

SUMMER 2025

CARDINAL COUNTRY ALUMNI NEWS & VIEWS

Belview | Morton | Redwood Falls

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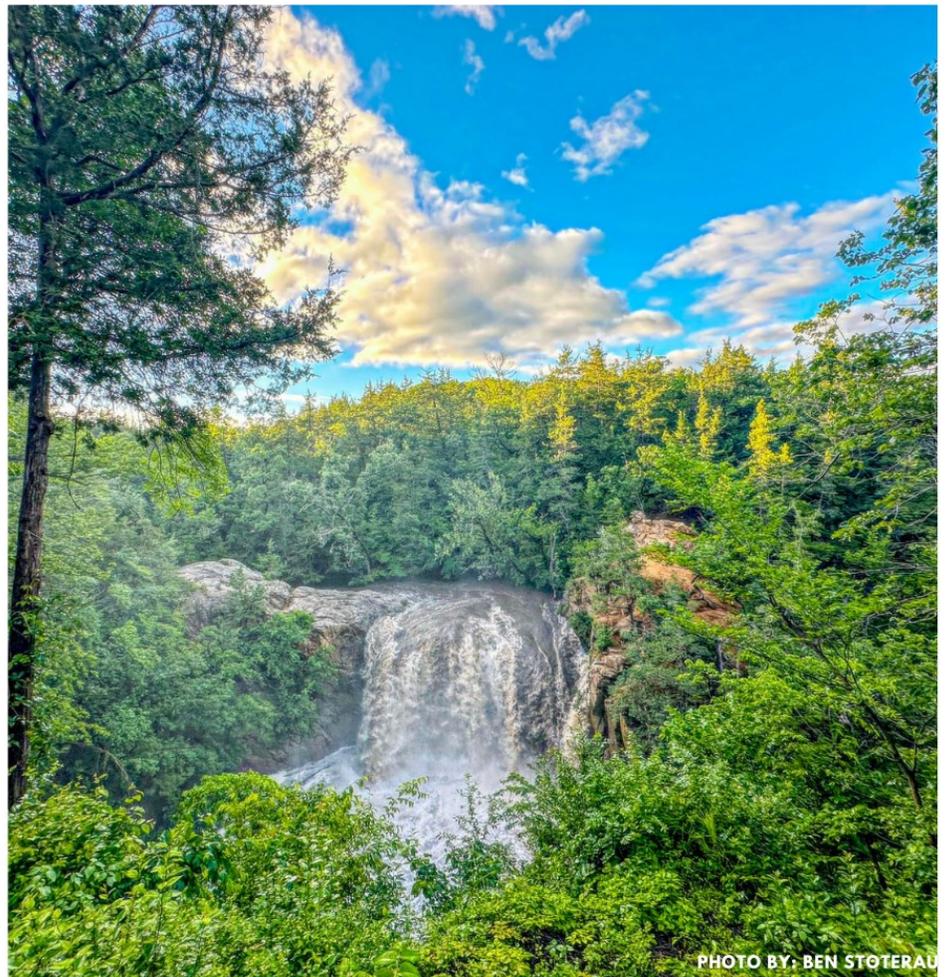


PHOTO BY: BEN STOTERAU

Alumni & Faculty Features



Morton Faculty

Former Morton School faculty members gathered at the Morton All-School Reunion held this past year. See more highlights from the reunion on page 11.

Mary Sanek, Marion Klimmek, Jackie Kokesch, Ann Foley, Marlys Mathiowetz, Tom Jacobson, Judy Zachariason, Nadine Weber Christenson, Bonnie Martinez, Bonnie Scheitel McKnight, Mary Revier Blue, Sandy Schrank, Randy Picka, Lynette Lothert.



Pictured: Joanne (Gray) Kolstad in front of the Reede Gray Elementary sign.

We had a very special visitor during the recent walkthroughs at Reede Gray Elementary — Joanne (Gray) Kolstad, Class of 1949 and daughter of Reede Gray.

Joanne was full of wonderful stories and memories, and it was such a treat to visit with her and so many former staff and students. Seeing her standing in front of the school named after her father was a meaningful moment for everyone who stopped by.

As we prepare to say goodbye to the Reede Gray building, we've discovered a few time capsules located near the cornerstones! Were you part of placing one of them? We'd love to hear your stories - please reach out!

We'll be sharing more about those soon — stay tuned to the Redwood Area Schools & Alumni Facebook pages for updates.

AN EXCHANGE STORY ACROSS GENERATIONS



Pedro Jr. with friends 2016.



Julian with Tim Joyce in 2021.



Javier with the Smith family in 2024.



Javier & Pedro with Matt Smith; Halloween 2024.

When Pedro Rodas arrived in Redwood Falls as a shy 12-year-old foreign exchange student in 1990, he had no idea that he was continuing a legacy—or that he would one day return, not just once, but several times, and eventually pass on the same experience to his own children.

Pedro's exchange journey began even earlier—with his own father. In 1969, Pedro's father was a foreign exchange student in nearby Morgan, Minnesota, where he stayed with the Kuehn family and became good friends with the Green family. Years later, when Pedro was old enough, his father wanted him to have the same experience.

Through connections with the Greens, Pedro was introduced to Dave and Sue Homan, who welcomed him into their home from September through December of 1990. "I was a little 12-year-old kid, shy, didn't know much English," Pedro recalls. "But the Homans made sure I had a great time. What a wonderful family."

He returned to Redwood Falls twice more—first in 1991, this time bringing along his younger brother Estuardo, while his older brother Emilio stayed in Morgan with the Quast family. The entire Rodas family even spent Christmas and New Year's with the Homans that year.

Pedro's third trip came in 1994. "Since then, we've stayed in touch with the Homans—Dave, Sue, David, and Libby—through phone calls, then emails, and even a visit in 2001." When Pedro became a father himself, he knew he wanted his children to have the same gift. And so began a new chapter of the Rodas-Redwood connection.

In 2016, Pedro brought his first son, Pedro Jr., to Redwood Falls to live with the Matt and Anna (Radel) Smith family. The connection to the Smiths came through the Homans, and it turned out to be a perfect fit—Pedro Jr. made lasting friendships with the Smith's sons (Nolan '22 and Oliver ('24), who were close in age.

Next came Julian, the Rodas' second son, who stayed with Libby (Homan) and her family in 2021. And most recently, their third son, Javier, lived with the Smith family in the fall of 2024. "Each one of our sons has had a great time—meeting family and friends and remembering Redwood Falls as a great place," Pedro says. "The people are the heart of the story. They're what makes it so special."

He credits the families who opened their homes—Homans, Smiths, Joyces—for their kindness, and the safe, welcoming environment they created. "It's amazing to return to Redwood and see that so much of what made it special decades ago is still true today: the warmth of the people, the sense of safety, and the lasting friendships."

The Rodas family's journey isn't over yet. Their youngest daughter, now just 11, hopes to follow in her brothers' footsteps in a few years—bringing this multigenerational exchange opportunity full circle once again. "We've been lucky," Pedro stated. "This story has been made through several decades—and through the amazing people we've met along the way."

Share with us! We would love to hear from you! Everyone loves to catch up on what their classmates and friends are doing. Send your pictures & your stories. Let us know where you are and what you're doing and we'll include it in the next issue of Alumni News and Views!



"Redwood Area Education Foundation"
"Redwood Area Schools Alumni"



rbuyck@redwoodareaschools.com



REUNITING TO CELEBRATE BACK TO BACK SECTION CHAMPIONSHIPS

When I was fortunate enough to be hired as the head football coach of the Redwood Valley Cardinals in 1998, I quickly learned that I was becoming a part of something very special. I was joining a rich tradition of Cardinal football that started in 1898 and since that year had been poured into by thousands of proud and wonderful alumni.

