**AMARILLO GLOBE-NEWS:** HOW DID GENE HOWE AND THE GLOBE-NEWS HELP GUIDE AMARILLO, TEXAS THROUGH THE DUST BOWL AND GREAT DEPRESSION?

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Thesis prepared for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

May 2015

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For many years newspapers were locally owned by editors and publishers. However, today many are run by corporations from out of state. As a result, many communities have lost the personal relationship between the family owned publication and the community. Gene Howe, who served as editor, publisher and columnist of the *Amarillo Globe-News* from 1926 until his death in 1952, believed the community was where the focus should be and the newspaper should do all that it can to help their readers. Despite the fact that Howe was not born in Amarillo, Texas, his passion and love for the city and its inhabitants compensated for it.

During the Dust Bowl and Great Depression Howe and the *Globe-News* helped Amarillo survive the dust and economic storms that blew through the Texas Panhandle, an area that has not been written as much as other parts of Texas. Through his “Tactless Texan” column, which served as a pulpit to the community, to the various contests and promotions the newspaper sprang up, including the creation of Mother in Law Day, Gene Howe gave the newspaper another dimension little has been studied about, the role of the editor and publisher in guiding a community through a dramatic era. Understanding Howe’s ethos can allow others to examine the roles editors and newspapers play in communities throughout the country.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people who played a role in the creation of this Master’s Thesis, but a few are prominent. First off, thank you to the University of North Texas and the Mayborn School of Journalism for taking a chance on me three years ago. More importantly, the support and guidance of Dr. James Mueller helped make this project a possibility. I also want to thank professors Dr. Koji Fuse and Dr. Tracy Everbach for agreeing to join the thesis committee and believing this project was achievable.

Outside of graduate school, I have received countless support from Dr. Tai Kreidler from the Southwest Collection at Texas Tech University and Cindy Wallace from the Amarillo Public Library. Their ability to remain patient as I dug through archives and handling countless requests is very much appreciated.

I hope that over the course of the thesis you will see how important a role a newspaper played during one of the most trying periods in United States history.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Amarillo
Where the Llano Estacado
Rolls out beneath the sky
Where the chilling blasts of winter
Sweep down from on high;
Where the sunshine seems the brightest,
And the breezes greet the dawn
There I found a cordial welcome
As in days now long since gone.

Here’s to you, oh Amarillo
May you never cease to be
The majestic growing city
That one glimpse of you can see
May you prosper and grow wider
Scattering happiness, joy and mirth
Till you boundaries reach their limit
The extent of all the earth

May your people grow still nobler
And your skies yet ever bluer
And the hearts of all your people
Never grow to be still fewer
Here’s to you, Oh Amarillo,
Standing at the northern gate;
You’re a diadem of beauty
Placed upon this Empire State

Minnie I. Bizzell

As men in grey suits once smelling of prosperity stood in soup lines in New York City, floats and a parade of automobiles filled with mother-in-laws from across the country strolled down Polk Street in Amarillo, Texas, the heart of the Texas Panhandle.

March 8, 1938, was a sunny day with temperatures around 40 degrees. Polk Street was congregated with men and women from across New Mexico, the panhandles of Oklahoma and Texas, as well as other states. Roof tops on each building and automobiles were covered with an army of people. Heads popped out of windows like a dog grasps for air from a moving pick-up
truck. Thousands of amateur camera people competed with professionals from news, magazine and newsreel organizations. There were so many people that by the start of the parade that the only standing room section was the “bald plains surrounding the city.”

Governors pranced on horses despite a small feud between Governors James Allred (Texas) and Clyde Tingley (New Mexico). Each featured cowboy recalls, Texas style hats and rode matched paint horses that pranced from side of the parade passageway. Tingley let out an Indian yell as Allred, in his studded jacket, imitated a cowhand.

First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt was escorted by 50 High Plains sheriffs to the reviewing stand as winds flapped her dress like waves slapping a rock. A decorated steel crane slowly swung a 2,500 lb. bouquet of 5,000 roses that Lewis. P. Fields presented to her from the original Mother-In-Law Club. Moments later, she received a gigantic postcard from “Uncle Sam’s nephews,” Amarillo’s postal employers with a message for all mother-in-laws, “With the heritage of successful parents, a background of sensible and Christian home influence, you have given to us our pride and joy, our wives. We congratulate you.” While she was speaking, waves of noise flowed throughout the crowd violently surging over her words of endearment to the community. After the speech the floats began to head down Polk Street. Among the cavalcade of floats was a flowery concoction belonging to the Florist Hill Home Demonstration Club. Wandy Lynn Martin, whose great-grandfather was a pioneer of the Panhandle greeted the crowd. Just behind her was a log cabin float decorated with hunt trophies gathered by the Phillips brothers (Tom, Walt and Emmett) from Guymon, Oklahoma.

Only one man could come up with an extravagant scheme to help a community deal with one of the worst economic crisis in American History, Amarillo Globe-News Editor and Publisher Gene Howe. Through his “Tactless Texan” column and love for Amarillo, Texas,
Howe was the perfect man to be in charge of the *Globe-News*, which helped serve as a hub to the community during the 1930s.

**History of a Newspaper**

A newspaper is more than a mechanical operation. It is the central nervous system of a community. The hopes and aspirations, the perplexities and the doubts, the grief’s and the successes of individual people are those of the newspaper. No news concerning the people of the Golden Spread is too minor to be printed in the Amarillo newspapers; no question if too difficult to be answered.

The *Globe-News* publishing Company intends to take the lead in any enterprise, no matter how larger that will bring prosperity or happiness to its community. And it will continue to be a willing worker for each individual member of that community. For a community are people, individual people with individual problems, seeking individual answers. (*Amarillo Globe-News* mission statement)

Author Jim Hart, in his examination of the *St Louis Globe Democrat*, found it was impossible “to separate the history of a single newspaper from the history of the times during which the newspaper was published” (Hart, vii, 1961). According to Startt & Sloan (2003), “to construct the historical record without including a place for the media would grossly distort the record.” (p. 18). In addition, “the media are part of the past that cannot be removed from it. To some degree, they have always reflected public whim, taste, and opinion, and to some degree they have shaped public and individual perceptions and opinions about aspects of society too numerous to mention” (p. 19).

Newspapers are excellent primary sources when studying an era or a history of a community. According to Fullerton (2011), primary sources enable people to get into the minds of contemporaries and to see the world as they did. There is not a better way do this than to be reading what they wrote or seeing what they created (or in the case of a newspaper, interpret how events unfolded and affected the community they are covering). Viewing historical events through the lens of a newspaper offers historians and mass communication scholars and students
a chance to examine the period or era from a third party perspective. “Every generation believes that it knows more than the previous generation that it has a more penetrating and accurate view than the generation that preceded it” (Startt, 2003, p.22). These two facets enable communication students looking at a history of a newspaper or television station to get a comprehensive view from which they can draw new conclusions.

A Newspaper Serves a Community

According to Amarillo Public Library Reference Assistant Cindy Wallace, a “newspaper shapes the community by the way it gains a reputation for presenting the news…fair and impartial [and while there is] leaning towards Republican or Democratic sympathies the goal is the same: the dissemination of information while garnering a predictable outcome based on influencing the nature of the community’s politics and religion” (C. Wallace, personal communication, March 14, 2015). Moreover, newspapers transmit or provide information about an event or issue to their readers.

News reading, and writing, is a ritual act and moreover a dramatic one. What is arrayed before the reader is not pure information but a portrayal of the contending forces in the world. Moreover, as readers make their way through the paper, they engage in a continual shift of roles or of dramatic focus. (Carey, 2009, p. 16-17)

One way newspapers accomplish this is by capturing the “day to day life of a community and its citizens. Under the headlines proclaiming great events are editorials, human interest stories, society news, sports reporting, advice columns, obituaries and business reports that as a whole tell the life story of the communities in which those great events take place and the lives they affect” (Das, 2009, p.72).

Mass communication scholars like James Casey look at the role of community and mass media through a ritual view, which
Is directed not toward the extension of messages in space but the maintenance of society in time (even if some find this maintenance characterized by domination and therefore illegitimate); not the act of imparting information or influence but the creation, representation, and celebration of shared even if illusory beliefs. If a transmission view of communication centers on the extension of messages across geography for purposes of control, a ritual view centers on the sacred ceremony that draws persons together in fellowship and commonality (Carey, 2009, p. 33).

In other words, communities connect every fabric of a place, including businesses, its citizens and media outlets. “Community ties include involvement in organizations…[They] are also used as indicators of community integration, and the extent to which residents become involved with and attached to their communities” (Jeffres, L., Lee, J., Neuendorf, K. & Atkin, D., 2007, p.6). The newspaper is the magnet that ties them together because it reports on each segment of a place. In turn, it becomes its heartbeat and as a result people place a lot of trust into it, which helps shape their identity and creates a close knit unit.

According to Sally Ruth Boaz (1950),

Newspapers of a town serve several purposes in the life and development of a community: they are a source of current events, both state and national; they relate the daily happenings of the community; they also sponsor community projects and help promote business and industrial progress. The major role of newspapers, however, is molding public opinion in all phases of civil projects and political issues (p.248).

Stamm, Emig & Hesse look at four reasons people would get involved in their community. The first is the relevance of a community. “What happens in/to the community should be of some consequence to the individual” (Stamm, K., Emig, A. & Hesse, M. 1997, p.99). This would allow a newspaper to identify problems “needing community attention and make known their consequences for that person or community as a hole. (Stamm, K., Emig, A. & Hesse, M. 1997, p.99) The second is an available collectivity. In other words, a group is needed in order for collection action to take place. The publication would identify these groups as making a difference, i.e. a local sports team or Kiwanis Club, and helping bring citizens together.
Third, “the individual needs the capacity to make a difference within the collective process.” This can be done by expressing one’s own view or understanding other perspectives. Finally, available time is needed is to read the publication.

The more people read a newspaper, the more likely they will be involved in the community, which is “testimony to the newspaper’s ability to inform audiences of what’s going on and mobilizing residents through organizations “ (Jeffres, L., Lee, J., Neuendorf, K., Atkin, D., 2007, p.17-18). Gene Howe and the Globe-News not only engaged their readers, but they enabled them to partake in community affairs, such as taking out free ads in the newspaper to promote their skills, participating in contests or becoming part of a major local event like Mother-In-Law Day. In essence, the newspaper served as the backbone of the city.

The purpose of this study is to see how the Globe-News served as the lifeblood of Amarillo during the Great Depression and Dust Bowl.

Why Amarillo?

For many years Amarillo and the Texas Panhandle were considered its own entity, miles from the state capital of Austin, left to fend for itself. It is because of its unique relationship in the Lone Star State and the fact it is not as prevalent in Texas studies as more populated areas like Houston and Dallas, which makes Amarillo worth examining. While Paul H. Carson provided a history of the city in Amarillo: A story of a western town, very little research has focused on the city’s newspapers, mainly the Amarillo Globe and the Daily News. Studying the newspapers will help give the researcher and reader a glimpse into the community in ways a historical overview may not. What do the articles or columns say about a community’s ethos? What is considered most important to its denizens and how does its coverage of events and relationship with its readers differ from other places in Texas?
Amarillo and the *Globe-News*

Amarillo is located in the High Plains, an area considered by many to be flat, yet the people who inhabit the area have experienced plenty of ups and downs in its history. One of these periods was the 1930s. Not only did the city encounter unemployment and financial struggles, but dust storms, some of which were so bad people could not see a step in front of them. Despite these obstacles, the city of Amarillo was able to survive. One catalyst that sparked the community and helped it overcome its dark days was the *Amarillo Globe-News* and its Editor and Publisher Gene Howe. “Amarilloans responded to unsettling conditions with the same sort of spirit that had sustained their town before during hard times. No one articulated the community mood more clearly than Gene Howe” (Price & Rathjen, 1986, p.100).

Through his publications, Howe was able to keep the community laughing, gave those who were trapped in the depths of desolation and desperation hope as well as standing up for his fellow Amarilloans. In all of these facets, the newspaper served as the hub of the community, the epicenter for who the locals can look to and rely on. It was the newspaper that helped the city survive the Dust Bowl and Great Depression. While the Depression was felt across the country and many of President Roosevelt’s New Deal policies pertained to most Americans, the focus of this study will be looking at pieces of legislation and other actions from Washington, Austin and the community and how they impacted Amarillo. What was being proposed and how did “Tactless Texan” and the *Globe-News* tackle those issues?

In order to understand the circumstances surrounding Amarillo during the Depression and Dust Bowl the piece will begin by looking at the city briefly through the history the newspapers in Amarillo leading up to the beginning of the Stock Market Crash.
Breakdown

While the United States was off fighting the Great War, the *Daily News* issued a challenge to its denizens. On April 15, 1917 they asked readers “Are you loyal to Amarillo?” Beneath it were several other questions for the community such as “Are you doing your full duty to your business associates and fellow citizens generally? Are you spending your money in the community in which you make it or live?” Just below the list of questions, “The next time you plan sending your money to a faraway mail order house to spend, think of Amarillo- your own hometown- and remember the duty you owe to this city. Consider thoughtfully to this community in which you live, and then leave that money right here at home where it was earned and rightfully belongs.” The *Daily News* under J.E. Nunn also sponsored contests and promotions, which were to be taken to a different level by Gene Howe in the 1920s and 30s. One such example of Howe’s extravagance was Mother-in-Law Day, which began in 1934 and reached its peak during the depths of the Depression when the First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt, appeared on a float containing hundreds of mother-in-laws.

In 1924 as the community was struggling finding a stable newspaper to report on its community, Howe left his father’s newspaper, the *Atchison Globe* and relocated to Amarillo where he realized his dream of owning a newspaper. He christened it the *Globe* after his father’s publication. He ran the paper by itself until 1926 when he bought out Lindsay Nunn’s share in the *Daily News*. At which point, he began to provide stability in the newspaper industry in Amarillo. Over the next several years, through his “Tactless Texan” column Howe “quickly captured the imagination of his readers” (Price & Rathjen, 1986 p. 100).

The balloon carrying the roaring bubble burst and on October 29, 1929 the Stock Market crashed. How did the *Globe* and *Daily News* cover this event? Chapter four looks at the
newspapers’ coverage of Hoover’s attempts at handling the Depression. Just as important is the response of the community. Many people felt that the depression was merely on the coasts, “For the individual who was not involved with the market, the first sting was not as pungent as that for the sage or sucker, but it was nonetheless, acute” (Nail, 1973, p.11). Arthur Brisbane’s column epitomized the local outlook, “Stock gamblers may worry, but there is nothing the matter with the national prosperity.”

However, while the depression slowly crept into the city most people including Mayor Ross Rogers stuck to their States Rights views that rejected most federal involvement in their affairs. However, by late 1932 and into 1933 the depression was fully entrenched in Hub City. President Herbert Hoover saw the situation worsen and attempted to help with various farm bills, the Recovery Finance Corporation (RFC) and other relief programs. How did businesses and citizens cope with the dire situation, i.e. the *Globe-News* sponsored soup kitchens?

In 1932, the country was at a crossroads. Vote for someone new like Franklin D. Roosevelt who offered a promise of better days or attempt to make it through the panic by re-electing Herbert Hoover; where did the papers lean? After Roosevelt’s victory the November 9, 1932 issue of the *Globe* in his “Tactless Texan” column, Howe opened with a sense of hope:

> It was a great day for the United States folks, it was a great day. Someone has said that for the first time in 25 years the Democrats are in full and complete control at Washington. A great responsibility rests upon the Democratic leaders and every real patriot in this country should hope and pray that they meet this responsibility.

A few months later, Texas Governor Miriam Ferguson proclaimed that banks close for a few days and shortly after the presidential inaugural, as part of his First 100 Days, Roosevelt created a Bank Holiday across the nation that lasted two weeks.

As the new president began laying out policies from the first Hundred Days the community began to follow suit. A committee was developed, for example, to help with another
key Roosevelt program, the National Relief Recovery (NRA). How did the New Deal affect Amarillo and what was Howe’s and the community’s response?

As the Depression deepened and as storm clouds continued to gather over the Amarillo, what were people doing or attempting to escape from the ravages of reality? Columns like “Bedtime Stories” by Thornton Burgess and the comics section helped lighten the mood, as did Will Rogers’ column, the appearance of Jack Dempsey and the opening of new theaters including the Paramount. The Amarillo Golden Sandies football team captured the hearts of the community. Across the country there were major events like the World’s Fair in Chicago. The Globe attempted to help a few lucky people to take their minds off conditions at home by offering those who had some money to travel to the fair and get a chance to witness a historical world event.

As the community began to feel better about itself storm clouds and violent winds began to pick up in the northern Great Plains. Eventually, it culminated in one of the worst dust storms in the history of the Panhandle on Palm Sunday, April 14, 1935. How did the newspaper and “Tactless Tack” tackle the situation? While the storm clouds shifted to the Panhandle, opinions of Roosevelt’s policies began to waver in many parts of the country. One result was in a court-packing scheme to help rid of conservative judges; did this permanently put a dent in Roosevelt and his New Deal? Finally, while the winds continued to twirl, Roosevelt decided to visit the drought stricken Panhandle by speaking at Ellwood Park in Amarillo. Without a coat and a care in the world he brought a lot more than national attention, he brought buckets of rain. How did the community react and was this a provincial sign that better days were on the horizon?

While the Depression occupied American attention, forces in Europe and the Far East began to pack a powerful punch that eventually came knocking on the United States door on
December 7, 1941. With it the community saw the end of one era and the start of another. In the process, the city saw Roosevelt win his third and fourth consecutive terms in office. However, a few years later the country and Amarillo lost their president and in 1952, Hub City lost Mr. Howe, who was the city’s refuge during the turbulent 1930s. Despite the losses, the city gained a strength that carried them through the worst of times and enabled them to continue to carry on and become ready for anything that came.
CHAPTER 2
EVOLUTION OF AMARILLO

By the turn of the 20th century the railroad depot “was usually the most important spot in town. It was the place to be for traveling any distance, for shipping goods, meeting friends, or in many cases, eating in the town’s best restaurant” (Price & Rathjen, 1986, p. 67). With the advent of the railroad came competition over the location of the main tracks and with it the county seat. Potter County was created by a legislative order in 1876. It was first part of Bexar County and then later divided into smaller counties. Five years later land that became Potter County was attached to Oldham County, which resides west of modern day Amarillo, for judicial purposes. In 1882, Potter County territory was joined with Randall. After five years “in the embryonic stage” developer James T. Berry, who helped create the town site of modern day Abilene, Texas, was hired to “locate a community in the central Panhandle where they might establish branch stores” (Price & Rathjen, 1986, p.68). He chose Potter County thanks in large part to the support of the ranchers. Diverse settlers from across the country,

Brought together a citizenship varied in ideas, in backgrounds, and in their desires and aims; yet the paramount desire was to make a new start where land was cheap, and could be obtained in a large quantity. Of course, the American sport of adventure was the impelling force that caused many to come to a new environment. English, Scot, and Canadian cattle barons established ranches and the town became a metropolis for the barons, a shipping point for cattle and as a general trading center for buying supplies for ranches (Boaz, 1950, p.42).

Some of the ranchers became prominent citizens of Amarillo as it grew into a city. Consequently, the first newspaper to come out in Amarillo evolved around cattlemen, the Livestock Champion.

The Champion, according to Boaz, was established in 1887 by editor H.H. Brookes, who previously worked in the newspaper industry in Henrietta, Decatur and Panhandle City, Texas. The paper formed in “Old Town,” but under the influence of barbed wire magnate Henry B. Sanborn it moved to “new town” (Boaz, 1950, p. 249). The paper boosted the new location and
helped the real estate boom. Eventually as it gained a strong position it evolved into a livestock publication. It was a six-page newspaper that covered agriculture and livestock. During the formative years of the community cattle reigned king and the May 15, 1897 edition illustrated how important a role it played.

This year will be a record breaker in the cattle business of Amarillo. So far this spring few positively know that over 100,000 head of cattle have been shipped from Amarillo or will be. This list embraces everything from yearlings up and includes all cattle delivered from or drove over our trails. Indications point that the total will be short $150,000. This represents at least $3,750,000 and the market still grows.

The July 2, 1897 edition featured “Cattle Clatter,” which was a personals section for cattle people. Unfortunately, the office was destroyed by a 1902 fire and shortly after Brookes stopped running the publication. A contemporary, the Amarillo Northwest, was a weekly that morphed into a five-column daily known as the Daily Northwest, which lasted 20 days.

In 1898, it changed ownership and turned into the Northwestern and at the turn of the 20th Century became the Western Advocate, which was edited by H.B. or Honey Martin. The Advocate ran until 1904. Another paper to start during the Gay Nineties was J.L. Caldwell’s Amarillo Weekly News. It was a four-page publication featuring larger pages than contemporary papers. It later took off the weekly and became the Amarillo News. Here’s an example from the May 6, 1898 edition of the Amarillo News,

Will Thompson’s confectionery has been adorned with soda fountain fixtures worth seeing and deserving of a grateful public patronage.

Frank Hasser’s vegetable wagon makes tri-weekly family rounds of Amarillo every Tuesday. If he accidentally fails to call, then hail him. He makes no invidious distinction whether there is a hope of a nickel.

In 1893, the United States went through a major panic or depression and the Texas Panhandle was not immune to the collapse in the economy. One area that suffered was the new
Amarillo school system, which could barely afford to pay their teachers. On March 15, 1895 the
*Amarillo News* commented on the salary of school employees.

Teachers were paid too much by half; the money was gobbled up and the schools have stopped. The full term ought to have been run for the same money. The principal’s salary was $110 when $75 was enough. Assistants received $65; $40 was enough considering that other laborers [as] a rule could scarcely make a living. But it is over. Let’s be more considerate in the future.

