

# BUZZ

February 2026



The **CITY OF AMARILLO** confirmed **THOMAS HOVER** as Amarillo Chief of Police. Hover brings more than 25 years of law enforcement experience with the Irving Police Department, where he oversaw field operations and specialized bureaus. His career has included leadership in community policing initiatives, officer

wellness programs, and crisis intervention efforts. He also served as an incident commander during major public events and emergency responses. Further, Hover is a graduate of Texas State University and Tarleton State University, as well as the FBI National Academy and the Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas Leadership Command College.



**AMARILLO COLLEGE** announced it has named **STEPHEN CRANDALL**, professor and former department chair of art, theatre, and dance at West Texas A&M University, as the Amarillo College Dean of Liberal Arts. AC officials said Crandall brings experience in higher education leadership and instruction.

"I am thrilled to join the team at Amarillo College," Crandall said. "I feel lucky to return to the institution where I began my own journey in higher education nearly 30 years ago. AC is a very important part of the Panhandle community, and I greatly value the learning opportunities that it fosters for the people of Amarillo and beyond. I am excited to get to know and work with the Liberal Arts, Creative Arts, and Education faculty and staff, and to support the students studying in these programs.



**PROF. HIRANMOY DAS, MSC, PhD, FAHA**, professor of pharmaceutical sciences in the **TTUHSC-JERRY H. HODGE SCHOOL OF PHARMACY**, has been named a fellow of the **ROYAL SOCIETY OF BIOLOGY**, an honor that recognizes leaders who advance the life sciences through education, research and science policy.

His commitment to research excellence continues to make a lasting impact, advancing innovation, education and discovery to improve overall community health. Dr. Das is a renowned biochemist and pharmacologist with a distinguished career. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Calcutta and has postdoctoral training from prestigious institutions like Harvard Medical School and the Hyogo Institute of Clinical Research. Currently a Professor at Texas Tech University, his research focuses on cardiovascular stem cell therapies, regenerative medicine, and immunology. He has received numerous awards, including induction into the National

Academy of Inventors and the American Heart Association. Prof. Das has authored several publications and holds multiple patents.



**MS. MINDI BOZEMAN ZANOWIAK** with **SPROUSE SHRADER SMITH, PLLC** has been elected to membership in the **FELLOWS OF THE TEXAS BAR FOUNDATION**. Fellows of the Foundation are selected for their outstanding professional achievements and their demonstrated commitment to the improvement of the justice system

throughout the state of Texas. Election is a mark of distinction and recognition of Ms. Zanowiak's contributions to the legal profession. Each year one-third of one percent of Texas attorneys are invited to become Fellows. The Texas Bar Foundation is the largest charitably funded bar foundation in the country.



JOE AND LAURA STREET DAY CENTER

After almost five years of strategic planning, relationship building, and deep thought, the **GUYON SAUNDERS RESOURCE CENTER** is on the move - to Transformation Park, at 6th Ave. and Travis St. When the **JOE AND LAURA STREET DAY CENTER**, which is under construction and will be finished this year, the City of Amarillo Community Development Department will occupy the building and Transformation Park nonprofit will assume full responsibility. "For the past couple of years, we have been partnering together (GSRC and Transformation Park, with its Safe Space and Cabin Community) to serve the homeless. Instead of having two organizations with the same mission, we will be one organization to carry out the mission," **MARK ZIMMERMAN**, Transformation Park Executive Director, said. **STEPHEN CROSS** is executive director of GSRC. In winter of 2026, the GSRC's new serving site will be at Transformation Park's the HUB, 601 S. Travis.



**THE RANGE** announced that **JAY L. BARRETT** has joined its team to lead **HORIZONS**, its workforce development initiative, and one of The **RANGE**'s key priority areas. The program is focused on preparing the Texas Panhandle's workforce for the future. Barrett is a longtime educator and community leader in Amarillo. He most recently served as principal of AmTech Career Academy, a nationally recognized, award-winning career and technical education campus within Amarillo Independent School District. Throughout his career, Barrett has worked closely with students, educators, and employers to better align education with real-world workforce needs. Workforce development and readiness play a critical role in regional economies. National workforce studies consistently show that communities with strong workforce pipelines experience higher job retention and greater economic resilience.



