

Rooted

GROWING TOGETHER, STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY

When Summer Nights End

Preparing for a New Season

Magic of the Pool

*Why Some of Our Best Summer
Memories Happen Near Water*

Randall High Legends

Planting Seeds that Last

Rooted in Leadership: Tia Van Ryn

Finding the Sacred in Everyday Moments

Fall 2026

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*Every story
has roots.*

*Every neighbor
has a story.*

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Letter From The Editor

Dear Rooted Readers,

There are seasons in life when growth feels easy. The path is clear, opportunities are abundant, relationships feel secure, and the future seems predictable. We can see exactly where we are headed and confidently take the next step. Then there are seasons like the one many of us find ourselves in today, where plans change, challenges appear unexpectedly, and the future feels less certain than we imagined.

Over the last several months, I have been reminded that life rarely unfolds according to our expectations. Businesses face setbacks, families navigate difficult conversations, finances shift, careers evolve, and relationships stretch us in ways we never anticipated. Sometimes it feels as though every area of life is demanding our attention at once. When that happens, it is easy to focus on what is changing around us. Yet perhaps the more important question is this: What remains when everything else changes?

That question is at the heart of what it means to be rooted. A tree does not survive because the wind never blows; it survives because its roots run deeper than the storm. The strength we admire above ground is built by the unseen work taking place beneath the surface. In much the same way, resilience is often developed quietly. It looks like showing up after disappointment, choosing hope when certainty is unavailable, extending grace when it would be easier to withdraw, and continuing forward one step at a time even when the path ahead is unclear.

This issue of Rooted is dedicated to that kind of resilience—not the kind that pretends life is easy, but the kind that grows through hardship. It is the resilience that allows families to heal, businesses to recover, communities to support one another, and individuals to discover strengths they never knew they possessed. Often, our greatest growth does not happen during seasons of comfort, but during seasons that require courage, perseverance, and faith. No matter what season you find yourself in today, my hope is that these pages remind you that growth is still possible. New beginnings are still possible. Stronger foundations are still possible. Storms may shape us, but they do not have to define us. May we continue to deepen our roots, encourage one another, and move forward with wisdom, courage, and hope for whatever comes next.

Until next time,

NICHOLE THOMPSON
Editor, Rooted Magazine



“ What
remains
when
everything
else
changes? ”

Pet Feature:

Peaches the Cat



Some souls don't just pass through, they **plant** themselves in your life and stay.

a mysterious visitor



Her Majesty, Queen Peaches of the Porch

Peaches arrived in my life completely by accident. One day I glanced outside and noticed what I thought was some strange little creature sitting near my porch. When I looked closer, I realized it was a cat. Assuming she belonged to someone nearby, I left her alone. But the next day she was still there—and the day after that. Eventually, I decided to put out a little food. A food bowl turned into a bed, and a bed turned into a routine. Despite never having owned a cat before—and despite being allergic to them—I found myself growing attached to this furry little visitor. Since I wasn't sure whether she was a boy or a girl, I chose a neutral name: **Peaches**.

When I finally took her to the veterinarian, I expected to learn she was a young stray kitten. Instead, an old microchip told a different story. Peaches was actually a girl and was estimated to be around nine years old. We updated her vaccinations, treated her for the usual concerns that come with living outdoors, and officially welcomed her into our family. Even then, Peaches remained wonderfully independent. During the winter months I'll bring her inside where it's warm and comfortable, but before long she's standing at the door ready to return to her favorite place -

the porch she has claimed as her own.



Most days, if I step outside, Peaches is nearby. She loves stretching out on the concrete in the sunshine, lazily swishing her tail while keeping an eye on everything around her. If she sees us come outside, she'll often weave around our feet and confidently lead us straight to her food bowl, as if reminding us of our duties. The dogs have long since accepted her presence, running past without a second thought, while Peaches watches them with the calm expression of a queen who would rather not be bothered. With her beautiful green eyes, silver-gray coat, and dignified posture, she looks completely at home. Looking back, I don't think I

rescued Peaches at all. I think she simply chose a porch, claimed a family, and allowed us the privilege of living in her kingdom. And honestly, we wouldn't have it any other way.

ROOTED IN HER KINGDOM



Is it dinner time yet?



Ah yes, this place will do.

