately. The program not only enhances patron safety but also reinforces the establishment's commitment to creating a welcoming and safe environment for all customers. The Freedom in the 806 Coalition was started by **FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES** in 2015 as a way to bring agencies together to prevent and bring awareness to human trafficking in the Texas Panhandle. Through the work of the Coalition and its subcommittees, resources are more readily available to survivors and the Coalition has provided an increase in trafficking education to the panhandle community. For more information about the 806 Shot initiative, contact **KIMBER THOMPSON** at [kimber.thompson@amaisd.org](mailto:kimber.thompson@amaisd.org).

**WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY BUSINESS STUDENTS** raised more than \$13,000 for Panhandle-area charities, including several agencies connected to the historic wildfires that tore through the area in March. Students were assigned to run a philanthropic project for the Leadership and Teamwork course taught by **DR. KELLY DAVIS McCAULEY**, associate and Engler Professor of Management in the **DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT, MARKETING AND GENERAL BUSINESS** in the **PAUL AND VIRGINIA ENGLER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS**. The College made matching donations through funds made available by the historic \$80 million donation from the late Dr. Paul Engler and his foundation. *AW*