Being part of the Redwood Valley Football family is something that is very special to me. The wonderful memories that I made with my teammates and coaches will forever be with me, and I think back of these memories fondly. Many of my teammates are still my friends to this day, and they are a special group of men. This Fall we were able to celebrate the 20th anniversary of our back-to-back State Tournament appearances, the first in our program's history. That night was so special, and being honored before the game and standing on the sidelines with the team was such a cool honor. Reminiscing on those great days brought us so much joy and many laughs. Organizing an alumni event like this and honoring these past teams shows what type of man Coach Lundeen is. He truly pours his heart and soul into not only the football program, but in the community and the individual players as people. He truly cares about each player in the program, and maintains connections even after their time at Redwood Valley. Coach Lundeen has been one of the most influential men in my life. I am so grateful for my time in the Redwood Valley Football Program, and truly believe I wouldn't be where I am today without my time in Redwood.

*Go Cardinals!
All my best,
Luke Radel, Class of 2005*

Hearing the numerous stories over the years from various players and coaches of the teams from Coach Scholl, Coach Ellingworth, and Coach Stoterau is always a highlight. Seeing the joy and emotion that radiates out of a Cardinal alumni football player as he shares special memories from years of wearing the red and white never gets old. Stories of playing at Memorial field, being in the pit, experiencing big games, and hearing about other random things that happened at practice or in the locker room or on the bus rides are always fun to hear. All of these various experiences create bonds between players and coaches that are indescribable, special memories that last a lifetime. These special bonds and memories are the reasons that Redwood Valley Football will forever be special.

As the current head coach of the Redwood Valley Cardinals, I want you to know that we never forget the wonderful alumni and coaches who have played before us. One of our goals every year is to always play the game of football the right way and carry ourselves in a classy way on and off the field to make others proud of the way we carry on the RVHS football legacy.

This fall we were fortunate enough to celebrate our 2003 and 2004 football teams who won back-to-back section championships. Even though not everyone was able to make it back, it was an extremely special time to reconnect and share many special memories and stories.

If you are ever able to make it back in the fall to a game or want to connect to talk about Redwood Valley football, please reach out to me. We always have a great appreciation for our wonderful alumni and tell our players, "Once a Cardinal! Always a Cardinal!"



MATT LUNDEEN
MLUNDEEN@REDWOODAREASCHOOLS.COM

The Redwood Valley football program and what Coach Lundeen and his staff have put together over the years is a legacy that far exceeds the product on the field under the lights on Friday nights. The relationships that have been fostered through the program have been the cornerstone for the success of so many alumni over the past 2+ decades. The Redwood Valley football program and Coach Lundeen's continued relationships with so many alumni truly make it a unique experience for those who go through it. For those who have, I believe it has instilled the hard work, dedication, and drive in so many that has ultimately produced men serving as doctors, engineers, teachers, a pro NFL scout, federal law enforcement, successful sales and businessmen, and everything in between.

I have been away from the Redwood Falls area for the past 20 years. I have developed new friendships, and in doing so I have learned through these new relationships of how rare it is to still have the bonds, experiences, and strong friendships with such good friends from high school. Redwood Valley is different and is truly blessed to have such an impactful football program and a coaching staff, to lead young men into becoming successful in life. Seth Junker, Class of 2004

...CONTINUED.

I have a deep love and affection for the game of football. I love football so much that I decided to pursue a career in it. As a result, most of the daily thoughts are centered around the game. I've been blessed to be a part of many different football teams. I've spent the past 7 years working in the NFL as a scout with the Dallas Cowboys and New York Jets. Prior to that, I coached 3 years of college football at the University of Florida Gators and 4 years coaching High School football and prior to that I was fortunate to play 5 years of college football at Augustana University. All of those teams have provided me with countless memories, life lessons, and have played a role in shaping who I am today. However, no team or program has had a greater impact on my life than Redwood Valley Football program.



My dad, Rick Ellingworth, was a long time Head Football Coach at Redwood Valley and there are pictures of me as a young kid in a stroller with my Mom and brother watching his Redwood Valley teams at practice and games. My Dad, brother, and I lived close to Memorial Field and I remember spending hours playing catch with one another on that field. I remember my first year as the team's ball boy during the 1996 season and almost 30 years later, I can still remember the starting lineup from that special season - Nick Stoterau, David Homan, Jeff Radel, Jerry Dagel, Josh Preusse, Mike Nester, Joe McCarney to name a few. Those guys were larger than life to me and I couldn't wait to put on the red helmet and represent the Cardinals on Memorial Field like they all did.

I was fortunate to be a part of the first teams (2003 & 2004) to advance to the State Tournament. It's easy to remember the success of those teams, but so many of my memories over that time were of my coaches and teammates challenging me in the weight room, encouraging me while feeling exhausted from running Arizona's (crossfield sprints) in practice and having coaches and teammates push us through that discomfort to prepare us for moments of adversity through the season. Times like that helped us in "back against the wall" moments where we had to come together as one to prevail - stopping Pipestone four consecutive plays from the 1 yard line in the 2004 Section playoffs to win is the first example to come to mind. My favorite Bible verse, which Coach Lundeen introduced to me over 25 years ago is Hebrews 12:11 - "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it." Our team was successful because we pushed through immediate discomfort together while believing success would come from it later down the road. Life is full of adversity, struggle, and tough moments. Those moments are never fun at the time, but people often come out better and experience success they otherwise wouldn't have because of those adverse times.

There have been several moments in my professional life where I've had to lead meetings in front of and take questions from Jerry Jones and Super Bowl winning coach Mike McCarthy. In those moments, it's natural to maybe have a sliver of intimidation or self-doubt or lack of confidence. Any time those feelings have crept in, I truly often think back to my time as a Redwood Valley Football player and the countless moments of Coach Lundeen believed in me when I had self-doubt, essentially reminding me to be confident in and believe in myself because of the way I've worked and prepared. When I think of those lessons learned 20+ years ago, any sliver of doubt or intimidation quickly subsides.

I love football and have been fortunate to pursue a career in it. The Redwood Valley football program is responsible for that love developing from an early age and is largely the reason I'm so passionate about the game today. Additionally, I've learned so many lessons and built so many amazing relationships through Cardinal Football that will last a lifetime. Cardinal football has provided me with countless memories I wouldn't trade for the world and I credit any amount of professional success I've had today to the people of Redwood Valley Football who so graciously invested their time and effort in my development as a person and player. Their investment and belief in me is so greatly appreciated as it's built a foundation that I lean on to be successful today.

Eric Ellingworth, Southeast Area Scout | Dallas Cowboys Football Club



Giving Back: Supporting Future Leaders from Redwood Area Schools

Doug Lennick, a 1970 graduate of Redwood Falls High School, has found a meaningful way to give back to his alma mater by creating opportunities for the next generation of leaders. As the founder and CEO of think2perform and the co-founder of think2perform Research Institute, Doug is advancing moral, purposeful, and emotionally intelligent leadership across industries—and now, within his hometown community.

Through the Future Leaders Academy, Redwood Valley students will gain access to mentorship and leadership training. This opportunity is made possible by Doug's vision and the generous support of fellow alumni like Gary Dirlam and others from the Class of 1970, who have funded a special scholarship to support local students upon completion of the program.

For Doug, this initiative is more than a program; it's a way to give back to the school and community that helped shape his own success. By investing in young leaders, Doug and his classmates are ensuring that today's students are equipped with the tools and insights to lead with purpose and emotional intelligence.

Thanks to Doug Lennick's leadership and the support of his classmates, Redwood Area Schools students are stepping into a brighter future as they prepare to become leaders who will make an impact for years to come.



Local alumni Featured in Patagonia's *Green Buffalo* ✦

Green Buffalo, a short film from Patagonia, shares the story of the Lower Sioux Indian Community's efforts to create innovative and sustainable housing solutions. By using locally grown natural materials and a mix of traditional and modern building methods, the community is developing affordable, energy-efficient homes - providing a model of sustainability rooted in cultural values.

The film featured several Morton/Redwood Falls alumni, including Earl Pendleton (Morton '89), Danny Desjarlais (RVHS '03), Robert Larsen Jr. (RVHS '13) and more. Their leadership and voices are helping bring worldwide attention to this meaningful work.

The *Green Buffalo* documentary recently won the Best Documentary Short Film award at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival. Congratulations!

