

SUMMER 2024

CARDINAL COUNTRY ALUMNI NEWS & VIEWS

Belview | Morton | Redwood Falls

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PHOTO BY: BEN STOTERAU

Evening of the Stars

The Scholarships

Redwood Valley High School
Class of 2024

The Redwood Area Dollars for Scholars, Orrin S. Estebo Chapter, is proud to recognize the graduates of the class of 2024. This year, our chapter was able to award 87 scholarships, totaling \$97,600! We are grateful to be able to support our students with their collegiate expenses. Congratulations to the following 2024 seniors:



Lilly Beermann

Henry & Mary Jo Boots
Scholarship: \$500
Lucille Nelson Memorial
Scholarship: \$500

Smetak Family Scholarship: \$500



Hannah Bender

Orrin S. Estebo
Scholarship:
\$500



Aubriella Dixon

Donald P. Tiffany Scholarship: \$500
Mandy Nieland Memorial
Scholarship: \$500
Myrl & Jeannine Barnes
Scholarship: \$500



Lauren Dolezal

Helen & Ruth
Peterson Scholarship:
\$4,800



Brynne Farasyn

Tom & Mary Gross
Scholarship: \$16,000



McKenna Flinn

Orrin S. Estebo Scholarship: \$1,000
Julie Gordon & James Gordon Schol: \$500
Norma Flinn/Tersteegs/Class of 1982
Scholarship: \$500
Rose Schottenbauer Andersen Schol: \$500



Murphy Fox

Orrin S. Estebo
Scholarship:
\$1,000



Morgan Franklin

Helen & Ruth
Peterson Scholarship:
\$4,800



Max Fuhr

Phillip McKay Memorial
Agriculture Scholarship
\$500



Anneliese Hammer

Don Tiffany Scholarship: \$500
Otto Family Scholarship: \$500
Scott Larson & Robin Stegner
Schol. for the Environment:
\$500



Jacob Hildebrandt

Colonel William R. Cook
Scholarship: \$500



Marissa Jaspersen

Patricia Burgemeister
Vollmer Memorial
Scholarship: \$750



Mila Jenniges

Matthew & Lindsay Johnson
Scholarship: \$500
Redwood Family Dental
Scholarship: \$500
Reitter Family Scholarship: \$500



Cole Johnson

Orrin S. Estebo
Scholarship:
\$1,000



Shyanna Johnson

Winifred Balkenol
Scholarship:
\$500



Taylor Klabunde

Bremer Bank Scholarship: \$500
Burmeister Family Scholarship:
\$1,000
Orrin S. Estebo Scholarship: \$2,000



Taia Koplin

Orrin S. Estebo
Scholarship:
\$1,000



Brandon Lang

Jim & Ann Lasley
Scholarship: \$500



Kylee Larsen

Class of 1969
Scholarship: \$500
Farmers Union Industries
Scholarship: \$1,000



Kenzie Lundeen

Dash Ellingworth/Jeff Jensen
Memorial Scholarship: \$1,000
George Ramseth Scholarship: \$1,000
Fuhr Family Scholarship: \$500
Nuvera/R.T. Rodenberg
Scholarship: \$500



Brode Lydick

Loren Jacobsen Memorial
Scholarship: \$1,000
Lucille Nelson Memorial
Scholarship: \$500



Kharma Mathiowetz

Barbara Hoepner Medical
Scholarship: \$1,000



Emmerson McCorquodale

Patricia Burgemeister Vollmer
Memorial Scholarship: \$750



Madisyn Mertens

Jan Raduenz Phillips Nursing
Scholarship: \$3,000
Nathan & Valerie Stephens Family
Scholarship: \$500
Robin Stegner & Scott Larson
Scholarship for Nursing: \$500



Karsyn Ramey

Jean Stephany
Scholarship: \$1,000
Michael & Patricia Vollmer
Scholarship: \$750



Ashlee Schueller

Minnwest Bank
Scholarship: \$1,500
Nick Stanton
Scholarship: \$1,000



Ava Shaw-Kerkhoff

Cedar Heart Homes Assisted
Living of Franklin Scholarship:
\$1,000
Don and Vera Tiffany
Scholarship: \$500



