

BUZZ

September 2026

The **HERRING HOTEL** is one of the oldest and most historic buildings in downtown Amarillo. Last month stakeholders for the Herring Hotel Project heard from the Project President, **TODD HARMON** that the Herring's design will be complete in the first quarter of 2027, with interior demolition scheduled early in the second quarter of 2027 and an anticipated opening during 2029. According to Harmon, the project will cost approximately \$100 million. Playing a role in revitalizing the hotel is **CAMPO ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN**, a leading architecture and interior design firm, specializing in adaptive reuse of historic buildings for hotels. Plans include luxury amenities, a new rooftop restaurant, an outdoor pool, and just very comfortable, plush guest rooms.



NEIL TERRY, a longtime academic leader at **WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY**, was approved to serve as the university's interim president by The A&M University System Board of Regents. Terry currently serves as executive vice president and provost. Terry, who does not intend to apply for the full-time position, would

succeed President Walter V. Wendler, who has announced his retirement effective Sept. 1. Terry joined WT in 1997 as an assistant professor of economics. He later served as associate professor of economics and director of graduate business programs before being named dean of the College of Business in 2006. He served as dean until 2020, when he became executive vice president and provost. Terry holds a Ph.D. and master's degree in economics from Texas Tech University and a bachelor's degree in economics from California State University at Sacramento. He also completed Harvard University's Management Development Program for higher education leadership. A nationwide search to find WT's next permanent president has already begun.



Dr. Kelly Beierschmitt



Dr. Linda Young

The leader of one of the nation's critical defense operations and a data scientist who has made a profound impact in agriculture are **WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY'S 2026 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI. DR. KELLY BEIERSCHMITT** and **DR. LINDA YOUNG** are the illustrious duo who will be celebrated Oct. 22 at The Phoenix during WT's Homecoming 2026 celebrations. Beierschmitt earned a bachelor's degree in engineering mathematics in 1987, then a Ph.D. in industrial engineering from Texas Tech University. Today, he is president and general manager of PanTeXas Deterrence, which is the managing and operating contractor of the Pantex Plant. Beierschmitt began his career at Pantex as a student

intern. After earning his degrees, he rose through the ranks in the national security field to take on leadership roles at Los Alamos National Laboratory, Idaho National Laboratory and Oak Ridge National Laboratory. After a four-decade career, he returned to Pantex in 2024. At W.T., Young earned a bachelor's and a master's in mathematics in 1974 and 1976, then a Ph.D. in statistics from Oklahoma State University. She recently retired as chief mathematical statistician and director of research and development at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service. She is now a senior fellow at the National Institute for Statistical Sciences. During her career with the USDA, Young pioneered innovations in agricultural and environmental statistics that impact food security and agricultural policy nationwide.



The **AMARILLO SYMPHONY** recently welcomed **DR. DAVID CLEMMER** as the new Executive Director. Clemmer brings more than two decades of leadership across the performing arts, higher education, and the private sector. An arts executive, conductor, educator, author, and organizational leader, his work has taken him from concert halls in Europe and international school ensembles in the Caribbean to nationally televised performances with the Boston Pops and professional development collaborations spanning Africa, Europe, and the Middle East.



NORTHWEST EMERGENCY AT EASTERN, a part of the **NORTHWEST TEXAS HEALTHCARE SYSTEM (NWTHS)**, located at 4409 East I-40, is celebrating one year of providing 24/7, high-quality emergency medical care. Opened in August 2025, this freestanding emergency department (FED) began providing access to crucial

emergency services directly into the neighborhood, enhancing access and bringing care closer to home. Over the last year, Northwest Emergency at Eastern has successfully met community needs by caring for more than 11,000 patients. Unlike a standard urgent care center, Northwest Emergency at Eastern offers the same round-the-clock medical capabilities available at the main NWTHS hospital-based emergency room. This significantly improves regional healthcare access for critical patients. **TIFFANY PUGH, RN**, is the Director of the Freestanding Emergency Department.



