Chamber Unveils New Video Tour of Amarillo

In January this year we announced a new project and partnership with CGI Communications to produce a series of videos for the Chamber’s website to highlight the many reasons Amarillo is a great place to live, learn, work, and play...and why the Chamber is a great place to belong. These new short and informative videos feature great Amarillo people, Chamber member businesses, non-profit organizations, attractions, scenery and more. They are available on the Chamber’s homepage at [www.Amarillo-Chamber.org](http://www.Amarillo-Chamber.org) for the whole world to see. We know Amarillo has a lot to offer, and now others can see that too.

Look for the VIDEO TOUR OF AMARILLO button on our home page or the Week’s Sneak Peek page of our website (like the one shown on the right). One click will take you to a welcome message from Mayor Paul Harpole and the Chamber’s own Gary Molberg and Dan Quandt. Then you can click on the other “Community Movies” chapters for LIVE, LEARN, WORK, PLAY, COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS to get information on real estate, healthcare, employment, attractions, Chamber events, and non-profit groups. Each new chapter will also give you a new selection of video partner logos that sponsored and supported this project. Clicking on one of those logos will take you to their own websites or bring up short video messages about that business. This is a great way to get to know some of the people and members of the Chamber. Sponsoring members who have their own video messages will also have the messages displayed in their online directory link on the Chamber’s website. Note, not all partners have video links, and some videos are still in production. Look for more partner videos coming soon. Thank you to these video sponsors as of July 14:


**Silver Sponsors:** Georgia St Mall, USA, Hillock Builders, LLC, Martin Tipton Pharmacy LLC, Specialized Therapy Services, and Western Chiropractic Clinic.


For more information about this ongoing project or promoting your business with videos, contact [penni@amarillo-chamber.org](mailto:penni@amarillo-chamber.org) or call 806.342.2005.
Ribbon Cutting & Groundbreaking Ceremonies in June

Click on http://bit.ly/RibbonCuttingJune2016 to download these pictures.

AquaOne
2500 S Coulter, Suite 119

Awaken Medical Day Spa
9200 Town Square Blvd, Suite 1150

Bliss Salt Spa
2920 Duniven Circle, Suite 2

Certified Used Cars of Pollard
2795 SW 45th

Chicago Title
8th & Fillmore

Chick-fil-A on Gem Lake
5544 Amarillo Blvd. West

Fresh Start of Monroe, Inc.
6500 Canyon Drive, Suite 500

Harrington at Park Central
401 SW 12th

My Place Hotel
2208 Cinema Drive

Be sure to look for our Ribbon Cutting photos in: Amarillo Globe-News

Contact Christy at 342-2004 for information on holding your own Ribbon Cutting or Groundbreaking event.
Welcome New Members
Thanks for Joining in June

**Absolute Lawn Care**
Brandon Ward
Micah Tijerina
13490 FM 2590
Amarillo, TX 79110
(806) 676-5199

[Lawn care website](http://www.absolutelawncareonline.com)

Lawn maintenance, sprinkler installation & repair, landscape lighting, patios, sod installation, Fall & Spring cleanup, shrub trimming, thatching, aerating, garden cleanouts, weed control, fertilizing, Christmas lighting, snow removal, rock sales, fencing, tree sales.

**Backyard Shades**
Juan Guzman
1815 S. Eastern
Amarillo, TX 79118
(806) 678-6511

[Lawn care website](http://www.backyardshades.com)

Locally owned. Patio covers, pergolas, carports, sun rooms, screen rooms, concrete and decks.

**Burdett Morgan Williamson & Boykin, LLP**
Weston Wright
Chris Stewart
500 S. Taylor, Suite 900
Amarillo, TX 79101
(806) 358-8116

[Law firm website](http://www.bmpw-law.com)


**Certified Used Cars of Pollard**
Oscar Guerrero
2801 W 45th
Amarillo, TX 79110
(806) 242-7368

[Website](http://www.certifiedofamarillo.com)

Chick-Fil-A at Gem Lake Road
Lisa McLain
Shauna Ashley
5544 W. Amarillo Blvd.
Amarillo, TX 79106
(806) 353-1350

[Website](http://www.chick-fil-a.com)

Providing the same outstanding customer service and delicious food that Chick-Fil-A is known for. Dine in, drive through and catering services available. It’s our pleasure to serve you!