Skyler Sherbon

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



Michelle Smith

Jan Raduenz Phillips Nursing
Scholarship: \$3,000
Redwood Area Hospital Found./
James & Lynn Burchett/Western
Family Scholarship-\$500
Joyce McKay Nursing
Scholarship: \$500



Oliver Smith

Brian Anderson Memorial
Scholarship : \$500
David Norman Memorial
Scholarship: \$500
George Ramseth Scholarship: \$1,500
Orrin S. Estebo Scholarship: \$1,000



Avery Sperl

Orrin S. Estebo
Scholarship
\$500



Blake Stephens

Sgt. Brent Koch Memorial
Scholarship: \$500
Steve Family Leadership
Scholarship: \$500
Minnwest Bank Scholarship:
\$3,000



Olivia Stoterau

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



Talon Two Clouds

Orrin S. Estebo
Scholarship:
\$500



Andres Vetsouvanh

Orrin S. Estebo
Scholarship
\$1,000



Elyse Vogland

Orrin S. Estebo
Scholarship:
\$500



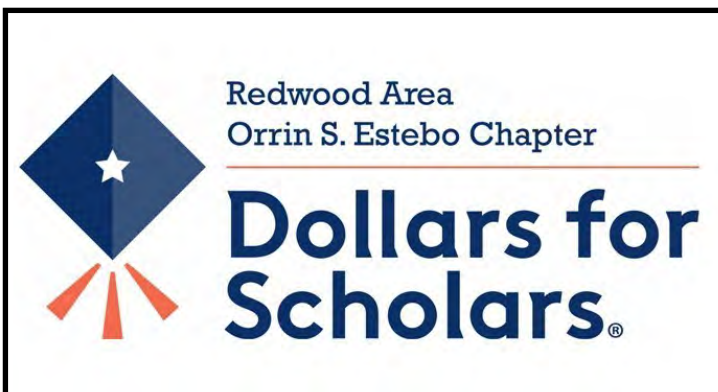
Avery Wilson

Bremer Bank
Scholarship: \$500
Women in STEM
Scholarship: \$2,500



Brooke Zollner

Dr. Thomas & Mary Gross
Family Scholarship
\$500



We would like to express our deepest gratitude to all the generous donors who have made these scholarships possible. Your support plays a crucial role in helping our students achieve their academic and career goals.

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

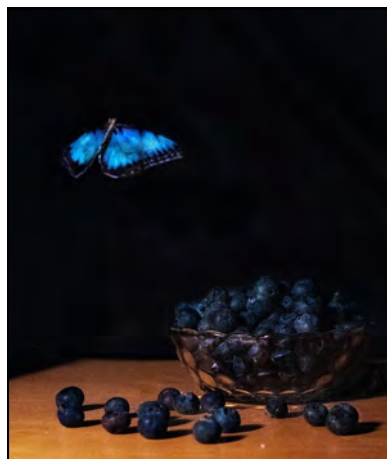
Together, we can continue to support the bright futures of our students.

Thank you for your continued support!

Sincerely,

The Redwood Area Dollars for Scholars Board of Directors

James Hopfenspirger - Class of 1965 Memorial Photography Scholarships



"Blew by the Blue" - Madisyn Mertens
1st Place (\$1,000)



"Sunshine" - Anneliese Hammer
2nd Place (\$500)



"Bee of the Falls" - Journey Ockwig
3rd Place (\$300)

College Scholarship Awards

PEO Scholarship for Women for \$500: Ella Fuhr & Sydney Mertens
Helen & Ruth Peterson College Scholarship for \$500: Sydney Mertens
Hagen Family College Scholarship for \$825: Catherine Maddock, Jahlyn Bill
Orrin S. Estebo Second Year Scholarship for \$800: Conner Salmon, Kaylee Robinson
Marlys & Gene Verdoes Scholarship for \$1,000: Carson Woodford
Mahal/DePauw-Buckley Education Scholarship for \$1,000: Daniel Haen
Marion Frederickson Scholarship for Music: Kody Robinson
Jan Raduenz Phillips College Schol. for Nursing: Ella Fuhr & Andrew Muetzel
Marilyn Smith Education Scholarship for \$2,500: Katherine Ahrens