“
She didn't just find a home...
She chose it.
”

Sweet Summer Memories

The simple treats we remember long after the summer ends.

Cool | Simple | Delicious

Dairy-Free Fudgesicles

These creamy, chocolaty fudgesicles are made with simple pantry ingredients for a decadent, cool treat that kids and adults will love.



Prep Time
5 minutes



Cook Time
7 minutes



Total Time
15 minutes
+ freeze time

Let's Make It!

- 1 In a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, combine the coconut milk and honey; bring to a simmer.
- 2 Add the coca powder and cornstarch and whisk until well incorporated and the mixture comes to a simmer. Cook 1-2 minutes, until slightly thickened and coats the back of a spoon.
- 3 Remove from heat and let sit 15-30 minutes to cool slightly, then stir in the vanilla.
- 4 Pour mixture into 2 or 3-ounce popcicle molds.
- 5 Place in freezer 8-24 hours before removing from molds and wrapping individually in plastic wrap.

What You'll Need

- ☐ 2 (15-ounce) cans full-fat coconut milk*
- ☐ 2 tablespoons honey (use maple syrup or agave nectar for vegan)
- ☐ 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- ☐ 1 tablespoon pure vanilla
- ☐ 2-3 ounce popcicle molds**

**Use full-fat coconut milk from a can, not carton*

*** Silicone molds work beautifully!*



Some of the sweetest memories are the simplest

Rooted Reflection

What treat instantly reminds you summer?



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When Summer Nights End

Preparing for a New Season

There is a moment every year when summer begins to whisper goodbye. The pool days become fewer. The sunsets seem to arrive a little earlier. The backpacks come down from the closet shelf. Calendars begin filling with practices, homework, meetings, and routines. A new season is arriving.

For some families, back-to-school brings excitement. For others, it brings stress. But preparation has a way of easing the transition. When we prepare thoughtfully, we create space for confidence instead of chaos.

Every school year is a chance to begin again.

Rebuild Morning Routines

- ☐ Getting dressed early
- ☐ Making breakfast
- ☐ Packing backpacks
- ☐ Preparing lunches

Start Before the First Bell

Begin adjusting bedtime and wake-up routines by 10–15 minutes each day during the final weeks of summer. Small changes often feel easier than overnight adjustments.

- ☐ Notebooks
- ☐ Pens and pencils
- ☐ Water bottle
- ☐ Backpack
- ☐ Folders
- ☐ Lunchbox

- ☐ Haircuts
- ☐ Updated clothing
- ☐ Comfortable shoes
- ☐ Medical forms completed

- ☐ Family calendar
- ☐ Morning checklist
- ☐ Homework routine
- ☐ Healthy snack station
- ☐ Backpack drop zone

ROOTED REFLECTION

What is one thing your family loved most about summer?

What is one thing you're looking forward to this school year?

A ROOTED THOUGHT

Seasons are meant to change. Summer teaches us to slow down. School reminds us to grow. Both have something valuable to offer.

Developing Leaders, Not Dependency

Namikango's Ministry in Malawi



Written by: Ben Hayes

The term Community Development—or simply Development—has become something of a catchphrase in ministry circles over the past decade. As a result, its definition and application have varied widely. For some, it means distributing resources with potential long-term benefits. Others focus on meeting physical needs without addressing the spiritual challenges present in a community. Still others combine practical service with the message of Jesus.

In *Walking with the Poor*, Bryant Myers suggests that true development addresses the four broken relationships described in Scripture: between humanity and God, neighbor, creation, and self. This definition reminds us that real transformation takes time. Discipleship and the journey toward Christlikeness are not quick fixes—they are long, faithful processes.



Discipleship and the journey toward Christlikeness
are not quick fixes—they are long, faithful processes.



So, what does this kind of development look like in practice at Namikango?

On a recent visit to Malawi, I had the opportunity to meet the Chingale Village Savings and Loans (VSL) group in Mayamiko village. Many VSL groups follow a familiar pattern: after saving together and reinvesting funds, individuals launch their own small businesses. That alone is a wonderful outcome. But occasionally, a group takes things a step further and launches a collective venture. Mayamiko is one of those groups.