Watch the Film: patagonia.com/stories/the-green-buffalo/video-154708.html

Glenn Corcoran Musical Fund Supports "The Marvelous Wonderettes"



Becky Corcoran, wife of the late Glenn Corcoran (Class of 1961), established the Glenn Corcoran Musical Fund to support musical theater at Redwood Area Schools. Glenn had an appreciation for music and the performing arts, and the fund was created to honor his memory by providing meaningful opportunities for student performers.

This year, the fund supported the high school's production of *The Marvelous Wonderettes*, helping enhance the experience for both the cast and the audience.

We extend our sincere thanks to Becky and the Corcoran family for their generosity and their ongoing support of the arts in our schools. A special thank you as well to Becky for making the trip from Oregon to visit with students and help celebrate this meaningful contribution!

ALUMNI PICKLEBALL & TENNIS

Tournaments



Redwood Area Schools' tennis program held their annual alumni pickleball tournament over the holiday break. Thank you to all the alumni who joined us for a fun day of friendly competition and reconnection!

The summer alumni doubles tennis tournament took place on June 14, with 22 current and former players competing. Congratulations to Nathaniel Passe and Tyler Hagen, who were declared the tournament champions in a rain-shortened final. Max Russel and Jeremy Robinson earned third-place honors.

Be on the lookout for the date of our annual pickleball tournament over Christmas break and the 2026 doubles tournament - scheduled to take place on the brand-new RVHS tennis courts! Watch the Redwood Area Schools Alumni Facebook page for information!

UPCOMING REUNIONS!



RVHS CLASS OF 2005
20 YEAR REUNION

SATURDAY, AUGUST 9

OPTIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TOUR
10:00 AM | REDWOOD VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

MAIN EVENT: RIVENDELL AT GRANDVIEW VALLEY WINERY
42703 GRANDVIEW AVE, BELVIEW
1:00 PM | FOOD & DRINKS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

OPTIONAL AFTER PARTY
6:00 PM | REDWOOD FALLS AMERICAN LEGION

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL THERE! PLEASE HELP SPREAD THE WORD

QUESTIONS?
EMAIL: RVHS2005@GMAIL.COM

JOIN OUR FACEBOOK GROUP!
FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/RVHS05

Save the Date!

REDWOOD FALLS HIGH SCHOOL
CLASS OF 1975

60TH CLASS REUNION

Saturday, September 6, 2025

Redwood Falls Golf Club
101 E. Oak St., Redwood Falls

More details to come...

Contact Bruce Tiffany with questions. 507-828-0193

REDWOOD VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

CLASS OF 1995
30 YEAR REUNION

OCTOBER 25, 2025

Redwood Falls Golf Club
4:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Redwood Falls High School

Class of 1957

68 Year Reunion

Thursday, September 25, 2025
12:00 p.m.

Pizza Ranch
1360 E. Bridge Street, Redwood Falls

No advance reservations needed.
Annual reunions will now be held the 4th Thursday in September each year!

Contact Persons:

Joyce Jensen Johnson - 507-430-5344
Carol Parker Garnhardt - 507-640-0998
Susan Symes Larsen - 507-430-2646
Letha McClintock Castle - 507-627-8885

If you have an upcoming reunion, please email us! We'll gladly share it on our alumni Facebook page!

RFHS Class of 1964 Fund

To the RFHS Class of 1964 classmates,

We are happy to share that the RFHS Class of 1964 Fund has been established to support scholarships for future graduates of Redwood Valley High School. This is a meaningful way for our class to give back and honor our class. If you would like to contribute to the fund, donations can be mailed to:

Redwood Area Dollars for Scholars
Attn: Class of 1964
100 George Ramseth Dr.
Redwood Falls, MN 56283

Thank you for supporting the Class of 1964!
Every donation, big or small, helps continue our tradition of support for the next generation.



CARDINAL
'64

Cardinal Country is published by the Redwood Area Education Foundation. Please send questions, suggestions, comments, kudos and address changes to:

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Please visit our website to subscribe OR email your name and address to rbuyck@redwoodareaschools.com if you no longer wish to receive a paper copy of Cardinal Country. An electronic copy will then be sent for all future publications. Thank you!

2024 Class Reunions



The Redwood Falls High School Class of 1957 held its 67th reunion on Thursday, September 26.

Pictured Front Row: Louis Swoboda; Dee (Altmann) Ouren; Art Werner; Sylvia Seifert; Judy (Warner) Penske; Lucille (Fidler) Lienig

Second Row: Susan (Symes) Larsen; Ardyth (Schroeder) Steinhaus; Karen (Davis) Look; Letha (McClintock) Castle

Back Row: Janice (Wohnoutka) Olsen; Myrna (Drogosch) Smith; Bill Willcox; Tom Sauter; Burlyn Barnes; Mary Jo (Vinar) Vollmer; Laurence Steinhaus; Carol (Parker) Garnhardt; Joyce (Jensen) Johnson, Jay Hornbacher



Redwood Falls High School, Class of 1964—60th Reunion; October 5, 2024

Front Row: Sharon (Allex) Kohls, Roberta (Panitzke) Kohlhof, Mike Nelson, Dwight Neale, Mike Warlop, Gwen (Western) El Sawi, Judy (Gray) Curtis, Mary (Dennistoun) Miller, Tom Huhnerkoch

Second Row: Konnie (Sowder) Jensen, Marsha (Egle) Guggisberg, Toni (Otto) Fredrickson, Julaine (Heit) Bohn, Karyl (Pratt) Beeman, Jane (Heiling) Syverson, Karen (Hertling) Kaufenberg, Laurelyn Simondet, Elaine Malecha, Kathy (Wegner) Krinke, Linda (Jensen) Nesburg, Katherine (Corcoran) Schoen

Third Row: Barbara (Felska) Schindele, Karen (Bjornstad) Rogotzke, Ernest Cady, Jim Rebstock, Jon Otto, Janet (Hanson) Hagen, Judi (Swigart) Beardsley

Fourth Row: Mark Peterson, Virgil Gluth, Jim Tersteeg, Jim Franklin, Lyn Tangen



The **Redwood Falls High School, Class of 1969, 55th reunion** was held Sept. 14. The Redwood Falls Class of 1969 has long held the record of being the largest class to graduate before consolidations occurred. It also donated \$10,000 to the local Dollars for Scholars organization, which results in a \$500 scholarship each year in their name.

Pictured front row: Paulette Simning Lindeman, Char Ulrich Morrow, Patrick Schoffman, Carol Iverson Woulfe, Charlene Schramm, Pam Christensen Savage, Barbara Canaday Robertson, Herb Viergutz and Bob Hoffman (teacher). Back Row: Bev Keil Czmowski, Tom Sheimo, Doug Wohnoutka, Gary Simondet, Larry Rohlik, Ron Morrow, Lee Patten, Darold Schmidt, Gary Meinert, Greg Young, Carol Stramel Lindeman, Alycen Bloedow Stewig, Jan Nelson, Don Nolting, Gwen Bohlke, Terry Palmer, Joanne Hess McGowan, James Okins, Linda Tetrick Duehn, David Melges, Shelley Blegen Jenniges, Steve Nelson, Darlene Zachow Kopischke, Ivar Kaardal and Steve Zimmer.



Redwood Falls High School, Class of 1974—50th Reunion; September 7, 2024

Front Row: Dick Weltsch, Cindy Becker Pope, Dawn Woelfel Branson, Vicki Bartholomaus Meyers, Kay Cherry La-Valley, Colette Christensen Anderson, Kevin Heinrich, Bobbie Wakeman Heinrich, Linda Moen Jensen, Jamie Foy Welter, Mary Ruder Daniels, Jodi Luckhart Blom, Barb Hagert Hildebrandt, Shayne Garman, Linda Schmidt Thornton, Ann Nelson Jones, Deb Salewske Schramm, Roxanne Bohlke Reski, Paula Kodet Person
 Second Row: Sue Dwyer Drummond, Theresa Keaveny, Tom Duscher, Mary Leopold DeWolfe, Rick Hardy, Galen Meyers, Peggy Young Dolezal, Greg Filzen, Martha Driscoll Nelson, Shelley Barker Hirman, Cindy Bartelt Schablin, Shirley Breikreutz Hoffman, Barb Keltgen Parliman, Linda Heiling Haak, Keith Sams, Craig Melges, Doug Vanderwerf, Cindy Nemitz Swierenga
 Back Row: Mark Palmer, Mark Diehl, Paul Manning, Pete DeWolfe, Brad Limoges, Bernie Willhite, Ray Anderson, Scott Clark, Linda Mariner U'Ren, Marcia Fluck Hoffman, Pat Mariner Serbus, Kevin Miller, Brenda Schmidt Boklep, Paul Holtan, Jim Hildebrandt, Fred Bloedow, Rick McVenues, Brad Schewe



Redwood Falls High School, Class of 1984—40 YEAR REUNION:

First Row: Mark Janning, Scott Norman, Julie Gordon, Kim Nordby.