**Destiny’s Garden**
Sheila Chick
Dennie Chick
1134 East loop 335 South
Amarillo, TX 79118

[Website](http://www.destinysgardens.com)

Destiny’s Garden is a full service Wedding & Event Center. Designed to provide an elegant atmosphere for Weddings, receptions and other events. Beautiful outdoor gardens, Royal reception hall, Marquis reception hall.

**Pollard Used Cars**
2801 W 45th
Amarillo, TX 79110
(806) 640-7260

**Rock n Fountains**
806-640-7260

**Southwest AMBUCS**
Streit Drive

**Twisted T Bar & Grill**
5120 Canyon Drive

**Wise Hearing Solutions**
3613 S Georgia

**Your Time Massage**
3419 S Coulter, Suite 2A
Welcome New Members
Thanks for Joining in June

Double R Lofts
Darin Hudson
705 S. Grant
Amarillo, TX 79101
(505) 252-0039
www.downtownamarillolofts.com
Downtown loft apartments. 1, 2, & 3 bedrooms. 730 sq. ft to 3,100 sq. ft. 25 units available. $1,100 - 2,900. Granite countertops. Environmentally friendly GREEN building.

Farmers Insurance - Kaci Himes
Kaci Himes
3414 B Olsen
Amarillo, TX 79109
(806) 340-7929
Fax: (806)340-7930
www.farmersagent.com/khimes
I offer auto, home, life, and commercial insurance.

God, Guns, & Gear, LLC
Doug White
601 SW 6th Ave
Amarillo, TX 79101
www.godgunsgear.com
God, Guns, and Gear is a family-owned retailer of guns, ammo, clothing and gear. We specialize in tactical goods with a Christian based philosophy.

Pollard Used Cars
Bryan Howard
Amarillo, TX 79110
(806) 503-9695
www.pollardofamarillo.com
Pollard Used Cars wants to be the number one source for all your used car needs, and because we are part of one of the largest used car auto groups in the area, we are happy to provide you with a large selection of used cars, used trucks and used SUVs.

Rafter J Bar B Que
Scott Atwood
Kelly Arrington
1909 Avenue J
Amarillo, TX 79111
Locally owned. Natural pecan fire smoked bar b que at its finest! Located on the historical Amarillo air force base.

Salon Lola Paige
Staci McGill
Curts McGill
5215 Coulter, Suite 200
Amarillo, TX 79119
(806) 282-2250
Locally owned. Full service salon with a licensed massage therapist and esthetician.

Smooth Transitions West Texas
Jan McCreary-Allen
Amarillo, TX 79109
(806) 672-4093
www.smoothtransitionswesttexas.com
We specialize in decluttering, downsizing, estate inventory and dispersal by managing and helping seniors and families through the process of moving.

Twisted T Bar & Grill
Paul Turner
Troy Davis
5120 Canyon Dr.
Amarillo, TX 79109
(806) 352-1145
www.twistedtbarandgrill.com
Locally owned. We use all local meats and produce. Hand tenderized chicken fried steak, juicy burgers, and great Mexican food.

Urban Society
Joe R. Mendez
3311 Wimberly Dr.
Amarillo, TX 79109
(415) 542-6521
We are a high end salon and blow dry bar.

Viva Media
Lupe Ceniceros
Jessi Prince
500 S. Polk, Suite 110
Amarillo, TX 79101
(806) 242-0877
Fax: (888) 990-1749
www.vivamediallc.com
Viva Media LLC is a local broadcast media company made up of 3 radio stations: La Poderosa 96.FM, La Raza 105.1FM, and Exitos 87.9FM.