Despite the severity of the panic, social events took place and many were held in churches. The December 29, 1899 edition of the *Weekly News* provided a look at what went on.

The Baptist Sunday School enjoyed, with their visitin friends, one of the most enjoyable entertainments of the season at the courthouse Monday night. All were in a good humor—plenty to eat and to spare—. Two features of the evening especially noticeable were the recitations of Miss. Smith and little Lucile Veale. Iss Smith’s rendition of Iasca being especially fine and showing the young lady to have a remarkable fine conception of the thought running through the piece. It was a rare treat to all present.

The December 19, 1899 edition of *Evening News* looked at a Christmas tree Saturday night “at the Christian Church. Nice program for the entertainment of the little ones. Fine opportunity to place suitable gifts.” In the August 26, 1899 issue it discussed the creation of an organization that would have a big future in the community.

The Amarillo Panhandle Fair and Livestock Association was organized yesterday with a capital stock of $10,000…Two thousand dollars in stock was immediately taken and the rest will be subscribed in a few days. A charter has been applied for and the greatest Fair and Live Stock Show in the west will be held in Amarillo.

Another example, from August 15 1899, foreshadowed what the *Daily News* and the *Globe-News* did: publish social events and personals.

Miss Ruby Kirk will be in on the Denver tonight, and Dean Kirk will be up from Portales.

Anson and Hazelwood of Canadian were circulating in the city Saturday. However, Caldwell was interested in local politics as well. The first two pages of the June 23, 1899 issue of the *Weekly News* were devoted to Amarillo’s city ordinances and later, he created an editorial with the caption, “The Birthplace of Cenius,” which, according to Boaz
(1950), compared the policies of the 1890s to those of past generations. The front page, according to Boaz, featured the advertising of “The Famous,” a dry goods company. “Most of the contents of the early paper were current news of local interest” (Boaz, 1950, p.256). While Caldwell attempted to add the Evening News it failed. However, it did continue to promote local news coverage and Caldwell’s editorials displayed a tolerance of other religions or sects. On May 7 he wrote,

If a Catholic hospital in Amarillo is a bad thing, than a Catholic hospital on the battlefield is a bad thing, and one in the midst of a plague should be boycotted. If you refuse to help to build a hospital for any church, let it be for other reasons than religious prejudices—those prejudices have been the bane of the world.

In 1900 citizens had to make an important vote. The August 31 edition of the Amarillo News reported that people voted to allocate $6,000 additional bonds for the competition of the City Hall.

In 1902 Mr. and Mrs. R.B. Morgan moved from Canyon, Texas to Amarillo and installed a cylinder press in the city and published the Amarillo Star. Despite some success it eventually was discontinued and while Mrs. Morgan created a weekly known as the Amarillo Paragon, it lasted only a year. J.B. Russell wound up buying the Star and began a new paper called the Semi-Weekly Herald.

Changes

By the early 20th Century, the railroad continued to be life blood of the community. Amarillo was less than 30 years old and slowly attempting to change into a well-respected community on the plains. On May 4, 1906, however, Amarillo was close to losing the Santa Fe railroad, who requested more money for its shop facilities. Every businessman and city organization, including the Commercial Club, appointed subcommittees to help raise money to prevent this loss. The Semi-Weekly Herald covered the story.
Just at this time when Amarillo is taking on metropolitan ways and undergoing a growth that is almost phenomenal in its strides towards the commercial center of the Great Plains country the loss of the Santa Fe shops would be almost irreparable.

According to businessman W.H. Fuqua, who was requested to help raise the money to pay the railroad,

The question of raising this bonus is not a matter of donation on the part of the people but it is bread cast upon the waters to return many fold. The citizens of this town hardly realize the magnitude of the possibilities of this proposition and they should show their loyalty by coming forward and subscribing to this bonus. Amarillo simply cannot afford to lose this opportunity of securing one of the greatest improvements ever within its reach and the people should not hesitate or stand back to see what their neighbor is going to do but come forward and assist in the matter as far as it is their power. It is the duty of every citizen of Amarillo to do what he can in the matter and if this is done the result will be very gratifying, indeed.

Finally,

Transportation facilities are one of the prime factors in the inducement to a city of other enterprises and where there are railroads, there also, you will find other commercial industries which play an important role in the rapidity of the growth of a town.

The town abided and avoided a major catastrophe. Nonetheless, while Amarillo survived the vicious wave the newspaper remained in choppy waters as it changed hands for several years until 1916 when it was purchased at a forced sale by J.E. Nunn, who migrated into Amarillo from Kentucky a few years prior.

During this period real estate magnate John S. Harper bought the Daily Panhandle before selling it to L.S. Scott and J.W. Chaney of Crowley, Louisiana. However Scott died and his estate sold his stock to Bascom Timmons, a Washington correspondent who became the editor of the paper, J.W. “Mac” McCammon (telegraph editor) and J. E. Nunn. What made the Daily Panhandle; four-page-seven column daily, unique was that it published Associated Press stories, which subsequent papers would continue to do.

In 1909 the Evening American was founded by Delbert Davenport and W.A. Allen of Emporia, Kansas. Mr. Davenport in recalling the trials and tribulations of Panhandle journalism
explained the *Daily American* started as a four-page daily and was distributed into every home and business place gratis for the first six months to make sure it was read. It began with competition, its biggest rival being the *Daily Panhandle*. However, the *Daily Panhandle* remained popular and was used as an instrument of the local government.

In 1911, the *Panhandle* published Mayor J.H. Patton’s letter to the city prohibiting the sale and use of alcohol in Potter County.

To the citizens of Amarillo,

The local option law goes into effect in Amarillo at 12 o’clock tonight. As Mayor of Amarillo, I earnestly request and urge that every law abiding citizen of Potter County, both pro and anti, join the law enforcement league if there will be one, to assist the city, county and district officers in the enforcement of the liquor law in Potter County. The majority have said they wanted Amarillo dry; I shall exercise my power as mayor and influence as a citizen to enforce the liquor laws in Potter County I do hope that one who have said so much about saving the boys of Amarillo will get in line and see where your boys are after night and be sure they are not keeping company with a bootlegger in the county. The prohibition we have had theretofore in Amarillo has been a joke and talked about all over the state as a total farce and failure; now friends get together on this one important question and help redeem Amarillo’s name as a law abiding city.

I am yours for making Amarillo dry.  
J.H. Patton, Mayor

*Daily News Arrives*

The issue of prohibition in Amarillo became inflamed, which resulted in crusaders J.W. Cruding, W.A. Askew and R.E. Underwood buying the newspaper to promote their prohibitionist views and changed the name of the publication to the *Amarillo Daily News*. The first issue appeared on November 4, 1909.

On May 5, 1912, the *News* informed the public of the creation of a new city organization.

It was moved by Nobles and seconded by Warren that the Mayor appoints a committee to arrange about a house for a fire department... It was moved by Nobles and seconded by Warren that Messrs. Carrie, Houston, and Miller be appointed a committee to organize a fire company. Same was voted and carried. It was also moved and duly seconded that Alderman White be appointed on the fire committee to see about getting up funds to defray the expenses of said fire department.
The Amarillo Fire Department was organized September 23, 1903, [which] consisted of one hand hose reel and one thousand feet of standard hose.

However, the owners accrued severe debt and at a foreclosure sale in 1912, the paper was bought by W.J. Williams and W.D. Twitchell. The latter became editor, but at another foreclosure on February 8, 1916, the Daily News became property of anti-saloon businessman Dr. J.E. Nunn. He immediately brought his son, J. Lindsay Nunn, into the town and they absorbed the Daily Panhandle and renamed it the Evening Post. That fall, Lindsay Nunn became publisher and general manager. A fall November Monday in 1918, the Daily News reported,

[Began] with a ‘shotgun’ celebration at 8 o’clock this morning, when the air was filled with the noises of exploding firearms, lusty cheers, the clanging of cowbells, shrieking whistles and the honk, honk, honk of numberless gas wagons, followed at 11 o’clock by a more formal celebration on the courthouse lawn where addresses were delivered: with the afternoon feature the religious services in many of the churches, where hundreds expressed gratitude to God and offered prayers for the future; and culminating in the evening in a grand parade through the principal streets of the city and with delivery of patriotic addresses opposite the post office at 7:30 o’clock – yesterday, November 11, International Independence Day, was celebrated by Amarillo people with an enthusiasm and an abandon never before equaled here on any occasion in the memory of the oldest inhabitant. The community gloated about its victory and the return of their loved ones even as it was in the midst of a Spanish Flu Epidemic, a period when local physician N.S. Griggs was conducting between one and six funerals for victims each day.

In the meanwhile President Woodrow Wilson attempted to help create a League of Nations in the hopes of obtaining a permanent peace. However, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge and the Republican Party voted down American involvement.

In March of 1920, as the country began to “return to normalcy” the Amarillo Daily Tribune was formed with R. H. Nickols of Vernon, Texas as president and editor. It lasted just over two years and the stock company that created the paper, according to McReynolds, turned over its assets to the National Bank of Commerce in Amarillo during a foreclosure sale in December 1922. At which point, the bank sold the publication, plant and equipment to Lindsay
Nunn the following March. (McReynolds, 1960) Nunn moved the Daily News into the Tribune’s building and stopped running the Tribune.

In 1924 a Kansas newspaperman named Gene Howe became interested in Amarillo. Shortly after the Daily News began to run under its new ownership, Howe took a few friends who worked with him at his father’s Atchison Globe and headed to Hub City, according to T.E. Snowden, “a town with a dissatisfied faction that wanted to see Amarillo grow through better promotion than the Daily News was giving it” (Snowden, McReynolds Interview, 1960, p. 84). After leaving Atchison, Howe who continued to keep an eye on their paper, became more passionate about his new home. However, the beginnings were tough and he and his “financial expert friend, Snowden, felt that either they or Daily News would have to go.”

One day, along with Wilbur Hawk, general manager who also came from Atchison, Howe and Snowden walked into Nunn’s office. “Taken by surprise with the questions, ‘How-about-it? Will-you-sell?’ Nunn said he would be willing for $200,000—a ridiculously high price, so he thought. He could not back down when the men accepted his offer” (McReynolds, 1960, p.89). Each put in $5,000 a piece and decided to borrow the rest from the First National Bank of Amarillo in order to be able to pay the $50,000 down payment. However, on January 1926, an oil boom hit the region. Consequently, the remaining $150,000 debt was paid off the same year.

While Howe was trying to figure things out, there were several weekly newspapers that ran. There was the Panhandle Weekly, a seven column-eight page journal devoted to agriculture and stock farming that later changed to the Southwest Plainsman and Panhandle Weekly. Other weeklies that came and went were the Tenth Street Weekly, Amarillo Free Press, Potter County News, and The Booster. During the oil boom of 1925-26 there was the Tri-State Journal, which lasted two weeks, the Amarillo Daily Examiner (lasted a month) and the Oil and Gas Journal (1925-1927).
However, by 1926, despite the attempt of the *Amarillo Sun* to run a metropolitan newspaper, which soon closed due to lack of interest, the *Globe-News* was in business, as was a new operation that eventually played a big role in the community and country. On August 28, 1928 the *Daily News* announced that a helium plant was being relocated from Fort Worth to Amarillo.

Here the helium will be separated from the natural helium-beating gas piped down from the Amarillo company in a pipe line now being constructed, to be used in the lighter than air ships of the Army and Navy, all of which are now lifted by helium.

In addition to helium, Amarillo dealt with an oil boom that began in 1916 and proliferated in the “Roaring Twenties.” On May 8, 1921,

Inquires about acreage and some acceptance of offers were received Saturday but no new locations were announced. By letter and wire, word was received this past week from a number of oil men announcing they will arrive in the Amarillo field this week.

The discovery of oil in Amarillo led to the creation of companies such as the Panhandle Pipeline Company, which along with the helium plant helped the community diversify its economy. While oil and gas slowly rose from the depths of the soil, wheat, which suffered from an overabundance following World War I, made a comeback.

According to the February 2, 1927 issue of the *Daily News*, the Panhandle would face the 1927 wheat harvest 1.3 million acres in the ground and a “future June market predicted at $1.10, five cents under 1926.”

Amarillo had a reason to feel optimistic by the start of Herbert Hoover’s administration in 1928. It began a transformation from a cattle community to a diverse and growing entity. However, they did not count on what the next decade would bring.

Although the frontier was gone forever, Panhandle people would often look to the past for inspiration during the dark days ahead. Like other Americans, the regions’ residents emerged from the ordeal in World War I with a broader view of the world to match their unfailing confidence and optimism. A promising future built on agriculture and ranching, bolstered by new-found petroleum wealth awaited them – or so they thought. Such
inviting illusions lasted but a few years before the old nemesis of drought and depression returned to choke their dreams and cloud the future (Price & Rathjen, 1986, p.85).

The *Globe* and *Daily News* would find a city once full of hope and optimism slowly turn to despair and uncertainty.
CHAPTER 3
ROAR IN AMARILLO Turner TO UNCERTAINTY

*If a man has a problem or is in trouble and he goes to the mayor of the city instead of coming to the editor of this newspaper, we've failed in our job.*

Gene Howe

By late 1929 Amarillo had overcome turbulent prohibition campaigns and railroad disputes that created tension and uncertainty to the new city. They survived a flu epidemic and world war. They saw the rise of the oil industry, which transformed the nation and the city. In addition, the proliferation of the automobile led to the creation of new industries that cropped up along the streets of Amarillo. In the agricultural sector, wheat prices skyrocketed creating a sense of invulnerability. However, by the end of the decade “the boom days vanished with the coming of the depression” (Nail, 1973, p. 15).

The roars of the 1920s created a false sense of security as a crash in 1929 began a wave that eventually took over the whole country. David Nail in his examination of the Great Depression in Amarillo provided insight as to the Genesis of the crash.

The crash was of course, symptomatic and in many respects pathogenic in nature, for the economic condition of the nation during the roaring twenties had been a façade...With the orgy of speculation abruptly ended; it telegraphed itself throughout the nation in concentric circles, as ripples on a calm pond. But because the pond was calm only on the surface, these ripples magnified themselves into waves, reversing known physical phenomena in direct proportion to the latent turbulence beneath. It was almost as if the pond were a type of storage place for the potential energy of economic collapse which the ripples of the crash catalyzed into a frothing cauldron of self-destructing kinetic energy. Lashing the insecure American economy built upon the sands of call loans and interlocking directorates, bound by bulky holding companies tainted with fraud, the waves began to wash away an artificial prosperity (Nail, 1973, p.9).
Panic wreaked havoc on Wall Street and in many cities in the east and Midwest as bankers and businessmen sought answers. Atop of the masthead in the October 29, 1929 edition of the *Globe* were the following headlines, “Court of Inquiry Into Shooting Here Opens” followed by “Twin boys, 3, Fire Victims” on the right and “Air Features Tonight,” which offered readers a chance to listen to National Grand Opera or a Magazine Story. Under the newspaper title on the right was the weather, which promised to be “unsettled and slightly colder tonight” with highs in the mid-30s.

Down the front page was a large headline titled “Testimony Clashes.” Just beneath it was a large photograph of a courtroom in Weatherford, Texas that featured several lawyers and two Amarillo physicians who offered differing opinions on whether or not Tom Walker Jr. was shot in the back at Dr. R.H. Hamilton’s office. Surrounding the courtroom drama was Arthur Brisbane’s “Today” column that began with a cadence of shock,

Wall Street’s big stock market opened quietly today. There was a slight dizziness, as of one that has fallen from a hammock while sleeping. But prices were better.” Dead center below the courtroom photograph is an Associated Press (AP) story titled “Stock Price Rally Brisk.” The lead epitomized the community’s opinion of the crash. “The selling frenzy which has been sweeping through the securities markets of the world during the past week appeared to have passed here today, and prices on all leading exchanges rallied briskly…High priced stocks, the hardest hit in the recent reaction, led the rally. Allied Chemical, American Telephone, Eastman Kodak, New Haven, and Delaware & Hudson ran up $20 a share or more.

Page two was where the piece concluded and next to it on the top right was Edgar A. Guest’s “Just Folks.” In it, he issued a poetic thought on business called “An Outsider Looks at Business.”

Business is a game,  
A game of give and take,  
Above a store a name,  
Within the name at stake.
One comes to buy goods,  
Uno comes his goods to sell,  
Both honesty must try,  
To close the bargain well.  
Today the goods are sold,  
But more days wait beyond,  
The spoken word must hold,  
As stoutly as the bond. Prices  
reduced may gain,  
New patrons for a store.  
But steadfast must remain  
That name above the door.  
Business is a game  
And profits are the prize  
But in the player’s fame Success or  
failure lies. Men analyze the sales  
Cold records on a slip,  
But many a business fails  
For lack of sportsmanship.

As the event of the stock market crashed reached Amarillo most of the 43,162 citizens were not overly concerned. “On the High Plains,” Timothy Egan (2006) said, “the Wall Street gyrations were a distant noise. The crash hurt rich people, city slickers, all those swells and dandies” (p. 74).

Some citizens like A.D. Foreman owned securities. He suggested “that the effects of the crash here delayed in their Amarillo arrival for over six months due to what he labeled as a lack of ‘communications.’” (Foreman, A.D., Nail interview, 1971) Moreover, business conditions, according to the Daily News, “in the entire panhandle were above normal according to Amarillo bankers and merchants. Bank deposits in that section were reported greater than last year” (Daily News, November 11, 1929, p.15). Other Amarilloans were “connected with banks in certain ways near the market without being part of it” (Nail, 1973, p.11). G.R. Coleman was head of new accounts at Amarillo National Bank in 1929. “I knew nothing about securities and I paid no
attention to the market individually...although I did handle...purchases through the broker...for customers of the bank who wanted to buy securities” (Coleman, G.R., Nail interview, 1971).

“For the individual who was not involved with the market, the first sting was not as pungent as that for the sage or sucker, but it was nonetheless, acute” (Nail, 1973, p.11).

Brisbane’s column epitomized the local outlook, “Stock gamblers may worry, but there is nothing the matter with the national prosperity.” For men like A.D. Foreman who was soaking in success, “I didn’t know the props were going to be jerked out from under me” (Foreman, A.D., Nail interview, 1971). While the community was delayed in feeling the depression’s effects, Coleman believed “it hit both coasts [first] then [it] came back at us from both directions.”

Continued Optimism

As 1930 arrived, advertisements in the newspapers displayed the community’s belief that the good times were still going. According to an ad from Blackburn Brothers, the crash of 1929 “only emphasizes the stable structure of American business. Basic conditions remain unchanged.” Furthermore, “When a country is sound, when policies are well laid, progress will go on. Like the country, our business is founded on real value” (Daily News, January 1, 1930)

The Amarillo Globe echoed similar sentiments.

In the Jan 1, 1930 edition, William J. Dunn from United Press wrote an article titled “Good Business Year Foreseen” that began with “American business is on the threshold of what should prove to be a happy new year in the full sense of the phrase. Administration authorities, while making no promises for the year 1930, foresee 12 months of steady progress in almost every business and economic line.” Furthermore, on page two in the February 10, 1930 edition of the Globe was a piece called “Prosperity Month in Reality is Here.” According to a survey conducted by the Babson Sales and Credit Map, said the article, “Amarillo is one of four cities in
the state and one of 29 in the United States where conditions are GOOD!” The survey, “figures in regard to business conditions in Texas are firmly substantiated in a similar survey of general business conditions in Texas, compiled by the Texas Commercial News for January.”

It seemed conditions were not so bad. President Herbert Hoover remarked on March 3, 1930, “All the evidences indicate that the worst effects of the crash on unemployment will have passed during the next sixty days.” Yet, on page four of the February 10, 1930 issue of the Globe was a caricature titled “Gosh! Doesn’t that make your mouth water?” It featured Uncle Sam in a chef’s hat that read “Treasury” as he flipped pancakes with a spatula reading “1928 Income Report” at an outdoor booth that said “U.S. Resources Unlimited.” As he flipped the burgers there were several tall stacks with labels such as “24 millionaire incomes over $5,000,000” and “Big increases in lower brackets.” Next to Uncle Sam was a cake mix bowl that read “Optimistic outlook for 1929.”

Standing in front of him appeared to be an unemployed businessman in a wrinkled suit and a worn countenance. A few pamphlets including “Big Military Bucks” sat in the back pocket as his right pant leg read “Rest of the World.” During the formative years of the Great Depression Amarillo remained optimistic. “Those who staked their fortunes [in Amarillo],” the December 29, 1929 edition of the Sunday News-Globe stated, “declare their territory was never in better or more stable condition.” Gene Howe was one man who made his stake in Amarillo.

Here Comes “Tactless”

Jack Beall, Jr once described Gene Howe as a “broad shouldered, well set-up man…somewhat bald, his face firm lined and his ruddy complexion betraying the inveterate duck hunter. His most noticeable feature is a pair of very direct blue eyes. He is vigorous in action and talk, but he is a better listener than talker” (Beall, 1931, p.39).
In 1924 Howe left his father Ed’s newspaper, the *Atchison* [Kansas] *Globe*, in order to pursue his dreams of operating his own newspaper. He felt Amarillo was the ideal location and interested several men in joining him. According to T.E. Snowden, a close associate of Howe’s from Atchison, Howe entered a community that had an unsatisfied faction that wanted to see Amarillo grow through better promoting than the *Daily News* was giving it. For Howe, going to Texas “was more like ‘going home to him. He loved Texas and he would have been happy to have been there.”

On February 20, 1924, the first issue of the *Globe* came out. The first column featured an article titled “Globe Force Here to Grow up with City” that epitomized the growth of the city. On the bottom was a cartoon of a lady (named Carl Brown, editor and general manager of the new paper) giving birth. To their right were two maids with the names McDaniel (Grover C. McDaniel, a stockholder and officer in the *Amarillo Globe* Publishing Company) and Johnson (J.O. who is another stockholder). “We’ll call her the *Amarillo Globe*.”

