

Amarillo Chamber eNews

1000 SOUTH POLK - AMARILLO, TEXAS

DEC 2009

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Agriculture Luncheon Addresses Future of Ag

By: Penni Bentley, Chamber Director of Communications

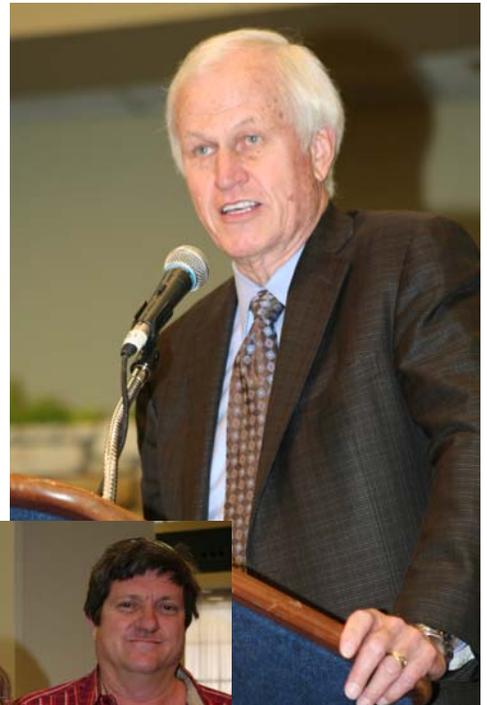
The Ag Council of the Amarillo Chamber of Commerce recently hosted its 17th Annual Ag Appreciation Luncheon in conjunction with the annual Amarillo Farm and Ranch Show at the Civic Center Grand Plaza. More than 230 attendees were on hand to hear keynote speaker, former Congressman Charlie Stenholm, speak on the future of politics, climate and agriculture.

"Every one second, there are another three mouths to feed in this world, and every one second, there are three less acres to be used for consumable agriculture," commented Stenholm. The former congressman also professed, "I'm not a lobbyist...I'm an educator of Congress." Stenholm touched on topics of energy, supplemental fuels, food supplies, undocumented workers and technology as they related to the future of agriculture.

The luncheon is meant to show the local and area communities the importance of the agriculture in the panhandle. Agriculture makes up a 5-billion dollar industry locally (3.7 from livestock and 1.3 from crops).

Another highlight of the annual event includes naming the Farmer of the Year by Duncan & Boyd Jewelers. This year, David Jackson and his wife Cindy of Stratford were recognized for their valuable contributions to the ag community. The Jackson family are second generation farmers, and one of the largest providers of corn to the company Monsanto.

Sponsors with Mayor Debra McCartt LtoR: Brice Edwards, KGNC; Steve Donnell, Panhandle Plains Land Bank; Mayor Debra McCartt; Ken Crump, First United Bank; Josh Winegarner, Texas Cattle Feeders; Donna Hughes, Peacock Trading; Dr. Pat O'Brien, WTAMU; not pictured is a representative from Texas Wheat Producers.



Above: Congressman Charlie Stenholm



Left: Cindy & David Jackson



View more Ag Lunch Photos at:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/amarillochamber/sets/72157622790770049/>

Mark Your Calendar

Jan 21	Chamber Annual Banquet
May 4	BusinessConnection
May 13	Ready for the Real World
May 18	Top Two Percent Awards
May 22	Golden Nail Awards
Jun 24	Summer Fiesta
July 29	Chamber Open Golf Tournament
Sep 9	Good Times Celebration Barbecue Cook-Off



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**AMARILLO
CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE**

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, or call 806.373.7800, fax 806.373.3909.

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Visit our website at:

Amarillo-Chamber.org

Penni Bentley, Editor
News@Amarillo-Chamber.org

CHAMBER Annual Banquet

Featuring Motivational Speaker & Corporate Trainer, Pat Johns

Thursday, January 21, 2010
6pm Social Hour
7pm Dinner & Program

Amarillo Civic Center
Heritage Ballroom

Tickets call 373-7800
\$25 / person Open Seating
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Contact: Andrea McClintock
andrea@amarillo-chamber.org



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Educator For A Day

Community businessmen and women recently participated in the Educator for a Day Program hosted by AISD and the Chamber's Quality of Life Council. Held on December 4th, more than ___ spent half a day in 37 AISD classrooms observing and assisting teachers. This program is designed to give the business community a hands-on look at the activities being conducted in the classroom to prepare our youth to be leaders of tomorrow. The event concluded with a luncheon held at the Kwahadi Museum of the American Indian and was sponsored by: AISD, The Chamber, The Big Texan, and Xcel Energy. For information on participating, contact Denise Blanchard at 326-1013 or denise.blanchard@amaisd.org or Becky Zenor at 342-2010 or becky@amarillo-chamber.org.



James Brown, Campfire USA, assists two Belmar Elementary 5th Grade science students dissect the eye of a cow.