Second Row: Melanie (Olson) Cook, Pam (Smith) Iverson, Karen (Kissner) Tubbs, Kris (Kuehn) Kappes, Shelly (Robbins) Hinderman, Bryon Evers. Third Row: Bonnie (Kramer) Vik, Amy (Poss) Tomsche, Lori (Vanderwerf) Taube, Jody Olerud, Teresa (Warner) Schmidt, Pamela (Revier) Sehgal, Cheryl (Pettis) Pedrolie, Julie (Hanson) Irely, Julie (Kretsch) Noyes, Ramona (Wendt) Fennern, Brad Becker, Connie (Liebl) Lechner.

Back row: Lisa (Jensen) Prater, Donna Henning, Tim Nesburg, Jon Dixon, Tim Beske, Dallas Einck, Troy Amberg, Rodney Thiel, Bob Hovick, Tim Otto, Jess McCorkell, Heidi Herron, Todd Childs.



**Belview Class of 1964
60 Year Reunion:**

Dale Davis, Bonnie (Clarcken) Tipcke, Diane (Kuehn) Asche, Carolyn (Larson) Huhnerkoch, Marie (Hultquist) Clausen, Tom Kohls, Ruth (Nelson) Boyle, George Gunelson, Karen (Muetzel) Lemcke, John Gunelson, and Robert VanHee.



The Morton All-School Reunion brought together over 460 alumni and guests for an unforgettable evening at Jackpot Junction. The event was a celebration of shared history and cherished memories, with attendees enjoying dinner, a short program and plenty of time to socialize.

The gathering offered the opportunity for alumni to connect with classmates, reminisce about school days, and celebrate the relationships that were built while attending Morton schools. Photos, yearbooks, and memorabilia from past years were on display. The program highlighted the importance of the reunion as a way to continue the traditions of Morton High School and the lifelong friendships that formed during school years. It also served as a reminder of the shared pride in the community's history and traditions.

Thank you to all who attended and contributed to the success of this special event. We look forward to future reunions and opportunities to celebrate the Morton school community!



A special gathering of former queens was held at the Morton City Park earlier in the day.



Oldest classmates in attendance were Ray Thomson (1946) and Robert Tretbar (1948).



Mary Lou Kodet—1952. The football captain that escorted her for 1951 homecoming, also escorted her to the all school reunion.



2024 Hall of Fame Ceremony



This past fall, the Redwood Area Education Foundation celebrated Craig Hillier, Rick Ellingworth, Denny Stoterau, Joyce (Jensen) Johnson and Don Yrjo at its annual Hall of Fame induction ceremony (see below). Congratulations to the 2024 inductees!

We are honored to announce the newest inductees to be honored at our 2025 event, which will take place on Saturday, September 27th:

Alumni: Jeff Radel
Community: Craig & Cindy LaBrie
Staff/Faculty: Margie Buckley, Wayne Junker

Consider nominating someone you feel is deserving of being inducted into the Hall of Fame! Please visit the Redwood Area Education Foundation website, or contact Rachael Buyck to obtain a nomination form.

rbuyck@redwoodareaschools.com | **Nominations are due by March 31st.**

All nominees are chosen by a selection committee comprised of community members, school staff and RAEF members who review all applications & determine the inductees. Nominees not selected for induction are carried over to the following year. Nominations will be reviewed and considered for five years & may be re-nominated at any time.

Hall of Fame Inductee
2024

CRAIG HILLIER
ALUMNI



Craig Hillier's journey began in Redwood Falls, where his curiosity, ambition, and natural gift for communication were evident from a young age. Participation in various sports and his selection for the Hugh O'Brien Leadership program were pivotal, instilling in him a commitment to leadership and service. After graduating in 1985, Craig attended Mankato State University, earning degrees in business marketing and speech communications. Marrying Kelly Schiller in 1989, Craig soon realized his dream of becoming a full-time speaker. Craig has since inspired over two and a half million students nationwide with his motivational talks on leadership and achievement. His presentations are renowned for their humor, enthusiasm, and impactful messages, empowering individuals to follow their dreams, set goals, and pursue excellence. Craig's dedication to empowering others has earned him prestigious accolades such as the Distinguished Young Alumni Award from Mankato State University and the Outstanding Alumni Award from the Minnesota Athletic Directors Association. Craig is also a prolific author. His work emphasizes living a life of significance and leaving a legacy of leadership, kindness, and integrity. Craig's pride in his Redwood Falls roots is evident in his speeches and personal reflections. A devoted family man, Craig and Kelly are parents to DJ and Abigayle, and proud grandparents to Holly and Kinsley. Craig Hillier's induction recognizes his lifelong mission to improve lives through leadership, motivation, and mentorship. His work ethic, enthusiasm, and belief in others make him a true pillar of pride for Redwood Falls.

Hall of Fame Inductee

2024



JOYCE JOHNSON
COMMUNITY

Joyce Johnson has exemplified dedication to education and community service throughout her life. After completing her education in Redwood Falls and earning her degree in English, with minors in Speech and Spanish, from Mankato State Teacher's College, Joyce joined the Peace Corps, teaching English in the Philippines. Returning to the U.S., Joyce taught at Redwood Falls High School and Morgan Public School. She furthered her education with a Master of Science degree in Media from Mankato State, leading to a distinguished career as a librarian and administrator in various non-profits. Her work at the Flathead County Library in Montana and the Humboldt County Library in California highlighted her skills in public programming, staff training, and community engagement. In every community she has lived, Joyce has been a tireless volunteer, serving on school boards, hospice boards, and participating in local parishes and historical societies. In Redwood Falls, she has been deeply involved with the Friends of the Library, Redwood Area Library Foundation, the Library Commission, the Plum Creek Library Board, and the Redwood Area Education Foundation. Joyce's philosophy that "many hands make light work" is evident in her numerous volunteer roles. Her commitment to community and education, combined with her organizational and leadership skills, has made a lasting impact on every community she has served. Her love of literature and learning, coupled with her willingness to help others, has brightened countless lives. Joyce's induction honors her lifelong dedication to making a difference through education, volunteerism, and community involvement.

Hall of Fame Inductee

2024



RICK ELLINGWORTH
STAFF/FACULTY

Rick Ellingworth devoted nearly 45 years of leadership to Redwood Area Schools. Serving as Superintendent from 1992 to 2020, and in earlier roles as Middle School Principal, Activities Director, Business Education Teacher, and Head Football Coach, Rick's impact is woven into the fabric of the district's success. His visionary approach led to the establishment of numerous programs and facilities, including the district's Middle School, the Redwood Area Community Center, the Senior Center expansion, the Ehlers Intergenerational Center, the Orrin Estebo Career Center, and the Redwood Area Education Foundation. These initiatives ensured the district remained at the cutting edge of education and community engagement. Rick's strategic planning and innovative initiatives propelled the district to new heights of academic excellence and community involvement. His leadership, enthusiasm, and visible presence made him a respected figure among students, staff, and community members. He was instrumental in employing and retaining high-quality staff who embraced collaboration, fostering an environment of high expectations. His integrity, work ethic, and dedication inspired those around him, leaving a legacy of compassion, appreciation, loyalty, and professionalism. Married to Janet, who is also a Hall of Fame member, Rick is a proud father to Tom, Eric, and Katie. He exemplifies the qualities of an exceptional leader and advocate for children. His visionary leadership, dedication, and impact will forever be a part of the district's history. Rick Ellingworth's legacy is one of enduring excellence and commitment to Redwood Area Schools and the entire community.