When Howe started the *Globe*, he firmly believed, according to George Ray, one of the editors under Howe, a “newspaper should be a warm and understanding friend of every family to him news was what people would talk about. If it was big enough, Howe believed in playing it out the window pulling out all stops as long as it got readers and met standards of decency” (Ray, G., McReynolds interview, 1960). One of the ways Howe got this across was through his “Tactless Texan” column. It featured lighthearted commentary such as, “I have been asked whether religion has ever penetrated into the plains of Texas. All I can say is that the other week in the vaudeville at the fair theatre a Miss Thompson was featured. She played the violin as she danced and was billed as the “Dancing Melodist.” In the Sunday paper it came out as the
“Dancing Methodist…There are so many Methodists in Amarillo that The Globe considered it good policy to get out an extra to correct it.”

Howe believed, according to McReynolds (1960), that a newspaper should be a “warm and understanding friend of every family. Howe took everything as his reporters’ domain. To him, news was what people would talk about” (p.108). Furthermore, his attitude towards humanity “had developed in the atmosphere of a small town, which is not a place to wash dirty linen in public.” (p.112). In the August 27, 1930 issue of the *Globe* Howe added “The breath of scandal touches many families. Many persons who hold their heads up have skeletons in their closets. I would not be the one to cause them to bow their heads.” His “Tactless Texan” column was a Perfect vehicle by which to expose mankind, especially the little man. And through his country-flavored style, Tack found great appeal. If Gene could not get intellectuals to enjoy his column, he could capture the majority of the populace. To do this, Howe did not seek out just the common denominator. He went far below to create a character buffeted by life but who kept on fighting—with a smile, Old Tack. In his own limited way, Howe found the universal man as he had the genius of Charlie Chapin (McReynolds, 1960, p. 169).

Viewed as a great white father who could do anything (McReynolds, 1960), Howe’s column gave countless locals a chance to battle ailments such as loneliness. For example, in the August 19, 1924 column of the *Globe*, “Tactless” stood behind a bachelor.

What’s the world coming to?

A lonesome bachelor has been advertising in the Globe for a wife and in explaining what a desirable catch he is he states he is a good cook If he is a good cook he's better than most of the girls and women who are anxious to get married but whose only qualification is that they are past masters at the art of petting.

In addition, “Howe was a firm believer in happy family life; and he wanted to be certain his paper was respectable enough to be read by every member in each home that subscribe to the *Globe*. [Yet], he was determined to publish an ‘alive newspaper. This policy led him to include
multitudinous jokes—many of which were revivals—in the “Tactless Texan.” In addition to helping seek companionship for the lonely hearts club of Amarillo, the column often allowed locals to voice their distresses in his newspaper. As the Depression crept in he used his column to examine the more serious topics. Yet, he kept spirits up. “His constant reassurances that they could survive that terrible time and regain the spirit of hope and their zest for living…to some he was their only friend and the only source of encouragement” (Lynch, 1979, p.3).

Lost and Found

One of “Tactless Texan’s” and the *Globe’s* service to community was advertising lost pets. According to Etta Lynch, Howe was a strong proponent of dogs because he felt that along with his family they constituted one of the two factors closest to man, the other being economically sound (Lynch, 1979, p.137). On August 7, 1936,

**COLLIE DOG LOST**

Dear Tack:
Will someone please telephone us if they had seen a tan Collie dog, white markings on face and neck, sheared and had on a collar. He disappeared from home last Friday. We need him very much. He will be in the south part of town most likely.

A. Reader

Sometimes the owner would get their dog back and then lose them again like this gentleman.

Arch Hunsley just bounced into The *News-Globe* office in great excitement.

It seems he lost his dog and he offered a reward. The dog was promptly delivered to his residence and Mr. Hunsley didn’t have any money in his pocket. He told the man who returned the dog that if he would call the next day at his office he would give him a dollar.

The man didn’t call for the money but the dog disappeared again that day.
Unemployed Look to “Tactless”

Nonetheless, Howe’s wit would be needed as the community embarked on one of the worst periods of its history. In the February 10, 1930 edition of the *Globe*, a gentleman issued the following,

Dear Tack,
I simply must have work. I am down to my last dollar and have a sick wife to support. We came here from Albuquerque under the doctor’s orders. I can’t find work. Tack I can do anything. I have had experience in most every line. I have done a great deal of mechanical work and am an engineer man and fireman. Please help me Tack. I will be grateful to you for anything that you can do for me. Until Saturday I will be at 413 West Seventh Street. My telephone number is 7609.

A.E. Williams

One reason Howe allowed people to issue their proclamations or advertise in his publication, according to McReynolds (1960), was because Howe “gave everyone a big break in the human nature department. Gene wanted the other fellow to be able to keep his self-respect; that is why he believed that charity was essentially an unkindness—that it would do something inside to the one who got the charity” (p.52).

As the Depression grew worse, Howe continued publishing letters from the community. Here are a couple of samples from the April 16, 1935 issue.

NEEDS WORK BADLY
Dear Tact,
I am a girl badly in need of work. I will do housework by the day or hour, but I must be home nights. Anything you can do will be appreciated. Thank you.

A. Reader

CHILDREN TO SUPPORT
Dear Tact,
Will you please print this letter for me? I am a woman of middle age in need of work. I have two children to support and keep in school. I am experienced in housekeeping and practical nursing. Prefer going home nights. Must have living wages. I can furnish the best of local references.

Mrs. Morgan
To illustrate Howe’s belief that every man deserved self-respect the newspaper took part in food drives during the early years of the depression. On Jan 23, 1933, “Two hundred gallons of soup, rich in red meat, fresh vegetable were distributed from the Neighborhood Kitchens which opened Monday morning…Lines of people waited outside the distributing kitchens Monday morning for the first of the free food.” Unlike many of the soup kitchens in major cities throughout the country Howe was in favor having families receive the allotted meal then taking it home. He refused to damage anyone’s pride.

In the next day’s edition, the Globe urged other members of the community to get involved. “When YOU make your purchases couldn’t YOU drop a little something in one of these barrels [that were placed in grocery and meat stores?]” On page two “Tactless” addressed a citizen’s concern about the kitchens.

You should have been out to one of those Neighborhood Kitchens yesterday morning and you’d have seen a sight that would have caused you to lose some of your faith in human nature. Two men drove up in a good-looking automobile and both of them got-out and helped themselves to palls of soup. Do you think this is right? Why don’t you announce that curb service will be started at the Kitchens?

“Tactless” responded.

Does this person want to know what I think about it? Why I don’t see anything wrong and if other folks drive up in automobiles and ask for soup no questions will be asked.

I know lots of people in Amarillo who own cars and who are not getting sufficient to eat. They are having a most desperate time getting along. It must be borne in mind that the automobile has become an absolute necessity for many, many people…What we need in times of stress is more real understanding and tolerance and much less picking here and there on folks we don’t know much about. In his column on January 23, 1933, Howe answered his soup kitchen critics while helping maintain the community’s pride.

Don’t feel backward because this isn’t charity but just a whole lot of people trying to be neighborly. We’re in a terrible condition, as serious as war or worse, and if we get through we must stick together close. And if you don’t feel like accepting it free make a note of it and sometime if you get on your feet you can pay back at the rate of 10 cents a
gallon. We’ll give it to you or trust you for it, and we’re not asking any questions except perhaps as to whether you are bona fide citizens of Amarillo. This is far, isn’t it?

“Tactless” and the Unemployed

“The depression of the 1930s troubled him [Howe]. And his conservative outlook on the functions of government made it impossible for him to become adjusted to New Deal activities. He did not believe in handouts or governmental controls” (McReynolds, 1960, p.69). Yet, Howe, according to Etta Lynch (1975), wanted the unemployed to know Old Tack sympathized with their plight and in spite of having a great job he used his columns to assure them he remembered harder times when he was looking for work as a young man:

Thousands upon thousands of graduates are about to pour out of college halls into the ranks of the unemployed. A large proportion of them have spent their last dime securing an education and now they must have work. And just what are we going to do with them?

The most terrifying time of my life was when I started out to look for my first job in my own hook. It took me about six days to land one and times were good in those days. It’s the absolute truth that even now, I have nightmares when I am transported back to time when I was haunting the newspaper offices for a job. That’s how deep an impression it made on me

What we need in this country beyond everything else is work for those who really want to work (Lynch, 1979, p. 139).

Yet, according to Jeane Bartlett, who began a 55 year career at the newspaper in 1945, Howe was a conservative Democrat and Wes Izzard, who was Editor of the Daily News, was a staunch Republican. While Howe believed in limited federal intervention in daily affairs he supported Roosevelt and welcomed the new president in his column after Election Day, November 9, 1932.

It was a great day for the United States folks, it was a great day. Someone has said that for the first time in 25 years the Democrats are in full and complete control at Washington. A great responsibility rests upon the Democratic leaders and every real patriot in this country should hope and pray that they meet this responsibility.
Through Howe’s optimism, his down-to-earth prose and deep love for Amarillo, the *Globe-News* was in great position to help the community face the economic clouds and perilous winds that lied ahead.
CHAPTER 4
HOOVER TO 32

In 1928 the United States and the Texas Panhandle were still roaring. Amarillo struck oil and was basking in its role as a cattle town, oil community and sophisticated city. However, the stock market crash of a year later left many people wondering what to do next. In 1930 and 1931, Amarillo was hardly feeling the effects of the economic downturn, but as 1932 came along the city found itself with an empty community chest and rising unemployment. The mayor as well as Gene Howe and the Globe-News did not want the help of outsiders. However, as 1932 drew to a close, they welcomed President Herbert Hoover’s last ditch attempts to help a struggling economy. When that failed, the newspaper and community voted in a man who promised to resurrect the country and community from the ashes of burnt stock certificates.

Amarillo during the Hoover Era

Amarilloans strongly believed less government was more. On page two of the November 30, 1931, issue of the Globe Mayor Ernest Thompson addressed the possibility of federal aid for the jobless. “Some people seem to have the idea the government’s pockets are bottomless, but there is no money in them except what the taxpayers put there.” He added, “If we ever recover, people must quit making demands of their government. People should realize when they do that they are merely calling upon themselves to pay more taxes.”

On February 15, “Tactless Texan” was invited by former Daily News Editor and current Washington D.C. correspondent Bascom Timmons. Timmons told Howe that the president meets with newspapermen every Friday and he would be one out of dozens of reporters and there would not be any introductions. At four o’clock that afternoon Howe and Timmons were informed that President Hoover didn’t have anything to talk about. However, Timmons spoke
with one of the president’s secretaries and “Tactless Texan” got his foot in the door (Amarillo Globe, February 16, 1931).

After greeting President Hoover, Howe told him that the Panhandle was in the “white spot in the Nation’s Business for 27 successive months and the people of Texas are not disheartened.” Hoover replied, “This is encouraging. The whole country will be better soon; you can’t keep the American people down.”

Back in Amarillo, by January 1932, the city’s budget decreased. Amarillo lost $144,960 from the 1931-32 city budget. City Manager Bill Durham said one way the city could save money was through obtaining electrical power at a cheaper rate and to buy materials and supplies that are absolutely necessary, which totaled about $40,000. Yet, as with most places that handle a downturn in their economy, the city saved $79,950 by cutting all salaries and by consolidating departments.

Amarillo did not remain dormant, however. Mayor Thompson in January 1931 put into operation a plan to help the unemployed. “His ‘heads up’ program was designed to serve as a clearing house to bring together job and worker” (Nail, 1976, p.36). The January 8 issue of the Daily News featured a large headline across the front page that read “Amarillo Launches Employment Drive Today.” On the far right column was an article titled “Mass Meeting Solidifies Aim of Campaign” and just below it, “Is Not Charity Move: Goal to Make Amarillo One of First Cities with No Needy Men Idle,” which led with,

Amarillo citizens, from the richest men of the city to the men who have worried for weeks about their family’s needs, packed the city auditorium to the top of the balcony last night, in the greatest demonstration of enthusiasm in the year, and solidified the movement to give every worker a chance to keep his head up during the remainder of the winter.
Just above the last sentence was an ad geared towards local businesses that Mayor Thompson requested the newspaper run.

If you have work that calls for skilled men, like carpenters, plumbers or painters, your request will be referred to the business agent of that particular craft and they will send you a man.

If you want unskilled labor your needs will be filled from those who have registered at the Chamber of Commerce. It is requested, however, that all requests be placed through the Chamber of Commerce so that proper credit be given the employer.

The goal, according to the article, was for Amarillo to “rid itself of unemployment, to be the first city in the United States to send out this report – that there are no jobless.” Yet, the city refused or could not afford to help provide money to the community chest.

On March 19, 1931, civic clubs in the city were asked “to cooperate with the Community Chest in a campaign to raise an additional fund of $10,000 for the benefit of relief agencies.” Less than a year later on February 3, 1932, the city commission felt that “without the legal authority [they] cannot follow the Community Chest suggestion to darken white ways and use the money saved from electricity bills for charity.” Moreover, the commission announced it “could not find, directly or indirectly, use [for] any city funds [to] aid the unemployed or worthy poor.”

As 1932 rolled along it was getting worse. In Amarillo, A.D. Foreman saw what was happening.

After I got laid off…I met a man…on Taylor Street who had been a business manager of one of our real growing concerns (in Amarillo). And I asked him the wrong question. I asked him how he’s getting along. I just oughtn’t to have said it. ‘I’ll tell you how I’m getting along.’ He said, ‘If I thought I had a reasonable chance of getting as much as five hundred dollars and a reasonable chance of getting away, I’m ready to go and rob a bank right now. He said, ‘my wife and children are out at the house hungry.’ It was desperate. It was desperate. (Foreman, Nail interview, January 5, 1971)
As the depression lingered even President Herbert Hoover realized the country needed to do something. In 1932 he enacted the Emergency Relief and Construction Act and one of its creations was the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC). In the September 28 issue of the *Globe* it appeared the community was willing to at least give the government a chance to help the community handle the economic downturn. The headlines stated that the city of Amarillo would make the application for RFC loans. John F. Hill, general manager of the Panhandle Lumber Company suggested Tuesday night the city obtained a loan to erect a coliseum at the Tri-State Fair Grounds.

‘Cities now are getting such funds for the installation of sewer and water lines,’ said Mr. Hill. ‘We have found there is a very definitive need for an auditorium at the Tri-State Fair grounds and I feel sure it could be a self-liquidating project.’

Furthermore,

‘Every dollar spent would be an asset to this community, putting money into circulation through employment’ Mr. Hill continued. ‘The property belongs to the county, but the site could be leased and the Tri State Fairgrounds developed into a municipal park.’

One of the projects the RFC took on was improving Llano Cemetery. The goal was to turn portions of it into a park while enhancing the cemetery. According to local RFC chairman J.O. Guleke, “It is our purpose to keep this project going as long as possible in order to keep jobs available for these hitherto unemployed men.” He added, “It must be remembered that R.F.C. money can be used only as wages for needy men employed on public projects. All material, equipment and services other than labor must be donated.”

While the RFC was slowly making its way into the city, Austin, Texas decided to start spending over $250,000 on Potter County’s state roads “for widening, retopping and general improvements as soon as right-of-way is provided.” W. J. Van London, State Highway Engineer for the Panhandle region, was excited because as the September 28, 1932, *Globe* article added; it
“would mean much toward aiding unemployment here before Christmas.” However, there was a hold up. “The commission is handicapped by lack of funds to pay for wider right-of-way and property owners are holding up the work.”

Howe Battles Insurance

In the summer of 1932, the community had another battle on its hands. American Commonwealth Company (ACC), a utility holding company, instructed its agents to sell Amarilloans “the company’s paltry securities not because it required money, but rather to create public good will by producing a quick buck for all purchases” (Nail, 1973, p. 54). While many West Texans bought into it, Gene Howe did not.

In his September 9 column, “Tactless Texan” issued an urgent message to fellow stockholders in Amarillo.

Let’s get together and form a fighting and protective committee. It’s most important that YOU attend if any of you own any of this six percent preferred stock in the American Commonwealth Company. This is the blue sky stock that was unloaded through the local electric light company here in Amarillo and throughout this plains country.

A great wrong has been done. Something as bad as highway robbery has been perpetrated. It smells clear to the high heavens folks, but if we’ll stick together and show our teeth and keep at it, I firmly believe something will be done about it.

He added,

Why we can ruin them folks, if they don’t do what’s right. And to come out here and sell more than a million dollars-worth of stock to the electric light consumers on the plea that they didn’t need the money but wanted to build up good will among the consumers is just plain stealing to my way of thinking…You robbers back there in New York we sure intend to see that justice is done. You stockholders must be at the meeting.

The meeting was held at the Herring Hotel during the Tri-State Fair. He told the stockholders that “if judicious settlement were not quickly rendered, he would attack them directly though his newspaper and publish all fraudulent particulars of their actions.” As a result, they decided to agree to some sort of settlement. (p.55)
“Tactless Texan” later informed the community of the company’s fate.

The American Commonwealths’ Power Company is now defunct and my information is that in the crash of the company that [Frank] Hulswit lost everything he had. He resigned as the head of the company about the time the company went into the bends of the receivers (Globe, April 5, 1933, p.2).

Nonetheless, the lack of federal regulations under the Hoover administration allowed for such unethical practices to occur. It would not be until 1934 when a future president signed the Securities Exchange Act, would corporations be held accountable by the federal government. As 1932 rolled along it seemed that everything went wrong for Herbert Hoover.

Hoover Failed

Despite the willingness of the community to accept project funding and while it helped the community improve the fairgrounds and parks, including the edification of Thompson Park, the community was still struggling. By fall of 1932 people were willing to listen to anything that may help their plight. “When you’re hungry, you listen when a politician talks about food, and in the election of 1932, growling stomachs drove many people to develop a sudden interest in democracy” (Egan, 2006, p. 129).

Ultimately, the main problem with President Hoover, despite his intentions at the end of his presidency, according to Leuchtenberg (2009), was that “he was never able to convince the nation that he cared deeply how people were suffering and that he shared with them the sorrows and the blighted prospects the depression had brought” (p. 13). His 1932 opponent for office, Franklin D. Roosevelt, championed for the common person.

Who was Franklin D. Roosevelt?

At first, Franklin Roosevelt was dismissed as a man without heft, a dilettante running on one of the nation’s great names. Then he took up the cause of the ‘forgotten man’ – the broken farmer on the plains, the apple vendor in the city, the factory hand now hitting the rails. And though he spoke with an accent that sounded funny to anyone outside the Mid-
Atlantic States, and he seemed a bit jaunty with that cigarette holder, Roosevelt roused people with a blend of hope and outrage. (Egan, 2006, p. 130)

On April 7, 1932, the Democratic nominee addressed the nation in a radio speech. “These unhappy times call for the building of plans that rest upon the forgotten, the unorganized, and the indispensable units of economic powers.” Furthermore, he “called for faith ‘in the forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid’” (Egan, 2006, p. 131). Page four of the November 4, 1932 issue of the *Globe* illustrated how Roosevelt was attempting to become a “forgotten man” by taking a bite of a frankfurter in front of Massachusetts Governor Joseph B. Ely. The presidential candidate was on his way to visit his sons Franklin D. Jr. and John while campaigning in New England. On September 20, “Tactless Texan” stated who he was in favor of.

> Haven’t I been supporting Roosevelt for the last four years? When Smith was defeated I took up the cudgel for Roosevelt and I’ve been hammering away for him ever since. Four years ago I predicted he that he would be the next President.

He informed the readers that he was the first Democrat to form a Roosevelt-for-President Club in Amarillo. “I formed it two years ago and I’m President of it and I was out in the open fighting for him long since he was ever nominated.”

The Election

On November 8, 1932, Franklin D. Roosevelt tallied 22,800,000 popular votes and 472 electoral votes to defeat Republican incumbent Herbert Hoover to become President of the United States. On the front page of the *Amarillo Globe* next to the masthead read “ROUT G.O.P. Texans loyal to Their Party.” Just below it on the left was a breakdown of how the states voted. In “Tactless Texan,” Howe reacted.

> It was a great day for the United States folks, it was a great day. Someone has said that for first time in 75 years the Democrats are in full and complete control at Washington. A great responsibility rests upon the Democratic
leaders and every real patriot in this country should hope and pray that they meet this responsibility.

A few weeks before Roosevelt’s inauguration President Hoover “appealed for cooperation from Roosevelt, but a peculiar brand of co-operation it was. He requested the President-elect to help ‘restore confidence’ by promising to balance the budget and to maintain a sound currency when he took office” (Leuchtenburg, 2000, p. 31). In other words continue with Hoover’s policies. Roosevelt refused.

Keeping the Faith

Despite the sagging economy, Gene Howe kept the faith. In the February 17, 1933 column he told the community to keep fighting.

And let me say right here and now that as far as I am personally concerned that I’ve sure washed my hands of the depression. And what do you say that all of us do the same?

Most of us are just as strong and healthy as we ever were. I know I am except for the hives. We’re calling and we’re sleeping and someway or somehow we’re going to keep going. Instead of being down and depressed, what do you say we start smiling more and more? Heaven knows conditions are bad enough but we make them worse by griping about them. I’ve become a fatalist and what is going to happen is going to happen.

And something else is that most of us never would have had anything anyway. And what a grand alibi the depression will afford us. In later years we can tell our children that grandpa would have been a great, rich man with a whole lot of money to leave to them if it hadn’t been for the world-wide depression of ’29-’33.

One result of the Depression was the decrease in societal status for bankers and other businessmen. According to Leuchtenburg (2009),

The crisis of the Great Depression revealed that the American people had come to view their financial ‘wizards’ in the same light; the businessman had been thought of as a magic-maker who could master the forces of a complex industrial society which the common man viewed with awe, and which were as much out of his control as the wind or tides. By [Roosevelt’s inauguration], the businessman had lost his magic and was as discredited as a Hopi rainmaker in a prolonged drought (p. 22).
Yet, “Tactless” defended many of Amarillo’s “wizards” while keeping an optimistic outlook.