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CampFire USA	Tascosa Excellence Council
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Women's Council Names 2009 Business Woman of the Year

By: Denise Blanchard, 2008 Women's Council
Business Woman of the Year

Our Business Woman of the Year is a perfect example of a business woman who not only meets the needs of her work duties, but also knows the obligation we all have to serve others in our community. She has served on the Women's

Council Steering Committee for a number of years, always helping out in any capacity needed. Not only does she serve in a leadership position for our Council, but also serves the Amarillo Senior Citizens Association, the Harrington Cancer Center, Amarillo West Rotary Club, Volunteer Services Council Texas Panhandle MHMR

and has volunteered with Junior Achievement. She is the first face you see when attending a Women's Council monthly meeting and has served as greeter for many years, our 2009 Business Woman of the Year is Judy Whiteley with First Bank Southwest.



Denise Blanchard with Judy Whiteley

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Cat-man-du is the 2009 Jim Henson Top Small Business of the Year Winner

The Chamber is proud to announce Cat-man-du as the 2009 Jim Henson Top Small Business of the Year Award Winner. Cat-man-du, was selected because of their success in our business community, commitment to good business practices, and dedication to serve our community. "This award is an amazing honor. I want everyone to know that we received this award because of my wife, our first employees (who reported to work in my garage), the great teams we have in three Panhandle cities and because our clients believed we had something special. That 'something special' is our culture of excellence and dedication to our clients that is cat-man-du," commented Ray Wilson, Cat-man-du Owner.



Chamber Board Chair, Laura Street with Ray Wilson, Cat-man-du Owner, and Mayor Debra McCartt.

For more information on the Small Business Awards, contact Jason Harrison at 373-7800 or Jason@amarillo-chamber.org.

View all the photos from the award event at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/amarillochamber/sets/72157622981079876/>

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**Convention & Visitor Council
2009-10 Year-To-Date Statistics**

Tourism	
Occupancy Rate	56.14%
Room Nights	168,435
Overnight Visitors	286,339
Visitor Center Guests	1,161
Group Tours	73
Inquiries for Amarillo Information	6,138
Overnight Travel Impact (\$)	\$48,677,630
Film Office	
Information requests	1
Conventions	
# of Conventions/Groups in Amarillo	8
Delegates	2,775
Room Nights	3,548
Delegate Spending (\$)	\$1,404,000
Delegates Booked-Future Conventions	6,475
Delegate Room Nights Booked	4,355
CVC Website	
Ave Monthly Visits	254,824
Ave Monthly Page Views	1,911,754
Page Views / Visit	7.50

WELCOME THESE CONVENTION GROUPS

DECEMBER 2009

1-3	Farm & Ranch Show Cygnus Expositions	2,500
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JANUARY 2010

2-3	Jehovah's Witness Circuit Event	700
9-10	Jehovah's Witness Circuit Event	700



Why travel when everything you need is right here at home? The benefits of meeting at home are doubled when you consider it not only saves you money-but boosts our local economy. Not to mention, saving yourself the time, money and stress that goes along with travel. So, hunker down now and meet at home, because after all, it just makes sense.

Go to www.visitamarillotx.com to see ideas of hosting a convention in your home town. There's sure to be some options that maybe you've never heard of, or simply taken for granted.



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DALHART OUTREACH EVENT

Members of the Chamber's Ag Council traveled to Dalhart on November 5th on an outreach event, which is an effort to educate Amarillo's business leaders about the growth and developments in our smaller neighboring towns. The Dalhart Chamber of Commerce hosted the event, which included tours of Hilmar Cheese and Cargill Sweet Bran. The event was a great success educating the council members on the developments of the Dalhart community that may impact the economy of the Panhandle as a whole. For information on future outreach trips, contact

Jason Harrison at 373-7800 or Jason@amarillo-chamber.org.



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The Chamber Ag Council has recently published the new AgriBusiness magazine highlighting the importance of agriculture, not only to the city of Amarillo, but to the entire panhandle of Texas. Click on the link below to flip through the online magazine version at: http://issuu.com/AmarilloChamber/docs/agribusiness_publication_2009

Member Advertising Opportunity

Did you know the Amarillo Chamber of Commerce has launched a Chamber Member advertising opportunity?

This opportunity is creating extremely high levels of exposure and return for participating members. In this economy, The Chamber has made a commitment to our Membership to provide cost-effective, affordable and on-target advertising venues. This advertising program is another way in which we are fulfilling that promise.

Visit www.amarillo-chamber.org and notice the large marketing messages at the top of our page. These rotating advertisements are only a portion of a larger package of branding messages that appear throughout the website. All major industry pages and category pages offer a multitude of advertising packages which are tracked with detailed statistics. These advertisements provide targeted opportunities for you to not only get your name and message to customers, but take them from our website to yours.

Due to the limited number of positions available advertising positions are sold on a first-come first-served basis. Just call **Penni Bentley at 342-2005** to schedule a guided tour of the Chamber's Website marketing program or email penni@amarillo-chamber.org for more information.