After completing their savings cycle, the group started three initiatives:

 A small-scale farming project on land loaned by a member

 A beekeeping project to care for a local forest and harvest honey

 A kindergarten school serving children in the village

What external resources were provided? Training—nothing more. The group was equipped with tools for self-governance, entrepreneurship, and stewardship of local resources. The vision and implementation came from within the community.

Today, members have their own savings, but they also know they are part of something larger. Together they are meeting practical needs, caring for creation, and creating opportunities for others.

The Mayamiko group is not perfect, but it is moving toward the kind of wholeness Myers describes: restored relationships with God, neighbor, creation, and self. And that's something worth celebrating.

Gas prices in Malawi are approaching \$15 per gallon—among the highest in the world. A gift of \$15 can help train more groups like Mayamiko.



Scan to donate
and learn more



ANGER

When strong feelings
— need wise direction —

Anger is a normal human emotion. It often signals that something matters to us, a boundary has been crossed, or a wound needs attention. The problem is not anger itself—it is what we do with it. When anger controls our words, decisions, and relationships, it can leave lasting damage.

“

The problem is not anger itself—it is what we do with it.

What Happens When Anger Controls Us?

Hurtful Words | Damaged Relationships | Poor Decisions | Resentment | Increased Stress

5 Steps To Managing Anger

- 1. Pause Before You React.** *Take a breath and ask, “What am I feeling right now?”*
- 2. Identify the Real Emotion.** *Anger often hides hurt, fear, disappointment, rejection, or feeling unheard.*
- 3. Process Your Feelings.** *Reflect, journal, or talk with a trusted friend, mentor, or counselor.*
- 4. Choose a Wise Response.** *Ask yourself if your response will create healing or more hurt.*
- 5. Release What You Cannot Control.** *Letting go does not mean what happened was okay—it means refusing to let it own your heart and mind.*



Things We May Need to Let Go Of

*Toxic relationships • Unrealistic expectations • Fear and anxiety • Negative self-talk
• Resentment • Pride • Old wounds • The need to be right • The desire for revenge*

Reflection Questions

- *What am I angry about right now?*
- *What is the deeper hurt underneath?*
- *Is there a conversation I need to have?*
- *What am I trying to control that I cannot?*



Rooted Though

Anger is like fire. In a fireplace, it provides warmth, light, and protection. Left unattended, it can burn down the house. The goal is not to eliminate anger. The goal is to learn how to manage it wisely so it becomes a force for growth rather than destruction.

“ You can feel anger without letting anger lead. ”

WHEN THE WATERS — Are Muddy —

Finding Hope When a Community Hurts



There are seasons when a city feels divided. Questions outnumber answers. Trust feels fragile. Headlines bring frustration. Families worry about their future, their homes, their water, and the direction of the community they love.

Amarillo has experienced that tension. From the landfill fire and water concerns to ongoing conversations about growth, accountability, and development, many citizens are asking the same question:

“Where do we go from here?”

The answer may not be found in another argument. It may be found in each other.

When waters become muddy,
you don’t abandon the river,
you move carefully through it together.



What Moving Forward Looks Like

-  **Listening Before Speaking** - Seek first to understand, not to react.
-  **Loving Neighbors Who Disagree With Us** - We can have different opinions and still choose to respect.
-  **Supporting Local Families & Businesses** - Every local choice strengthens the fabric of Amarillo.
-  **Praying for Wisdom, Leadership, & Healing** - Our city needs more than policies, it needs peace.
-  **Choosing Community Over Division** - United, we can build a future we can be proud of.

Rooted Reflection

What kind of Amarillo do you want to help build?

“ **The
strongest
roots are
often
formed
during the
hardest
storms.**

A Rooted Reminder

Amarillo’s story is still
being written.
The future will not be
shaped only by
elected officials, city
departments, or
headlines.

*It will be shaped by neighbors
helping neighbors.*

By families choosing grace.

By citizens choosing hope.

*And by a
community
refusing to let
hardship have
the final word.*



FITNESS: WHERE DO I START?



Fitness Doesn't Begin In A Gym

Most people think they need a gym membership, expensive equipment, or the perfect plan before they can begin. The truth? You simply need a place to start. Fitness isn't built in a day. It's built through small choices repeated consistently over time.

Start Here

- ✓ Walk for 10 minutes
- ✓ Drink more water
- ✓ Add protein to your meals
- ✓ Move your body daily
- ✓ Focus on progress, not perfection

Every journey
begins with
a decision.

