



## A look inside The Central Plains Academy of Estacado, Texas

LOCAL, 1B

# LUBBOCK AVALANCHE-JOURNAL

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## LATEST CRUSH



Amanda Veasart, co-owner of The Crush Pad by Veasart Cellars, pours a customer a glass of the wine bar's summer crush wine cocktail at its recently opened location at 1717 Crickets Ave., in Lubbock on July 10.

MATEO ROSILES/AVALANCHE-JOURNAL

## Shallowater vineyard brings gem to Lubbock Depot District

Alana Edgin

Lubbock Avalanche-Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

In Lubbock's downtown Depot Entertainment District, a new hidden gem is sharing the flavors of Shallowater wine with a side of charcuterie and music.

Amanda Veasart, of her family's namesake Shallowater vineyard, poured wine cocktails for customers as her husband, Jason, uncorked a bottle. Along with their children and Jason's parents, the family has operated Veasart Vineyards, a 50-acre vineyard near

Shallowater since 2019.

On June 19, the Veasart family opened The Crush Pad by Veasart Cellars, 1717 Crickets Ave. in Lubbock. The location serves the family's wine and Blissful Bites charcuterie from Thursday-Saturday each week, with live music on Saturday nights.

"Everything you taste that is in this bottle, we've grown, touched and harvested," Amanda Veasart said. "We're both Texas Tech alums, so the Depot District is very close to us. We want to be downtown and help revitalize it."

The Crush Pad is home to Veasart Vineyards' seven wines, and their wine

cocktails. The Summer Crush cocktail tastes similar to cherry limeade, with an added depth from their Cabernet.

Since starting the Veasart label, their wine has gained a following through pop-ups and wine clubs. Fans asked when they would open a location, which led them to open The Crush Pad, named after the start of the wine-making process.

The Crush Pad's wine club can also attend special chef events for free. Non-members can attend, but will need to pay for their food and drinks.

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TEXAS TECH  
PRESIDENT

## Insight into Alumni Association transition offered

Aynsley Larsen

the Avalanche-Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

As Texas Tech moves forward with plans to absorb the Texas Tech Alumni Association into the university, Tech President Lawrence Schovanec offered some insight into what that transition will look like and what they hope to achieve.

While the plan was initially announced in a joint statement from university, Tech System and Alumni Association leadership last month, Schovanec elaborated on those plans in an interview with the A-J. He said the central purpose of the transition is to better coordinate the goals of the Alumni Association with those of the university and streamline areas that inevitably overlap.

Beginning in September, the Texas Tech Alumni Association will shift from being an independent nonprofit to an entity within the university in a move that Schovanec said is aimed at reducing redundancies, improving communication and benefiting students through scholarships while maintaining the association's overall mission of engaging with students and alumni.

"I believe we will ... retain the organizational elements of the Alumni Association that's essential to their mission," Schovanec said. "At the same time, we're going to look for efficiencies and cost savings. It's natural that there would be redundancies in certain positions they now have, as opposed to those resources that are already in place at the university."

Schovanec said personnel changes are expected to be finalized by Sept. 1, at which point they will be employees

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## Branch banking has continued to evolve

Molly Davis

Nashville Tennessean  
USA TODAY NETWORK - TENNESSEE

When customers walk into a new bank branch these days, they may not see a bank teller.

They likely won't see the marble floors and rows of grand wooden desks, each staffed by a teller in a white collar shirt. Instead, there is more likely to be an AI-powered ATM, a seating area and a few offices used by customers with financial planning questions. Some branches will even look more like a coffee shop than a bank.

It's all indicative of a new era for banks large and small, which are trending toward sleek, modern interior design, technology-forward experiences and strategic branch locations in growing cities to win over a new type of consumer - one who doesn't always care to visit the bank in person.

From the massive Bank of America to community banks across the country like

**"There's this whole concept of the evolution of loyalty for customers in banking and banks are having to figure out how to maintain these customers because Gen Z, they are going to be switching more frequently."**

Susanne Turnbo

Financial services and real estate expert

Nashville-based FirstBank, fighting for customer loyalty means keeping up with the times by investing in the latest technology and adapting to the current trends despite fond memories of the past, such as in-person Friday check deposits.

Financial services and real estate expert Susanne Turnbo said part of the motivation for banks to adapt comes from an industry-wide race to win over Gen Z customers who are aging and starting to need more advanced financial products, like home mortgages and investment accounts.

All banks, she said, are fighting for loyalty from younger customers.

"Research shows (Gen Z) are more likely to switch banks if they're not happy with what they're getting," Turnbo said. "So, there's this whole concept of the evolution of loyalty for customers in banking, and banks are having to figure out how to maintain these customers because Gen Z, they are going to be switching more frequently."

The number of physical bank branches in the United States has been in steady decline since it peaked in the 2000s, said Turnbo, the managing director for Sendero, a consulting firm based in Dallas.

Causes of this decline include a consumer-driven shift toward online and mobile banking, increased automation in financial services in general and efforts by banks to streamline operations.

But that doesn't necessarily mean physical

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