I think that for every banker that is a crook in this country that we have 50 bankers who are honest and are on the dead square. I’d like to see them put some bankers on the stand who have rendered conspicuous service to their communities and fellow man. I’d like to see their virtues extolled and not just the rottenness of the few.

And I want to say that out here in this Southwest our business men and our bankers, on the whole, have stood right up to the lick log. They’ve taken it on the chin and they’ve kept things going and personally I’m proud to know them. I don’t think the whole world is wrong and all of our leaders are not right.

Why I have more faith in the United States and particularly the people out here than I’ve ever had. And folks, faith is what we must have and folks out here it’s JUSTIFIED.

Following Roosevelt’s inaugural, “Tactless Texan” reassured the community that everything will be ok. “Why honest, everybody, we’re on our way and as soon as this present period of uncertainty passes we’ll be making progress forward and upwards day by day” (Globe, March 7, 1933, p.2).

Like Howe was doing for Amarillo, Roosevelt would become instrumental in establishing a positive outlook throughout the country. “Roosevelt had nonetheless made his greatest single contribution to the politics of the 1930s: the installation of hope and courage in the people. He made clear that the time of waiting was over, that he had the people’s interests at heart, and that he would mobilize the power of the government to help them” (Leuchtenburg, 2006, p. 42). The grand effort began right off the bat.
Thousands of young men came off trains and buses from Fort Sill, Oklahoma or other locations throughout the nation. They headed south down winding roads into a canyon. Shovels and a desire to work would help create a new park, Palo Duro Canyon. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), responsible for the building and maintenance of roads and other public projects, was one of President Franklin Roosevelt’s alphabet letters of legislation.

After President Roosevelt came into office he enacted legislation in hopes of putting a halt on the Depression. The New Deal took over the nation at blazing speed and in Amarillo it helped a community to come together.

“Tactless Texan” and the Globe-News stood behind the president’s domestic agenda. From placing the NRA logo next to the mastheads to Gene Howe help raising funds to help CCC workers enjoy leisure time, the newspaper stood behind the president’s legislation even as it began to fade by the end of the decade.

Bank’s Take a Holiday

By early 1933,

The ship of state sailed upon waves that were (to borrow the phrase from Hemingway) neither very good, nor very gentle, nor very brave. The seas of America’s economy were convulsing below the ship, and it rocked uneasily under the chill and disconsolate clouds of depression that hung over the land like an eerie calm before a storm (Nail, 1973, p. 59).

Banks across the nation fell rapidly. In Texas, Governor Miriam A. Ferguson issued a financial moratorium for five days “after due consideration and with approval of the State Banking Commissioner of our State the Federal Reserve Banking Authorities and upon earnest demand of the leading financial institutions of the state.” (Amarillo Daily News, March 3,
1933). “Tactless Texan” shared his opinion in the March 3, 1933, issue of the *Globe*,

This bank holiday won’t affect us after a few days except that it will give some individuals who haven’t any money in the bank a chance to do some talking…The banks in Amarillo and the Panhandle on the average are in as good shape as the banks of any similar area in the whole United States…There wasn’t a banker in this part of the state who put pressure on Jim Ferguson to declare a holiday.

Furthermore,

And folks, what difference does this bank holiday make to the mess of us? Most of us have been on a cash holiday for so long that the banks closing up for a mere five days means little or nothing.

Honest, it’s funny how different people are affected and what they do. I met one man just a while ago who was jumping up and down like an automatic jumping jack and bawling like a calf. Was he exercised and was he excited? And to my certain and exact knowledge this man who was whining and whimpering hasn’t so much a dime in any bank anywhere. He’s broke now and he has been broke and busted and plum flat for years.

And then I met another man who to my positive knowledge has $2,600 in cash in one of the banks and he was all smiles. And he was just as happy as he could be and he’s not worried in the least.

In Washington, the banking crisis was atop the smorgasbord of problems that sat on the president’s desk as he was being given the oath by Supreme Court Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes. A day after Howe’s editorial, people in Amarillo and the nation listened to the new president. “Mayor [Ross] Rogers and Editor Howe had attempted to dispel pessimism in Amarillo minds and replace it with some sort of confidence; the new President was attempting the same thing on a national level” (Nail, 1973, p. 63). The first paragraph of Roosevelt’s inaugural speech illustrated Nail’s point.

I am certain that my fellow Americans expect that on my induction into the Presidency I will address them with a candor and a decision which the present situation of our Nation impels. This is preeminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly. Nor need we shrink from honestly facing conditions in our country today. This great Nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper. So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life a leadership of frankness and vigor has
met with that understanding and support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. I am convinced that you will again give that support to leadership in these critical days.

After the inaugural his administration acted swiftly. The first thing they did was enact a national bank holiday beginning on March 4. In the March 6, 1933 edition of the *Globe* the front page explained to the readers the dire situation banks were in. “The nation’s banking activities were at a standstill today. President Roosevelt’s proclamation forbidding banking institutions to pay out gold or any other form of currency was followed by efforts to provide a uniform emergency medium of circulation. Credit exhaustions were arranged so that business might be carried on.”

Underneath was an AP story that opened with “The nation’s banks were shut today, but behind the scenes plans for resuming business went steadily forward with prospects that at least some money or a good substitute would be available tomorrow.”

The next day the *Globe* reported the president was attempting to win the confidence of everyone. “Backed by the governors of every state, President Roosevelt moved steadily forward today to restore the confidence of the people as the first step toward success of his sweeping program for economic and financial recovery.” The article later added, “The President was hopeful the public would react soon on his plan to open new bank accounts which can be drawn upon at once. Money put in such accounts must be kept available by the banks.”

Overall, “the emergency banking measure extended government assistance to private bankers to reopen their banks. The bill validated actions the President had already taken, gave him complete control over gold movements, penalized hoarding, authorized the issue of new Federal Reserve bank notes, and arranged for the reopening of banks with liquid assets and the reorganization of the rest” (Leuchtenburg, 2009, p.43).
President Roosevelt’s bank holiday was received well in Amarillo. By 1935, according to the May 10 issue of the *Daily News*, “Roosevelt’s moratoriums for the banks can still be remembered by many of us. The fourteen day holiday for the banks of Amarillo seemed to give them new momentum. The new deposits for the first half day of their opening brought one and one half million into the four banks in 1933.”

One of the results of his banking policies was the establishment of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) that was part of the Banking Act of 1933. The FDIC highlighted the second goal of the act, which was to expand government money supported by greater security. This even prompted “Tactless Texan” to remain optimistic.

And folks, haven’t I been telling you that that we would be on our way out of these hard times this year? Business everywhere will be very, very much better by this fall. We’re going to have a spring and summer of rising prices.

Despite the optimism, banks were still running dry, but as 1933 ran along the president decided to wet the nation’s appetite.

**Prohibition Comes to an End**

After President Woodrow Wilson suffered a stroke that left him incapacitated from October 1919 to the end of his presidency, “the nation,” according to Nail (1973), “experienced a sort of collective hedonistic nervous breakdown as the twenties began to roar. In short, the national state of mind was not particularly appropriate for the instigation of noble experiments” (p 51). One result was in the passing of the 18th Amendment, the prohibition of alcohol. Despite the amendment, speakeasies and moonshine kept parched throats from cracking. Nonetheless, the country was on a moratorium.

After Roosevelt took office he had different ideas. Months into his administration he signed into law the Cullen-Harrison Act, which repealed the Volstead Act by legalizing beer and...
wine of 3.2% alcohol by weight or 4% by volume, levying a federal tax of $5 a barrel of 21 gallons and leaving all regulation of the act to the states. The March 22, 1933 issue of the *Globe* featured a bold head line atop the masthead reading “BEER ACT IS NOW LAW.”

While the beer law passed, states were deciding on the proposed 21st Amendment, which would repeal the 18th Amendment. In Amarillo, religious forces and other groups vehemently opposed the amendment. The United Forces of Prohibition traveled to Amarillo on July 26 and issued the following concern on page two of the *Globe*.

> It is time to call a halt on wets who are merely psychologizing the people, making a play on the minds of the people because of the depression and trying to put over the wet scheme of the liquor lords.

Then, they examined it from a socio-economical aspect.

> When you spend your money for booze you cannot at the same time spend it for shoes and when you put $5,000,000,000 in booze you lay off 2,500, 000 men in the shoe factories to put 405,000 in the manufacturing of liquor.

Finally, the article concluded with a warning.

> Well, if you vote wet you are inviting the liquor interest to open up a saloon right next to your store; you make it a respectable business where tens of thousands will see the open door and he then can also advertise wet goods in the daily and he will take a thousand dollars a day out of the merchants’ prospective customers and send it to St. Louis and Milwaukee millionaire brewery lords.

On August 28 most Texas counties voted to remain dry. Amarillo was split, however. Randall County remained dry while Potter County voted wet. On December 5, 1933, Utah became the 36th state to ratify the amendment thereby satisfying the ¾ majority needed to pass the 21st Amendment. Nonetheless, the president wanted to avoid a return to an era where saloons dominated the landscape. “The policy of the government will be to see to it that the social and political evils that have existed in the pre-prohibition era shall not be revived nor permitted again to exist” (*Amarillo Globe*, December 6, 1933, p.1).
The banks and the end of Prohibition were just the beginning. Over the next few months President Roosevelt and Congress enacted legislation that would alter the nation’s fabric.

**NRA**

On August 2, 1933 while dry and wet counties were being counted in Texas, the *Globe* reported “Volunteers in the NRA house-to-house canvass Monday received supplies and final instructions majors of the city’s seven zones.”

As 1933 progressed, Roosevelt wanted to help businesses grow and the way to do that was through establishing a strong relationship between the government and business. In June 1933, the president signed the National Industrial Recovery Act, which created the National Recovery Administration (NRA). According to Roosevelt, the establishment of the NRA would help curb and perhaps reverse the trend of the depression. “If all employers in each competitive group agree to pay their workers the same wages – reasonable wages – and require the same hours – reasonable hours – then higher wages and shorter hours will hurt no employer” (Rosenman, 1940, p.298). The key task, according to Leuchtenburg (2009), was “to negotiate NRA agreements with the major industries” (p. 64).

On the front page of the July 25, 1933 issue of the *Globe* was a huge section devoted to the NRA that featured its emblem: an eagle in silhouette form with the letters NRA on top and at the bottom said “We Do Our Part.” It was surrounded by an article called “America Speedily Gives Favor to Jobs Appeal.” Just below the lead was the following.

Hardly had he finished last night the plain-worded, direct call for patriotic and unquestioning acceptance of the voluntary and individual employer-pledges to raise pay and shorten hours before the answers began to come in. Within an hour 300 promises had come, a few more minutes and the number had doubled and still there appeared no end to the flow.
The next day the NRA gave the community instructions. “You will receive in the mail, about July 27th, an envelope with two pieces of paper and an addressed envelope in it. One piece of paper is the President’s agreement. Sign that on the dotted lines and fill out the information called for. Put in the addressed envelope and mail it. Then put it into effect at once.” After August 1 the patron who signed on would receive an NRA sticker to place over their business.

One column over citizens learned that representatives from various businesses in Amarillo held group meetings Wednesday to select representatives on the city’s central campaign committee for shorter hours and more pay as suggested by President Roosevelt. According to Mayor Ross Rogers, “Each classification of business, retail, wholesale and utility, has been requested to name two representatives to serve on that committee reporting the names at once so we can stand ready for a meeting immediately upon receipt of further instructions from General [Hugh] Johnson.”

The mayor went on to add, “As I understand it, this campaign will be conducted along the lines of the Liberty Loan drives during the war. It is an appeal to patriotism and the eagle of the NRA will be displayed by those who fall in line and do their duty.”

In the next day’s edition of the Daily News it was reported that “Amarillo businessmen with a spirit of national patriotism heretofore displayed only in periods of war, yesterday were rushing to perfect local business associations to carry out the edicts of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Recovery Administration.” At this point, the Daily News and Globe began running the NRA emblem next to their mastheads.

On August 1, stores and businesses throughout Amarillo operated using the new regulations and they had the support of the employers such as Blackburn Brothers. A top of their advertising masthead was the Blue Eagle and a promise to the new program.
We are going right down the middle of the road with the President in the New Deal which begins this morning in thought, in speech and in practice we will back up the NRA code as near one hundred percent as it is possible for us to do so. Beginning this morning our employees will go on a basis of forty hours per week with an increase of ten percent in pay. We will adhere strictly to the opening and closing hours as agreed upon by the Amarillo Retail Clothes.

The August 4 issue of the Globe featured a full ad by the bakers of Amarillo. Beneath the NRA emblem was the following:

These Amarillo Bakers Subscribe 100% to the President’s Recovery Program

In the full belief that President Roosevelt’s Recovery Program will prove beneficial to industry throughout the country – and to every individual as well – the undersigned bakers of Amarillo have met together and adopted the recommended program.

This means, among other things, that these bakers will put new employees to work – creating new jobs and providing new incomes for Amarillo families. This action is taken without thought of present, profit or advantage – but will full realization that it is the only way in which American people can pull themselves of the economic depression.

It is the earnest hope that of these Amarillo Bakers that every business firm throughout the country will take similar action at once.

Aside from displaying ads featuring the eagle, the Globe-News played an important role. Wes Izzard, editor of the Daily News, was named a member of the newspaper publicity bureau; Wilbur Hawk, business partner, became colonel of the publicity committee and Mason King, promotions manager, who worked directly under Horace M. Russell, President of the Amarillo Trades Council.

In subsequent editions, the Daily News issued space to “Amarillo Welcomes the New Deal” and Arthur Brisbane came out with a new column, “Buy in August: This Answers the Question, ‘What can I do to help?’” In the August 2 issue, it led with,

Many of us wonder why “somebody” does not “do something” about the depression, lack of employment, and other troubles.

It is easy to suggest that somebody ELSE should do something.
This is written to suggest that every individual make up his mind that HE will do something, and proceed to do it.

The suggestion at this moment is that you BUY IN AUGUST, co-operating with merchants, seeking to create employment in stores and factories by creating a demand for goods in August, normally a dull month of the year.

To help reassure citizens about the NRA the August 3 front page of the Globe featured an article in question and answer form.

Q: Is the government asking a boycott of stores which do not display the NRA Blue Eagle?

A: No. The NRA is asking support of stores which put out the agreements into effect. At the same time it is asking consideration for small employers who may not be able to make the necessary judgments immediately.

Another important question asked,

Q: What allowance is made for small manufacturers who are financially unable to put increased wages into effect?

A: The NRA is committed to a flexible administration. Action of banks in pledging a sympathetic attitude toward loan applications would tend to aid plants and business houses to ‘take up the slack between increased costs and improved business.’

The next day on page four was a cartoon of President Roosevelt swimming in a pool of papers. Each stack was designated with different facets of the legislation including, “Application for NRA Membership,” “N.R.A. Contract” and several blank pages. Was the president getting himself too deep or was he spreading his wings too far?

While the policy was being questioned, on NRA Day, usually Friday and Saturday, merchants “not only have arranged sales on goods that inevitably must go higher in price, but also have offered substantial prizes.” Businesses who participated include the Amarillo Hotel, Blackburn Bros., and White & Kirk. Each displayed banners provided by the Amarillo Credit Association and clerks wore arm bands.
However, the enthusiasm slowly began to wane. A couple of reasons include the higher prices for goods and as the economy of 1933 into 1934 improved people began to readjust their philosophy. Instead of supporting Roosevelt’s measures, some felt that the federal government had exerted too much power. The Supreme Court concurred and on May 27, 1935 ruled that section three of the National Industrial Recovery Act, which Congress delegated powers to the president to issue codes, was unconstitutional and while “transactions have merely an indirect effect on interstate commerce, the control rests with the states” (Amarillo Globe, May 27, 1935, p. 1).

Overall, the NRA accomplished a couple of things. "It is clear, however, that the N.R.A. made a definite contribution toward changing the prevailing mood of the country from apprehension to hopeful effort, and this was vastly important in itself. Business gained confidence, which was no less real because it may have been partly based on exaggerated expectations.” (Rosenman, 1938, p.153) Yet, it could only “maintain a sense of national interest against private interests only so long as the spirit of national crisis prevailed” (Leuchtenburg, 2009, p. 69)

At this point Roosevelt was unsure where he was going, “barely able to manage an unruly Congress and downright contrary in his refusal to indicate his main line of direction” (p. 146). The May 28, 1935 front page of the Globe featured the large headline, “NEW DEAL PARALYZED.” However, later that year he began to reassert himself. The decision on the NRA galvanized the president who began insisting on the passage of four pieces of legislation that were stymied by the decision. One of these was the Social Security Act.
Social Security

On January 17, 1935, a piece of legislation targeted to help provide security to the aged and insurance to the unemployed was being debated in Congress. “General opinion in the capitol was that the move represented the most sweeping effort in the country’s history to provide against the ‘hazards’ of life” (*Daily News*, January 18, 1935). Some of the details of the plan included: providing unemployment insurance “borne by a three percent payroll tax;” a pension plan for people over 65, in which the employee would contribute via payroll taxes; joint federal state aid to mothers, dependent children and the disabled; a public health service “with a further study of health insurance possibilities” and a “tie-up between unemployment insurance and job assurance through public works. On August 14, 1935, President Roosevelt signed what became known as the Social Security Act.

While the government was working to help the aged, women and disabled, another organization was created that helped pave more jobs in Amarillo and the Panhandle.

CWA

“The Civil Works Administration was a temporary measure at best, but in late 1933 and the first half of 1934, it was one of the few hands in the dike” (Nail, 1973, p. 93).

On May 12, 1933 Congress allocated the use of a half a billion dollars to be channeled by the federal government through state and local agencies (Leuchtenburg, 2009, p. 120). The *Daily News* reported that “The unemployment relief measure’s signing marked the first venture of the government in granting direct federal funds for relief of needy persons.” A column over discussed a plan for public works.

Bearing the approval of President Franklin Roosevelt, the broad program of the administration to link an elaborate public works program with industrial cooperation in a concerted move against unemployment is slated definitely for submission to Congress early next week.
Texas was allocated $200 million and the Panhandle had to head to the Texas Rehabilitation and Relief Commission through county units of the West Texas Chamber of Commerce. According the act, every type of public works was made available. (*Amarillo Sunday News-Globe*, June 18, 1933, p.1). The CWA was the first of various public works programs the president administered.

In mid-September, one of the main roles the CWA played, building and improving highways, got underway. The *Globe-News*’ T.E. Johnson traveled to Austin and reported the following.

The Panhandle’s special road program, designed to give relief to several thousand unemployed in 17 drought stricken counties and at the same time make possible a connected system of paved highways will get underway in earnest this week and will mean the spending of possibly $5,000,000 if the state relief commission cooperates as desired by federal authorities.

Johnson added,

If there are any delays or if the program fails to give the widespread relief in the form of employment as proposed by federal officials, the fault will be with the relief commission. The relief commission promises to abide by the terms of a ‘treaty’ set forth Friday by C.E. Swain of the Federal Bureau of Roads, wherein the relief board is to furnish men from its county relief rolls for work on any and all projects approved by highway officials.

However, FERA was not doing enough and Roosevelt decided to create the CWA to deal with the need to implement emergency measures. (p. 121)

**Civil Works in Amarillo**

While the NRA lifted spirits, the Civil Works Administration (CWA) made its presence in the Panhandle. While many CWA projects dealt with improving parks and other areas, in Amarillo it helped with road projects. The Sept 16, 1933 edition of the *Daily News* spelled out the need for the CWA to begin its work in the region. The front page article began with the title, “Highway Body to Boss Work, Pick Projects.” Just below it, “Relief Commission Given Power
to Select Men and Pay Wages.” It opened with the following, “The Federal Government today settled the dispute between state departments over the Panhandle’s road-relief work program and cleared the way for additional projects to be started in the drought counties.”

In early 1934, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) worked together with the CWA and created the Transient Bureau. Many travelers seeking greener pastures out west passed through Amarillo. Located on 601 Johnson Street, 40-120 transients came by each day and were fed and cared for. Many were young men and boys “of a pretty good sort and lots of them are just bums who have lost hope and ambition.” “Tactless Texan” added “Everyone should see for themselves what the government is doing. And incidentally, have you any used deck of cards about your home? What about an old checker set?...And is there anyone who has an extra radio that is in fairly good shape? If so, the Transient Bureau would surely like to have it” (Globe, December 20, 1933, p. 2).

The CWA eventually faded, but provided jobs to Amarilloans as would another civil program.

CCC

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) reached Amarillo in 1933. On June 22, 190 CCC recruits arrived in Amarillo from Fort Sill, Oklahoma as part of Roosevelt’s reforestation army created to help build what would become Palo Duro Canyon State Park. By August 24, work began. “The road, pronounced a significant engineering feat, reached the level of the first mesa below the canyon rim after winding around the sheer sides of a promontory.” The first section of the road was about a half mile in length and its approximate terminus was 150 feet below the rim.
In recognition of the work the young men were performing, Gene Howe and Amarillo businessman, John Fullingim began a campaign to raise money to purchase athletic equipment for the workers. “Tactless Texan” explained in the September 22 column.

Those boys down there at the camp are getting $25 a month. Of this, $20 is sent to their family. All they have left for their own needs is $5 a month each. In the evenings and on Sunday they haven’t a thing to do. They haven’t any money to come to town. So they just have to sit and loaf around their camp. And most of these boys are good old West Texas lads. They are Texans and our kind of people.

The CCC continued to receive more volunteers into 1935. The April 15, 1935 edition of the Sunday News-Globe reported that 171 young men from the Panhandle between 18 and 25 enrolled in camps that week. Overall, while wages were meager the men who worked the camps received room and board and it was at least a job.