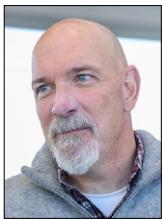
**CREEK STONE INTEGRATED MEDICAL** announced the addition of **DR. KYRA EASTER** as an associate chiropractor, expanding the practice's ability to serve patients seeking evidence-based, patient-centered, non-surgical solutions for pain and

mobility issues. Dr. Easter will provide comprehensive chiropractic care to patients dealing with back pain, neck pain, sports injuries, auto accident injuries, and chronic pain conditions. She joins a multidisciplinary team that includes massage therapists, acupuncturists, and medical professionals dedicated to avoiding pills and surgery whenever possible. **DR. JEFF WILLIAMS** is the owner of Creek Stone Integrated Medical, located at 3501 SW 45th Ave., Suite T, in Amarillo.



**WTAMU's LAURA AND JOE STREET SCHOOL OF NURSING'S** annual pinning ceremony—held at the end of last year recognized 49 students who graduated during a commencement

ceremony held later that day. "These nursing graduates have gained incredible knowledge and skills through relentless determination to be the best registered nurses they can be. What they have learned here at WT will have a positive impact on patient care for families and communities across the Panhandle and throughout Texas," said **LAURA REYHER**, director of the **STREET SCHOOL OF NURSING AND WT'S LAURA AND JOE STREET PROFESSOR OF NURSING**. Of the 49 graduates, 88 percent plan to work in Amarillo or the Panhandle region. Established in 1972 and graduating its first students in 1974, WT's Street School of Nursing currently provides about 70 percent of nurses employed throughout the Texas Panhandle. WT nursing graduates, over the past five years, have averaged a 92 percent score on the National Council Licensure Examination, required by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing to test the competency of nursing school graduates in the United States and Canada. Nationally, the average is 85 percent; in Texas, it's 87 percent.



As a **WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY** student, **RANDY RIKEL** gave tours to prospective new Buffs and even helped out at the University's 75th anniversary celebration. Now, after about 40 years and two careers at WT, Rikel has retired at the end of

December as WT's vice president for business and finance. Rikel first joined WT in 1996 as director of accounting, rising to assistant vice president in 2002, then associate vice president for business and finance in 2006. After several years at Texas A&M

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University-Texarkana and the University of Dallas, Rikel returned to WT in May 2015. Rikel, a CPA who is active in several state business professional organizations, has overseen the University's physical facilities and contract management along with supervising the Accounting and Business Office, Budget Office, Buff Gold Card Office, Human Resources, Post Office, Purchasing and Inventory Services, Risk Management, University Bookstore and the University Police Department. **TODD MCNEILL**, who is currently associate vice president for finance and controller, will serve as interim vice president for business and finance.



**C. PATRICK REYNOLDS, M.D., Ph.D.**, director of the School of Medicine Pediatric Cancer Research Center at the **TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER (TTUHSC)**, has dedicated his life as a researcher to developing treatments for childhood cancers, including neuroblastoma, the most common cancer outside of the brain in infants and young children that is very aggressive and fatal for many children. To recognize the career of contributions he has made to help these young patients, the **NATIONAL ACADEMY OF INVENTORS (NAI)** named Reynolds to its **2025 CLASS OF FELLOWS**, considered to be the highest professional distinction awarded solely to inventors. He will be inducted June 4 during the NAI's 15th Annual Conference in Los Angeles. The 2025 Class of Fellows is comprised of 169 emerging inventors representing 127 NAI Member Institutions, including universities, government agencies and research institutions from 40 states. A co-inventor on multiple issued and pending patents, Reynolds, a TTUHSC professor of pediatrics, medicine and cell biology and biochemistry, was a pioneer in developing isotretinoin, a differentiating agent for treating neuroblastoma. His research currently focuses on using telomere maintenance mechanisms as cancer biomarkers for neuroblastoma and other cancers and developing agents to specifically target alternative lengthening of telomere cancers. He also studies mechanisms of resistance to drugs and antibody therapy in childhood and adult cancers, biobanking human cancers and developing novel preclinical testing systems for cancer drug development.

