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# THE RED OAK Express

**WEDNESDAY**

May 17, 2023  
Red Oak, IA  
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Naturalist Cassandra Alfstad, left, and Deb Karwal coordinated this year's Oregon Trail event, which celebrated its 25th anniversary May 5. (Charm Carpenter/Red Oak Express)

## Oregon Trail celebrates 25 years of teaching kids

**Nick Johansen**  
The Red Oak Express

The Anderson Conservation Area's annual Oregon Trail event celebrated a major milestone on May 5.

This year marked the 25th anniversary from when the event was first started by former Montgomery County Conservation naturalist Deb Karwal. Annually, the Oregon Trail draws around 200 students from area schools, as well as home schoolers in the third grade through fifth grade, and allows them to take a three-mile hike, in period clothing, simulating the journey made by the original Oregon Trail settlers.

Since her retirement in 2020, Karwal has been assisting naturalist Cassandra Alfstad in putting together the Oregon Trail. With this being the 25th anniversary, Karwal said this year's event was quite a milestone.

"Not only is it extra special, it's kind of amazing we got here. I don't think there's anywhere else in the state that has a program like this where the kids come all dressed up and experience a day that takes them back in time," Karwal said. "The first few years we had high school kids we

trained and who served as presenters, and then over the years, the adults have come in to serve as presenters."

Even though she officially retired as naturalist a few years ago, Karwal said she's always glad to help out with the Oregon Trail.

"It's a lot of work, and it's intense, and when I retired and Cassandra took over, I told her I will help her for as long as she needs help, because there are a lot of little details that I didn't even write down, they're just things I know. As long as she needs me to help, and as long as I'm capable of doing it, I will be out here because when I've asked kids over the years what their favorite thing was that we did together, Oregon Trail is almost always the thing they mention first," commented Karwal. "I remember one kid told me that they'd waited their whole life to take part in the event. Another girl told me that she was wearing the dress her mom had worn when she was on the Oregon Trail, so I've gotten the chance to do this event with more than one generation."

While it's a lot of hard work, Karwal said seeing the joy on the kids' faces makes it all worthwhile and remains her

**TRAIL, Page 2A**

## Nelson named new community development director for Essex

**The Express Staff**

Officials with the City of Essex, Essex Community School District, and Essex Community Club have hired Tess Nelson as their Community Development Director. As Community Development Director, Nelson will work to strengthen and expand economic and community programs and businesses, market the community and school, obtain grants for growth and improvements,

and serve as the Essex Community Club Director.

All three of the entities recognized a need to improve communications, centralize efforts and resources, and most of all, seek opportunities for community growth that may be overlooked.

Since 2005, Nelson has been in the newspaper business. She spent more than 10 years at The Valley News and Essex Independent and the last several years as the General

Manager of The Red Oak Express and The Opinion-Tribune in Glenwood.

Nelson's office will be located at Essex City Hall. She will begin her duties Monday, May 15.

"The community and school district in Essex have a lot of potential waiting to be untapped," said Nelson. "I'm excited to get started in marketing and promoting all it has to offer."

## Laire, Foote honored for public safety service

**Nick Johansen**  
The Red Oak Express

Montgomery County's 911 supervisor Jackie Laire and telecommunicator Shari Foote were recently honored for their decades of service dispatching first responders.

Earlier in May, Laire and Foote attended the Iowa APCO/NENA Conference in Des Moines, receiving Milestone awards. Laire was honored for 45 years of service in Montgomery County, while Foote was honored for 25 years of service. Montgomery County's dispatch center is in operation 24 hours a day, 365 days per year, and Laire and Foote are among a total of eight dispatchers employed by the county.

Laire, who will begin her 46th year of service with the county in September of this year, said when they first moved to town, her husband was a firefighter, and she started working for the Red Oak Police Department around 1975 before later transitioning to her current role as a Montgomery County dispatcher.

"When I first started, Red Oak Police had 24-hour dispatchers, but the sheriff's office did not. A couple of year's later, then-Sheriff Dick Harrell was able to get board approval for 24-hour dispatchers at the sheriff's office. He had approached me and asked if I'd consider leaving the police department and serving as a sheriff's office dispatcher, and so I did. I started in September of 1977," Laire said.

Initially, the dispatchers were separated between the police department and sheriff's office. Later, in the early 1990s, the county dispatch center expanded into basic 911 services and combined into one center.