At-Home Movements



Lower Body: Squats, Reverse Lunges, Lateral Lunges, Curtsy Lunges



Upper Body: Wall Push-ups, Dumbbell Presses, Shoulder Raises, Bicep Curls



Core: Marching in Place, Planks, Bird Dogs



Beginner Circuit (2-3 sets)

- 10 Squats
- 10 Reverse Lunges
- 10 Wall Push-ups
- 20 Marches
- 30-Second Plank



Rooted Reflection

What is one thing I can do today?

“

A ROOTED THOUGHT

You don't have to start where someone else is. You only have to start where you are.

”



PLATED

*More Than What's
For Dinner*

A balanced plate is one of the simplest ways to nourish our bodies and the people we love. It's not about perfection, it's about intention.



Some of life's most meaningful moments happen around a table. It's where families reconnect after long days. It's where friends gather for conversation. It's where celebrations are shared and memories are made. Long before food became calories, macros, and meal plans, it was a way of bringing people together. That's why building a balanced plate isn't just about nutrition—it's about nourishment.



A simple way to think about healthy eating is to build your plate around three key elements:



Protein

Protein helps support muscle growth, repair, and satiety. It gives our bodies lasting fuel and helps us stay satisfied longer.

EXAMPLES:

*Chicken, Turkey, Fish, Eggs,
Lean Beef, Greek Yogurt*

Vegetables

Vegetables provide color, texture, fiber, vitamins, and nutrients. They add variety to our meals and support overall wellness.

EXAMPLES:

*Asparagus, Broccoli, Green Beans, Tomatoes,
Mushrooms, Salad Greens, Brussels Sprouts*

Smart Carbs

Carbohydrates provide energy for our daily lives. The goal isn't to fear them but to choose them intentionally.

EXAMPLES:

Sweet Potatoes, Roasted Potatoes, Brown Rice, Quinoa, Corn, Fruit, Whole Grains

Plated Ideas

The Texas Plate – Grilled sirloin, roasted asparagus, and a baked sweet potato.

The Burger Plate – Lean burger patty topped with mushrooms and jalapeños, served with fresh tomatoes and roasted potatoes.

The Harvest Plate – Herb-roasted chicken, green beans, and wild rice.

The Sunday Supper Plate – Pot roast, carrots, green beans, and mashed potatoes.

The Tex-Mex Plate – Grilled chicken, fajita vegetables, and Spanish rice.

A ROOTED THOUGHT

Healthy eating doesn't have to be complicated. You don't need perfection. You don't need fancy ingredients. You simply need a plate built with intention. Because a well-balanced plate isn't just food. It's fuel for the life you're building and the people you're gathering around your table.



RANDALL HIGH LEGENDS



Great schools are not built by brick and mortar. They are built by people who choose, day after day, to invest in the lives of others. As these Randall educators reflected on decades of teaching, coaching, and leading. Their stories shared a common thread. They spoke of

change - the district split, advances in technology, and an ever-evolving generation of students - but they also spoke of what has never changed: relationships matter most. Every educator agreed that teaching extends far beyond lesson plans and test scores. It is about showing up

every day, caring enough to invest, and believing in students long before they believe in themselves. They lead by example, care beyond a paycheck, and understand that education is not a job - it is a calling.

“ We cared enough to be tough enough not to let them skate along. ”

Planting Seeds that Last

Each educator described teaching as planting seeds they may never see bloom. They hope students remember more than formulas, dates, or assignments. Instead, they hope students remember that someone cared enough to invest in them, challenge them, encourage them, and refuse to let them settle for less than their best. High expectations, they explained, are never about perfection - they are about helping young people discover what they are capable of becoming.



Perhaps the greatest lesson shared that day was that legacy is rarely recognized in the moment. Like **planting seeds**, educators often never witness the full harvest of their work. Years later, a former student returns with **a simple message**:



Students Teach, Too

The conversation also revealed that today's students continue to teach their teachers. Behind confident smiles are often unseen struggles, reminding educators that compassion and consistency matters as much as instruction. Students need positive adults who lead by example, demonstrate where they feel valued, challenged, and known.