Amarillo philanthropist **MARGARET HODGE** and the **DOWNTOWN ATHLETIC CLUB** have provided a lead gift of \$100,000 to the **TEXAS PANHANDLE FIRST RESPONDERS MEMORIAL** to be built at 11th and Polk in downtown Amarillo. The donation, in honor of her late husband **JERRY HODGE**, was a gift of the heart for Mrs. Hodge.

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# BUZZ

Continued

The Downtown Athletic Club and Margaret and Jerry Hodge are now one of largest donors to the Texas Panhandle First Responders Memorial, marking a major milestone for the project.



**THE TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE HIGH PLAINS RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER**, a new state-of-the-art facility that combines research and education outreach to the greater Texas High Plains region, opened recently in Canyon. The Center will provide research and education outreach to the greater Texas High Plains region. This new facility, with a new name, will include all the staff, faculty and programming from the **TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER** at Amarillo which recently closed its doors at 6500 W. Amarillo Blvd. The new facility is part of **THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM'S** Charles W. "Doc" Graham '53 DVM Center complex, located at 3211 Russell Long Blvd. on the WTAMU campus. This center encompasses **THE TEXAS A&M VETERINARY EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND OUTREACH, VERO, and THE TEXAS A&M VETERINARY MEDICAL DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY** complex. The multi-use facility will provide office space to support about 60 faculty and staff for the AgriLife Research and **TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE** agencies. Signature research programs headquartered at the new facility include beef cattle nutrition and health, wheat breeding and genetics, irrigation water management, water-limited forage systems, plant physiology, plant pathology, entomology, soil science and sustainable livestock systems engineering. *AW*

# CALENDAR

February 2026

**Feb 1 Bored Teachers "is it Friday Yet?" Comedy Tour.** Warning: May contain PG-13 language, teacher truths, and uncontrollable fits of laughter. Get ready to laugh until you cry as the funniest teacher-comedians in the world share their side-splitting stories, savage truths, and hilarious classroom confessions. Whether you're a teacher, a parent, or just someone who's been in school, this show will have you nodding, clapping, and hollering, "That's SO TRUE!" 3 p.m., Amarillo Civic Center Auditorium. For tickets: 378-3096.

**Feb 1 West Texas Social Wedding Expo.** 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., Amarillo Civic Center North Exhibit Hall. 378-4297.

**Feb 6 Chamber Music Amarillo concert.** Celebrate Valentine's Day with an evening of the beautiful voices of Melody Rich and Matt Oglesby, accompanied by Choong-ha Nam. 7:30 p.m., Arts in the Sunset, 3701 Plains Blvd. Tickets: \$40. 376-8782.

**Feb 6-7 Amarillo Bombers Indoor Soccer vs Orlando Atletico Pro FC.** 7 p.m., Amarillo Civic Center. For tickets: 378-3096.

**Feb 6-15 "Pride and Prejudice,"** Canyon. WTAMU theatre performance. 7:30 p.m. (2/6-7 and 12-14), 2:30 p.m. (2/8 and 2/15), WTAMU Happy State Studio Theatre. Tickets (\$15): 806-651-2810 or artsboxoffice@wtamu.edu.

**Feb 7 Travis Howye-Post Traumatic First Responder Purpose.** An empowering course and presentation on Leadership, Mental Wellness and Resiliency. 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Globe-News Center Education Room. 378-4297.

**Feb 7 Annual Catholic Student Center Auction.** To benefit Catholic Student Center at WTAMU. Dinner, dancing, exciting auctions, interactive fun, live entertainment and chance to win \$1000 in reverse drawing. 6 p.m., St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 4100 S. Coulter. For tickets (\$75): wtcsc.org or 806-655-4345.

**Feb 7 Amarillo Lincoln Reagan Dinner.** "Stars Stripes & Spurs" includes a prime rib dinner, cash bar and silent auction supporting Republican clubs and mission efforts for the next two years. It's a night of fellowship, meet the candidates, and inspiration: Guest speaker is Dr. Ben Carson. Western formal wear is encouraged! 4:30 p.m., Amarillo Civic Center Heritage Ballroom. Tickets (\$100): amarillolincolnreagandinner2026.com.

**Feb 7 71st Annual Amarillo Symphony Ball.** "An Evening Under the Grove" will include cocktails, a seated dinner, and dancing to the high-energy band, Midtown. Amarillo's most elegant evening will feature casino fun and the presentation of the Amarillo Symphony



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