"At the start, basic 911 allowed



Montgomery County telecommunicator Shari Foote, left and 911 supervisor Jackie Laire attended the Iowa APCO/NENA Conference in Des Moines May 1. Laire was honored for 45 years of service and Foote for 25 years of service. (Photo submitted)

phone companies to route a 10-digit number to the sheriff's office. Around 1997, we moved to the enhanced 911 system. After that, there was more talk about one dispatch center, and we finally went to one center in November of 2001," stated Laire.

Laire admitted that in the early years of her dispatch career, she wasn't expecting it to be long-term, nor did she expect the changes that would come with the job over the years.

"I would never have thought on the day I walked into the police station that I'd eventually move into dispatch and still be doing it 45 years later, but once I got it in my blood, I've never had any desire to do anything else but this. Every day, there's something different," commented Laire. "I was the first hire Sheriff Harrell made, and he asked for my input on the hiring of the other three dispatchers at that time. Also, we were working as jailers, and did

both duties. Throughout the years, we've added 24-hour, 365 day corrections officers to the staff.

As the years have gone by, Laire said there have been a number of improvements that have made her role much more efficient, the implementation of 911 being the best thing that could have happened.

"It really helped law enforcement and first responders by doing away with rural route addresses. When rural routes were in place and we got a call, the rural route address tells us nothing, so we'd have to dispatch the address as being two miles west of Red Oak, or one mile north of Red Oak as an example. When 911 came in, every rural route was given a four digit address with a main street or an avenue, and now we can get our responders a pinpoint address. They know exactly where to go because they know our addressing

**DISPATCHERS, Page 2A**

## Possible June completion for Eastern Avenue road project

**Nick Johansen**  
The Red Oak Express

Work continues on the reconstruction project on Eastern Avenue.

At the regular Red Oak City Council meeting May 15, the council was given a project update by Red Oak Street Superintendent Chris Baird. Earlier in the project, Baird said residents along the street were given notice of a complete closure. Baird clarified that letter did not come from the City of Red Oak.

"We sent out a new letter this past weekend, that was approved by the city. The last letter was not. That didn't go over very well with us, and the citizens were concerned as well, Baird said. "We had a meeting at city hall and it was made clear that this won't happen

again, and nothing will go out without us approving it beforehand."

Baird said the project will be progressing heavily beginning either May 19 or May 22.

"On one of those two days, they're going to start removing part of the street. The contractors will start from the south, move up to Birchwood Drive, and remove that part. They've guaranteed us that whatever day they begin, we'll be given 48 hours notice," commented Baird. "They're going to remove the other part of the street from Forest Avenue north. That's when they'll get the water services done. There are a few left on the west side of the street. Once those are completed, everyone will be hooked up to the new water

**COUNCIL, Page 12A**



## Journeys Grief Support Group

Journeys is a support group for anyone who has lost a loved one and provides a safe, supportive atmosphere to learn about and understand the grief process.

Sessions held Tuesday  
May 23rd - June 27th  
2:00 - 3:30 p.m.

Call Judi at (712) 623-7288  
or email at juderi@mcmh.org.



TRAIL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

favorite part of the Oregon Trail.

"I just really like seeing the kids. I think it's fun to tell them stories, and I've always been a storyteller myself. After I retired and Cassandra took over, I realized I could be a presenter and do programs if she wanted me to, and she did," stated Karwal.

Karwal said she appreciated all the support the event has received from the community over the years.

"It takes a lot of parents to get kids dressed up and into costumes. I think it's very commendable that for 25 years the community has been okay with getting their kids ready for the event. I'm looking forward to the next 25 years," Karwal said.

Like Karwal, Alfstad said she was also both surprised and pleased with how the Oregon Trail event has grown since it was first started all those years ago.

"Through the years it's changed and evolved into event that's almost a rite of passage for kids in Montgomery County. It's had a lot of momentum up to now, and I still think it will have a lot of momentum over the years," commented Alfstad.

Alfstad said the week leading up to each event is a busy one and involves a great number of steps, but this year in particular took extra effort due to a bout of sickness Alfstad was recovering from.