Yellow City Pet Supply
John Mkee
Grant Harbison
7710 Hillside Rd, Suite 200
Amarillo, TX 79119
(806) 418-6890
https://www.facebook.com/yellowcitypetsupply/
Yellow City Pet Supply offers the Texas panhandle communities premium dog and cat food as well as pet supplies and accessories.

Zach’s Club
Tammy Prescott
Jeff Cox
6022 SW 48TH
Amarillo, TX 79109
(806) 352-7100
Fax: (806) 952-7295
www.zachscub.com/amarillo.html
Health and fitness facility that offers group fitness classes, strength training machines, free weights, plated weights and indoor lap pool.

The Chamber cannot guarantee your success or your profitability, but it can guarantee the right business climate for you to succeed.
– Author Unknown

Mark Your Calendar:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/4</td>
<td>After Hours Networking</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/8</td>
<td>Good Times Celebration® Barbecue Cook-Off</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/24</td>
<td>Chamber Challenge Shooting Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/6</td>
<td>After Hours Networking</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/20</td>
<td>Annual Banquet &amp; Business Excellence Awards</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/10</td>
<td>Fall Mega Market</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/1</td>
<td>After Hours Networking</td>
</tr>
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</table>

We’re on Fun 99.7 every Tuesday at 8:30am to talk about the week’s events, conventions & newest members. It’s the most jam-packed three-minute segment. If you miss it live, you can always check out the video recap with more information on our YouTube Channel, Facebook page or on the Week’s Sneak Peek page on our website.
Free Networking at Chamber After Hours August 4

If you have yet to join us at one of these fun events, you can expect to meet some new faces, connect with some old friends, hand out some business cards, maybe win a door prize, enjoy some great food and beverages, and network, network, network. Best of all, they are FREE. We invite Chamber members to take advantage of this great way to meet new people who might want to know about your business.

For more information about After Hours hosts and to view photos from our last event at Nistler’s Lawn & Landscape / The Re- splendent Garden, visit [http://bit.ly/AmarilloChamberAfterHours](http://bit.ly/AmarilloChamberAfterHours) or call Jason at 806.342.2018 if you would like to host a future After Hours at your business.

Thursday, August 4th
5:00pm—7:00pm
Keller Williams Realty
(3955 S Soncy)

Chamber Members & Guests are invited to join us for another FREE Business Networking event. There will be hors d’oeuvres, drinks & door prizes. Adults only please.

## Convention & Visitor Council
### 2015-16 Year-To-Date Statistics

### Tourism
- **Occupancy Rate (June)**: 77.7%
- **Group Tour Buses (Fiscal YTD)**: 150
- **Visitor Center Guests (Fiscal YTD)**: 2,789

### Film Commission
- **Information requests (Fiscal YTD)**: 16

### Sport & Convention Groups
- **# of Conventions/Groups in Amarillo (Fiscal YTD)**: 58
- **Delegates (Fiscal YTD)**: 11,863
- **Room Nights (Fiscal YTD)**: 3,792
  - **Convention Delegates Booked-Future Conventions (Fiscal YTD)**: 15,565
  - **Convention Delegate Room Nights Booked (Fiscal YTD)**: 11,920
  - **Attendees Booked-Future Sport Events (Fiscal YTD)**: 6,675
  - **Room Nights Booked (Fiscal YTD)**: 10,205

### Communications / CVC Website
- **CVC Website Visits (Google Analytics—June)**: 40,278
- **CVC Website Unique Visitors (Google Analytics—June)**: 32,952
- **CVC Website Page Views (Google Analytics—June)**: 94,820
- **CVC Website Average Visit Duration (Google Analytics—June)**: 2:01