COMMUNITY PARTNER SCHOLARSHIPS

Redwood Falls Lions Club Scholarship for \$500: Blake Stephens & Avery Wilson
Redwood Falls Rotary Scholarship for \$500: Lauren Dolezal
Redwood Falls Fire Department Scholarship for \$150: Morgan Franklin, Madisyn Mertens, Michelle Smith & Jacob Hildebrandt
RWF Chamber Ag Committee & AFA Scholarships: Lauren Dolezal (\$4,200), Kylee Larsen (\$1,600), Brode Lydick (\$1,600)
Redwood County Corn & Soybean Growers for \$750: Kylee Larsen
Basin Electric Power Coop Scholarship for \$1,000: Lauren Dolezal
Rwd. Area Wrestling Scholarships: Max Fuhr, Jamen Hennen, Andres Vetsouvanh, Ava Dillon, Antonio Vasquez-Martinez
Education MN-RWF for \$500: Emmerson McCorquodale
AgCountry Farm Credit Services Scholarship for \$1,000: Lauren Dolezal
Audacia Study Club Scholarship for \$200: Blake Stephens
Royale B. & Eleanor M. Arvig Scholarship for \$3,000: Oliver Smith
Redwood Electric Operation Round-Up Scholarship for \$450: Brynne Farasyn & Blake Stephens
HomeTown Bank Scholarship for \$500: Lauren Dolezal
Horatio Alger Scholarship for \$10,000: Emmerson McCorquodale
John H. Nelson Memorial Scholarship for \$500: Brynne Farasyn
Southern MN Beet Sugar Cooperative for \$1,000: Lilly Beermann
ProAg of Renville County for \$250: Kylee Larsen
Redwood Falls Community Endowed Scholarship with SMSU for \$800: Skyler Sherbon
American Red Cross High School Scholarship for \$250: Taylor Klabunde

Senior Cardinal Excellence Award Finalists



Female Finalists:

Mila Jenniges

Tina (Phan) '93 & John '95

Avery Wilson

Angie (Stephens) '97

Kenzie Lundeen

Long time educator Matt Lundeen

Male Finalists:

Brandon Lang

Janel (Thiel) '94

Max Fuhr

Oliver Smith

Anna (Radel) '93



Congratulations to this year's award winners: Mila Jenniges & Brandon Lang!

Brandon Lang, son of Keith and Janel (Thiel '94) Lang, was a three sport athlete and multiyear varsity letter winner in Football, Basketball and Baseball. His impressive skills earned him All-Conference honors in all three sports, along with Receiver of the Year award for the football district. This fall, Brandon will be continuing his academic career at Mankato State University, pursuing a degree in Construction Management.

Mila Jenniges, daughter of Tina (Phan '93) and John ('95) Jenniges, was a two-sport letter winner in Tennis and Golf, earning All-Conference honors twice in Tennis and four times in Golf. Her dedication and skill to the sport of golf have led her to the state level three times, achieving 8th place individually in her junior year and helping her team secure a 5th place finish. As a senior, she earned another trip to the state tournament and finished in 7th place this spring. Beyond her athletic achievements, Mila is actively involved in various extracurricular activities, including Gymnastics, Student Council, Band, Jazz Band, Pep Band, Solo & Ensemble, Drumline and National Honor Society. Looking ahead, Mila plans to attend Mankato State University in the fall, where she will continue her golfing career and pursue a degree in dental hygiene.