Advice for Younger Teachers

- 🍂 It gets better.
- 🍂 Iron sharpens iron, and as educators, we push each other.
- 🍂 Don't be surprised by anything.
- 🍂 Ride out the bad times.
- 🍂 We are building a foundation, and you have to build it right.
- 🍂 Education matters every day, not just one day, not just some days, but every day.

"You got me through."

Those words become the true reward of a lifetime spent teaching.



At Randall High School, excellence has become more than a slogan, it has become a standard passed from one generation to the next. While classrooms, students, and the world around them continues to change, the mission has remained the same: to invest in people, to lead by example, and to leave every student better than they found them.

That is the legacy of a legend.



Meet the Legends

Behind every strong school is a group of dedicated educators who pour their hearts into students every single day. At Randall High School, these legends have spent decades inspiring, leading, and making a difference that reaches far beyond the classroom. Their stories remind us that education is more than a profession - it's a calling.



Travis Willard

PRINCIPLE, RANDALL
HIGH SCHOOL

For the past five years, Travis Willard has helped lead Randall High School with a heart for serving students. His passion for education began with a simple desire to help others, especially young people, and although he never planned to return to Randall, the opportunity felt like the right fit. Since coming back, he has watched the school community continue to grow, evolving from a smaller student body and staff into a close-knit campus built on resilience, pride, and high expectations.

Willard believes one of the greatest lessons he has learned comes directly from the students he serves. Today's young people face real-life struggles that are often unseen, making the presence of caring, positive adult role models more important than ever. His leadership is rooted in showing up for students each day, fostering meaningful relationships, and creating a culture where excellence is expected, character is valued, and every student knows they matter.



Melissa Howle

37 YEARS AT RANDALL

For 37 years, Melissa Howle has faithfully served Randall High School, building a career defined by compassion, dedication, and a genuine love for students. Before entering the classroom, she taught parents how to understand their children's nonverbal communication, but soon discovered her true calling was working directly with the children. Asked why she stayed so long, her answer is simple: *"I love what I do, and they kept letting me stay year after year."*

Throughout nearly four decades of teaching, Melissa has watched education evolve, especially with the rise of technology, which she believes has made student engagement more challenging. Even during seasons when she questioned whether she was making a difference, former students reminded her that her influence reached farther than she realized. *"There have been years when I felt so inefficient and ineffective. Then I hear from the kids and realize that I did more than I thought."* Her legacy is not measured by years alone, but by the countless lives she has quietly shaped along the way.



De-Vonna Clark

35 YEARS AT RANDALL
(42 YEARS IN EDUCATION)

Teaching has been part of De-Vonna Clark's heart since she was in second grade. She always loved sharing what she learned with others, and that passion grew into a remarkable 42-year career in education, including 35 years at Randall High School. *"I love what I do, so I just stayed. By now, I bleed black and silver."* When she first arrived in the early 1990s, Randall was still building its identity. Today, she takes pride in seeing a thriving school and community that have grown together over the years.

While Clark has witnessed decades of change, she believes her greatest lessons continue to come from her students. She has learned that many young people quietly carry burdens others never see, teaching her the importance of extending grace and compassion to every student who walks through her classroom door. Whether through traditions like Jello Jam or everyday moments with students, Clark's legacy is one of kindness, understanding, and an unwavering commitment to helping others learn - not only academically, but through the example she sets every day.



Grady Benton

17 YEARS AT RANDALL

The lessons Grady Benton learned from his own teachers and coaches at Randall High School shaped the educator and leader he would become. After spending eight years at Randall, he left to pursue his dream of becoming a head football coach. Ten years later, when the opportunity arose to return, the decision was easy. *"It was a no-brainer. I wanted my kids to be Raiders."* Now, after 17 years back at Randall, he continues investing in students with the same passion that once inspired him. Benton has witnessed many changes throughout his career, including the school split, which brought challenges but

ultimately strengthened the Randall community. While much has changed, he believes Randall's commitment to excellence and its sense of unity have never changed. He says his students remind him every day how important it is to show up ready to invest in their lives, a mindset that continues to shape his work as an educator. Through every chapter of his career, Benton has remained committed to developing young people, carrying forward the same legacy of mentorship that first influenced his own life.



Rooted in Resilience: — The Story of — Fillmore Cleaners

For more than eight decades, Fillmore Cleaners has been more than a dry cleaner. It has been a neighborhood landmark, a family business, and a trusted part of Amarillo's story.