CVC Has New Convention Sales Director

By: Eric Miller, CVC Director of Communications

Rick Matchett of Amarillo has been hired as the new Director of Convention Sales by the Amarillo Convention & Visitor Council. He replaces Jason Harrison, who moved into a staff position with the Amarillo Chamber of Commerce.

Matchett has been a fixture in the Amarillo community and he brings over 20 years of management and sales management experience, many of them in the local broadcast industry, to this key position. He will head a three-person staff that markets Amarillo as a destination for meetings, events and conventions to groups throughout Texas and the nation.

Matchett will handle sales management and administration. He will also be responsible for national association accounts and agriculture markets. Today is his first day on the job.

"Hiring Rick Matchett is a big step for the CVC. His reputation in the local community adds to the profile of the CVC. I am sure he will be a great ambassador for Amarillo in the national convention industry," Jerry Holt, Vice President of the Amarillo CVC, says.

Tina Teague was also promoted to Senior Convention Sales Manager at the Amarillo CVC.

Teague has been on the convention sales staff of the Amarillo CVC since spring 2007. She will cover the traditional SMERF markets (social, military, educational, religious and fraternal associations) and the sports market.

"Tina has proven to be an important asset to the Convention & Visitor Council," Holt says.

The CVC will continue to maintain a regular presence in Austin with the state association markets, assigning that duty to existing convention sales staff member Tiffany Redinger.

Each of them will also work to develop small business events (under 200 room nights) in their respective areas.



**Rick Matchett, CVC
Director of Convention Sales**

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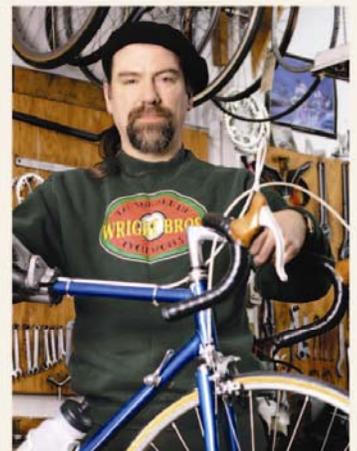
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Ribbon Cutting & Ground Breaking Ceremonies in November

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and for your continued support of the Chamber.**

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Editor's Corner

By: Penni Bentley, Chamber Director of Communications
penni@amarillo-chamber.org

This month I'm doing something a little different. Call it plagiarism if you want, but I think with the internet and the ability to cut and paste, it's more about being resourceful than dishonest. I keep getting information on twitter and facebook about tips for social media and small businesses. I know there are a handful of our Chamber members using these great tools, but I think the vast majority are scared of it or thinks it's a flash in the pan. If you use a search engine like Google or Bing, you will probably get more than 25 million related sites for the phrase "social media tips for small businesses". I did. From the first article listed in my search, I'll share some key points.

From [Mya Frazier](#) and [foxbusiness.com](http://www.foxbusiness.com), **5 Social Media Tips for Small Business:**

Today, social media is transforming the small-business marketing landscape. Social media are Web- or mobile-based tools for sharing and discussing information. It's not just for seeing who your high school sweetheart married. Businesses can tap into powerful networking sites and other social media to drive customers to their shops or companies.

If done right, small-business owners might even be able to slash their traditional marketing spending to zero. Writing blogs (short for "Web logs") or ongoing online commentary and using social-networking sites, such as Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube, can provide inexpensive but powerful online marketing.

Because it's free, people think it's easy to create a social media presence. But this attitude can lead to missteps. So before you dive headlong into social media, take some time to observe the customs and social norms of these new forms of communications, says David Spark, founder of Spark Media Solutions, a San Francisco-based firm that

helps companies tell their story through social media.

"Think of social media as a cocktail party," he says. "You don't go into the cocktail party and go into the middle room and scream at the top of your lungs and say, 'Buy my products.' ??? What works is you have some meaningful conversation first. And that's just how social media works."

For the full article:

<http://www.foxbusiness.com/story/small-business/social-media-tips-small-business/>

If this still all sounds like Greek to you, you are not alone. But there are a ton of free resources to take advantage of in the online community to explain things. The Chamber has a social media presence on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Flickr. Here is how I would describe some of these things in a nutshell: **Twitter** (saying what you need to say in 140 characters or less to your followers or "tweeps"). **Facebook** (most businesses and organizations have a Facebook Page rather than a Profile. A Profile is for an individual person, and they have "friends". A Page is for a business or product and has "fans" rather than friends. **YouTube** (a source that lets you upload your video messages, commercials, psa's, event highlights etc. and store it on the web so you can send people a link to watch your message. That's lots easier than trying to email actual videos that take up lots of space and crash your email) **Flickr** (a site for storing and sharing photos online).

My suggestion would be for you to go out there, explore social media, ask for help. It might be the best, cheapest thing you can do for your business. Go to any of these social sites and search Amarillo Chamber to see how we are using these tools to help the chamber grow and promote our members.

So as always, tell us how we are doing. Give us your suggestions, feedback, and input. Get involved. We are YOUR Chamber.

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