"Deb Karwal and I get every Oregon Trail prop, object, and craft ready, and it takes about four days, so I don't have any programs, I dedicate the whole week for

Oregon Trail prep. This year was a little special, because I was sick for a couple of days. Bless Deb Karwal, because she came in on those days and did all of the really heavy work for me," Alfstad explained. "While the week before is busy, usually I start the yearly Oregon Trail prep as early as January, calling presenters and getting things lined up."

Dressing up, Alfstad said, was a key component of the event. Alfstad urged all the participants to dress as they would have in 1840.

"I always ask them, who would you have been on the Oregon Trail. I'm dressed as a trapper, because I would not have been in a family, wearing a dress. I would have been one of the trail guides, blazing a trail and trapping and hunting, so that's what I dressed up as," Alfstad advised.

While a lot of effort is put into making the Oregon Trail a success each year, Alfstad said she loves seeing all the work pay off.

"The actual day of the event is my favorite part. I don't have any commitments of doing a presentation, I just get to watch all the work we've done fall into place. It's really cool to see everyone come as their own character. It's super fun to be here and be in the moment on the Oregon Trail," Alfstad said.

While it's only been a bit more than a week since the 2023 Oregon Trail, Alfstad said she's already laying the prep work for the event in 2024.

"If people want to donate their time, we're always looking for volunteers. We also



Naturalist Cassandra Alfstad shows off her trapper outfit. (Nick Johansen/The Red Oak Express)

have some props that need replacing, so if anyone has some old time items, we would love to feature them in the event if we can do so. We also have a whole costume closet here that people can check out for free," Alfstad explained.

To donate, or for more information, call 623-4753, or email Alfstad at calfstad@montgomerycountyia.gov.

Chilton wins Lakin award



Inman Elementary third grade teacher Kristina Chilton was named a Lakin Outstanding Teacher May 12. More details on the win will be in a future edition. (Nick Johansen/The Red Oak Express)

DISPATCHERS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

scheme for the county," advised Laire.

Another vast improvement, Laire said, has been the equipment upgrades she's seen over the years.

"I never would have thought there would be emails, or a computerized aided dispatching system. Whenever a call comes in, it goes into our call-taking screen, and we fill it out and log it as our caller is giving us the information, and dispatch it out to our units, and it automatically logs the times that everything is being done, which is much more accurate than the way it was, where we wrote it down on a sheet of paper," Laire said.

The last major improvement, according to Laire, happened less than five years ago, when the county transitioned from its UHF radio system to the new radio system.

"It served its purpose, and we did as much as we could do with the UHF system to have coverage all over the county, but it was poor in certain areas, and we would have trouble hearing our first responders and vice-versa. Now we're on the state system, and it's great. We have good coverage, we can hear each other, and we have operability with other counties," Laire stated.

Throughout her 45-year career as a dispatcher, Laire said the most rewarding aspect is a positive resolution to an emergency call.

"Whenever you take a call, and handle it to the best of your abilities, when the call resolves in a positive manner, I think that has to be about the best feeling you can have as a dispatcher. We are the first responder.

We're taking the information and how we handle the information here helps out our emergency responder out there. It's a rewarding feeling to take a call and know that you've helped someone. That's what we're here for," Laire commented.

Footo who joined the dispatch center 25 years ago, said she pursued the field for a better opportunity for her family.

"I was a single mom with two little kids who was looking for a better job than what I had, and something that would provide for my children at the time," Footo said.

While there are a number of reasons why she stayed with the center, Footo said one of the biggest reasons is to be able to help people.

"It's interesting to come here every day and never know what you're going to face or run into. Sending our emergency responders out and making sure they come back safe is a huge priority here. It's also a huge priority to keep the public safe," explained Footo. "I was 23 years old when I started and had no idea where life was going to take me. Now I couldn't imagine doing anything else. If I could talk one of my kids into following in my footsteps, I would."

For Footo, the biggest improvement she's seen in helping make her job more smooth and efficient is all the advances that have been made in cell phones.

"The technology that has been added to cell phones is great. The cell phones have Rapid SOS, and it can locate a person within a certain perimeter of where they are. My sister had

the first chunky cell phone when they first came out. The fact that they've got all this technology in such a small device allows it to do so many different things, and it helps us, as well as the public, with knowing where they're at if they need help," Footo stated.

"On the flip side of that society has changed a lot, I would have never imagined when I had children there would be such a vast variety of social media outlets available for use. There is a good and bad side to that with all the information that people chose to share with the public, more issues that get debated in such public forum," Footo said.