Hall of Fame Inductee

2024



DENNY STOTERAU
STAFF/FACULTY

Denny Stoterau dedicated 39 years to Redwood Area Schools, serving in roles such as educator, coach, community education director, dean of students, and athletic/activities director. A graduate of Luverne High School in 1969 and the University of South Dakota in 1973, Denny's career began in Miller, SD, as a teacher and head wrestling coach. At Redwood Falls, he taught middle school social studies, led as head wrestling coach for 16 years, and served as head football coach for 7 years, in addition to numerous other coaching roles prior to his administrative opportunities. Renowned for building strong relationships, Denny left an indelible mark on students and athletes, instilling in them a strong work ethic, competitiveness, and a desire to achieve. He made everyone feel important and appreciated, treating colleagues with respect and always offering unwavering support. His leadership as activities director, where he led with integrity and class for over a decade, has left a lasting impact. He was rightfully awarded the 2010-2011 Regional Administrator of the Year. He mentored many coaches and teachers, who continue to carry forward his legacy of compassion, appreciation, loyalty, and professionalism. Beyond his professional roles, Denny continues to volunteer for multiple organizations in the community. Married to his high school sweetheart Nancy, Denny is a proud father to Andy, Ben, Sarah, and Nick. We are proud to honor Denny with this award in recognition of his exceptional service and profound impact on Redwood Area Schools.

Hall of Fame Inductee

2024



DON YRJO
STAFF/FACULTY

Don Yrjo dedicated 35 years to the Redwood Area School District, shaping countless lives with his vision and drive for excellence. With degrees from Bemidji State University (Magna Cum Laude) and Mankato State University, Don began his career as a technology instructor in Linton, ND, before moving to Redwood Falls. From 1977 to 2012, his tenure as a teacher, coach, and high school principal was marked by a commitment to high standards, respect, accountability, and collaboration. He was instrumental in establishing one of the top industrial arts programs in southwestern Minnesota and played a key role in creating the Alternative Learning Program. As a visionary, he guided staff through significant transitions, providing necessary support and resources. His contributions earned him numerous accolades, including Principal of the Year by the SW MN Association of Secondary School Principals in 2000 and 2010. Don's interpersonal skills—grounded in trust, honesty, clear communication, and a sense of humor—made him a highly respected figure within and outside the district. His leadership extended beyond the classroom; he has served as director, vice president, and president of the Redwood Area Community Foundation since 1999—a true pillar of the community. A dedicated family man, Don enjoys hunting, fishing, golf, and travel with his wife, Bev, and children, Melanie, Mike, and Mark. His legacy of integrity, hard work, and unwavering optimism epitomizes what the Hall of Fame represents: educational excellence and a lasting impact on the lives of students and colleagues.

What's happening in the area?

INTRODUCING TWO NEW PROGRAMS IN MARVEL PRYOR'S LEGACY!

The Redwood Area Education Foundation is honored to announce the launch of two initiatives: Marvy's Pantry & Marvy's Buddy Benches. These initiatives, in partnership with our Cardinals Care program, are made possible by the generosity of Marvel Pryor and her five children, all graduates of Redwood Falls Schools.



- 1** **Marvy's Pantry:** Inspired by Marvel's years as an elementary teacher and her compassion for children, Marvy's Pantry was created to ensure that no child leaves school hungry. Marvel understood the important connection between hunger and learning, as well as the challenges some students face accessing food outside of school hours. Marvy's Pantry resource stations are now available in both the elementary and middle/high school offices. Stocked with healthy grab and go items, these pantries allow staff to discreetly support students who may need a little extra nourishment to get through the day - helping to supplement the options offered at school. We are proud to partner with the Redwood Area Food Shelf and are grateful for their support in this effort.
- 2** **Marvy's Buddy Benches:** In addition to nourishing bodies, Marvel's legacy also seeks to nourish hearts. Marvy's Buddy Benches are being established at both school buildings, creating welcoming gathering spaces designed to support connection, friendship, and a sense of belonging. These benches and tables offer a supportive spot for students to sit, talk, and find friends during lunch, recess or outdoor learning times - ensuring that no child feels alone or left out.

"Marvy" was the affectionate nickname given by her husband, Paul Pryor (RFHS Class of '48). Marvel's lifelong commitment to supporting children shines through these programs. We are so grateful to the Pryor family for their generosity and for ensuring every student at Redwood Area Schools feels cared for and supported.

We invite our alumni, families, and the entire Redwood Falls community to celebrate the launch of Marvy's Pantry and Marvy's Buddy Benches - two programs that truly embrace the compassion and connection that Marvel brought to our schools. For more information about these programs, or how you can support Cardinals Care, please contact the RAEF.

A message from Marvel's children: Marvel believed that every child is born pure, shining with love and light from God, and is perfect just the way they are. She wished to share a special "puff of love" with each child - so they may be filled with joy and peace, and remember that their hearts are filled with puffs of love, ready to share with the world. May Marvel's story remind us all: You are light. You are love. You are perfect just as you are. And you have puffs of love in your heart to share.



L TO R:

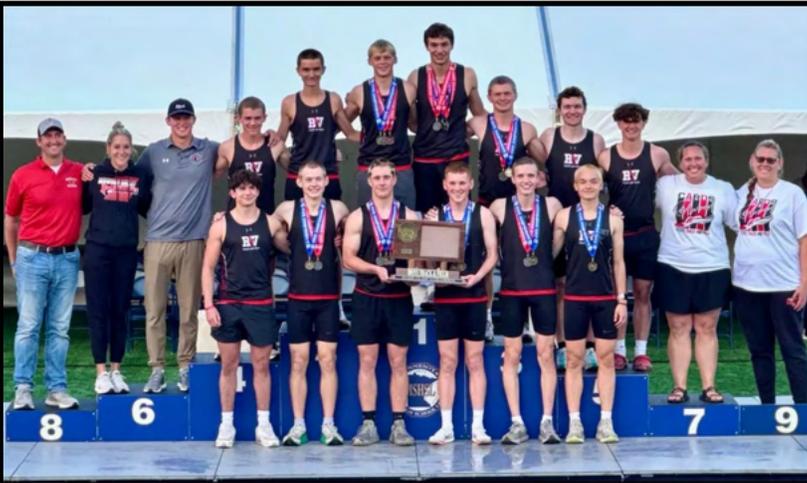
BEN JORGENSEN (SON OF EDUCATOR NICOLE JORGENSEN AND HS PRINCIPAL RICK JORGENSEN), TYLER ROBINSON (SON OF MATT '92), CLAYTON SALMON (SON OF JOHN '99), LANDYN NORDBY (SON OF ERICA (SMITH) '02), KILEN CILEK (SON OF EDUCATOR SHAWN CILEK), WILL AHRENS, ELWAY BERG (SON OF EMILY (VANHEE) '97), AIDAN SALMON (SON OF JOHN) AND MASON ANDERSON.

REDWOOD VALLEY CROSS COUNTRY WINS CLASS 3A TITLE

The Redwood Valley Cross Country team brought home the Class 3A championship this season after a strong showing at the state meet.

Senior William Ahrens led the Cardinals with a 2nd place finish, with a time of 15:35. Fellow senior Kilen Cilek followed closely behind, placing 3rd with a time of 15:49. Their strong finishes helped set the pace for the rest of the team and were key to securing the first place team win.

Congratulations to the Redwood Valley Cross Country team on an outstanding season and a well-earned state title!