While thousands of garments have passed through its doors over the decades, the real story of Fillmore Cleaners is one of resilience, hard work, and the determination of people who built something lasting. The first official city directory listing for Fillmore Cleaners appeared in 1945 at 700 North Fillmore. Because Amarillo did not produce a city directory in 1944, historians believe the business may have opened sometime during 1944 or early 1945. Yet the roots of the business may reach back even further.

A painted sign that remains visible on the south side of the current building at 619 North Fillmore proudly states, "Established 1939." Documented by the Texas Historical Commission during a historic resource survey, that sign continues to connect today's business with its earliest beginnings.

The story begins with Hazel Annis. In 1937 and 1938, Hazel worked as a finisher at Mrs. Gould's Tailor Shop in Amarillo, where she learned the craft of pressing garments, making alterations, and delivering quality workmanship. By 1940, she was working as a librarian at Sanborn Elementary School while her daughter, Velma Dunn, worked as a stenographer. Velma's husband, James C. Dunn, joined DeLuxe Laundry and Dry Cleaner in 1943, gaining valuable industry experience. Together, the family possessed a unique blend of skills that likely laid the foundation for what would become Fillmore Cleaners. Historians believe Hazel and Velma may have taken in laundry and alteration work from their home during the late 1930s and early 1940s, a common practice during the Great Depression and World War II years.

As Amarillo grew following the war, so did the family's opportunity. Their home-based work appears to have



Hazel Annis, 1930s-1940s. The story of Fillmore Cleaners begins with hard work, skill, and a commitment to quality.

evolved into a storefront business at 700 North Fillmore. Family stories suggest the business was already thriving by the mid-1940s. According to the obituary of Jimmy Dunn, Hazel gave him his first job at the cleaners when he was only five years old, placing him in the business around 1944 or 1945. In 1957, Fillmore Cleaners moved to its current location at 619 North Fillmore, where it has remained for nearly seventy years. Through the decades, the business became woven into the fabric of Amarillo life, caring for wedding dresses, church clothes, work uniforms, and the everyday garments of generations of local families.

A new chapter began on January 1, 2026, when Nichole Thompson became the latest steward of Fillmore Cleaners. While honoring the traditions customers have trusted for decades—including the same starching process and garment-finishing techniques that built the company's reputation — significant investments have been made to modernize the business. Major electrical and plumbing upgrades, new flooring, updated equipment, and facility improvements have helped preserve the quality customers expect while preparing the business for the future. New membership programs have also been introduced, allowing customers to maximize the value of professional garment care and starching services while rewarding loyal patrons throughout the community.

The community's response has been overwhelmingly positive. In 2026, Fillmore Cleaners was recognized as the Best Dry Cleaner in Potter County and was also voted Best Dry Cleaner in the 79107 ZIP Code. These honors reflect not only the quality of the work being performed today but also the trust earned over generations.

 Nearly eighty years after first appearing in Amarillo's city directories, Fillmore Cleaners continues to stand as a symbol of perseverance, craftsmanship, and service. 

STILL FAMILY. STILL LOCAL. STILL ROOTED.

From Hazel Annis and the Dunn family to a new generation of ownership, the story of Fillmore Cleaners reminds us that some businesses become more than businesses—they become part of a community's identity.

The building may have changed, the equipment may have changed, and the city itself may have changed, but the values that built Fillmore Cleaners remain exactly the same. **And that is what it means to be rooted.**

WORSHIP

beyond the song

Finding the Sacred in Everyday Moments

When many people hear the word worship, they immediately think of music. But worship is much bigger than a song. Worship is how we respond to what we value most. It is the posture of a grateful heart, the choice to notice beauty, and the willingness to give our attention to something greater than ourselves.

WAYS WE WORSHIP EVERY DAY



Through Service – Helping a neighbor, volunteering, listening to a friend, or showing kindness through action.



Through Gratitude – Taking time to recognize the gifts around us and appreciating the beauty in everyday life.



Through Learning – Reading, studying, journaling, asking questions, and growing in wisdom.



Through Prayer and Reflection – Creating space to slow down, listen, reflect, and reconnect with what matters most.



Through Creativity – Painting, writing, photography, gardening, baking, designing, and creating beauty.



Through Nature – Watching a sunrise, walking through a park, admiring changing seasons, and appreciating creation.