Winds Change Direction

“When Congress adjourned on June 16, precisely one hundred days after the special session opened, it had written into the laws of the land the most extraordinary series of reforms in the nation’s history” (Leuchtenburg, 2009, p. 61). Gene Howe, on January 30 1934, just a few months after the busy 100 days, gave an assessment.

It will be interesting, if we could live that long, to read what historians have recorded about Franklin Delano Roosevelt a half a century hence. Regardless of the outcome of his experiments and his plunge into the dark in his attempts to do something, it is certain to be said that he was tremendously unselfish in honestly striving to better the great mass of American people…A great many of our idealists are fools, but not Roosevelt.

Nonetheless, as 1934 progressed and the country seemed to be improving, “but failed to achieve prosperity, dissatisfaction mounted”. (Leuchtenburg, 2009, p. 94). The NRA was decommissioned and people began to look at his policies in a different light. However, “Tactless” remained supportive of the president.

This Franklin Roosevelt isn’t the tool of anyone. He isn’t a representative of big business or big banks or anyone. He has had the supreme matchless courage to pitch right into
every class and group that he thought needed some pitching veto. And folks, he hasn’t flinched one in tackling any problem that he thought needed his attention. May be he may be wrong. No doubt he will make many mistakes but boy hasn’t he the courage and the will? Boy oh boy, the Big Chief up there in Washington sure suits me. As a warrior in the rear ranks am I happy?

By the spring of 1935, the NRA Blue Eagle faded away. The Supreme Court found it to be unconstitutional and moreover, the courts found many of his New Deal policies to be an overextension of presidential powers. As a result, they slowly began hammering away at his policies. Yet, the president had reason to feel optimism heading into election year. “Almost all progressives had drifted into the Roosevelt camp, in part because they believed they had no choice save to support the President in order to stave off a return to Hooverism,” which was in part due to the success of his Second Hundred Days. (Leuchtenburg, 2009, p. 191).

1936 Election

On page 5 of November 2, 1936 issue of the *Globe* is a large Democratic National Committee ad promoting the incumbent. It began with “ACTION SPEAKS LOUDER THAN WORDS” and a penciled caricature of President Roosevelt smiling was to the right. Just below it were two separate small columns “Domestic Recovery” written by an executive from N.W. Ayer & Son from San Francisco. It began with,

Let’s Discuss Politics
To Point with pride can cause little harm;
The time-honored bluff is to view with alarm!

The ad promoted the president’s accomplishments while issuing a peaceful proposal to Republican candidate, Alf Landon,

Arguing is largely the noising of opinions already well set. But preparatory to an election why not discuss matters quietly and objectively? – is that not more scientific?

After Election Day “Tactless Texan” gave his weather forecast.
Chills and chilblains for poor, old Alf Landon wherever he may be. He didn’t care about running for the Presidency, and he had a defeatist attitude from the very first. He was a built-up candidate of the newspapers. Good man that he is he will go down in history as the most colorless candidate who ever ran for the Presidency. As for President Roosevelt its sunshine and roses wherever he may be.

After the election, however, things began to wither. Shortly after his inaugural he focused on reforming the Supreme Court.

**Supreme Decision**

The popularity of many New Deal programs began to wane during his second term. Despite the President’s personal popularity, many complained of the waste, inefficiency and regimentation inherent in a federally regulated economy. The protests grew louder when the President attempted to alter the Supreme Court after it had declared both the National Recovery Act and the first AAA unconstitutional.

As a result of the conservative judges shooting down various legislation, including the NRA, Roosevelt turned more aggressive and one consequence was the passing of the Judicial Reform Act of 1937, which gave the president “the power to appoint an additional federal judge for any member of the federal bench who did not voluntarily retire six months after his seventieth birthday” (Nail, 1973, p. 154).

On February 6, 1937 the headline across the front page of the *Daily News*, “Court Revision Proposal Causes Sensation.” The lead informed the readers of the president’s plan to raise the number of Supreme Court justices to 15, which “produced a sensation almost beyond comparison. Congress split into warring camps, with many New Dealers rejoicing and their foes crying, “Dictator!”

Many continued to back the president, however, as it was “conversely evident that a turning point had been reached regarding the obedient acceptance of the New Deal” (Nail, 1973,
p. 157). Furthermore, “the depression-era experience of Amarilloans revolved in a vortex of events too closely amalgamated to disassociate the President from the New Deal. Amarilloans obviously placed their faith in both” (p. 158).

There were pieces of the New Deal policies that hurt the community. In 1934, President Roosevelt’s Postmaster General, James A Farley, cancelled all airmail contracts. The Transcontinental and Western Airlines (TWA) and Texas Air Transport (TAT) abandoned Amarillo. TWA personnel were notified that reductions would be made by February 28 (Globe, February 20, 1934, p.2). It would take another year for commercial aviation to return to Amarillo. At which point Brainiff Airlines chose to use English Airport.

Despite the loss T.E. Johnson in his “Plains Speaking” column believed more federal funds were needed.

Relief in local communities soon will become an acute problem unless more federal funds are made available. Word has been sent down to Washington time and again since the first of the year that direct relief hereafter must be handled by the communities themselves, however funds have been dispensed on several occasions since for direct relief. If federal aid is restricted to giving work, as the government says it will be, Amarillo offers an example of the necessity that will arise from raising local funds.

Other legislation that was enacted under the New Deal continued the trajectory Johnson was referring to with regards to providing job opportunities. One example was the Public Works Administration (PWA). Unlike the TWA it stimulated employment. On March 24, 1935, the Sunday News-Globe announced that the PWA was helping Amarillo build a reservoir on West 8th Avenue and Crockett Street. More than 150 local men from the Panhandle Construction Company out of Lubbock worked on the project. Eventually, the PWA was scattered into several other groups including the Works Progress Administration (WPA). According to Nail (1973), the project was considered a failure because many people would stand around and do menial jobs (p.161). Moreover, this was because the administration was “not permitted to compete with
private industry or to usurp regular governmental work” (Leuchtenburg, 2009, p. 125).

Nonetheless, there were two important projects that the WPA worked on. They included the building of a two-foot concrete retaining wall and curb on the south side of Northwest Texas Hospital and the construction of a new post office and federal building a block north of the Potter County Courthouse (Nail, 1973, p. 162). With the new post office, the spirit of Amarillo began to resurrect and the outlook became rosy.

In the meanwhile, what was the Globe-News doing to help the citizens escape from the plethora of changes that was occurring nationwide and in the Panhandle?
CHAPTER 6
THE GREAT ESCAPE

What did the Newspaper do to Help the Community Escape from the Depression?

On April 21, 1932, the *Globe* reported the opening of a new theater. “Beautiful beyond the fondest hopes of most Amarilloans and residents throughout the entire Panhandle territory, the new Paramount Theater was formally presented to the movie public in Amarillo last night with an attendance of 3,000.” Among those at the affair was Mayor Ernest Thompson and actor Richard Arlen. Guests were treated to *This is the Night* with Lily Damita.

Two months earlier on February 22, humorist Will Rogers “wise cracking cowboy of stage and screen was in Amarillo today on his way to air to Hollywood.” When asked about Oklahoma Governor Alfalfa Murray’s run for the Democratic presidential ticket, Rogers quipped “He’s going to kick dust in somebody’s eyes.”

Through columns, contests & promotions as well as its coverage of sports and famous visitors, the *Globe-News* was able to help provide an oasis to a community filled with fear and uncertainty.

Columns

One of the ways the newspaper helped the community was through some of the columns. The *Daily News*, in 1935, for instance, displayed Will Rogers’ discourse on its front page. In the April 13, 1935 issue he commented on the state of the two political parties.

Among my mail this morning was a telegram marked “urgent.” It says, “The Democratic postmasters of Los Angeles County are getting together.” It says very specifically that it’s the “Democratic” postmasters.

I love to see a dinner given by the Republican postmasters.

I think these boys are kinder getting together to draw up ways and means of prolonging their stay. You see their employment calls for four years, (with an option). Well, I think it’s this option that they want a little rough and tumble advice from me on. I am
suggesting that they deliver no mail to anyone of Republican faith Why should hardworking deserving Democrats take up their valuable time handing out what is no doubt anti-Democratic propaganda, and I am so advising em’.

Yours,
Will Rogers

On Sundays readers had a chance to read “Plains Speaking,” which was written by straight shooting Managing Editor T.E. Johnson. On March 19, 1933 as President Roosevelt began to make his mark on the nation, Johnson issued the following observation.

The Legislature has been in session for two months and done practically nothing Not one of the major economy measures has been passed. The Senate has voted to reduce expenses in some departments, but the House has refused; the House has started out to make cuts in other fields and the Senate has done nothing. The net result so far is negligible.

For those interested in the state of the railroad, page three in the Globe in the early 1930s featured John Moore’s “Railroad Rounds and Rumblings.” On April 17, 1933, Moore provided commentary on the state of the railroad.

Many American railroads have been sunk by adverse circumstances and other roads are expected to follow suit. Many of them have borrowed heavily from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, many of them have entered a plea of bankruptcy. The government’s only recourse will be to take them over and operate them. And who’ll pay the taxes then? From whence will come the necessary ‘sponduhx’ to build hard surfaced highways for railroad competitors to operate over? The public has just about killed the goose that has been laying the golden egg and no one seems to be producing another goose of the same kind.

In addition, the Sunday News-Globe featured a spread titled, “Backstage Impressions of the News” and just beneath it, “The Sunday News-Globe is an Independent Democratic newspaper, publishing the news impartially and supporting what it believes to be right regardless of party politics.” The page displayed various columns including, “Trail Dust” by Douglas Meador, which contained philosophical comments such as “Human nature without any claim for genius, perfected the wild-oat seeding facility of the automobile” (Amarillo Sunday News-Globe, June 26, 1938, p.20).
Not all columns contained political commentary. The “Backstage” page also featured the “Octagon House” by Phoebe Atwood Taylor, which entertained readers with a mystery story one chapter per week. The Globe, in the meantime, republished “Bedtime Stories,” a group of children’s stories written by conservationist and children’s author Thornton Burgess, aka “Bedtime Story Man.” The short stories that appeared in the newspaper often had quotes with morals at the top given by its main character. A couple of examples include,

“The wise to luck will never trust
Unless it happens as they must.” Robber the Rat

“Though lacking fear, still have a care;  
Do nothing just because you dare.” Shadow the Weasel.

If the Weasel didn’t appeal to the reader, they could open up to page four in the Daily News and read about people’s problems in the “Dorothy Dix Says” column. On June 1, 1934, she issued the following commentary of the state of many well-to-do wives.

In the course of a year I get thousands of letters from these unhappy wives. And they are really unhappy. That is the inexplicable part of it. They tell me they are married to men who are pillars of the communities in which they live and as upright as the moral law. They say that their husbands are tender and considerate and anxious for them to be happy. They have beautiful homes, fine cars, lovely clothes, delightful trips, but everything is dust and ashes in their teeth because their husbands never pay them any compliments or tell them that they still love them.

While the community was figuring out whether to continue trusting the New Deal the Globe ran Jeanne Bowman’s “Judith Lane.” Each day featured a new chapter and began with a synopsis. On April 10, 1934,

SYNOPSIS: Judith Lane, Big Tom Bevin’s “perfect stenographer,” has agreed to marry Norman Dale, junior partner of the Houston law firm that handles legal business for the Bevins’ engineering and construction concern. New Judith finds that her employer’s daughter, Maiblle, is trying to take Norman’s partner, Morton Lampere, is trying to wreck Bevin’s plan to dam the Rio Diablo and reclaim a vast track of land in western Texas. Bevins has called Judith at the Dates, and asked her to go to his office.
However, one of the strengths of the *Globe-News* was the fact they were community oriented in their columns. Some informed readers of locals who came back from vacations or took on new business ventures. On page four of the September 3, 1937 issue of the *Globe* was “All Around the Town” where the community welcomed back Rev. and Mrs. Frederick A. Forler from a two-week vacation in Los Angeles. It also informed the reader that H.G. Maxfield, owner of Maxfield Drug Store, bought Witherspoon Drugs and moved into the Santa Fe Building.

A few pages over was “Men at Work,” a look at men in various professions. In the September 3, 1937 issue, Foster Peterson spent time with a cab driver.

What makes the wheels go around in a taxi?

Today’s Man at Work is Robert Phillips, a taxi driver who insists that the art of driving a taxi is one of skill. The article went on to describe Phillips’ view of drivers in Amarillo.

As a whole Amarillo drivers are pretty careful, but the main fault seems to be a slow traffic on our main stem streets. It not only slows down traffic but this slow driving is the cause of more accidents than anything else.

Nonetheless, “He is proud of his job and takes pains to please people who ride with him.”

Another column centered on the citizens of Amarillo was “All Around the Town.” Each segment focused on a member of the community. For example, on August 11, 1938, the *Globe* featured Sylvester Munn, a local clothing merchant, whose secret ambition was to run a clothing store and felt that night football on Friday’s and big named orchestras would help improve the community.

Society

Another important component to the *Globe* was the society section on page six. “Society news coverage was always a problem for Howe, who realized that Amarillo did not have a well-developed society. Noticing the popularity of a personals column in a San Francisco paper, Howe thought readers wanted to know about the doings of the rich. So he started a policy of
creating a society by picking out the wealthiest cattlemen and oil families. They were featured more and more on the Sunday front pages” (McReynolds, 1960, p. 117).

On New Year’s Eve in 1929 Mr. and Mrs. O.V. Vernon hosted a “delightful New Year’s Eve Dinner Party.” The article epitomized the community’s continuing optimism despite the stock market crash of a couple months earlier.

Today is a clean page. ‘Happy New Year’ is on everyone’s lips! How wonderful it is to be able to start all over again, with fresh hopes, new plans, greater activities and the happy playtime of social life to help us balanced in our program. No matter what comes before us in a bright and glorious visit. So here’s to our 1836 and may our social chronicles be as bright and filled with good times as those of the milestone just past.

A smart occasion of today was the New Year’s Eve dinner given by Mr. and Mrs. O.V. Vernon, at their home, 1013 Sunset.

The decorations for the affair were artistic. A cupid, dressed to represent 1930 centered the large table. Smilax and candles surrounded the centerpiece. Miniature cupids were used as place cards. Red roses, poinsettias and smilax were used here and there on the table. The smaller tables were centered with flowers and greenery.

Section two of the *Sunday News-Globe* featured an entire spread. On April 15, 1934, a day after the major dust storm that hit the region, Blanche Rose Walker, a former Baptist missionary in China, was the honored guest of Mrs. R.B. Wingate. Members of the Woman’s Missionary Union attended with Mrs. G.L. Stone presiding as Chairman. A musical performance was given and tea was served from the “beautifully appointed dining table adorned in lace and flowers.”

**Religion**

While Gene Howe’s father, Ed, was a strong opponent of organized religion, Howe, who did not practice any religion, was tolerant of it and his newspapers featured church columns. In section two of the *Sunday Globe-News* was “In Churches Today,” which denoted the churches that were open and stated what each were going to preach on. On the day after the dust blizzard
on Black Sunday, for example, at First Christian Church Dr. R.C. Snodgrass’ sermon was titled “I Die Daily.”

The *Daily News* also published J.E. Nunn’s “International Sunday School Session.” He began with a general topic and provided scripture verses to complement his lesson. For example, on May 13, 1933, he spoke how “Jesus Assets His Kingship.” He concluded the sermon with: “Thus all the events in of our stirring lesson point to and illustrate the kingship of Jesus – his superb manliness and courage, his indomitable force of character, his matchless wisdom, and his confidence in the authority over human lives and hearts which was given him by His Father.”

Guests

Various people stopped in Amarillo during the Great Depression. In November 1933, Jazz legend Duke Ellington and his Harlem Aristocrats performed at the Paramount Theater where Ellington’s own composition, “Mood Indigo” was the feature of the evening’s show. “Plaintive, sobbing and sweet, the weird numbers offered great opportunity for Sonnie Greet, drummer, as well as showing off all sections of the band to greatest advantage” (*Daily News*, November 1934, p. 2).

A few months after the repeal of Prohibition, Sister Aimee Semple McPherson came to speak at Municipal Auditorium. The topic was “Milk Pail to Pulpit,” in which she defended herself against charges of sin and corruption. On February 1, the first of a two-night engagement, she spoke on “America, Awake!”

The next day “Tactless Texan” gave his review.

Mrs. McPherson is one of the great modern speakers. There are just two people who have been in Amarillo who can hold their audiences for hours at a time. One is Will Rogers and the other is Mrs. McPherson…My own women folks went to see her and she swept them off their feet. They are lamenting because they didn’t go see her in the afternoon also… If she comes here for a revival she’ll pack the Municipal Auditorium every time she appears.
Boxer Enters Amarillo

On August 8, 1933, boxing great Jack Dempsey came to Amarillo with his wife, Broadway actress Hannah Williams. Dempsey came to town to referee a wrestling match at the Municipal Coliseum while the new bride commented on her new role. “I am going to be Mrs. Jack Dempsey,” the newlywed said, “and we are going to have a real home and raise children. Both of us want babies so much, don’t we Jack?”

“Well, well, well Jack Dempsey is in town,” “Tactless Texan” said. “And his wife is with him and those who have seen her say she is just as nice and charming and as fine a little lady as you will meet most anywhere. Jerry Malin, of the Globe-News, interviewed her and what do you suppose she told him?”

Jerry asked her if she planned to go back on the stage. She said no emphatically NO. She said that her ambition was to raise babies for Jack and according to Jerry the two sure went into details.

‘How many?’ asked the News-Globe man.

‘Not more than three or less than two.’

‘How many boys and how many girls?’

‘Two boys and one girl would be just right and one boy and one girl if there should be but two of them.’

The Comics

After reading about people losing their jobs or Washington fighting over New Deal legislation, people could find relief in the comic strips. On February 2, 1933, the Globe announced its newest acquisition.

The Bungle Family is about to take up its residence in Amarillo.

Col. George Bungle and his competent wife, Josephine, accompanied by their more or less charming daughter, Peggy, positively will meet the people of Amarillo next Monday. Rain or shine, hail or blizzard, the Colonel and his active family will be here, and will perform every day in The Globe.
The Bungle’s joined local celebrities such as Moon Mullens: Moon is a Pacifist at Heart; Just Kids; Salesman Sam and Felix the Cat. On February 3, 1933,

Sports

Once upon a time, before multiple veer offenses and wide receivers eclipsed single wings and shotgun quarterbacks, before foam rubber and fiberglass replaced leather and cotton, there existed a most remarkable football team (Nail, 1973, p.131).

The Amarillo High School Golden Sandstorm, known as the “Golden Sandies,” was the pride and joy of Hub City. The nickname came about from former coach A.S. Douglas who applied the term to the 1922 squad. In a decade the squad won 107 games, lost 12 and tied one. In the process they won the district race six of the 10 years and won state championships from 1934 to 1936. The November 12, 1934 sports section of the Globe dedicated most of its coverage to the district title game between the Sandies and the Lubbock Westerners.

Motoring, hitch-hiking, riding the trains and going every other conceivable method of transportation, football fans left Amarillo this morning to trek to Lubbock for one of the high spots of football in this section of the country – a game between the Lubbock Westerners and Amarillo’s Golden Sandstorm.

While the air was full of excitement in Amarillo because of the hustle and hurry of catching the train, the Sandies were taking it easy with little thought of the fray, which will go a long ways in deciding the winner of District I.

Jerry Malin described the experience in Lubbock in his column, “You’re Being Told,”

Arrived here yesterday afternoon along with vanguard of Amarillo fans. Thought I’d get here easily enough in make reservations at the hotel, but found I was hours behind. There is not a room available in town. Both of the big hotels here report they had sold out room space for tonight, days ago.

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Malin went on,

There’s an air of cockiness down here. Lubbock believes it’s her year, and the only regret is the game is not being played in Amarillo – Lubbock would like in break that Butler Field tradition.

Lubbock fans are cocky, but they are not giving any points. Not even the Coca Cola boys. Some of the malted milk boys are giving odds, but the caviar boys are asking either points or odds.

Amarillo fans are not the only ones arriving in town early. They are trekking in from nearly every section in West Texas. Never has there been so much pre-game interest manifest in this city. The natives are agog. The out-of-towners are hysterical. There is only one topic of conversation and it usually starts an argument (Globe, November 12, 1934).

People from all over wrote to “Tactless” about the Sandies. On January 3, 1935,

Honor from Colorado
Dear Tack:

If it wouldn’t be out of the way for me to say this, but I want to congratulate the people of Amarillo for supporting the Golden Sandies in such numbers this past season; and I also want to congratulate the team. However, winning the Texas high school title wasn’t the outstanding thing to me possibly because I don’t live in Amarillo—but it was the way in which the fans of that section supported the Sandies. Perhaps you don’t realize it, but attendance at home games in Amarillo this season probably surpassed attendance of some colleges in Colorado and Wyoming.

Great American Pastime

Baseball was another popular sport in town. The main headline in the Globe sports column just days after the Black Blizzard on April 16, 1935 provided some sign of hope for the upcoming season. “Joyous Fans Welcome Initial Tilt of ’35 Baseball Season.” The momentous event came with an exuberant lead, “There was widespread peanut-shucking today in our urban centers; pop, that most elemental of carbonated beverages, popped; “grandmothers” had fictitious funerals in great numbers. In short, it’s baseballs opening day!”

The season culminated in an exciting World Series.

The long grind of the baseball season, which started in April, again has narrowed down to the two-club battle for the world championship which starts between the Washington
Senators and New York Giants tomorrow. The other 14 major league clubs finished up their chores yesterday but some of them and their followers still are wondering how it happened that they are not occupying the world championship positions.