JUSTICE LAURA PRATT took the oath of office for the Seventh Court of Appeals, Place 2, last April, following her appointment by **GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT**. The Seventh Court of Appeals, based in Amarillo, hears civil and criminal appeals from district and county courts across 46 counties spanning the Texas

Panhandle and West Texas. Justice Pratt brings more than sixteen years of legal experience in the Texas Panhandle to the Seventh Court. As a member attorney at Sprouse Shrader Smith PLLC, her practice focused on business and commercial litigation, including eminent domain, oil and gas, public utility, environmental, and agricultural law. A Texas Tech University School of Law graduate, magna cum laude, Justice Pratt also holds a Bachelor of Arts in Chemistry with a biochemistry concentration from the University of Arkansas.

NORTHWEST EMERGENCY AT TOWN SQUARE, a part of the **NORTHWEST TEXAS HEALTHCARE SYSTEM (NWTHS)**, located at 8960 Hillside, is celebrating a decade of providing 24/7 emergency medical care to the region. Over the last 10 years, Northwest Emergency at Town Square has successfully met community needs by caring for more than 190,000 ill and injured patients a year. Similar to Northwest Emergency at Eastern, Northwest Emergency at Town Square offers the exact same round-the-clock medical capabilities available at the main NWTHS hospital-based emergency room. It also offers convenient outpatient services with limited wait times, providing routine outpatient laboratory and advanced imaging services. Patients can walk in with their doctors' orders, get the necessary studies or scans done, and receive their results right away, allowing for timely diagnosis and treatment.

In further news, **NORTHWEST TEXAS HEALTHCARE SYSTEM (NWTHS)** has been named among U.S. News & World Report's 2026-2027 **BEST HOSPITALS** edition as a High Performing hospital for Heart Attack and Heart Arrhythmia. This is the highest distinction a hospital can earn as part of U.S. News' Best Hospitals Procedures & Conditions ratings.

AMARILLO NATIONAL BANK recently celebrated the grand opening of its new **GREENWAYS BRANCH** with a ribbon cutting. The beautiful new **GREENWAYS BRANCH** is **AMARILLO NATIONAL BANK'S** largest location outside of downtown Amarillo and features the bank's updated look and feel, designed to provide easier access for customers and enhanced landscaping. **WILLIAM WARE**, President of ANB remarked, "This location is a full service branch with 4 driveups, 2 atms, 240 safe deposit boxes and serves as the new home of our Mortgage and Home Equity lending departments." He then added, "Since giving back to our communities is so important to us, we want to celebrate this day by supporting local charities. Today we are making donations to: **CHILDREN'S MIRACLE NETWORK, FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES, CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF THE TEXAS PANHANDLE AND THE HIGH PLAINS FOOD BANK**. We appreciate their important work," said Ware.

BELL BOEING celebrated the completion of the U.S. Marine Corps' planned fleet of **MV-22 OSPREY AIRCRAFT**, marking the delivery of all 359 aircraft included in the program of record. The milestone was

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commemorated at Bell's Amarillo Assembly Center. While production of the Marine Corps fleet is complete, Bell says the work is far from over. The company will now focus on sustainment, readiness and modernization efforts designed to keep the MV-22 flying through at least 2055, while continuing production of the Navy's CMV-22 and supporting upgrades to the Air Force's CV-22 fleet.

BELL TEXTRON has also secured an estimated \$300 million U.S. Navy contract that will bring additional modernization work to its Amarillo Assembly Center. The project will upgrade up to 49 Marine Corps **AH-1Z VIPER AND UH-1Y VENOM AIRCRAFT**, with work beginning here in Amarillo in mid-2027 and the first upgraded aircraft expected to be delivered in 2028.



FLOOR COVERINGS INTERNATIONAL OF AMARILLO has opened, bringing a new locally owned flooring business to the Texas Panhandle. Owners **BRENT and NICOLE HOULE**, a husband-and-wife team based in Canyon and both graduates of WTAMU, left established corporate careers — Brent in software development for the risk-management industry, Nicole in banking and most recently at a local law firm — to open the business together in July 2026. The company offers carpet, hardwood, laminate, luxury vinyl and tile for residential and commercial customers throughout Amarillo, Lubbock, Canyon and the surrounding area, and features a Mobile Flooring Showroom, bringing thousands of samples directly to a customer's home or business. Floor Coverings International is the #1 flooring franchise in North America, with more than 300 locations across the U.S. and Canada. For more information, visit floorcoveringsinternational.com/locations/us/tx/amarillo.