Through Community – Sharing meals, gathering with others, supporting local businesses, and serving alongside friends and neighbors.



Through Music – Singing, playing instruments, and expressing joy, gratitude, hope, and faith through song.



Through Humility – Choosing grace over pride, releasing control, and trusting the process.

A Rooted Thought

Worship is not limited to a building, a day of the week, or a particular song. It can be found in kindness, creativity, gratitude, service, learning, community, and quiet reflection. The invitation is simple:

Pay attention. Give thanks. Live with purpose.

*Worship may already
be happening in
more places than
you ever imagined.*



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The Magic of the **Pool**

Why Some of Our Best Summer Memories Happen Near Water

There is something special about sitting beside a pool on a warm summer afternoon. Maybe it's the sound of children laughing. Maybe it's the sparkle of sunlight dancing across the water. Maybe it's the feeling that, for a moment,

life becomes a little simpler. 

Whatever the reason, pools have a way of bringing people together. Being around water can help our minds relax, lower stress levels, and create a feeling of calm often called the "Blue Mind" effect. The sight and sound of water naturally encourage us to

slow down, be present, and enjoy the moment. 

But the pool offers more than relaxation—it offers connection. Families gather. Friends share stories. Neighbors meet. Children invent games. Laughter echoes across the water. For a few hours, phones are forgotten, conversations become easier,

and life feels a little lighter. 

The pool isn't just a place. It's a feeling.

What Makes **Pool Days** So **Memorable**?

Sunshine – Natural light boosts our mood and encourages us to spend time outdoors.

Community – Pools create spaces where friendships grow and memories are made.

Laughter – Shared experiences create connection and strengthen relationships.

Movement – Swimming, floating, splashing, and playing keep our bodies active without feeling like exercise.

Water – The sights and sounds of water naturally help the mind relax and reduce stress.

A Social Equalizer – At the pool, titles, schedules, and daily pressures seem to disappear. Everyone is simply there to enjoy the moment.

A Multi-sensory Experience – Sunshine on your skin, birds overhead, cool water, and the sound of laughter create a powerful combination that helps us feel refreshed and connected.

Rooted Reflection

What is your favorite summer memory involving water?

Who would you love to spend a pool day with this summer?

A ROOTED THOUGHT

Sometimes the best therapy isn't a meeting, a book, or a plan.
Sometimes it's sunshine, water, laughter, and the people you love.

Rooted In Safety



Why Church Security is so Important

By: Matt Garrison



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Church security is important because it helps protect people, preserve peace, and support ministry. A church is meant to be a place where individuals and families can worship, learn, and serve in an atmosphere of trust and safety. When a church takes security seriously, it is not acting out of fear, but out of wisdom, responsibility, and care for everyone who enters its doors.

“When a church takes security seriously, it is acting out of...wisdom, responsibility...”

One of the most important reasons for church security is the protection of worshippers, staff, and volunteers. Churches welcome people of all ages, including children, seniors, and individuals who may be especially vulnerable in an emergency. A thoughtful security presence can help reduce risks such as theft, disruptive behavior, violence, and medical crises, while also reassuring members that their well-being matters.

Church security is also essential because many ministries focus on children and other vulnerable individuals. Nurseries, youth programs, Bible classes, and community outreach events require careful attention to safety. Simple practices such as monitored entrances, check-in procedures, trained volunteers, and awareness of unusual behavior can make a significant difference in protecting those who depend on the church for guidance and care.

Another major purpose of church security is emergency preparedness. Security is not only about responding to threats; it also involves being ready for medical emergencies, fires, severe weather, missing persons, domestic conflicts, or suspicious activity. A trained team can respond more quickly and calmly in these situations, helping to reduce confusion and protect lives. This preparation allows the church to remain steady and organized even when unexpected events occur.

In addition, security helps protect the peace and purpose of worship. A visible but respectful security presence can discourage disruptions and allow services, classes, and events to continue with focus and order. It also helps safeguard church property, financial resources, equipment, and records from vandalism or misuse. Beyond these practical concerns, church leaders have a duty to take reasonable steps to protect those under their care.

“Providing security is part of good stewardship and reflects both ethical responsibility and genuine concern for the congregation.”