Pitching ruled in the series between the Giants and Senators. United Press Sports Editor Stuart Cameron led with the following,

The New York Giants, baseball’s ugly ducklings, consigned to nowhere in the National League pennant season were champions of the world today and everybody knows just why. In winning four out of five from the Washington Senators, the Giants came through with that unbeatable combination of great pitching, airtight defense and flaming will to win.

Under “Today’s Sports Parade,” Henry McLemore gave readers a synopsis of the World Series. It was broken down into a few categories such as hardest hit ball, outstanding player, outstanding goal and most unusual play, which included “Blondy Ryan’s handling of Myer’s roller in the eighth inning of the first game, and the manner in which he flipped to Critz for a force-out. Blondy did everything to that ball but give it singing lessons.”

If the singing lessons failed there were always donkeys who could take the field, which they did. The Sunday Globe News reported the event on September 26, 1933.

Folks who haven’t laughed out loud in years, guffawed until they wore themselves out by the third inning at the Shrine’s novelty baseball game at the Tri-State Fair grandstand Monday night when Wellington’s Shrine team easily bucked and pitched itself to a 9-3 victory over Shamrock.

The article proceeded to describe some of the action.

The fourth inning gave Wellington another tally but the rest of the game failed to see any more riders who could stay on their restless and somewhat peeved mounts for the four bases as the donkeys were getting tired and mean.

It was very hard to compete with donkeys, but that did not prevent the Globe-News from offering contests and promotions.
Contests and Promotions

Since the early years of the Daily News the newspaper has participated in various contests. In January 1922, the Daily News sponsored a $3,000 automobile and prize campaign for those who obtained the most subscriptions via automobile. Winners could win items ranging from an Essex automobile to a Brunswick phonograph. None prize winners also had an incentive. “A ten per cent commission will be paid to those who turn in at least two paid in advance subscriptions each week during the life of campaign from date of entry.”

The News mentioned women were also able to participate, “Having been granted the right to vote women are taking it for granted that that they have the same opportunities as do the men in the $3,000 campaign- and they are right.”

After Gene Howe took over he continued having promotions and contests. He felt it was an “abiding duty, as he saw it, was to keep Amarillo from stagnating. To keep people stirred up, he engaged in a continuous rash of promotional activity.” Howe had two main ingredients for his stunts. First, it needed organizational support and second, it had to tie in with some ready-made event (McReynolds, 1960, p. 119).

In July 1933, the Daily News ran a contest akin to the one in 1922. Whoever acquired 35 three-month subscriptions to either the Daily News or Globe or 20 of each, the person would receive a $50 Ranger bicycle. There was one stipulation.

In case the required number of subscriptions are not sold a commission will be paid for each subscription sold. It’s a case of ‘If you lose you win.’

Howe also used the classified ads section for promotions and contests. On March 3, 1932, he gave readers the chance to create their own amateur ads for such firms as White & Kirk, the Amarillo Coca-Cola Bottling Company and Blackburn Bros. A couple of the rules for the contest included writing only about the firms listed and the reader can write as many ads as they wanted.
about any one firm or all of them, “for you may win any number of prizes.” In addition, the
*Globe* offered free movie tickets to those placed ads in the newspaper. In March of 1937, people
had a chance to win tickets to see Gene Autry in *The Big Show* at the Rialto or Robert Armstrong
and Sally Ellers in *Without Orders* at the Mission.

**Chicago World’s Fair**

On April 20, 1933, the *Globe-News* offered readers a chance to attend the Chicago
World’s Fair. “Want to go to the World Fair this summer? Another one of those famous *Globe-
News* trips by special train was announced definitely this morning by Wilbur C. Hawk.”

There were two trips: one in June and the other later in the summer and each lasted a
week. They included stops in places such as Kansas City, St. Louis and Milwaukee. “Definite
prices haven’t been set but Mr. Hawk said the rates for fare and Pullman would be ‘startlingly
low.’” According to the June 6, 1934 issue of the *Globe* tickets were $75 with a $10 down
payment, which included transportation on the Santa Fe line; enjoying food from the Fred
Harvey diners, the La Salle Hotel, Old Heidelberg Inn and the S.S. Roosevelt; lodging at the La
Salle and admission to the following: A Century of Progress exhibit, including the Fort Dearborn
replica; big league baseball game; theaters, sight-seeing tours in Chicago using Gray Line and
cruises on Lake Michigan.

However, that would pale in comparison to a blunder he committed a year later, which
culminated in bringing hundreds of mother-in-laws to Amarillo.

**Mother-in-Law Day**

The mother of all stunts began in 1934 when Gene Howe insulted his mother-in-law,
Mrs. Nellie Donald. According to Mrs. C.C. Cunningham, who witnessed Howe’s plan from its
Genesis, “Gene…asked me to help him start a …club. I called 70 mothers and got seven who
wanted to join. That’s when mothers were ashamed to be mothers-in-law” (Lynch, 1979, p.121).
After the club was established, Howe chose March 5 to become Mother-In-Law Day and it coincided with the opening of the fourth annual Amarillo Fat Stock Show, which featured cattlemen and delegates to the Panhandle Live Stock Association. In his March 5 column, Howe proclaimed,

Greetings to you, other Mother,
Who have given, through the years,
Of your heart’s own full devotion,
Pain and pleasure, sometimes tears.
To the rearing of a man-child,
Product of your patient joy
To me life’s companion, husband
To you always, ‘just my boy.’

“Three years later Old Tack observed the fifth anniversary of his lack of discretion and by any measure the Mothers-in-Law Day of 1938 was the most massive single-day celebration ever held in the city” (Nail, 1973, p.144).
Today we are Proud

To pay tribute to all Mothers-in-Law

‘Mothers who have made good’

AND TO EXTEND A SINCERE WELCOME TO THE THOUSANDS OF VISITORS WHO WILL BE WITH US FOR THIS OCCASION!
Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt was the guest of honor in the 1938 event, which featured a huge float displaying 650 mothers-in-law. Roosevelt realized that the parade was going to be large and undoubtedly trying, and her day would be made longer by a public lecture that evening. Yet she did not allow such thoughts to interrupt the careful combing of her hair as she chatted amiably with oilman Lawrence Hagy who arrived at Ernest O. Thompson’s penthouse atop the Amarillo Hotel to pick up the first lady (Nail, 1973, p.146).

The first lady was driven south in an “Eleanor Blue” Buick from Polk Street to Thirteenth at the front of the parade where she then made it onto a reviewing stand. At which point, she witnessed a hull shaped 165 foot-long float that carried 591 people, mostly mother-in-laws, and was presented with a 2,500 lb. bouquet of roses that was lifted by a crane onto the stand.

Also among the list of guests at the parade were four state governors, including Texas Governor James Allred, who issued a proclamation naming March 9, 1938, Mother-In-Law Day; Army representatives from Fort Sill, OK; National Guard troops from Texas and New Mexico; Cal Farley’s Father-in-Law unit; 14 flower floats made by over 2,800 Home Demonstration Club women from the Panhandle; 50 highway patrolmen; motorcycles from the Texas Highway Patrol; Ben Turpin, who is featured daily on Tactless’ column, a 25- foot long Santa Fe min train, a Dust Bowl victim float and 50 Indian (Native American) mothers-in-law from a Navajo reservation. While the parade helped take the minds off of the hard times, there were other promotions and contests that brought some hope and opportunity to the community.

Confederates and Marines March in Amarillo

On September 3, 1935, the United Confederate Veterans and Sons of the Confederacy held their 45th national convention in Amarillo. “Most of them are very, very old, of course,” “Tactless Texan” commented, “but they sure must have fine physiques to have lived this long. And they show it in their carriage. They carry themselves like soldiers, and they make it easy for you to imagine they have been through the fires of war.” Under Globe-News business partner
Wilbur Hawk, over $10,000 was pledged to help pay expenses for many of the Confederate alum. Amarillo High School was turned into a bivouac area named Camp Pierce, after General Rice A. Pierce, Commander-in-Chief of the United Confederate Veterans.

At the same time as the convention the Globe-News sponsored the United States Marine Band. On September 5, as they played “Dixie,” “rebel yells fused into the tramp, tramp, tramp of uniformed soldiers.” “Tactless Texan” was delighted in the whole affair.

As an Extraordinary Plenipotentiary of His Excellency the Governor of Texas I hereby [declare] that Whereas the members of the United States Marine band are the salt of the earth and Whereas they have played their way into our hearts hereby I pronounce and declare them CITIZENS of TEXAS

And as to Captain Branson I am reserving the greatest honor of him. I’m not only making him a citizen of Texas, but I am making him a CITIZEN OF THE PANHANDLE.

This is the greatest gift within the realm of man.

Confederates were not the only ones part-taking in oration in Amarillo.

Oratorical Contest

On January 8 1933, the Sunday News Globe presented readers a chance to part take in an oratorical contest.

In answer to the many inquiries from high schools over the district, T.E. Johnson of the Amarillo Globe-News which has sponsored the preliminary contests for two years, announced Saturday night that the contest would be held – with the same opportunity to enter the zone finals and perhaps win a summer tour of Europe for the first place winner and with handsome prizes for other high place winners.

Each high school in West Texas entered a contestant, “a bona fide pupil,” who had to be 19 years of age or under by February 1933. The oration involved reciting the Constitution of the United States in under six minutes. “An extemporaneous speech will be required on some phase of the oration which the judges will select.” The winner would be sent to Kansas City, all expenses paid by the newspaper, where they competed with other students from different sections of the country.
In addition to participating in contests citizens welcomed guests heading west or east on Route 66.

Route 66

Many people traveled through Amarillo on their way west. Route 66, which was born on November 1926, began to be paved across the town and with it saw the rise of roadside businesses such as motels and filling stations. In August 1938, the community celebrated Old Southwest Days, which marked the completion of the Will Rogers Memorial Highway. During the first day of the parade on August 15, the community paid tribute to the late Will Rogers. “A hush fell over the crowds as the riderless horse (Will Rogers’ horse Soapsuds) was led along the parade route. Many eyes were watery, many throats were dry as the empty saddle recalled the memory of Will Rogers” (Globe, August 15, 1938, p.2).

The next day “Tactless Texan” commented on the event.

The memorial and the celebration was very splendid. It’s very, very credible, it’s magnificent. The parade was beautiful and the crowd, with its color and enthusiasm, was great, very great. And the pageant was everything expected and much more. Beautiful and simple in its magnificence, it thrilled the vast crowed that swarmed to Butler Field. Will Rogers son, Jimmy, added, “It is not only an excellent show, but some of the finest tributes every paid to the memory of my father” (Globe, August 17, 1938, p.1).

The new route enabled people to head west to pursue their dreams. Nonetheless, despite the increased travel, the community was dealing with a powerful enemy. By 1938, the drought and heavy winds had transformed the region into a dust bowl and made traveling nearly impossible. How did the community respond to the latest threat to the Panhandle?
CHAPTER 7

DUST BOWL REACHES HUB CITY

On April 14, 1935 a mass of dust rose into the big sky country of the High Plains. The openness slowly began to be filled with a blizzard of black particles that appeared to be a sign from the Book of Revelations. Darkness and fear seeped into the area. Model-A Fords perusing the dirt roads on their way to church began to slow down. Burnt rubber crawled along the dirt as the dust blinded the driver’s eyes. Others began honking their horns, not out of impatience, but out of fear. What will come at them? Where are their loved ones? Seconds began to tick and tick. Hearts raced to the cadence of a funeral march. By the grace of God what was happening?!

While dust storms came and went in the early 1930’s nothing that hit the region was as severe as the storm on Palm Sunday in 1935. Nonetheless, dust remained a problem. Why did this have to be and what will the government do, if anything? Amarillo was barely 50 years of age and it survived dry patches in the past, but what made the dust storms of the 1930s different? How did “Tactless Texan” and the Globe-News help the community survive the ordeal?

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA),”A dust storm usually arrives suddenly in the form of an advancing wall of dust and debris which may be miles long and several thousand feet high.” The dust storms that circulated the High Plains during the 1930’s created many problems and as a result people wanted to get away as fast as they could. However, the automobile did not act as a savior to the men, women and children who dealt with the intense increments of dust and high winds.

At noon on January 21, 1932, a gigantic cloud began to roam into Amarillo. As it slowly crept in like a vulture seeking its prey the sky began to change. It lost its golden blue hue and its ivory clouds “turned brownish then gray as the thing lumbered around the edge of Amarillo, a city of 43,000 people. Nobody knew what to call it. It was not a rain cloud. Nor was it a cloud
holding ice pellets. It was not a twister. It was thick like coarse animal hair; it was alive.” (Egan, 2006, p. 113).

Like the Great Depression people were confident it would only be brief and that rain and good times would come back quickly. However, the black blizzard came back stronger each time. It would become so powerful that it not only would damage land from the Texas Panhandle and No Man’s Land in the Oklahoma Panhandle to southeast Colorado and Kansas, but eventually make its way to the East Coast prompting Washington D.C. to act like it never had before.

The Beginning

In 1931, as the nation was in the early stages of the Great Depression, President Hoover attempted to bring financial relief to farmers. “The White House statement on the farmers’ predicament emphasized the low prices for wheat now prevailing made it ‘practically impossible’ for farmers to repay the crop production loans ‘without incurring grave risk of need during the winter.’” The RFC’s plan was to accept only 25% of the amount due while they figure out the terms for the remaining percentage. However, this was not enough.

As part of the Hundred Days President Roosevelt signed the Agricultural Adjustment Act on May 12, 1933. The measure attempted to help with farm relief inflation by appealing to mortgage creditors to abstain from foreclosure pending operation of the legislation; authorize secure voluntary reduction of the acreage in basic crops through agreements with producers and use of direct payments for participation in acreage control programs; regulate marketing through voluntary agreements with processors, associations or producers, and other handlers of agricultural commodities or products; license processors, associations of producers, and others handling agricultural commodities to eliminate unfair practices or charges; determine the necessity for and the rate or processing taxes; and use the proceeds of taxes and appropriate
funds for the cost of adjustment operations, for the expansion of markets, and for the removal or 
agricultural surpluses.

Wheat decreased rapidly and a drought became etched in the Great Plains. As 1933 
progressed, “the earth of the southern plains was dead. Wheat that was planted had no moisture 
to germinate, and the dry winds blew it from the soil where it had been placed” (Nail, 1973, 
p.113). Dust was here to stay.

TNT Greets Mother Nature

In August 1933, dust circulated across the Texas Panhandle town of Dalhart. “Tactless 
Texan” attempted to help by concocting a remedy for the storms. “I am planning to hold a 
conference with the operators of the carbon black plants. I plan to suggest that they shut down 
their plants for a week to see if relief results. This is at least trying to do something isn’t 
it?”(Amarillo Globe, August 2, 1933)

The city hired Tex Thornton who felt that raising dynamite into the clouds and then 
blowing them up would get the clouds to loosen their stranglehold on water. “When you are 
fooling with dynamite and the weather you sure are fooling with dynamite,” “Tactless Texan” 
observed.

On August 27, 1936, Thornton became ill and “Tactless Texan” offered his support. 
Tex Thornton, who is ill in bed, is some better today. He’s threatened with a nervous 
breakdown. And I don’t blame him. If I had to work as hard as he does and to travel 
around with as much nitroglycerine as he does I’d have a nervous breakdown before I 
started.

Anyway, Tex is a good old boy and a fine fellow, and we’ll have him back on his feel 
within a day or two. Meanwhile the bombing will be done by one of his capable 
assistants.
“Tactless,” the Weatherman

The Globe began many columns with the weather and at times even asked employees to call the weather bureau for that day’s prediction. However, Howe used “Tactless Texan” to not only predict the rain, but to help provide sunshine to the community during the dark days that prevailed for many months. With concern to the dusters in Dalhart in 1933,

More showers and these showers sure will be concentrated. Wherever may strike, there will be lakes. There is a trend to the northwest that is most encouraging to those who are most needful of relief. My prediction is that it will rain in Dalhart within the next three days. And to those Dalhart citizens who are planning to give a banquet in my honor next week, that if it rains, all I can say is that I will be most available any evening. If they would make the honoring and the festivities last two days or longer I sure can stay longer.

There isn’t anything I like better than the good people of Dalhart I’d get to see less of.

On April 2, 1934, “Tactless Texan” offered an encouraging forecast.

When the whirl winds turn from the right to the left there is always a major change in the weather. If it’s been raining it will stop raining and start droughting. If it’s been droughting it will start raining.

Folks, our weather problems are about to be behind us. We’re about to turn the corner and it’s not a Hoover corner, either.

While rain stayed away, “Tactless Texan” continued to be hopeful. “The drough marches on, folks, the droughs marches on. And so does Old Tack.”

The Housewife’s Dust Story

On March 2, 1935, Amarillo skyscrapers were “hiddin in a pall of dust, the aftermath of the region’s worst sandstorm in history which yesterday afternoon turned day into night, damaged railroad communication, broke a plate glass window in a downtown store and caused a woman to faint in the lobby of a downtown hotel.” (Globe, March 2, 1935, p.1)

In the March 19 issue, “Tactless Texan” received a letter from a housewife who gave readers a glimpse into what a typical day was like during the dust storms.

Dear Tack:
The Panhandle housewife wakes up in the morning, rubs the dust from her eyelids, goes into the kitchen, scrapes off the stove, table and chairs, takes the covers and lids from food supplies and starts breakfast. After breakfast she wraps her head well in a towel, puts on canvas gloves and then begins a full blown movement, moving the soil erosion from her household. The dust fringes her eyelids until she appears as though much mascara had been used. She doesn’t even have to pay for it or bother to apply it carefully. It makes her eyes appear luminous, also the indomitable spirit flashing therefrom adds to their attractiveness. Sand seeps in through her canvas gloves. It cradles itself in the lines of her hands.

Lines, some psychologist has said, give character to the hand. The crystal gazer says, ‘The more lines, the more you have lived.’ Most Panhandle housewives’ hands show – well – that they have LIVED. By the time Mrs. Panhandle housewife has wiped the grit from her face four or five times during the cleaning, her complexion has changed ‘from white to rosy red.’ Nothing like a good Old Panhandle Sandstorm for pale complexions. The Panhandle housewife saves her rouge and mascara money and purchases toothpaste and incidentally, dust cloths, brooms, etc… The Panhandle housewife does not gossip over the back fence. She has no time for such things. She must hurry her housecleaning before another duster crashes into her domicile. Those setting-up exercises. How tiresome! Mrs. Housewife of the Panhandle does not bother about them.

By the time she has swept the walls, run the vacuum over the floors and applied the dust cloth vigorously, she feels like she’s sitting atop of the world. (She may be ere long, if there are many more sandstorms in the Panhandle. By the time this post-sandstorm housecleaning is over, in sweep her bridge friends. Do they speak of operations, of special diets over the bridge table? No. Their conversation is unlike that of the ordinary housewife. And for prizes, Mrs. Panhandle Housewife presents a dust cloth or two, handsomely wrapped. Or perhaps, it is a shiny new broom.

No other housewife in the United States could present such gifts and get away with the act as graciously as Mrs. Panhandle Housewife. Mrs. Panhandle Housewife takes the covers from the bed. She shakes off the sand, the tumble weeds, and the scorpions and heaves a sign of contentment. She is pleasantly tired. The monotonous walling of the wind and the gentle rocking of the house lull her to sleep. Couseism? No. The Panhandle Housewife ORIT and she has plenty of it.

A month later a major dust storm came to Amarillo making the Panhandle Housewife’s routine more difficult.

The Blizzard

A Sunday in mid-April 1935 dawned quiet, windless, and bright. In the afternoon, the sky went purple—as if it were sick-and the temperature plunged. People looked northwest and saw a raggedly-topped formation on the move, covering the horizon. The air crackled with electricity. Snap. Snap. Snap. Birds screeched and dashed for cover. As the black
Waves of sand, like ocean water rising over a ship’s prow, swept over roads. Cars went into ditches. A trail derailed (Egan, 2006, p. 7).

The front page of the April 15, 1935 edition of the *Daily News* led with the headline “Worst Duster Rips Across Panhandle.” Directly beneath it was a column called “Lost for Night in Dust” that featured a picture of a young girl and her brother sitting by a barbed wire fence. The caption underneath read, “Leland Fox, 10, his step-sister, Corine Weeden, 9, and their dog passed an entire night by this thistle and dust-clogged fence row in vicinity of their home near Hugoton, Kans. Some 100 persons joined in the searching party. After a night in the storm, punctuated by coyote howls, Leland made his way to aid.”

Next to the image of the dust covered children was a piece titled “Writer Caught in Dust.” It began with the following editor’s note. “Of all types of soil blowing, the black duster provides the most awe-inspiring manifestation of the power of the prairie wind. It moves with express train speed and blots out the sun so darkness prevails at midday. Such a storm was that which swept over part of the Southwest Sunday. An Associated Press correspondent caught in the cloud tells of the experience.” According to Timothy Egan (2006), Denver AP correspondent Robert Geiger and photographer Harry Eisenhard traversed the dust stricken regions in the Oklahoma Panhandle “simply looking for more anecdotes about the storms that were killing the southern plains. With black blizzards blowing through almost daily, Geiger’s stories were getting good play across the nation” (p.203).

Here is a sample from their experience in Boise City, Oklahoma that the *Daily News* published. It described the darkness and omnipotence of the blizzard.

We went down the road about 60 miles an hour to keep ahead of it. We had seen an old couple at a dilapidated farm house, and stopped there to warn them, but they had already gone.
Speeding on, the car was suddenly engulfed by flank movement of the cloud. Momentarily the road glimmered ahead like a ribbon of light in a tunnel, then the dust closed it. It became absolutely black as night. We slammed on the brakes and turned on the car lights. Exploring by touch, we found the car in a dust drift.

Backing out and keeping a door open to watch the edge of the highway, we took two hours to move the remaining six miles into Boise City.