2024 HONOREES

Redwood Family Dental, PLLC.: Establishment of the Redwood Family Dental Scholarship

Darin Prescott: Establishment of the Cedar Heart Homes Assisted Living of Franklin Scholarship

Barbara Hoepner: Establishment of the Barbara Hoepner Medical Scholarship Fund

Family of Joyce McKay: \$5,000 donation to the Joyce McKay Nursing Scholarship

Marilyn Smith Family: \$5,000 donation to the Marilyn Smith Education Scholarship

Jan Phillips: \$10,000 to the Jan Raduenz Phillips Nursing Scholarships

Michael Vollmer: \$15,000 to establish the Michael & Patricia Vollmer Scholarship

Eugene & Carol Garnhardt: \$10,000 lifetime donations to the Redwood Area Education Foundation

Clark & Denise Grannes: \$10,000 lifetime donations to the Redwood Area Education Foundation

Alumni News!

Remembering Glenn "Cork" Corcoran: A Legacy of Music and Theater



If you knew Glenn and his love for music and drama, you may wish to honor his memory by contributing to the fund established in his name. Your generosity will help continue his legacy and support the arts that he cherished so deeply.

Glenn "Cork" Edward Corcoran was a Redwood Falls kid through and through. He cherished his hometown and the people in it. Encouraged by his parents, teachers, and friends, Cork was actively involved in school activities from an early age.

Among his many passions, music and theater stood out the most. In grade school, Cork received his first horn and proudly played in the grade school band. His talent extended beyond music, as he took a starring role in the school production of "Pinocchio." His love for the cornet continued through high school, and this cherished instrument has since been passed down to his grandson, Guy Corcoran, who shares Cork's musical talent.

A high school friend fondly recalls, "When you planned to meet Cork, you never knew what character would show up." Cork's love for storytelling and taking on different roles made him a memorable and vibrant personality. In high school, he showcased his theatrical talent by playing Stephen Foster in the musical "Oh, Susanna," a role that placed him center stage for most of the play.

After college, Cork married and had three children and four grandchildren, all of whom adored his stories and the characters he brought to life. Later in life, his passion for theater led him to participate in community theater, where he continued to captivate audiences and draw others into his vibrant world.

To honor Cork's legacy, his wife Becky Byhre Corcoran established the Glenn Corcoran Musical Theatre Fund. This fund supports production costs such as royalties, scripts, sets, and costumes, ensuring that Cork's love for musical theater continues to inspire future generations.

Cork's life was a testament to the power of music and theater in bringing joy and connection. His memory lives on through the performances and stories he so dearly loved.

Curt Hokanson, RASD Faculty



Curt Hokanson, former educator in the Redwood Falls School District, passed away at age 82 on February 12, 2024. According to his obituary, Curt grew up in the Tracy/Slayton, MN area. He attended Augustana University and Mankato State University before spending his career inspiring students in library science and business in Jasper, MN from 1963-1989. He served in the military from 1967-1969, where he worked evenings at Central Texas Junior College, helping service members attain higher education. He continued his teaching career in Redwood Falls in 1989, until his retirement in 2005. Curt is survived by his wife of 53 years, Ilene, three children: Steve '91 (Tonsha), Karen '99 (Kristopher) and Mark '02 (Marie), seven grandchildren and sister, Marilyn.

Curt's full obituary can be found at www.mcnearneyfuneralhome.com

where are they now?

Polly Bowen



Where did you grow up? Richfield, Minnesota (South Minneapolis)

Where did you go to college? Bemidji State University

How many years were you employed in the Redwood Falls district? 32 Years (1977-2009)

What subjects did you teach? 5th-8th Grade Physical Education; Adapted Physical Education; 7th Grade Life Science; 10th Grade Biology; 6th Grade Reading.

Coached: Volleyball, Gymnastics, Track & Field, Softball and Special Olympics

Did you always want to be a teacher? Yes, I knew I wanted to teach when I was in 6th grade.

What did you like most about teaching? Working with the students and athletes.

What is one of your most memorable moments as a teacher? Working in the new facility when it was built.

What year did you retire? 2009

What do you miss most about teaching? I miss my colleagues that I worked with and students, of course.

What have you been up to during your retirement? I moved to Sun City, Arizona.

Here I have been very active with golf, pickleball, hiking, biking, camera club and meeting new people.

What do you enjoy most about retirement? Freedom, time to travel and volunteer.

Family: Just me. Not married. I have three siblings and four grand nephews, with one on the way!