### Social Media
- **Facebook Page Likes Thru June (VisitAmarilloTX)**: 38,751

### WELCOME THESE SPORT & CONVENTION GROUPS TO AMARILLO

#### July
- **28-8/1**: Texas Air Hogs Baseball—Series 3

#### August
- **6**: Kuben Puckett Productions Invitational PBR & Ranch Bronc Riding
- **7-9**: American Hereford Association Faces of Leadership Pride
- **13-14**: Amarillo Area Tennis Association August ZAT
- **13-21**: West Texas Futurity
- **17-20**: National Cutting Horse Association 2016 Mercuria NCHA World Series of Cutting
- **19-21**: Hills Hallmark Keepsake Ornaments Artist Signing Event
- **22-25**: Texas Air Hogs Baseball—Series 4
- **26-9/8**: American Quarter Horse Association 2016 Adequan Select World Championship Show
- **29-9/11**: Xcel Energy Southwest Power Pool Operator Conference

#### September
- **2-6**: Texas Air Hogs Baseball—Series 5
- **4-9**: Great American Adventures
- **7-11**: 404th Military Police Unit MP Reunion
- **13-18**: Panhandle Kennel Club of Texas
- **19-25**: The Deborah Project A Night of Hope
- **23-24**: First Presbyterian Church of Canyon Regional Meeting
- **23-25**: Tascosa High School Class of 66 50th Reunion

#### October
- **5**: Valley Irrigation Company Workshop
- **7-9**: Amarillo High School Class of 76 Reunion
- **8-9**: National Route 66 Motor Tour
- **11-16**: Cowboy Mounted Shooting Association World Championships
- **20-23**: Amarillo College Association of Information Technology Professionals Reg. 3 Conference
- **27-29**: National Junior Bull Riders Association NJBRA Year-End Finals 2016
August Around Town
By: Eric Miller, CVC Director of Communications

There’s something to do in Amarillo in August.

As the summer draws to a close, now is a perfect time to check out all that is happening in our city.

The play TEXAS is finishing its 51st season. This iconic attraction has brought over 4 million viewers to its theater in Palo Duro Canyon State Park. The season ends August 20 so make plans now to catch this show or its wait till 2017. www.texas-show.com.

Wonderland Amusement Park is celebrating its 65th season, all of them owned by the Borchardt/Roads family. The park closes the end of business on Labor Day but in August it is planning a special prize incentive. It’s the perfect time to visit the park. www.wonderlandpark.com.

Several summer music series have expanded and most of them now have performances well into August. Listen to top-notch live music with Starlight Theater (Tuesday at 7 pm in Sam Houston Park); High Noon on the Square (Wednesday at noon at the Potter County Courthouse lawn) and Music in the Gardens (Thursday at 7 pm in the Amarillo Botanical Gardens). All the concerts are on the Amarillo Civic web site. www.amarillo.org.

Discover! 4.0 flashes back to when Labor Day weekend closed with Discover!, an event hosted by the Don Harrington Discovery Center that involved the Amarillo Symphony and fireworks. This year, Discover! 4.0 celebrates the Don Harrington Discovery Center’s 40th anniversary. Lots of booths and vendors will be on the DHDC grounds featuring food, music and great activities. The festival ends with a special laser show. Admission to Discover! 4.0 is just $3 per person (children under 2 are free) and includes all the exhibits inside the Discovery Center. It is August 6 from 4-10 p.m. www.dhdc.org.

The same day is a bull riding event that also promises a lot of fireworks! The Koben Puckett Invitational is a PBR-sanctioned event that will bring the best bulls and bull riders to Amarillo. Hosted by Koben Puckett it benefits the Press On Foundation, a group that helps people like Koben who face all the challenges from spinal trauma. The riding will be at the Will Rogers Range Riders Arena near the intersection of Loop 335 and Washington Ave. It kicks off at 7 p.m. www.kobenpuckettinvitational.com.

Debuting in August is America’s Horse in Art, a major art show and sale at the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame and Museum. More than 20 of the best Western artists will display pieces and offer them for sale. The show opens with an invitation-only reception on August 13 but runs through October 15 and it is included with regular admission. www.aqha.com/museum.