2025 BOYS CLASS A STATE CHAMPION
FIRST TITLE SINCE 1985!

- WILL AHRENS: 1ST PLACE - STATE CHAMPION 1600M WITH 4:19.58.**
- BOYS 4x100 RELAY: 1ST PLACE - STATE CHAMPION WITH 42.85.**
- BOYS 4x800 RELAY: 1ST PLACE - STATE CHAMPION WITH 8:00.36.**
- KILEN CILEK: 2ND PLACE - 3200M WITH 9:34.25.**
- BOYS 4x200 RELAY: 2ND PLACE - WITH 1:28.45.**
- BOYS 4x400 RELAY: 2ND PLACE - WITH 3:22.60.**
- TUCKER AMBERG: 6TH PLACE - TRIPLE JUMP WITH 43'7.**

Scoreboard

Event	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
100	Genesee Indoor Invitational		
100	Troy Invitational		
100	Whitby-Gaylord, New Ulm Triangular		
100	Redwood Falls Invitational		
200	New Ulm Invitational		
200	Marshall Invitational		
400	Redwood Falls Quadrangular		
400	Monroeville Relay		
800	Demetrio		
800	Region 3A		
1600	State Class A		

It was an outstanding season with many notable performances. Among those were seven school records. Chad Hilton set records in the 100 and 200 meter dashes. Joining him in the 400 meter relay were Jeff Vance, Erik Hanson, and Jerome Swoboda. Erik Hanson also set marks in the 300 meter intermediate hurdles and the triple jump. Other records were set by Jim Sandgren in the 110 meter high hurdles and Doug Hertzcock in the high jump.

The Cards placed in six events at the State Championships to win the title. These included first in the 100 and 200 meter dashes (Chad Hilton) and the 400 meter relay (Jeff Vance, Erik Hanson, Jerome Swoboda, and Chad Hilton), second in the 1600 meter relay (Jeff Vance, Erik Flinn, Steve Junker, and Erik Hanson), third in the 300 meter intermediate hurdles (Erik Hanson), and sixth in the 110 meter hurdles (Jim Sandgren). Congratulations Cards!



WHAT A YEAR FOR CARDINAL TRACK & FIELD!

Season highlights:

- **Boys 4x100:** set a new school record with 42.85, topping the 1985 mark of 42.90 set by Chad Hilton, Jerome Swoboda, Jeff Vance, and Erik Hanson.
- **Boys 4x200:** new school record of 1:28.45, breaking the previous school record of 1:31.94 set in 2024 by Lucas Fuhr, Tucker Amberg, Blake Stephens and Duran Kramer.
- **Boys 4x400:** new school record of 3:22.28, besting the 1981 record of 3:24.30 by Todd Scherling, Bill Schmidt, Kevin Hjerpe, and Mark Poss.
- **Boys 4x800:** new school record with 7:56.72. The previous record was set by Michael Felt, Anthony Bongard, Nate Thooft, and Justin Peters in 2007 with a time of 8:04.70.
- **Will Ahrens:** broke his own school record in the 1600 this year with 4:15.09. Will has reset the record five times since his sophomore year.
- **Kilen Cilek:** earned 2nd place at state in the 3200 with 9:34.25. Current record holder: Todd Kuglin (1982 - 9:25.60)

The girls team had a strong season and state showing as well:

- **Ellie Nelson:** 4th place in the 1600m; 7th place in the 3200m.
- **Kendall Huhnerkoch:** 4th place in Triple Jump; 8th in Long Jump.
- **Cali Johnson:** 14th Place in Long Jump.
- **Addie Thomas:** 16th Place in the 1600m.
- **Girls 4x100 (20th Place).** Set new school record this year finishing in 50.82. Previous record was set in 2024 by Kenzie Lundeen, Cali Johnson, Caitlin Flinn and Kendall Huhnerkoch.
- **Girls 4x200 (14th Place).** Broke new school record this year with 1:46.34, narrowly beating the 1986 record (1:46.42) set by Terri Freitag, Andrea Mannz, Linda Tiffany, and Kristen Erie.
- Girls team placed 20th out of 78 at state!
- Head Coach **Tessa Heiling** (RVHS '13) named Section 3A Coach of the Year!



Historic Season for Redwood Valley Boys Tennis!

The Redwood Valley boys tennis team made history this season, earning several first-ever accomplishments:

- ➔ Big South Conference Title
- ➔ Section 3A Championship
- ➔ First-ever team appearance at the State Tournament

Front: **Coach Matt Lundeen, Kenzo Okins** [Bob & Ally (Schroeder) '05], **Kaden Hicks** [long time educator Kyle Hicks], **Rick Green** [Rachael (Bloedow) '03 & Richard '00], **Reese Regnier** [Andy '99 & Alicia (Goodthunder) '01], **Fletcher Leach** [Brianna (Spielmann) '05], **Carlos Martin, Yzkiel Rendon**

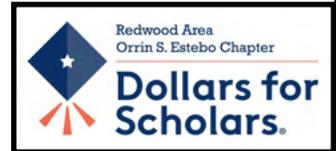
Back: **Coach Jeremy Robinson** ('97), **Tevin Sivixay** [Patrice (Hartfiel) '04], **Zach Malecek, Dylan Anderson, Mason Davis** [Emily (Wetmore) '96 & Mike '95], **Kanyon Hicks** [Kyle], **Zack Lundeen** [Matt], **Elway Berg** [Emily (VanHee) '97], **Cayden Johnson-Mariner** [Robby '04 & Channing (Johnson) '05], **Coach Eric Johnson**



Sue Tiffany was not only a beloved member of the Redwood Falls community, but she was such an important part of Redwood Area Schools for decades. Sue loved being around students - whether tutoring math, subbing in the classroom, or knitting stocking hats for the wrestlers. She was one of the most selfless people to ever walk our halls and truly cared about ALL kids. She had a special way of connecting with students that was truly one in a million. She meant so much to so many. Her love for education, the Redwood Area School District and our community ran deep.

"One of Sue's great joys was spending time at the Redwood Falls High School. She was a substitute teacher and tutored students in math until she was 87 years old. Sue took pride in knitting stocking hats for all the wrestlers. Being a lover of music, Sue and John attended every band and choir concert they could. Spending time with young people and supporting them in their activities energized her. In 1999, Sue was honored to be inducted to the Redwood Area School's Hall of Fame. Sue was an involved member of the First Presbyterian Church, serving on numerous committees, acting as the church librarian and singing in the choir for over 60 years." Sue passed away on March 16, 2025, at the age of 93.

Major Gifts & New Dollars for Scholars Scholarships



Redwood Falls Senior Center established the **Donald Frank Memorial Scholarship** a \$500 annual award for a student who shares their vision of making a difference in the lives of others, just as Don did.

The **Redwood Area Hockey Association**, established the **Redwood Area Hockey Association Scholarships**, awarded to active members of the Redwood Valley Hockey team.

Richard and Julie Bodensteiner, for the establishment of the **Richard and Julie Bodensteiner Scholarship**. Rich, a Class of 1978 graduate, established this scholarship in honor of his parents, Leo and Mary Ann Bodensteiner, as a way to help students excel in their careers and share the value of education with others.

Michael Vollmer, generously gifted \$15,000 to create the **Michael Vollmer Legacy in Agriculture Scholarship**, supporting students entering ag education or ag business, which Michael dedicated his career.

Jan Jacobsen, contributed a \$25,000 gift to establish the **Jan Petersen Jacobsen Scholarship**, now awarded in her memory.

The **Orrin S. Estebo Foundation** continued its support, providing a \$25,000 donation to create the **Estebo College Scholarships**, furthering Orrin's legacy in education.

Bruce and Katheryn Byram for the establishment of the **Bruce and Katheryn Byram Education Fund**.

Brian Ahrens Memorial SCHOLARSHIP

The family of Brian "Boo" Ahrens proudly announces the establishment of the Brian Ahrens Memorial Scholarship honoring his memory. A 1995 graduate of Redwood Valley High School, Brian was an active member of his class and an enthusiastic participant in Cardinal athletics.

Brian lived for the outdoors. As an explorer, avid hunter, and fisherman, he found both peace and wonder in nature. His life centered around the environment and its endless gifts.

To honor his memory and preserve his legacy, this \$2,000 scholarship will be awarded to a Redwood Valley High School senior who shares Brian's passion for the outdoors. Priority will be given to students pursuing studies in Environmental Sciences, Conservation, Natural Resources, Fish, Wildlife, Forestry or Geology.

The family invites Redwood Valley seniors to apply for this scholarship and carry forward Brian's profound love for the outdoors in his honor.