What matters to you most in life? Being with family when I am back in Minnesota.



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"](#)



rbuyck@redwoodareaschools.com

Alumni News and Views, Redwood Area Schools, 100 George Ramseth Drive, Redwood Falls, MN 56283

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Year of Graduation/School _____ Email _____

Comments _____

Would you like us to include email or address information in the Alumni News? : Email _____ Address _____ Neither _____

UPCOMING REUNIONS!

Redwood Falls High School Class of 1957

67 Year Reunion

Thursday, September 26, 2024
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

Redwood Falls High School CLASS OF 1964 60 YEAR REUNION

October 5, 2024
3:00-8:00 PM
Jackpot Junction Conference Center

Reunion Committee:
Karen (Hertling) Kaufenberg
Linda (Jensen) Nesburg
Konnie (Sowder) Jensen
Mary (Dennistoun) Miller
Toni (Otto) Fredrickson

**SAT
7TH
SEPT
2024**

CLASS OF 1974 REDWOOD FALLS HIGH SCHOOL 50TH YEAR REUNION

3:00 PM
SHELLEY & MARK HIRMAN HOME

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
FACEBOOK: REDWOOD FALLS
CLASS OF 1974
-OR- CONTACT PAULA AT
PPERSON@PAUZ.COM

Redwood Falls High School Class of '84

40-year Reunion

Friday, September 20, 2024
6:00 p.m.
Grandview Valley Winery

Saturday, September 21, 2024
5:00 p.m.
Redwood Falls Golf Club

MORTON HIGH SCHOOL ALL SCHOOL REUNION

AUGUST 10, 2024

Jackpot Junction's Dakota Exposition Center

Schedule of Events

2:00: Doors Open
4:00: Social Hour
6:00: Program Begins
6:30: Dinner

*Schedule subject to change. Please join the Morton All School Reunion 2024 Facebook page for any updates.

Redwood Falls High School CLASS OF 1969 55th Year Reunion

For questions concerning the reunion, please contact:
Steve Nelson: aasjnelson@gmail.com - or - Gwen Bohlke: ggbohlke@hotmail.com

Friday, September 13, 2024

Meet and Greet
Redwood Falls Golf Club
6:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 14, 2024

Reception & Dinner
Jackpot Junction Casino & Hotel
5:00 p.m. - Midnight
**Class Photo at 6:00 p.m.
Cost: \$40.00/person

*Classmate Name: _____
Please print name as you wish your name tag to read. Please include maiden name.

*Address: _____

*Phone #: _____ *Email: _____

*Total Number Attending: _____ *Names of Additional Guests Attending: _____

*Amt. Enclosed \$ _____
(\$40/Person)

*Please make checks payable to: RFHS Class of 1969
No refunds will be given. Thank you for your understanding.

Mail RSVP To:

Gwen Bohlke
400 E 5th St., Apt. 105
Redwood Falls, MN 56283

By August 30th!



The Class of 2004 celebrated their 20th year reunion on June 29th at the Redwood Falls Golf Club. Front Row: Shandra Bavier, Krista (Potter) Schroeder, Kate (Maland) James, Krista (Nelson) Okins, Sarah (Nelson) Hoyt, Courtney (Bohn) Sowder, Kristi (Curry) Hill, Dani (Omtvedt) Haas. Back Row: Braxton Zieske, Matt Johnson, Travis Bavier, Ken Wolmutt, Tyler Baune, Jessica (Bennett) Meeker, Laura (Rasmussen) Bruns.

|
SAVE
the
DATE
|

Redwood Falls High School
Class of 1980
SEPTEMBER 13-14, 2025

More information to come!