The day after Black Sunday,

Moisturesless clouds hung over Amarillo…The atmosphere seemed haggard and was filmy and pale. Dust sifted from the hazy sky and was set in motion by a slight breeze. Sidewalks and streets were ripped tan surfaces. When a car passed, a cloud of dust rose behind it, and the car’s tires left tracks in the powdery precipitate (Nail, 1973, p.107).

Many viewed the dust storm as a sign from God that the city is paying for its many sins that included electing Franklin D. Roosevelt whose legislation (Cullen-Harrison Act) concerning beer and wine sales was the work of the devil. Howe responded to these charges.

Just a whole lot of people are really worried about this drouth and these sand storms because they believe it is a visitation from the Lord. They have been telephoning me to read verse 24 chapter 28, Deuteronomy, in the Bible. It’s under ‘Curses of Disobedience,’ and it says:

‘The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust; from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.’

He went on to add,

No doubt there has been sufficient disobedience in this western country to justify the Lord in almost anything He might do to us, but I cannot believe He would single out our people here. Taking them as they come the people who live in the Panhandle and this whole plains country are so much better morally and religiously than the folks who live in the big cities in the eastern part of the United States that there is no comparison.

As dust trickled into the community “Tactless Texan” created a combatant or a substance known as vitamin K, an extra airy ingredient in dust that made Panhandle citizens better than others (Lynch, 1979, p. 127). “The actual purpose of vitamin K was one of distraction, to cause people to smile at their own plight and to maintain their morals” (Nail, 1973, p. 116). “Say what you will,” “Tactless Texan” wrote, “but you must admit that we surely are getting through these
dust storms in pretty good shape.” He continued to help bring levity to the situation, “Out here on these plains we’ve never been fatter, healthier, or dirtier. And the women folks have never been jumpier.”

While the big storm that came down the plains occurred on April 14, dust had been a problem for quite a while and Howe attempted to explain what was going on. “The magnitude of the fictitious substance accompanying come immense dust storms was seemingly hazardous” (Nail, 1973, p. 116). “Boy oh boy,” Howe said,” this Vitamin K sure would be a whole lot easier to take if it wasn’t so choking. This latest storm is the most chokingest of all.” He went on to analyze vitamin K on Amarillo housewives. After cleaning, they would become discouraged. “And then, there are the women folks who sweep the dust under the sofas and the beds and the ice boxes and they do even more complaining…for the simple reason they have more time.” (“Tactless Texan”, March 27 1935, p.2). As for men, there were those who can stand the ladies’ complaints and those that couldn’t. “Why even my angelic mother-in-law is as cross as an old bear right now. She chased me out of the house with a broom this morning, and that is the truth if I ever told it, because I made some remark that some things might have been worse than a dust storm.” Furthermore, he added, “If you talk to her please don’t say anything to her about vitamin K. It’s a touchy subject with her.”

What’s Next?

On April 16, 1935, the front page of the Globe offered readers a mixed bag of optimism.

The dust storms are singing their swan song. That was the pleasant prediction made this morning by Weatherman H.T. Collman. ‘There may be one more bad duster on tap, but the storms will become less and less frequent,’ he said. There’s raining if the offing too—but it will be the last of this month or next month.” Mr. Collman went on to examine the current situation.
‘It’s not the lack of moisture, which is holding vegetation back, for we have had a good amount of rain for this time of year, but its dust that arrive this afternoon. The wind here is not strong enough to start a storm and there has been on outside help as yet.’

For many people, according to David Nail (1973), this prognostication or explanation did not help lessen the misery of the Dust Bowl. For many, it was too much to take. “These were the people on the road to despair, separated from their tenant farms by conditions which they neither understood nor over which they had any control. In broken Fords, Chevrolets, and even Hudson Super-Sixes they moved westward from parched and limp soil to a promised land that was largely imaginary and almost solely a product of misplaced faith” (P. 116-117). Many of these men and women traversed what became Route 66 in Texas from McLean in the eastern Panhandle to Glenrio at the New Mexico state line looking for work.

Washington D.C., Turns Black

For early parts of the 1930’s most of the nation could not comprehend what was going on in the Great Plains. “The dust storms were perceived as a penance Man paid for his ‘sin’ in mistreating the ‘wounded land.’” It got so bad that “if the process were not reversed, the United States would, like ancient civilizations, disappear into oblivion” (Leuchtenburg, 2009, p. 173). In the spring of 1934, the nation’s capital and the East Coast got a taste of what the Texas Panhandle was digesting.

On May 9, 1934, dust cropped up and heavy winds carried along the Great Plains. This time it skirted east and stopped in many places. “In Manhattan, the streetlights came on midday and cars used their headlights to drive…From the observatory at the top of the Empire State Building, people looked into a soup unlike anything ever seen in midtown” (Egan, 2006, p. 151). From there, it traversed to the nation’s capital where it “seeped into the White House, where President Roosevelt was discussing plans for drought relief. Dust in Chicago, Boston, Manhattan, Philadelphia and Washington gave the great cities of America a dose of what the
people living in the little communities of the High Plains had been living with for nearly two years. People in the cities wondered why the plains folks could not do something to hold down their soil” (p. 152).

Meanwhile back in Amarillo, on the same day of the powerful storm, “Tactless Texan” comforted the community as duster fever spread throughout the nation.

It may be that the drought is not broken and that it is still here. And it looks as if this Plains country was especially fortunate in the late rains. Wheat is climbing because of the dry weather in Western Kansas and Western Oklahoma and up in Iowa and away out in the Pacific Northwest. The western half of the United States now is right in the midst of the most prolonged drought in the history of the United States.

It’s hot and the evening wind has been blowing out of the southeast. It’s been in this direction for the last three nights. If conditions were at all normal we’d have plenty of rain this week. And personally I’m expecting it.

The same night the country was flowered with dust rain came to Amarillo. The front page of the May 10 edition of the *Globe* reported the event.

An electrical storm last night brought intermittent thundershowers to Amarillo and the northeastern and eastern sections of the Panhandle.

Amarillo received .16 of an inch. Moisture over other sections ranged from light showers to three-quarters of an inch.

This caused “Tactless” to gloat.

Old Tack is back hitting on all cylinders in this weather. And did I call on the turn of this present spell?

If you remember, on Tuesday I positively predicted rain within two days and there wasn’t a cloud in sight. And Wednesday also was as clear as a bell but on Wednesday I again stated that that rain was on its way and would be here immediately. That was my forecast without any “ifs” or “ands.”

And during the night Wednesday it clouded up and began raining and now the weather bureau, just 73 hours behind, also is forecasting moisture. More rain is in the making. The outlook is favorable.
While “Tactless Texan” was singing his praises in the rain, the black blizzard caused President Roosevelt and the government to take a serious look at the destruction the dusters caused.

Documenting the Dust

While the black blizzard in May 1934 woke people up across the eastern seaboard, the everyday realities that ranchers, farmers and other people in the Great Plains dealt were largely unknown across the country.

A couple of photographers and a film maker helped bring the dusty reality across the nation. Roy Stryker came up with an idea to create a record of "American decay for the files of the Farm Security Administration" (Egan, 2006, p.248). The motives, according to Egan, were political. Roosevelt was running for a second term as president and was facing an acrimonious Supreme Court, which deemed it crucial to his policies to have "documentary support for conditions that called for programs deemed radical and un-American by critics" (p. 248). Stryker sent photographers including Arthur Rothstein to the Great Plains "to get the faces of the desperate." He told them to "taste the dirt, get to know the people, live with the dusters" (p. 249). Rothstein, like Geiger, wound up in Boise City, Oklahoma, a town "slouching away from the sand pummeling, its buildings unpainted, the windows brown, so much dirt floating around that it was impossible to tell a street or front lawn or sidewalk from the drifting prairie" (p. 249-250).

While Rothstein captured the still imagery of the remnants of dust and broken dreams, another documentarian, Pare Lorentz, broadened the scope. He wanted to create or film a narrative: "how and why the Great Plains had been settled and then brought to ruination." While he struck out in Hollywood, Lorentz found an eager benefactor in the federal government. He went to Dalhart "catching dusters as they tumbled across the land, getting chased off the road, living with the grit, hearing the same story told over and over, in varying forms: the boom, the
bust, the dust.” (p. 252). *The Plow That Broke The Plains* played in the Paramount Theater in Amarillo from June 2 to June 4, but 1,500 people, mainly members of the Chamber of Commerce and other local leaders, got an early preview. The June 1, 1936 issue of the *Daily News* reported on the film on page two. Titled “Tugwell Film Called Libel on Panhandle,” just below, “Amarillo Citizens Open in Condemnation of Dust Picture.”

George May’s article shared the view of *Dalhart Texan* editor John McCarty that the movie was some form of government propaganda aimed at destroying the virtues of the people in the Panhandle. “It is purely a propaganda film,” McCarty said, who began the Last Man Standing Club in an attempt to boost the morale of the Panhandle. Nonetheless, *Daily News* Editor Wes Izzard said in the *Globe* that the audience was split. Half the audience believed the film served its purpose and that farmers had over plowed the land while the other half thought the movie was inaccurate.

Nonetheless, the situation got the nation’s attention and beginning in 1935 the Federal Government began enacting programs aimed at helping prevent wind erosion and to lessen the chances for another major dust storm. One idea the president proposed was the resettlement of families in the region.

**Roosevelt Makes His Move**

In April 1935 Roosevelt set up the Resettlement Administration (RA) to help with the poverty stricken rural communities and named Rexford Tugwell to head the operation. The goal was to “move impoverished farmers from sub marginal land and give them a fresh start on good soil with adequate equipment and expert guidance” (Leuchtenburg, 2009, p. 140). Shortly after, *Globe-News* Business Manager Wilbur Hawk reported back from Washington D.C. announcing that the Panhandle was to receive immediate funding. “This emergency grant,” Hawk said, “is merely an evidence of good faith on the part of government officials who realize that it would
take time to secure the necessary funds for the permanent program through the regular channels” *(Sunday News-Globe, April 28, 1935, p.1)*.

Due to the severity of the situation, however, the president juggled a couple options for the Great Plains. A few days later, on May 1, 1935, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 7028 granting the federal government the power to buy back much of what it provided Americans through the various homestead acts. As a result, “Tactless Texan” informed the community that all of the newspapers’ editors, spouses and mother-in-laws were joining the Last Standing Club.

Despite the newspaper’s stance, on February 29, 1936, the *Sunday News-Globe* reported that the Resettlement Administration was planning to coordinate efforts to fend off wind erosion in the Plains. A few months later, on August 7, 1936, the policy began to trickle into Amarillo and the Southern Plains. The *Globe* reported that in addition to emergency drought programs, the RA was to provide supplemental loans to farmers-borrowers who need more money due to having a shortage in crops. Farmers were eligible for: seed loans if they are not able to get regular Farm Credit Administration emergency crop loans and feed loans. In addition, RA clients could work on WPA projects as well. The goal of the Resettlement Administration was to locate bureaus for special services to those suffering from the drought. (*Amarillo Globe*, August 7, 1936, p. 7).

The country had to do something, not only did the dust finally trickle away from the Great Plains so everyone can see it for themselves, but it was affecting a whole region of people. Could the president allow them to simply become buried and forgotten? In August 1936, soil conservationist Hugh Bennett took over a project known as Operation Dust Bowl. “The plan was to slow the drifts by contour plowing, which created furrows and made it less likely for the earth to lift in great sheets, and then plant it over with grass seed from Africa” (*Egan, 2006, p. 263*).
On August 18, New Dealers Dr. Rexford Tugwell and Harry L. Hopkins stopped in Amarillo as part of a tour that sought to help figure out ways to combat the drought. They visited the area with regional conservator of the Soil Conservation Service, H.H. Finnell, who issued his report. “Based upon ample scientific and practical observations it is recognized that fundamentally the natural conditions in the area are capable of supporting a permanently prosperous agricultural industry” (*Amarillo Daily News*, August 18, 1933, p. 1).

Despite Bennett’s success in planting trees in the Panhandle dusters continued to wreak havoc. On April 7, 1938, below freezing temperatures and winds gusts up to 70 miles-an-hour destroyed fruit, wheat, trees and structures in Amarillo in one of the highest sustained windstorms in the region in years.

Despite the news, “Tactless Texan” attempted to shed light on the situation.

Dust may seem to be homely, prosaic, and uninteresting, but it is one of the most necessary things in the world. Sunsets, with the sunlight broken by floating dust which takes on color, owe their brilliance to the dust-laden air. Clouds would be impossible without dust for vapor in the air to condense on. Water vapor which would gather on our bodies and clothing, is kept from us by dust in the air, air that otherwise would be oversaturated and dripping. The world would be a very damp, cold and less beautiful place without dust (*Globe*, August 17, 1938, p.2).

“Tactless Texan’s” constant dosage of hope would not be the only ray of sunshine to creep into the dusty mist of the Texas Panhandle.

**FDR Arrives in Amarillo**

By July 11, 1938, “Some of the gloom that enveloped the country at midterm in President Hoover’s reign was back. In the Dust Bowl, the fuzz of a forced forest and the re-tilling of tousled dirt did not stop the wind or bring more rain, but it was a plan in motion – something – and that was enough people to keep the faith” (Egan, 2006, p. 304). Despite this, the cover of the *Globe* continued to show its faith to the president. In the July 11 issue readers were greeted with “Throngs Await FDR” and just below “Ellwood Park is Crowded; Excited City Preparing for
President’s Visit.” Next to it was a portrait of President Roosevelt smiling as he looked to his right in a tuxedo. His image was bordered by a full moon, almost as if the community viewed Roosevelt as a heavenly figure coming to help save the town from a decade of misery and dirt.

The president chose to visit Amarillo, which was the headquarters to Operation Dust Bowl, “because it was the only city of any size in the broken land and because [Hugh] Bennett had told him to go out, have a look, see how farmers were holding the land down, taking what he had started and making it his own” (Egan, 2006, p. 303). Roosevelt’s visit to Amarillo in July 1938 attracted an enthusiastic crowd of some 200,000 willing to believe the president will help the community get back on the right foot. (Price & Rathjen, 1986, p. 103) However, the president brought more than a sense of optimism. On July 12, light rain began to fall in Amarillo as the president’s train came into town. As the rain began to pour “Roosevelt didn’t even hesitate. He wouldn’t don a raincoat.” After his car dropped him off along modern day SW11th Avenue and Carroll Street he got out of the car stepped onto the sidewalk and addressed the roaring crowd who cheered as the president enjoyed the elements. “My friends of the Panhandle and you from neighboring cities who have been good enough to come here today: If I had asked the newspapermen on the train what the odds were, they would have given me 100 to 1 that it wouldn't be raining in Amarillo. But it is!” (Globe, July 12, 1938, p.2)

After thanking the city for hosting Mrs. Roosevelt during Mother-in-Law Day, the president began by reassuring the community that they were not the only ones dealing with water scarcity and wished people across the nation could appreciate the dire situation the community was in.

I wish that more people from the South and the East and the Middle West could visit this Plains country. If they did you would hear less talk about the great American desert, you would hear less ridicule of our efforts to conserve water, to restore grazing lands and to plant trees.
Back in the East, in Washington and on the Hudson River I have seen the top soil of the Panhandle and of Western Kansas and Nebraska borne by the wind high in the air eastward to the Atlantic Ocean itself. I want that sight to come to an end.

It can be ended only by a united national effort, backed up one hundred per cent by you who live in this area. You are giving us that backing.

Roosevelt then went into his forestation projects, which involved planting trees in the community so it would minimize the damaged created by wind erosion. His goal was “to establish this part of the Nation as a fine and safe place which a large number of Americans can call home.” Moments later, he spoke about three objectives. The first part represented government assistance to help the individual farmer to use his land for those products for which it is best fitted, and to maintain and improve its fertility.

In addition, the president sought to prevent overproduction and low prices and at the same time to provide against any shortage by giving farmers throughout the country as high a purchasing power for their labor as those who work in industry and other occupations. His last objective was to decrease farm tenancy and increase farm ownership by those who till the soil. The process would include encouraging small farms and of even smaller acreages for those who live near the cities and work in the cities, and who should by all the rules of common sense grow on a few acres around their homes a substantial part of their own family food supply.

The president finished by thanking the people of the community.

You have given me a wonderful reception today in Amarillo, not counting the rain, and I am happy, I am happy indeed, to have been able to see this extraordinarily interesting and progressive part of the United States. I am grateful to you for your cooperation with your National Government, and your understanding of all that we are trying to do in the National Administration to help those who are willing to help themselves.

Response to the President

In the July 12 issue “Tactless Texan” displayed shock over the president’s gift to Amarillo.
Weather: I have nothing to say about the weather. No comment. Absolutely nothing. Not a word. Silence is golden at this moment.” Then he goes into the president’s visit.

But wasn’t President Roosevelt a sport? Didn’t he take it? President Roosevelt comes out here to see the Dust Bowl and he runs into a drenching rain. No more dust relief that is certain. We’ll have to change our tempo. Our petitions for allotments will have to be under the heading of flood control. [Tone turns serious; almost as it Tack was issuing a confession]

The people of the plains can now understand the President’s hold on the people of the United States. He’s been fighting and making enemies every day since he has been in office but he still has the majority of the people with him in a big way. Roosevelt made a statement with his appearance in the rain.

‘Now just frankly how many other presidents would have done this? You know most of them wouldn’t have even left the train. They would have said it was just bad; that they couldn’t take the risk of taking pneumonia.’

Roosevelt and Bennett’s conservation plan was beginning to take hold and while dusters still occurred, it would not hit the level of those in the mid-1930s. As the decade drew to a close a storm that began to brew during the Roaring Twenties slowly turned deadly as the 1930s progressed. The United States continued to deal with rising unemployment and dust as events across the Atlantic slowly galvanized the spirits of the community and nation.
CHAPTER 8

OPTIMISM AND WAR

There are definite indications for an upward trend in business. The postal business has always been a good barometer, and the postal business is good – the best in its history.

Postmaster General James A. Farley

In spring of 1939, the weather began showing signs of blossoming as did the atmosphere in Amarillo. In May, the community welcomed Postmaster General James A. Farley with open arms as they gave him a parade down the streets of Amarillo, acting as if he was the Second Coming.

Two hundred and eighty riders of the range spread out for a mile and a quarter to a colorful parade. Some of the men wore the streaked aged dusty clothes of the corral and branding pens. Others had their spurs let out the town notch and wore the brilliant shirts and big white hats reserved for special occasions. Music of four bands was punctuated by ‘Howdys’ and ‘Yippees’ as the riders greeted friends crowded along the line of march. (Amarillo Globe, May 17, 1939, p.1).

The edification of the post office, which employed many people in Amarillo, helped change the community’s outlook. “The federal government under this administration is conscious of the needs in all sections of the nation and that it is providing facilities which are adequate for the public service” (Amarillo Globe, May 17, 1939, p.2).

Other signs that things were beginning to change in the community included businesses, like White and Kirk, opening up new locations. On Christmas Eve in 1937, they made a big announcement.

It has been our policy to always keep abreast of the times and advance with a growing territory. Today we number among our very best friends and customers, some of the people that were the very first customers over forty years ago. Returning year after year they have afforded us a great pleasure in the knowledge that such a following was secured by our efforts to please.

In 1938 a greater White and Kirk will begin to form. A modern store building offering our clients the conveniences and comforts of any large city will be built. More room for additional stock and displays will be incorporated for your benefit. It will be our effort
more than ever: to be one of West Texas’ Finest Stores and to maintain the tradition of quality that has been the cornerstone of our business.

On March 3, 1938 after the opening of the store, “Tactless Texan” congratulated the owners.

White & Kirk is one of the great institutions of this Plains country. It is one of the greatest assets that Amarillo has: that this Plains country has. It’s the Marshall Field of this part of the Southwest as it has a grand record of service and success.

He added,

White & Kirk helps every store in Amarillo as it brings people here, and when they come to a city don’t all shop in one place.

Even advertisements were beginning to show signs of optimism. In the December 20, 1937 issue of the Globe, an ad promoting a “Great White Way of Christmas merchandise,” featured a picture of Polk Street that appeared to be ready for a Hollywood premiere. Rows of parked Plymouths and Chevy’s were surrounded by bright neon signs displayed from establishments as the Paramount Theater. Just below the ad read,

The Texas High Plains Own White Way… of Fashions, Gifts and Entertainment
There is always good entertainment in Amarillo!
Particularly so at this time of year. Theaters are showing the very last minute productions from Hollywood and New York. The party season has reached its zenith and the entire city is permeated with a holiday atmosphere.

It went on to add,

The whole city of Amarillo is one great Christmas Carnival. The feel of the holidays is in the air. Just to walk down the street makes you want to buy someone a gift and enjoy the holiday yourself.

The mood was right for a major anniversary.

Golden Anniversary

On August 14, 1938 the Globe-News came out with a Golden Anniversary issue that coincided with the 50th anniversary of Potter County. It featured articles that focused on the
history of the city. From the retelling of the Genesis of the Polk Street Methodist Church to remembrances of pioneer men and women that settled in the Texas Panhandle, the newspaper helped the community feel proud about itself as it reached the end of a long and miserable decade. However, “Tactless Texan” did not take the credit.

And did you like the Anniversary Edition of the News-Globe? We hope so. Old Tack is very, very proud to be part of an organization which turned out such a fine newspaper. It was simply a reflection of the citizenship and of the institution of the Plains.

The truth is Old Tack had no part in the preparation the Anniversary Edition. All of it was done by others. I was on the sidelines looking on. I wanted to see what the youngsters could do. And they did it.

While the community was feeling electric, Adolf Hitler was shocking the world in Europe.