Scholarship given in loving memory from:

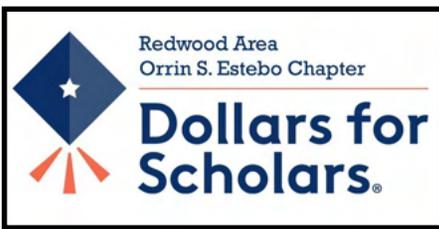
Linda, Craig & Harlee Ahrens, Clel Ahrens, Ben and Tonya Benson, Mike and Emily Davis, Travis and Frankee Fluck, Jesse Kodet, Tiffany and Matt Montgomery, Scott and Megan Revier, Dion Sgro, Bob and Mary Wetmore and Tim Wetmore.

LIMOGES FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP

Brad & Jeanne (Jacobson) Limoges
[RFHS '74 & '75]

As alumni of Redwood Falls High School, Brad and Jeanne recognize the value of their educational experiences and have been strong advocates for the district's growth and opportunities. With their grandchildren representing the fifth generation to attend and graduate from the district, they wanted to give back by supporting graduating seniors and highlighting the importance of the building trades. These scholarships will be awarded to graduating seniors entering a technical school program in the building trades industry.

CONSTRUCTION | CARPENTRY | ELECTRICAL
PLUMBING | MASONRY



The Redwood Area Dollars for Scholars, Orrin S. Estebo Chapter, is proud to recognize the graduates of the class of 2025. This year, our chapter was able to award 105 scholarships, totaling \$110,500! We are grateful to be able to support our students with their collegiate expenses. Congratulations to the following 2025 seniors:



William Ahrens

Western Family Scholarship: \$500
Nick Stanton Scholarship: \$1,000



Alexis Altmann

Farmers Union Ind. Schol: \$1,000
Orrin Estebo Scholarship: \$500
Otto Family Scholarship: \$500
Reitter Family Scholarship: \$500



Mason Anderson

Jim & Ann Lasley Schol.: \$500
Nuvera/R.T. Rodenberg Scholarship: \$1,000



Kayla Andries

Elmer & Julia Kaardal/
Viking Coke/Rotary Scholarship: \$500



Elway Berg

Sgt. Brent Koch Memorial Scholarship \$500



Kayla Bill

Michael's Challenge Schol: \$1,000
Orrin Estebo Scholarship: \$500
Patricia Burgemeister Vollmer Memorial Schol.: \$500



Kilen Cilek

Helen & Ruth Peterson Scholarship: \$5,000
Redwood Area Hockey Asstn. Scholarship: \$500



Ryder Crawford

Janice Petersen Jacobsen Scholarship: \$1,250



Inez Crowdog

Scott Larson & Robin Stegner Scholarship for the Environment: \$500



Lillian DeBlieck

Steve Family Leadership Scholarship: \$500
Women in STEM Scholarship: \$2,500



Annabelle Eriksen

Jean Stephany Schol.: \$1,000
Rwd. Area Theater Schol.: \$1,000



Griffin Evans

Limoges Family Schol.: \$500
Loren Jacobsen Memorial Scholarship: \$1,000



Thomas Fischer

Jan Phillips Nursing
Scholarship: \$2,000
Redwood Area Hockey
Asstn. Scholarship: \$500



Caitlin Flinn

Rose Schottenbauer
Andersen Scholarship
\$500



Thomas Gerke

Brian Anderson Memorial
Scholarship: \$500
RWF Public Utilities/SMMPA
Scholarship: \$1,000



Adrian Gottfried

Orrin S. Estebo
Scholarship
\$500



Kanyon Hicks

Bremer Bank Schol.: \$500
Don & Vera Tiffany Schol.: \$500
George Ramseth Scholarship:
\$1,000



Kendall Huhnerkoch

Jan Phillips Nursing
Scholarship: \$2,000
Robin Stegner & Scott Larson
Scholarship for Nursing: \$500



Trinity Hutchinson

Patricia Burgemeister
Vollmer Scholarship
\$500



Cali Johnson

Dash Ellingworth/Jeff Jensen
Memorial Scholarship: \$1,250
Orrin Estebo Scholarship: \$250
Winifred Balkenol Schol.: \$500



Kooper Johnson

Redwood Area Hockey
Asstn. Scholarship
\$500



Cayden Johnson-Mariner

Barbara Hoepner Medical Schol: \$1,000
Donald Frank Memorial Schol: \$500
Matthew & Lindsay Johnson
Scholarship: \$500
Orrin Estebo Scholarship: \$1,000



Jordan Kathermann

Orrin S. Estebo
Scholarship
\$500



Aubree Keehl

Jan Phillips Nursing
Scholarship: \$2,000
Joyce McKay Nursing
Scholarship: \$750



Isabella Kleinhuizen

Nathan & Valerie
Stephens Family
Scholarship
\$500



Morgan Kodet

Helen & Ruth Peterson
Scholarship
\$5,000



Tallulah Kremin

Vic & Olga Engberg/
Bernicks Pepsi Scholarship
\$500



Julia Lang

Class of 1969
Scholarship
\$500



Ethan Louwagie

Don Tiffany Scholarship: \$500
Lucille Nelson Memorial/
Nelson Salvage & Towing
Scholarship: \$500



Gracelyn Malecek

Jan Phillips Nursing
Scholarship: \$2,000
Tom & Mary Gross
Family Scholarship: \$500



Jordan Matson

Michael Vollmer Legacy in
Agriculture Schol.: \$750
Phillip McKay Memorial Ag.
Scholarship: \$500



Shaun Matthews

Donald P. Tiffany Schol: \$500
Gordy Jensen/RWF
Sportsmen's Club Schol.: \$500
Orrin Estebo Scholarship:
\$1,500



Madalyn Munsell

Fuhr Family Scholarship
\$500



Ellie Nelson

Minnwest Bank M.V. Schol: 1,500
RWD Area Hosp. Found./James &
Lynn Burchett Schol: \$500
Redwood Family Dental
Scholarship: \$500



Landyn Nordby

Burmeister Family Schol: \$1,000
Col. William R. Cook Schol: \$500
Myrl & Jeannine Barnes
Schol.: \$500
Orrin Estebo Schol: \$1,500



Ella O'Keefe

Darr Family Scholarship: \$500
Eberlein-Stoterau/Kathryn Olson/
HomeTown Bank Schol.: \$500
Meister/Swartz Families
Scholarship: \$500



Hailyn Ourada

Julie Gordon & James
Gordon Scholarship: \$500
Orrin Estebo Scholarship:
\$2,000



Heather Pantizke

Jan Phillips Nursing
Scholarship
\$2,000



Chance Pendleton-Sam

Tom & Mary Gross
Scholarship
\$16,000



Andrew Peterson

Smetak Family
Scholarship
\$500



Aidan Salmon

Henry & Mary Jo Boots
Scholarship: \$500
Minnwest Bank M.V.
Scholarship: \$2,000
Norma Flinn/Tersteegs/Class
of '82 Scholarship: \$500



Easton Sandgren

Cedar Heart Homes
Asstd. Living of Franklin
Scholarship
\$1,000



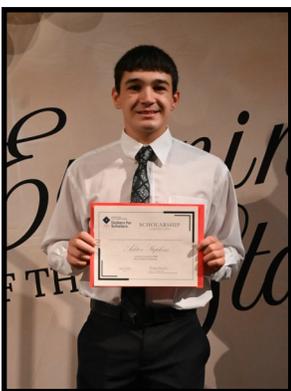
Addison Schmidt

Orrin Estebo Schol.: \$1,000
Richard & Julie
Bodensteiner Scholarship
\$500



Tevin Sivixay

George Ramseth
Scholarship: \$1,500
Mandy Nieland Memorial
Scholarship: \$500



Ashton Stephens

Bremer Bank
Scholarship: \$500
Brian Ahrens Memorial
Scholarship: \$2,000



Mitanski Wabasha

Patricia Burgemeister
Vollmer Memorial
Scholarship
\$500



Andrew Willemsen

Orrin S. Estebo
Scholarship
\$500

If you are interested in joining our scholarship community and making a difference in the lives of our students, please visit our website for more information about our program, or contact Rachael Buyck at 507-644-8023 or rbuyck@redwoodareaschools.com.