Kendall Huhnerkoch: 2nd Place - Triple Jump;
5th Place - Long Jump
Will Ahrens: 1st Place - 1600m Run
Kilen Cilek: 6th Place - 3200m Run
Blake Stephens: 5th Place - 110m Hurdles

TRIUMPH AT THE MN STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIPS: JUNIOR WILLIAM AHRENS CLAIMS VICTORY IN THE CLASS 3A 1600M RUN

In a display of athletic determination, Redwood Valley junior William Ahrens became champion in the Class 3A 1600m run at the Minnesota State High School League Championships. From the start, Ahrens demonstrated exceptional speed and strategy. He maintained a steady pace, staying in the leading pack throughout the initial laps. As the race progressed, his training and dedication became evident, with each stride showcasing his endurance and skill. Entering the final lap, Ahrens made his decisive move, breaking away from his competitors and creating a gap that only widened as he approached the finish line. He secured his position as the state champion with an impressive time of 4:19.91, just shy of his 4:18.99 personal record.

Ahrens' victory is a testament to his hard work, perseverance, countless hours of training, and continuously pushing his limits. Will was also runner-up in the Class 3A State Cross Country Championship this past fall.

As a junior, Ahrens still has another year of high school competition ahead of him. His victory at the state championship sets a promising tone for the future, and there's no doubt that he will continue to achieve great things in the running world. Congratulations to Will on his outstanding achievement!

Along with Ahrens, Redwood Valley sent 22 additional athletes to the state tournament. Of those, and pictured left, were Kendall Huhnerkoch (Brent RFHS '85), Kilen Cilek (long time educator, Shawn Cilek), and Blake Stephens (Nathan RFHS '94 & Valerie (Johanneck) RFHS '95). Congratulations to all of our athletes!



MSHSL 4 x 100m Class A State Champions: Jon Hanson, Dustin Polkow, Dugan Flinn, Shawn Snyder.

Row 1: Jon Rohlik, John Siegfried, Jim Meister, Gary Krueger, Lou Phan, Tim Klabunde, Tim Ringheisen, Jerome Cech, John Zwiers. Row 2: Rick Messer, Jeff Cech, Mark Rohlik, Mark Redmann, Jim Tryon, Jason Schmidt, Doug Hirschcock, John Sandgren, Mark Ferris. Row 3: Mr. Thompson, Kelly McCorquodale, Scott Werner, Lon Phan, Jason Heffelfinger, Mark Fuhr, Jim Sandgren, Chad Hilton, Brett Swenson, Erik Flinn, Steve Junker, Jeff Vance, Erick Hanson, Mr. Garvey.



PREVIOUS TRACK & FIELD STATE CHAMPIONS

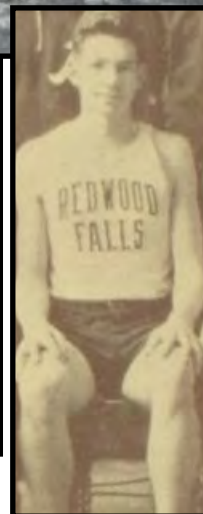
1931: Ward Cuff - Javelin
1957: Bill Greenslit - 100 Yd. Dash
1977: Joan Hopfenspirger - 1 Mile Run
1978: Joan Hopfenspirger - 1 Mile Run
1979: Joan Hopfenspirger - 1 Mile Run
1981: Chuck Hitchcock, Bill Schmidt, Todd Sherbing, Mark Poss - 4x400m Relay
1984: Chad Hilton - 100m Dash
1985: Chad Hilton - 100m Dash & 200m Dash
Jeff Vance, Erik Hanson, Jerome Swoboda, Chad Hilton - 4x100m Relay
1986: Erik Flinn, Jason Heffelfinger, Steve Junker, Erik Hanson - 4x400m Relay
1995: John Hanson, Dustin Polkow, Dugan Flinn, Shawn Snyder - 4x100m Relay
2000: Nate Schmidt - 300m Hurdles
2002: Tom Ellingworth - 300m Hurdles
2003: Tom Ellingworth - 300m Hurdles
John Olson, Scott Leopold, Mark Kohlhof, Tom Ellingworth - 4x100m Relay
2004: Jeremy Soupir - Shot Put

2011: Kayla Huhnerkoch
800m Run & 1600m Run

2014: Kayla Huhnerkoch
1600m Run

2015: Kayla Huhnerkoch
800m Run & 1600m Run

2016: Cade Johnson
High Jump



What's Happening in the Area?