Ultimately, church security should create an environment that is welcoming, calm, prepared, and safe. In today’s world, places of worship are not immune to danger or disruption, so being prepared is a necessary part of ministry. Effective security does not take away from the spiritual mission of the church; instead,

“it helps protect that mission by creating a setting where people can worship freely, serve confidently, and grow in faith without unnecessary fear.”

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Room At The Table



By: Jerri Glover

After the Fireworks Fade

The fireworks faded, the flags were folded, and another Fourth of July came and went. This year's celebration carried even greater significance as America commemorated its 250th birthday. As I reflected on our nation's Independence Day, I found myself thinking less about the festivities and more about what they represented.

Who Do We Want To Be As A Nation?

I sometimes struggle with a celebratory attitude. It's difficult to celebrate the founding of America when it often feels as though we've lost sight of the vision our Founding Fathers worked so courageously to establish.

The Declaration of Independence reminds us: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.'

“ ★ ★ ★
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The Constitution begins with equally powerful words: 'We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity.'

Those words describe a nation striving toward unity—not uniformity, but unity. A table where everyone has a seat. A place where disagreements are expected, but dignity, respect, and collaboration remain essential.

Too often, we allow fear, politics, social media, and even voices from within our own communities to convince us there isn't

enough opportunity, compassion, or prosperity to go around. Yet nearly every faith tradition teaches us the opposite—to love one another, care for those in need, extend grace, and treat others with kindness. So why do we so often use our beliefs as weapons instead of bridges? Now that America's 250th birthday has passed, I challenge each of us not to leave its message behind with the fireworks. Instead, let us carry forward the ideals that have guided this nation from the beginning: to seek justice, protect liberty, treat one another with dignity, and continue the work of building a more perfect Union.

Our Founding Fathers established this nation, in part, to escape religious persecution and to create a government that derived its authority from the people—not from a monarch. They believed liberty belonged to every person, not just a privileged few. Our history has not always reflected those ideals. We cannot ignore the injustices committed against Native peoples, the horrors of slavery, or the many ways equality has fallen short throughout our history. Acknowledging those failures does not diminish America—it challenges us to become the nation we have always aspired to be.

As Maya Angelou wisely said, 'When you know better, you do better.' We know better.



America's 250th birthday was more than a celebration of our past. It reminded us that the responsibility of 'We the People' did not end when the fireworks faded. The work of building a more perfect Union continues, and it belongs to each of us. May we continue choosing humility over pride, compassion over division, and unity over fear. If we do, then the greatest legacy of America's 250th birthday will not be the celebrations we witnessed,

but the future we choose to build together.

Rooted in Leadership

— Tia Van Ryn —

Tia Van Ryn is the Team Leader and Founder of LEGENDS REALTY GROUP, brokered by Regal Realtors, and has been a trusted force in the Texas Panhandle real estate market for more than a decade. With over 13 years of industry experience, Tia has built her business on exceptional service, innovative marketing, and a commitment to helping clients achieve their real estate goals with confidence.

Bold. Modern. Memorable

Known throughout the community for her signature pink branding and bold, luxury-inspired marketing, Tia has created a recognizable brand that stands out in a crowded marketplace. Her modern approach combines professional photography, cinematic video, strategic advertising, social media marketing, and unforgettable client experiences to maximize exposure and deliver results.

A Leader & Mentor

As a respected leader, Tia oversees a strong team of dedicated real estate professionals at LEGENDS REALTY GROUP. She is passionate about mentoring agents, fostering a culture of collaboration, and providing the tools, training, and support needed for her team to thrive.

Serving Our Community

Together, they serve buyers, sellers, investors, luxury homeowners, and farm and ranch clients across the region, delivering a high level of expertise and personalized service.

Clients First, Always

Tia's commitment to excellence, strong negotiation skills, and client-first mindset have earned her a reputation for building lasting relationships and consistently exceeding expectations. Whether helping a first-time home-buyer purchase their dream home or marketing a luxury estate, she believes every client deserves an exceptional experience from start to finish.



Beyond Real Estate

Outside of real estate, Tia enjoys spending time with her husband, Jeremy, their son, Legend, and their dog, Gucci. She remains deeply committed to serving her community, supporting local businesses, and helping families build wealth through real estate.

 **Ready to Make**
your next move? 

Tia Van Ryn

Team Leader & REALTOR®

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