Don’t miss a brand-new event for Amarillo. The NCHA World Series of Cutting comes to the Amarillo National Center on August 20 at 6:30 p.m. with a performance featuring the top National Cutting Horse Association riders and horses. Better still, the event honors our veterans and donations will be accepted at the gate for local veterans’ organizations. http://www.nchacutting.com/ag/shows/world_series.php.

Two public markets continue through August. The Golden Spread Farmers Market features fresh area produce at the Sunset Center parking lot near 15th & Pecos. The market is Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday starting a 7 a.m. and continues until sell out. www.goldenspreadfarmers.com. New this summer is the Amarillo Community Market downtown on the grounds of the Bivins Mansion at 10th and Polk. The market operates on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and features locally made products as well as produce. www.amarillocommunitymarkey.weebly.com.

Have you seen the indoor rainbow? Drop by the Amarillo Museum of Art for the exhibit Side by Side featuring work by Larry Bell and Gabriel Dawe. In the atrium of the museum is what is best described as an indoor rainbow. The installation by Dawe changes color and pattern as the sun and clouds change position outside. Admission is always free at the AMoA but donations are welcome. www.amarilloart.org.

Can’t keep track of everything (and that’s not everything)? Then subscribe to the Amarillo Convention & Visitor Council’s weekly email newsletter, AMAriillo. Delivered to your email box every Tuesday morning at 7 a.m., it is filled with events and ideas for the upcoming seven days in Amarillo. It is free and your email information is never shared with any other organization. Find the sign-up at www.visitarmarillo.com and click the e-newsletter tag near the bottom of the page.

Congratulations to this Prime Service Award Winner in June

Members of the CVC’s Convention & Tourism Committee as well as other Chamber volunteers recently dropped in on the following businesses to deliver an AMA Prime Service lapel pin to these employees who provided someone with PRIME customer service.

If you receive outstanding service at an area business, nominate that person for a Prime Service award. Just call the CVC office at 374-1497 or visit http://www.visitamarillo.com/primeservice/.

Dr. Christina Kulage
Amarillo Veterinary Clinic

AMA Prime Service

Visit Amarillo
www.visitamarillo.com

AMA Prime Service

Amarillo Veterinary Clinic

AMA Prime Service
The fourth annual Chamber Challenge Clay Shoot will be held on **Saturday, September 24th** at the Amarillo Gun Club. We are bringing back Dennis Linden and his famous sporting clays program. There will be 12 stations and 100 target sporting clays, and optional Annie Oakley games will be going on all day for extra fun and prizes!

The following businesses have already signed up to sponsor or have a team in this years event:

**Sharpshooter Sponsor:** Scarborough Specialties

**Marksman Sponsors:** Amarillo National Bank, Axigent Technologies Group, FirstBank Southwest, and Yellowhouse Machinery

**Sportsman Sponsors:** Bruckner Truck Sales, and Johnson & Sheldon PLLC


Sign up today and add your business name to this growing list of participants and sponsors. Sponsorship opportunities and team information can be found on our website at [http://bit.ly/ChamberChallenge2016](http://bit.ly/ChamberChallenge2016). For more information, contact Becky Zenor at 342-2010 or becky@amarillo-chamber.org.

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**Airport Art Display – “I Might Fly Away”**

The artist, Nannette Womack, has been selected to exhibit 6 pieces of her artwork at the Rick Husband Amarillo International Airport from July – October, 2016.

The artwork is mixed media and acrylic on canvas and includes the following: Purple Martin, Saffron Finch, House Sparrow, Raven, Blue Jay, and Green and Gold Tanager. You may view other works of Nannette at Gesture Gallery located at Galleries at Sunset Center, Studio #94.

The Amarillo Convention and Visitor Council Arts Committee, the City of Amarillo and the Rick Husband International Airport kicked off the Airport Art program in December, 2013. This is the fourth display of artwork. The artwork is located on a wall just to the left of the entrance to the TSA security screening area, almost in the shadow of the sculpture of Rick Husband.