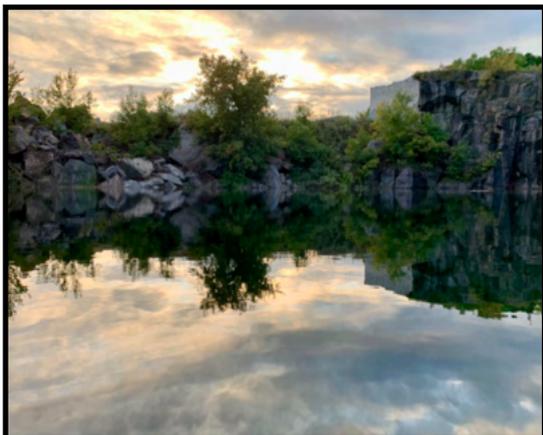
Together, we can continue to support the bright futures of our students.

Thank you for your continued support!

Sincerely,
The Redwood Area Dollars for
Scholars Board of Directors

James Hopfenspirger - Class of 1965 Memorial Photography Scholarships

The James Hopfenspirger Memorial Photography Scholarship was established to honor the memory of James R. Hopfenspirger, a 1965 graduate of Redwood Falls High School and proud U.S. Navy veteran. After serving in the Vietnam War, Jim dedicated 36 years to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN, where he worked as a physician assistant in cardiothoracic surgery and as a medical photographer. Founded by Dr. Michael Hopfenspirger, James's son, the scholarship represents Jim's love for photography and his connection to the Redwood Falls community. It is awarded to Redwood Valley High School juniors and seniors who demonstrate talent and passion for photography, serving as a tribute to an art form that was an important aspect in both Jim's personal and professional life.



"Nature's Mirror"
Kooper Johnson
1st Place (\$1,000)



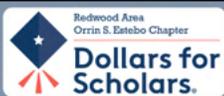
"Mexican Midnight"
Thomas Fischer
2nd Place (\$500)



"Frost on the Pond"
Izzy Kleinhuizen
3rd Place (\$300)

College Scholarship Awards

Estebo College Scholarships for \$500: Carter Peterson, Jacob Hildebrandt
 Orrin S. Estebo Second Year Scholarship for \$550: Anneliese Hammer, Blake Stephens, Madisyn Mertens
 Hagen Family College Scholarship for \$575: Andrew Muetzel, Cameron Sandgren, Jahger Bill
 Helen & Ruth Peterson College Scholarship for \$600: Catherine Maddock
 Michael & Patricia Vollmer Scholarship for \$750: Karsyn Ramey
 Mahal/DePauw-Buckley Education Scholarship for \$1,000: Daniel Haen
 Marion Frederickson Scholarship for Music for \$1,000: Avery Wilson
 Marlys & Gene Verdoes Scholarship for \$1,000: Camden Cilek
 PEO Scholarship for Women for \$1,000: Trinity Corder
 Marilyn Smith Education Scholarship for \$2,500: Carson Woodford, Elizabeth Guggisberg



Redwood Area Dollars for Scholars Celebrates \$1 Million Milestone!



You read that right. Over \$1 million in scholarships has now been awarded through Redwood Area Dollars for Scholars to students from our own small but mighty community. For towns our size, that's an incredible number. And what makes it even more meaningful is that every dollar has come from local individuals, families, businesses, service organizations, and alumni who believe in the power of education and the potential of our students.

The program supports both graduating seniors and college students in their second, third, or fourth year — ensuring that support doesn't stop after high school. Some scholarships are awarded annually, while others are endowed and given in perpetuity, often in honor or memory of someone special.

What's most inspiring? Many of the people giving today were once recipients themselves. We've seen alumni come full circle — paying it forward with scholarships of their own. So, thank you. Whether you've given back through a scholarship, shared your story, or simply cheered on the next generation, your continued connection makes a difference. We're proud to have you as part of this milestone!

Pictured: Senior Easton Sandgren with Darin Prescott ('87) and Karen Hoffman-Distad, as they presented the Cedar Heart Homes Assisted Living of Franklin Scholarship.

2025 HONOREES

Redwood Falls Senior Center: Establishment of the Donald Frank Memorial Scholarship
Brad & Jeanne Limoges Family: Establishment of the Limoges Family Scholarships
Family of Brian Ahrens: Establishment of the Brian Ahrens Memorial Scholarship
Redwood Area Hockey Association: Establishment of the Redwood Area Hockey Asstn. Scholarships
Redwood Falls Senior Center: Establishment of the Donald Frank Memorial Scholarship
Rebecca Corcoran: \$5,500 to establish the Glenn Corcoran Musical Theater Fund
Richard & Julie Bodensteiner: \$10,000 to establish the Richard & Julie Bodensteiner Scholarship
Jan Phillips: \$10,000 towards the Jan Raduenz Phillips Nursing Scholarships
Bruce & Katheryn Byram: \$10,000 to establish the Bruce & Katheryn Byram Education Fund
Michael Vollmer: \$15,000 to establish the Michael Vollmer Legacy Agriculture Scholarship
Jan Jacobsen: \$25,000 to establish the Janice Petersen Jacobsen Scholarship
Orrin S. Estebo Foundation: \$25,000 to establish the Estebo College Scholarships
Jim & Lori McKay: Significant contribution to the Joyce McKay Nursing Scholarship Endowment
Jim & Margie Buckley: \$10,000+ Lifetime Contributions to Redwood Area Dollars for Scholars
Paul & Elaine Hagen: \$25,000+ Lifetime Contributions to Redwood Area Dollars for Scholars

COMMUNITY PARTNER SCHOLARSHIPS

Redwood Falls Lions Club Scholarship: Jordan Matson & Ellie Nelson
Audacia Study Club Scholarship: Easton Sandgren
Education MN-RWF Scholarship: Hailyn Ourada
First Security Bank of Renville L.A. Amundson Ohana Foundation Scholarship: William Ahrens
Hometown Bank Scholarship: Thomas Fischer
Redwood Area Chamber Ag Committee Scholarships: Griffin Evans, Zac Guiggisberg, Adrian Gottfried, Jordan Matson, Morgan Kodet; AFA & Rwd. Area Chamber Ag Committee Scholarships: Ella O'Keefe, Alexis Altmann
ProAg of Renville County Scholarship: Morgan Kodet
Rwf Fire Department Scholarships: Andrew Peterson, Izzy Kleinhuizen, & Easton Sandgren
Redwood Falls Rotary Scholarship: Adrian Gottfried & Ethan Louwagie
Renville Sibley Cooperative Power Asstn. Scholarship: William Ahrens
American Red Cross Scholarships: Ellie Nelson, Hailyn Ourada & Cayden Johnson-Mariner
Royale B. and Eleanor M. Arvig Scholarship: Lillian DeBlieck
Basin Electric Power Coop Scholarship: Kendall Huhnerkoch
Granite Companies Scholarship Fund: Thomas Gerke
John H. Nelson Memorial Scholarship: Cayden Johnson-Mariner
Redwood Area Hospital Auxiliary Scholarship: Ellie Nelson
Redwood Area Wrestling : MicLain Winge, Tucker Amberg, Addison Schmidt, Julia Lang, Zac Guggisberg, & Griffin Evans
Redwood Electric Operation Round-Up Scholarships: Tucker Amberg & Julia Lang
Technology & Trades on the Prairie Scholarship: Adrian Gottfried
West Central Smiles Scholarship: Ellie Nelson



Your gifts power all that we provide.

We are incredibly grateful for your generous response to our annual fund drive & your support. From ECFE programs for our youngest learners, to scholarships for our graduating seniors & college students, we are honored to be able to make a difference in Redwood Valley classrooms and the lives of Redwood Valley students.

To find out more information about our programs, please visit our website:
www.redwoodareaeducationfoundation.org.



Give A Gift:

Online: www.redwoodareaeducationfoundation.org—Click Donate!

By Mail: Redwood Area Education Foundation, 100 George Ramseth Drive, Redwood Falls, MN 56283

For more information, or to further discuss ways in which we can assist you with leaving a legacy within our district, contact Rachael Buyck at 507-644-8023 or rbuyck@redwoodareaschools.com.

Redwood Area School District
100 George Ramseth Drive
Redwood Falls, MN 56283

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