Honoring Our Heroes: New Veterans Cemetery Opens in Redwood Falls

A place of honor and remembrance now stands proudly in Redwood Falls, with the opening of the newest Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery. This dedicated resting place for veterans represents a significant milestone for the community and veterans across the state. The cemetery officially opened less than a year ago and is set on a serene, 80-acre parcel of land that offers a peaceful environment for reflection and remembrance. The cemetery is designed to honor the service and sacrifices of veterans and their families, providing a dignified final resting place for those who have served in the United States Armed Forces.

A community effort, the creation of the cemetery has been a long journey, marked by the tireless efforts of local veterans' groups, community leaders, and state officials. The project received substantial support from the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) and the National Cemetery Administration, ensuring that the site meets the highest standards of respect and care. Local high school alumni and residents played a pivotal role in advocating for the cemetery. Many former students who have served or have family members who served were instrumental in garnering support and raising awareness for the project. Their efforts highlight the deep connection and gratitude the community holds for its veterans.

The cemetery boasts meticulously landscaped grounds, with pathways and seating areas that invite visitors to spend time reflecting on the sacrifices made by those interred there. Key features include:

- Committal Shelter: A beautiful and solemn structure where services can be held, providing a dignified space for families to say their final goodbyes.
- Memorial Walkway: Lined with plaques and monuments, the walkway serves as a tribute to the various branches of the military and the battles fought by our veterans.
- Columbarium: A structure specifically designed to house cremated remains, offering an additional option for those who choose cremation.
- Ground Burial Sites: Traditional burial sites are available, ensuring that all veterans have a place of honor within the cemetery.

The opening ceremony was a poignant event, attended by veterans, their families, local dignitaries, and community members. The ceremony featured speeches from state and local officials, a rifle salute, and the playing of "Taps," creating an atmosphere of reverence and respect. Among the speakers was the mayor of Redwood Falls, who expressed profound gratitude to the veterans and their families. "This cemetery is a testament to our community's unwavering commitment to honoring those who have given so much for our country," the mayor said. "It is a place where their legacy will endure, and future generations will be reminded of their bravery and sacrifice."

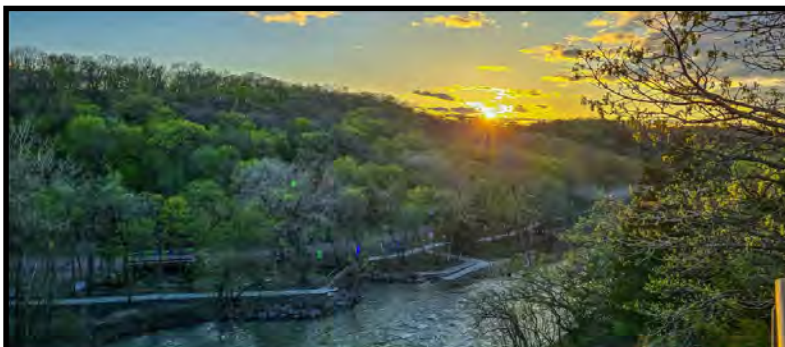
As the cemetery has begun to serve its noble purpose, it stands as a beacon of respect and remembrance in Redwood Falls. The community's dedication to honoring its veterans is evident in every aspect of the cemetery's creation and operation. For alumni and residents, the new Veterans Cemetery is more than just a resting place; it is a symbol of gratitude and a reminder of the values that bind us together. It is a place where stories of bravery and sacrifice will be told for generations to come.

Nightfalls Event Illuminates Redwood Falls

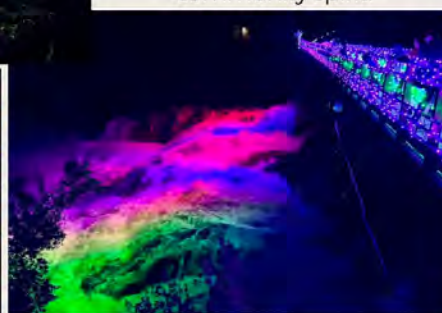
The annual Nightfalls event, which began in 2014 as part of the Sesquicentennial celebration, has become a much-anticipated occasion among visitors who wish to experience its enchanting light displays. Attracting nearly 8,000 visitors this past spring, the annual event features over 4 miles of lighted trails, including nearly 420,000 lights, lighted waterfalls and themed sections of trails, ensuring a memorable night in Ramsey Park.