We appreciate the assistance from the CVC Arts Committee, CVC Arts Committee Airport Art Sub-Committee, Sara Freese of the Rick Husband International Airport, and Alex Gregory of the Amarillo Museum of Art for developing and supporting this ongoing project.

If you are interested in participating in the Airport Art program and would like to receive an application, please contact Becky Zenor. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact her at 806 342-2010 or becky@amarillo-chamber.org.
RENEWING MEMBERS

41 Productions
7 Bar and Grill
ABC 7 News
Acoma Pine Animal & Bird Clinic
Amarillo Association of REALTORS
Amarillo Cheer Elite
Amarillo College
Amarillo Custom Box Company
Amarillo Museum of Art
Amarillo Pressure Wash
Amarillo Republican Women
Amarillo Spine & Rehabilitation Center
Amarillo Town Club
Amarillo’s Parkview Realty, LLC
Ameriprise Linen and Apparel Services
Apex Plumbing Heating and Air LLC
Auto Sales & Finance
Bekins - A & W Transfer
Better Business Bureau
Border States Electric Supply of Texas
Brookdale Medi Park West
Brookdale Sleepy Hollow
Bruckner Truck Sales, Inc.
Bubble Bath Car Wash
Caprock Home Health Services
Centergas Fuels Inc.
Central On-Line Security
Chicken Express
Cintas Corporation
Cloud 9 Services, LLC
Coldiron Real Estate Group, LLC
Coldwell Banker First Equity/
Regena Ladd
Colonies at Hillside
Cross Texas Transmission
Cypress Creek @ Jason Avenue
Apartment Homes
D & L Plastic Screening dba The Great Armadillo Printing
Company
Desperado's Catering

DBF Insurance Group LLC
- Amarillo
DBF Insurance Group LLC
- Arlington
DBF Insurance Group LLC
- Pampa
Diversified Improvement Contractors
Economic Leads
Family Support Services
Farmers Insurance - Hunnicut Agency
Get Fit
Gonzales Investigations
Gray County Vet Clinic
Harwell & Harwell
Heritage A Skilled Nursing & Rehab Facility
Hi Plains Canvas Products, Inc
High Plains Public Radio
Homer’s Backyard Ball Foundation
Homes & Land of Amarillo, Canyon & Pampa
Jenkins Wealth Management
Johnson & Sheldon, P.C.
KFD NewsChannel 10 CBS
Kimrad Transport, LP
Kwahadi Heritage, Inc.
Lady Bug Services
Landscape Supply
Latham Hometown Realty
Lone Star Construction
Luxury Inn & Suites
Mariposa Apartment Homes @ Jason Ave
Micro/MWI
Midas Auto Service Experts
Mission Amarillo
Missouri Valley, Inc
MTS Transportation Inc.
Northwest Texas Healthcare System
Owens Corning
Pablo R Diaz-Esquível, M D P A
Palo Duro Heating & Air
Panhandle Eurotech Automotive
Patrick Electric Service, Inc.
Pete’s Car Smart KIA
Plains Builders Inc
Plains Dairy L.L.C.
Proffitt’s Lawn & Leisure Ltd.
Reagor-Dykes Mitsubishi Amarillo
Rib Crib
Robert Keys & Associates Land Surveying
Robinson’s Hay and Animal Nutrition
Rockwood Furniture Co.
Rodfathers LLC RV & Auto Body Shop
Ronald McDonald House of Amarillo
Ross Rogers Golf Complex
Royal Glass of Amarillo, LTD
RPC CPAs + Consultants, LLP
Scrib-Tech Laboratories
SIG Dansby Insurance & Associates
Sir Speedy
Specialty Supply
Spherion Staffing
Sports World
State Farm/Brian Moore
State Farm/Jeff Bara
State Farm/Rhonda Greathouse
State Farm/Roy Hunter
State Farm/Shannon Brooks
Stonegate Apartments
Street Toyota
Tate & Cox, P.C.
Tecta America CS LLC.
Texas Mutual Insurance Co.
Texas Plains Federal Credit Union
The Carpet Guy
The Drawing Board
The Haworth Company
The People’s Federal Credit Union
Top Notch Outfitters Inc
Toye’s Boutique
Tru Trading Company

Your Chamber's June membership retention rate of 91.4% puts us in the top 10 Chambers in the nation for our size.