Hitler’s March

The United States was not the only nation facing the harsh realities of the Great Depression. Germany was severely punished for its role in World War I by the Treaty of Versailles. As a result, the country went into such a deep depression that people turned to anyone who could help steer the nation out of despair. By 1933, the nation was seduced by the charm of a man who promised a return to glory. Adolf Hitler rose in the ranks and became Chancellor in 1933. Over the next few years he slowly took over Central and Eastern Europe with the hopes of conquering the world. England and other nations in Europe slowly allowed this. The policy of appeasement enabled Hitler to accomplish many of his goals until some leaders began to put up some form of resistance.

In 1938 when Hitler was confronted about the consequences of his actions he promised to put an end to his expansionist foreign policy, but several months later, on March 15, 1939, he ignored his pledge and invaded Czechoslovakia. Despite some calls to stop the monstrosity
across the Atlantic, the United States continued to sit and debate whether or not to get involved in another world war. “Tactless Texan” epitomized the prevalent attitude of the nation.

Why must there be a war with America in it? Can anyone give me one valid reason? Can anyone advance one potent argument for getting into something that would hang crepes on the doors of 7,000,000 American homes?

The decade was ending with dark clouds and plenty of uncertainty. President Roosevelt had many important decisions to make, including the decision to run for an unprecedented third term in office.

Another Term

In 1940, the country was continuing to battle the effects of the Depression as Europe was dealing with another war. Despite some uncertainty, President Franklin D. Roosevelt decided to run for a third term in office. The campaign between Roosevelt and Republican candidate Wendell Willkie epitomized the battle between New Dealers and Anti-New Dealers as well as isolationists and internationalists. Despite the battle in the nation’s capital, on November 5, just before the election, “Tactless Texan” once again provided a voice of reason.

Really, it’s more important that the election wounds be healed in this country and that all of us get together in a united United States, than who is elected President. A President can do just so much; he hasn’t nearly the power that some persons think.

As for those who fear a third term would make Roosevelt a totalitarian leader,

There is no danger of a dictatorship if Roosevelt is elected. The American people wouldn’t stand for it; we would have a revolution in every state and county and hamlet in this country if anyone or group of persons attempted to do away with our elections or rule the elections with the bayonet.

His words for Amarilloans, “So, let’s have a great, wonderful turnout Wednesday night at the city auditorium when the people of Amarillo and this Plains Country display some of the fine Americanism which fills their hearts.”
Roosevelt defeated Willkie through the Electoral College (449-82) and popular vote (54.7% to 44.8%) to become the first president to win a third term. The front page of the *Globe* devoted half the page to the outcome, which featured five pictures of the president under the headline of “F.D.R. Carries On” that included him issuing a “fireside chat” and signing off on a piece of legislation.

While Amarillo was celebrating the results of the election, they were preparing for an “Uncle Sam” rally that evening. According to Mayor Ross Rogers, “This will be an Americanization program. It will not be a victory party in any sense or any degree. Instead it will show that Americanism is the most important thing that we’re together, that we can work together” (*Globe*, November 6, 1940, p.1). The program featured the playing of the “Star Spangled Banner” by the Amarillo High School band, a “massed singing by audience of ‘God Bless America’” and a speech by Representative Marvin Jones.

“Let’s give him a demonstration of our friendship,” “Tactless Texan” said to his readers, “and admiration that will be worthy of the red-blooded Texans of this part of Texas. Let’s take off the roof off the auditorium; let’s applaud him and applaud him and keep on applauding him until he makes us stop.”

Transition

While the country voted back President Roosevelt and saluted “Uncle Sam,” Mother Nature sent another message to the people of Amarillo. On Saturday November 23, 1940, Amarillo was hit with a devastating ice storm that disrupted communications, power, aviation and highway travel in the Panhandle. The storm spread for hundreds of miles in all directions and grew steadily worse all night leaving communities isolated. The event also resulted in traffic accidents that put four people in the hospital.
Monday’s *Globe* headline read “Relief Promised in Worst Storm.”

The worst icy spell in the history of the Panhandle – one which isolated Amarillo and several other places – is about over. Mr. Coleman working without essential instruments and reports from other stations, says today likely will be the end of that spell, that warmer air is due tomorrow.

Amarillo last night and today was like the Ancient Mariner – there was water, water everywhere but not a drop to drink.

Despite the storm, “Tactless Texan” provided the readers with an appreciation for what could have been and what people across the world are dealing with.

The funniest thing about the current awfulness that struck Amarillo was that so many people compared our terrible sufferings to the hardships of the folks in London.

‘We looked like we’ve been bombed,’ commented so many as they drove about and saw the stripped trees and the branches littered about the side-walks and streets.

But supposed we HAD been bombed. Supposing three-fourths of our homes were blasted and wide open and our business section was a pile of brick and mortar? Supposing most of us were wandering about the ruins fires blazing high everywhere, looking for members of our family.

Supposing several thousand of us were dead or badly wounded and we had no place to look after the hurt because the hospitals were gone. And we had no fire, no heat, no water, no light, and no nothing; nothing but hunger and pain and desperation? And we had to face something like this not for two or three days but for two or three years?

**Shock Hits Amarillo**

The ice storm was just the tip of the iceberg. A year later, on December 7, 1941, “Japanese warplanes made a deadly assault on Honolulu and Pearl Harbor Sunday in the foremost of a series of surprise attacks against American possessions throughout the Pacific” (*Globe*, December 8 1941, p.1). In a matter of hours President Roosevelt asked Congress for a declaration of war against Japan and Germany as the United States prepared for another world war.
The *Globe* issued a series of articles written by Ralph Ingersoll, who predicted defeating the Japanese in six months.

The defense of the U.S.A. calls for the destruction of the Japanese Empire.

The first lesson of the war against Fascism is that it is not three wars but one. All the fighting fronts of the world are interrelated; each are depends upon the other. The defense of England depends upon the maintenance of the Soviet armies in the field against Hitler. The defense of the Soviet Union depends upon British and American maintenance of freedom of the seas. And the defense of both, as well as the defense of China, depends upon the elimination of the Japanese armed force as a factor in this war.

However, “Tactless Texan” attempted to quell a community filled with anger and other extreme emotions. On December 9 he wanted the community to unite on all fronts.

This is a time for unity, if there was ever one, and may I express an opinion or suggestion on something I think is important for continuing the unity?

Wars are won on the battle fields and also at home. Morale and confidence at home are something that reflects back to the actual fighters at the front. The boys who have to survive the bullets are the real heroes of course, but wars are won by united nations.

He also talked about the necessity to keep the public informed and not to censor any news.

The American people are capable of absorbing bad news. They can take punishment and plenty and plenty of it. The more bad news the madder they’ll get, the more determined they will be to fight back.

But lack of information and wild reports and rumors are dangerous; they will undermine morale and confidence.

The next day President Roosevelt opened up to the American public and attempted to help ease the burden the nation was feeling.

Powerful and resourceful gangsters have banded together to make war upon the whole human race. Their challenge has now been flung at the United States of America. The Japanese have treacherously violated the longstanding peace between us. Many American soldiers and sailors have been killed by enemy action. American ships have been sunk. American airplanes have been destroyed.

The Congress and the people of the United States have accepted that challenge. (*Amarillo Globe-Times*, December 10, 1941, p.9)
As the war progressed, the newspapers reported on local fatalities, including the first Texan to die in combat, Amarilloan Jay Edward Pietzch. A few years later, on June 6, 1944 the *Globe-Times* reported, “American, British, and Canadian invasion forces landed in Northwest France today, established beachheads in Normandy, and by evening had ‘gotten over the first five or six hurdles’ in the greatest amphibious assault of all times.” This left “Tactless Texan” stunned.

Don’t know what to write today: I’m stunned over the invasion. Nothing matters except what is happening to our American soldiers over there in France. The dispatches say that 40,000 American paratroopers dropped out of the skies onto enemy soil at daybreak this morning. Wonder how many are alive at this moment? How many others are lying silent on the beach?

Do you remember the writings of the Germans, among them Hitler, who told the German people that the Americans had become soft and flabby? What are THEY thinking today?

D-Day helped the nation and community develop a level of optimism and faith not seen in several years. What lied ahead, however, caught the nation and Amarillo off-guard.
CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION: THE LEGACIES

Lines of somber men and women filled the streets of Washington D.C. to pay their respects. Just months earlier they were listening to another of the president’s famous “Fireside Chats” where each word fed their souls like a commandment slowly etching its place on the stone tablet. As the carriage carrying the American flag draped coffin passed the grieving souls on the chilly April day, the nation was entering a new era.

As World War II drew to a close, the country began crawling out of a lengthy depression and entered a post-war world filled with unbridled prosperity. Everyone felt the optimism except for one man. As a result, Amarillo and the world of journalism lost an important figure.

Fourth Term

Several months after the invasion of Normandy along the coast of northern France, the United States was faced with another historic election. Franklin D. Roosevelt decided to run for a fourth term. For the first time since Abraham Lincoln, who ran for re-election in 1864, the country was voting for a president during a major war. Many people, according to the November 7, 1944 issue of the *Globe*, voted, like those in 1864 did, “primarily according to their feeling about ending the way with a lasting peace.” Once again Amarillo and the country voted for Roosevelt with the war playing a huge part.

According to “Tactless Texan,”

In the final analysis, the election was decided on the war. The American people are behind Roosevelt in this war; they are satisfied with the manner in which it is being run and they believe that Roosevelt can wind it up quicker than Dewey.

Another candidate might have come closer but no one could have defeated Roosevelt in this election.
The joy and excitement the nation and Amarillo were feeling would soon turn to deep sadness.

Roosevelt Dies

By spring of 1945, Amarillo, like everyone in the country, was feeling good. It was confident that the war was in their grasp as the economy began to recover from a decade long depression. However, on April 13, 1945, just weeks after electing their president to a fourth term in office, citizens opened up the *Amarillo Daily News* with the following headline in large font sitting above the newspaper mast head, “THE PRESIDENT IS DEAD.”

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt died suddenly at 3:35 P.M, Amarillo time, today of a massive cerebral hemorrhage.

On page eight “Amarilloans Forget Party Lines in Paying Tribute to Dead President.”

Out of the shock attending news of the death of President Roosevelt, Amarillo residents yesterday expressed a universal sense of loss and unanimity of sorrow.

Some of their observations followed:

Brig. Gen. Carl W. Connell, commanding general of the Amarillo Army Air field said: ‘The people of this country owe a debt of gratitude for the services of this great strategist and statesman. We should be most grateful for the leadership of the man who gave in our behalf not only his health but his life as well. Truly we have lost a great leader.’

Former Mayor Ross Rogers who states’ rights philosophy coincided with federal involvement during the early stages of the Depression issued the following statement.

Having visited the White House at Mr. Roosevelt’s desk on three occasions and having personally greeted him, rode with him through the streets of Amarillo, and introduced him to the people here, when he visited Amarillo, his passing is to me the loss of one whom I looked on as a friend and personal acquaintance.

As for the rest of the community,

Grief in the voices of children and women was among the first reactions in Amarillo to news of President Roosevelt’s death. ‘Is it true the President is dead?’ was the question asked by hundreds of unbelieving and stunned Amarilloans was called The Globe News.
'Yes, that’s correct,’ the operator said over and over again and hurried to answer another call as the lights danced on over the board.

Shreks, gasps, declarations like ‘O-u-oh,’ ‘Well…Well…Thanks.’ And outright crying were heard as the telephone operators checked out the calls.

The operators, who kept working into the late hours of the night, said the most striking thing to them was the gasp of hope which the children and women had when they called the newspaper to see if some mistake had been made and hoping the President was not dead.

Some mothers later told reporters their children had sobbed as if some member of their own family died.

At the funeral procession in the nation’s capital, “Tactless Texan” issued a few observations.

This is an odd strange town. I witnessed the Roosevelt funeral procession Saturday morning and my nerves were rubbed raw by the thoughtless of so many of the younger spectators. Many were as expectantly gay as if they were assembled to see a circus parade.

The soldiers and sailors in uniform and the older women and men were so very serious and grave. Buy myriads of young girls, and women, presumably who work as clerks and stenographers in the government offices were giggling and tripping airily up and down the sidewalks before the arrival of the procession. After it was over I entered the coffee shop of the Willard Hotel and the chattering of the young girls and women sounded like a concentration of magpies.

With regards to the late president’s legacy,

Unquestionably, he was our most beloved President since the Civil War. And just as unquestionably he was our most hated. But every moment since he was stricken last Thursday he is growing in stature in the minds of historians and also is penetrating deeper into the hearts of the American people. Roosevelt has become our martyred President. The strain of war, of being President for 12 years, hastened his death, of course. His dying on the eve of the collapse of Germany as such a spectacular, such a stupendous climax in world charm.

But he didn’t need any of this: the cold bare, undeniable record of his accomplishments speaks for itself. It cannot be challenged by those who know.
Life after Roosevelt

President Roosevelt’s death left the nation shocked and uncertain, but they continued on thanks to the leadership of Harry S. Truman. A couple of months after the vice president took the oath of office Truman ordered two nuclear bombs dropped on the Japanese communities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki resulting in an immediate Japanese surrender and the end of World War II. “If they do not now accept our terms,” the president said, “they may expect a rain of ruin from the air the like of which has never been seen on this earth” (Amarillo Globe-News, August 8, 1945, p.1).

The end of the war created a great sense of optimism throughout the country. However, it also saw the rise of another conflict that began to evolve. The United States and the Soviet Union, while both serving as allies, began to see the world in different eyes. The Russians under Joseph Stalin saw the defeat of Germany as a chance to create a new empire. In 1945, they slowly took over half of Germany and Eastern Europe spreading their Communist ideals while the United States attempted to contain the perceived threat to democracy.

In Amarillo, men and women were readjusting to life away from the darkness provided by a decade full of dust storms, economic depression and four years of war. However, a horrific tornado hit the Panhandle in May 1949. The series of five separate twisters danced through Potter and Carson counties. However, on May 15 Amarillo received the first destructive tornado in its history to that point. While only five people died, the twister left a plethora of damage, including the destruction of 76 homes that totaled close to $5 million. Nonetheless, the community began to rebuild, and like most of the country benefitted from a post war boom.

Pantex and Amarillo Air Force Base were at the center of attention. During the war, Pantex produced shell ammunitions, but closed after, which caused a mass of unemployment.
However, it would not last long as they began a new assignment, helping produce nuclear weapons that would play a role in the Cold War conflict for decades to come. In the meanwhile with the reinvention of Pantex the defense industry was providing federal funds to the community and more people relocated to Amarillo. As a result, more money was spent in local businesses and schools. Things were looking up until June 1952.

City Loses “Tactless Texan”

By the early 1950’s Amarillo was beginning to ride a new wave of prosperity. However, Gene Howe, who was no longer editor and publisher (he sold the publication a few years earlier to S.B. Whittenberg) was dealing with depression. Yet, he continued his “Tactless Texan” column for many years. Nonetheless, his depression reached its zenith on June 26, 1952 when he shot himself with a .38 caliber pistol. In that day’s edition of the Daily News was a picture of him in a checkered hunting jacket displaying a content expression as if he just came back from bird hunting. To the left of the June 26 headline was Wes Izzard’s column, “A to Izzard,” but it did not feature any witty or powerful words targeting an aspect of government or society. Instead, it began with the headline “A Great Reporter, Friend and Teacher.” The piece went into how he and an editor named Eddie Bowen saw an item in a newspaper stating that Howe planned to “start an afternoon paper in a place called Amarillo, Texas” (Amarillo Daily News, June 26, 1952).

The front page featured many tributes. Just below Howe’s picture an article began, “But Howe has just about convinced his readers, that as residents of this happy region (the Panhandle) they are a sort of a super race – the finest, tallest, handsomest, cleverest, healthiest, fightingest people in the world” (Saturday Evening Post, Jan 1, 1944). The tribute was among of many
given my anonymous writers who concluded that one of Howe’s greatest strength was fighting for a cause, not his, but of the people of Amarillo and the Texas Panhandle.

Roosevelt Legacy in Amarillo

Roosevelt’s New Deal and Dust Bowl legislation helped boost the morale of the country and the community, even if it was only a temporary fix. Moreover, while not all the programs worked his influence was in “his ability to arouse the country and, more specifically, the men who served under him, by his breezy encouragement of experimentation by his hopefulness, and – a word that would have embarrassed some of his lieutenants – by his idealism” (Leuchtenburg, 2009, p. 346).

While many of his New Deal policies, such the NRA, did not last long, they provided the Amarillo with glimpses of hope, which for a time brought men and women of various backgrounds together, working and kept the city from scattering.

According to “Tactless Texan,”

There are some things you cannot get around. One of them is that there would not be much of its people in this plains country if it had not been for the government aid during the depression and the drough. If it had not been for government aid, we would have lost a substantial part of our population either by not eating or by moving away.

“It became commonplace to say that people felt toward the President the kind of trust they would normally express for a warm and understanding father who comforted them in their grief or safeguarded them from harm” (Leuchtenburg, 2009, p. 331). Howe and Roosevelt came from two opposing spectrums. Nonetheless, their impacts in Amarillo were immense. From Mother-in-Law Day to the visit in Ellwood Park, the Roosevelt’s branded their name into the Texas Panhandle. While Howe recorded the events and helped establish a strong relationship between the Globe-News and the city of Amarillo.
The Community and the Newspaper

The *Globe-News* helped the community escape from the dust and clouds of uncertainty. One may argue, however that “There is much talk about escape, finding symbolic outlets or solidarity being created, but how these miracles are accomplished is never made clear. In such analyses one never finds serious attention being paid to the content of experience” (Carey, 2009, p. 42). However, that ignores other variables.

The importance of the community in communications, as illustrated with the *Globe-News* during the 1930’s, indicates that the role of the newspaper in Amarillo was much more than a facilitator of facts; it was a refuge, a place for the people to learn about how one another was doing and it galvanized the spirit of a region. The attachment Howe felt towards Amarillo not only enabled him to succeed as a newspaperman, but it created and cemented the *Globe-News* as a community newspaper. How was this accomplished?

On a basic level, the newspaper entertained readers. Reporting on celebrities making local appearances along with societal columns and entertainment sections helped readers escape into fictional realms or learn about various perspectives on different topics. In sports, the Amarillo High School “Sandies” football squad was not just a team to cheer for, they were a spec of light in a decade full of darkness. Their success traversed across the country and “Tactless Texan” made sure he shared their opinions with the community.

Additionally, through sponsoring events (Mother-in-Law Day), trips (World’s Fair in Chicago), contests (creation of amateur ads) as well as the opening of soup kitchens, the newspaper also served as a chamber of commerce. Howe believed a “newspaper should be the chamber of commerce for any community and he was the newspaper; therefore he considered
himself the embodiment of the chamber of commerce” (Lynch, 1979, p. 146) In this regard he not only helped put Amarillo on the national map, but helped provide confidence to the city.

In the process the *Globe-News* enabled the region to congregate despite the dust and economic downturn. In the early stages of the depression there were some disagreements within the community. “Although conflict among internal groups may be disruptive to the functioning of a small community, conflict between community leaders and outside groups may serve to enhance local solidarity by rallying the community against a common ‘enemy’” (Hindman, 1996, p. 709). In this case the federal government. Just before Franklin Roosevelt took office the community remained steadfast to local sovereignty and refused outside help. However, as the Depression worsened they began to reconsider. “Community conflict can stimulate public debate, bring attention to community problems, and activate the search for solutions” (Hindman, 1996).

As the decade progressed, the *Globe-News* began buying into the president’s New Deal legislation by putting NRA eagles atop their mastheads and displaying ads from local businesses supporting various measures. In addition, Gene Howe helped CCC boys handle the down time from work at Palo Duro Canyon. In essence, the newspaper and community put aside their differences and as a result made a difference.

The most important role the newspaper served, however, went far beyond soup kitchens and mastheads.

**Spiritual Leader**

The *Globe-News* not only reported on and discussed the events of the day, but presented the reader with humor and perspective in the most trying of times. “Tactless Texan’s” weather forecasts and commentary of the events of the community, nation and the world provided relief
and substance to the lives of many. Howe also helped people struggling in the depths of the depression by allowing them to place ads in his paper free of charge or analyzed an event, like the drought, and tried to make it bearable for those who were suffering. In the process, his cheerleading spirit encouraged the people to dig deeper even if life was overbearing.

While Gene Howe was not an outgoing person, “Tactless Texan” was the city’s biggest booster and on March 15, 1939 he showed how proud he was of those who were battling the dust storms.

It’s when the going gets toughest that the people of the Plains really show what they are made of. The lighter they draw their belts, the more sand they dig out of their ears, the more they smile and toss their heads as they plunge in for more punishment. Say what you please, the dust storms have done more to build character, to make more real men and women, than say influence we had.

All of us, who have any good in us at all, are sure better men and women and children because of the dust storms that that didn’t whip us the last few years.

Local Focus

It is “important for community newspapers to take advantage of this functional niche, maintaining, or strengthening their focus on local actors, institutions and culture. Such content likely promotes shared values and produces positive benefits for community residents.” (Yamamoto, 2011, p.29) While the Globe and Daily News kept the community afloat on national and international concerns, they succeeded in focusing on their “local actors” and “institutions,” which was another way they boosted morale. The Panhandle Housewife’s look at a typical day of cleaning during the dust storms illustrated the newspaper’s willingness to let the readers speak their mind and give off much needed steam.

Another thing that made “Tactless Texan” successful, and in turn both of his newspapers, was that “he used his folksy style to reach the everyday reader and if he didn’t pay much attention to his writing style, it was because he was more interested in catching the individual
flavor of those he met as quickly as possible” (Lynch, 1979, p.114). The individual flavor was the main ingredient that made the people in the Texas Panhandle unique.

Amarillo businessman Ed Hardin summarized Gene Howe best,

No one has done more for Amarillo than Gene Howe. Few men have left a deeper imprint on a region than Gene Howe left the Panhandle. As The ‘Tactless Texan,’ or ‘Old Tack’, whose column had been a fixture in the Globe-News for 28 years, he was an oracle for a whole generation of Plainsmen.”
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