Nightfalls is a collaborative effort involving various local organizations, businesses and dedicated volunteers, including founders Craig and Cindy (Schmidt) Labrie - RFHS class of '83 & '82. The event's success is a reflection of the strong community bonds in Redwood Falls, with many groups coming together to plan, set up and manage light displays and activities.

Next year's event will be held May 1-3, 2025. Bring your family and friends to enjoy the lights, music, and wonderful community spirit!



Photos courtesy of Dan Schmid Photography - thank you, Dan!



SPOTLIGHT ON CHAPTER 2: A COMMUNITY GEM IN REDWOOD FALLS



Nestled in downtown Redwood Falls, Chapter 2, is an independent bookstore owned by former educator Joni Nieland. Joni, a former chemistry teacher, envisioned Chapter 2 as a haven for book lovers. Her journey to opening Chapter 2 began in 2014 when her husband Jim was diagnosed with liver failure, prompting her to reconsider her post-retirement plans. An avid reader, she found solace in creating a space where others could find joy in books. "When I choose a book, I like to pick up the book, hold the book, and look at the book," she says. "I like to wander around a bookstore. It's the experience. To me that's what this is about. I don't choose the book; the book chooses me," she said in an interview with the Redwood Gazette. This philosophy is evident in the store's warm and inviting atmosphere.

Opened in November 2022, Chapter 2 quickly became a beloved community fixture. The store offers a diverse selection of new and gently used books, puzzles, games, greeting cards, and gifts. From best sellers and children's books to collectible vintage and signed books, there's something for everyone.



Photo: Redwood Gazette

Follow Chapter 2 on their Facebook page for more information and updates!

The building housing Chapter 2 has a rich history. It was originally Knutson's Jewelry Store. It later became Miller's Jewelry, then Brauer's Gift Store, Lutheran Brotherhood, and Between Friends gift store. The existing shelving from its days as a 1940s jewelry store provided the perfect backdrop for the store's books.

Beyond being a bookstore, Chapter 2 fosters community connections by hosting book signings, poetry readings, and Compassionate Friends meetings for those who have lost children. Nieland also owns The Tables, an event space next door, available for showers, birthday parties, meetings, and family gatherings.



2024 Hall of Fame Inductees Announced

The Redwood Area Education Foundation is honored to announce the 2024 inductees into the Redwood Area Schools Hall of Fame. This year's inductees have made significant contributions to our schools, community, and beyond, exemplifying the spirit of excellence and demonstrating outstanding dedication to their professions, community service, and personal achievements.

The 2024 Hall of Fame induction ceremony will take place on Saturday, September 28, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. at the Redwood Valley High School. The event will include a formal induction ceremony and reception, celebrating the achievements and legacies of these distinguished honorees. We are proud to honor those who have made lasting contributions to our schools and community.

2024 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



Rick Ellingworth
Staff/Faculty



Denny Stoterau
Staff/Faculty



Don Yrjo
Staff/Faculty



SEPTEMBER 28, 2024



Craig Hillier
Alumni ('85)



Joyce Johnson
Community

Rick Ellingworth: 44 years of service at Redwood Area Schools, including roles as educator, coach, activities director, principal, and superintendent.

Denny Stoterau: 39 years of service at Redwood Area Schools, including roles as educator, coach, community education director, dean of students, and athletic/activities director.

Don Yrjo: 35 years of service at Redwood Area Schools, including roles as educator, coach, and high school principal.

Craig Hillier: Redwood Falls High School Class of 1985; distinguished author and motivational speaker.

Joyce Johnson: Lifelong volunteer with a distinguished record of service both locally and globally. Also, RFHS Class of 1957.

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Please send questions, suggestions, comments, kudos and address changes to:

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Rachael (Bloedow) Buyck ('03)
Redwood Area Educ. Foundation
Executive Director

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