Thanks for renewing your membership in June and for your continued support of the Chamber.

REMEMBER: You can pay your Chamber invoices online and even update your membership listing, including address, phone, fax, email, website, description of services and more. Visit the MEMBERS ONLY section of our website or email Christy@amarillo-chamber.org for your login name and password if you have forgotten it. Need help? Give her a call at 342-2004.

Click here to go to the Members Only Login Section: http://bit.ly/MembersOnlyLogin
The Chamber eNewsletter is published by the Amarillo Chamber of Commerce, 1000 South Polk, Amarillo, Texas 79101. It is provided free of charge to Chamber members. Address correspondence to Chamber Communications at the address listed above, call 806.373.7800 or fax 806.373.3909.

2015-16 Board of Directors
Executive Committee

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Chair-Elect
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Finance Chair
William Ware
President/CEO
Gary Molberg
Past Chair
Bill Jenkins
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Chris Reed
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Bob Murray
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Nicole Shannon
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Joe Street
Bryan Kauffman
Toby Tucker

Visit our website at:
Amarillo-Chamber.org

Penni Bentley, Editor
News@Amarillo-Chamber.org
In less than six weeks on September 8th we will fill downtown with that amazing, mouthwatering smell of meat cooking on a grill when we bring together 5-6,000 of our closest friends for an evening of food, fun, music and networking.

Big outdoor events involve a ton of logistics, staff, planning, and months of coordinating. One thing that is always a top priority for our event is trying to ensure the safety of our participants and attendees. We are honored to contract with the Amarillo Police Department to provide uniformed officers to assist with our entrance gates, security, crowd control, and be on hand for first-aid if necessary during our events. We never anticipate an issue, and have been very fortunate to have a long history of incident-free events (knock wood) over the years.

The picture below is of the officers that were assigned to work our Summer Celebration last month. It’s become somewhat of a tradition to make them pose for a group photo before the event starts. We get to see them cutting up with each other and laughing and joking, and it reminds us that they may wear a badge and a gun and a bullet proof vest, but they are still just normal men and women like you and me underneath it all.

Lately, we’ve seen too many news stories of officers being killed in the line of duty, and it truly breaks my heart. I’ve come to consider many of the men in these photos friends of mine over the years. My next door neighbor is an APD officer. A sheriff’s deputy lives across the street from me. They have wives and kids, a mortgage, stress and bills, joys and celebrations just like I do. But when I come to work every day at the Chamber, I don’t worry that someone may physically attack me because of my job. I don’t tell my husband goodbye in the morning and worry that he won’t come home at night because a customer got mad. The men and women who take an oath as a public servant wake up every morning knowing that they will put themselves in harms way to protect people, who many times by their own actions, don’t deserve protecting. And they do it anyway.

I was raised that if you are always doing the right thing and not breaking the law, you probably will stay out of trouble. It’s a philosophy that’s gotten me to 40-something years of age and kept me out of jail so far. These frequent news stories just remind me now more than ever to be thankful for those who are willing to do what so many could not...and would not do.

Look for some of these faces in the crowd at our barbecue, and thank them for being part of our event. Be sure to stop by the Amarillo Police Officers Association tent and meet some more APD off-duty officers. Those guys know how to cook a mean brisket too!

As always, tell us how we are doing. Give us your suggestions, feedback, and input. Feel free to write on our Facebook wall. Get involved. We are proud to be YOUR Chamber.