CAVINESS BEEF PACKERS is among six additional meat and poultry companies to adopt the U.S. Department of Agriculture's voluntary **"PRODUCT OF USA"** label. The label is reserved for products that are born, raised, harvested and processed in the United States and is intended to help consumers identify American-produced meat.

A new outdoor **FITNESS COURT** has opened at **JOHN WARD MEMORIAL PARK**. The City of Amarillo, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas and National Fitness Campaign partnered on the free outdoor gym, which features seven exercise stations designed for a range of fitness levels.



GARRETT ROBINSON recently joined **HTS COMMODITIES** as a Financial Advisor in Amarillo. He is a Texas Panhandle native with a decade of banking experience focused on serving agriculture producers as well as families and business owners across the region. Drawing on his background from working directly with farm and ranch families, in personal and agribusiness banking, he is uniquely equipped to help clients build wealth and manage risk. To learn more, contact Garrett at (806) 641-5897. HTS Commodities is a division of Hilltop Securities Inc., member: NYSE, FINRA, SIPC, and NFA.

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BUZZ

September 2026 continued

The **MAVERICK BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF AMARILLO** partnered with **BODYARMOR®** and The United Family for the **BODYARMOR & BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA DONATION CAMPAIGN**, giving Amarillo residents an easy way to invest in the future of local youth with every qualifying purchase. Through October 4, 2026, BODYARMOR will donate \$1 for every qualifying purchase of a six-pack of 16-ounce BODYARMOR sports drinks at participating United Supermarkets, Market Street, and Amigos locations in Amarillo. Proceeds from the campaign will directly benefit the Maverick Boys & Girls Club of Amarillo, helping support the Club's mission to inspire and enable all youth to reach their full potential through academic success, healthy lifestyles, character and leadership development, mentorship, and enriching after-school and summer programs.



DOVE CREEK EQUINE RESCUE (DCER) announced the hiring of its new Executive Director, **SHANNON WILLIAMS**. After serving in the United States Marine Corps, Williams has lived and worked in Amarillo. He brings 25 years of business experience in management and marketing to the equine rescue.

HISTORIC AMARILLO BUILDING celebrates its 100th anniversary this year, marking a century as one of downtown Amarillo's most iconic landmarks. Its first tower opened on New Year's Eve 1925 as the city's first skyscraper, the twin-tower building at 301 S. Polk St. drew roughly 5,000 guests to its grand opening — about one in three Amarillo residents at the time. The second tower opened in 1926. It was developed by Ross D. Rogers and Ernest O. Thompson, both future Amarillo mayors, alongside ten other local investors who believed in the city's future. Designed by the Kansas City firm Shepard & Wiser, the building's twin-tower courtyard layout delivered natural light to every office, including interior suites — a design decades ahead of its time. Financed largely through oil, gas, and cattle profits, the project delivered 100,000 square feet of Class A office space, unprecedented for 1920's Amarillo. It sparked the design of our downtown skyline, and the building earned a place on the National Register

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of Historic Places in 2018. Today the building is owned by **KEVIN AND (former MAYOR) GINGER NELSON**, who office onsite and have led its recent modernization, including four new elevators and a commissioned bronze artwork depicting a cattle drive that wraps the building's exterior. "The key to preservation is utilization, and this building has been in continuous use since 1925. We are proud to steward one of Amarillo's most prestigious historic addresses at 301 S. Polk," said Kevin Nelson. To mark the centennial, the Nelsons will host a cocktail hour celebration, from 5:00 – 6:30 p.m. on September 10 in the building's lobby, unveiling "Frame by Frame," a photo installation of 100 photographs celebrating a century of Amarillo history. *AW*



▲ The Amarillo Building in 1925 before the completion of the south tower in 1926

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