"The increase in mass shootings in the country and gun violence toward officers and first responders, unfortunately it is important that we realize that it can happen anywhere even in rural America, and we always have to train and use our resources to our advantage. There are a lot of responsibilities when it comes to this career and there are always so many different things in motion in any event we handle, we have a plethora of sources to train for such situations you will never be fully prepared if that sort of thing happens but you can try to do your best if it does"

For Footo, the most rewarding aspect of the job is being able to help people, even if it can be a thankless job sometimes.

"A lot of people assume that's just what we're here for, and think it's just another day to us, but sometimes, we take a call that we don't know the resolution, and that's hard for us, but after all these years, I love being able to help. We're a team, and we all are in here to help each other. I'm proud of everyone I

work with here," Footo commented.

Both Footo and Laire also issued a public service announcement to Red Oak and other communities in the county: If you accidentally dial 911, don't hang up.

"We've had a huge uptick in 911 hang-up calls. With the technology on the phones, if you push the side button a certain number of times, it will dial 911 and people panic and hang up because they don't have an emergency. You're not going to be in trouble if you accidentally call," advised Footo. "If you stay on the line, then it's easier for us because we'll know there isn't an emergency," Footo said. "Also, even if a cell phone is disconnected and you give it to a child to play with, those phones can still call 911, and if they accidentally call, we won't know they're not having an emergency or where they're at if they don't stay on the line."

Footo added that when an emergency call is accidentally made, it rings the 911 center for one entire ring before it rings on the person's own phone, which ordinarily means the dispatch center has already initiated a response to the call before the caller realizes a call has been accidentally made.

Also, Laire said that the center has police in place to call back if a 911 call is disconnected, and if they have a good location and can't get anyone to answer, they'll automatically send out an officer to that location, so Footo and Laire said just waiting on the line to notify the center the emergency call was made accidentally is the best course of action.

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Mueller named new CH&S program director

The Express Staff

Red Oak Community Heart & Soul (ROCH&S) is pleased to announce the hiring of L. Dee Mueller of Red Oak in the position of Project Coordinator.

Mueller brings a wealth of experience, knowledge, and skills to help the residents of Red Oak connect with one another through a resident-driven process.

The process engages the entire population in identifying what they love most about their community, what future they want for it, and how to achieve it.

Dee will work with the ROCH&S Core Team and its coach, Michelle Wodtke Franks, to schedule events, coordinate volunteers and communicate with community partners as they work through each phase of the Community Heart & Soul program.

For more information, please contact Dee at [coordinator@roheartsoul.org](mailto:coordinator@roheartsoul.org). You can also follow on Facebook at [roheartsoul](https://www.facebook.com/roheartsoul) and visit the website at [roheartsoul.org](http://roheartsoul.org).

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STATE OF IOWA DEPARTMENT OF **Health ~ Human SERVICES**

**MYTH**  
Syphilis only affects men.

**FACT**  
Syphilis quadrupled among Iowa women from 2019 to 2022.

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**Public Health**  
IOWA HHS

Syphilis is a sexually transmissible infection (STI) that may have no symptoms. If not treated, it can cause serious, long-term health problems. Syphilis can also be passed on to sexual partners or to an unborn baby during pregnancy. Thankfully, it's easy to test, treat and cure! If you're sexually active, make sure that getting tested for syphilis is part of your regular health routine.



## RO nominated for HS musical theater awards



Members of the cast of February's "Fiddler on the Roof" production at Red Oak Jr./Sr. High School. (Photo submitted)

Red Oak High School's music/theater department will participate in the 2023 Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards Showcase, presented by EMC Insurance Companies, in honor of the school's achievements for its February production of *Fiddler on the Roof*. The musical was directed by Tim and Terra Marsden.

Produced by Des Moines Performing Arts as the culmination of a year-long education initiative, the Showcase will be held at the Des Moines Civic Center June 1 at 7 p.m. and will recognize a total of 94 schools from across the entire state.

The ensemble of *Fiddler on the Roof* will perform an excerpt from their production at the showcase, in celebration of the school's

receipt of an Outstanding Musical Production Award - the program's highest honor.

Select students will represent Red Oak High School by performing in a collaborative inter-school medley led by a guest Broadway music director and choreographer.

Lena Torbett and Jonah Wemhoff will also participate in the Triple Threat Award program with other advanced performing students. In addition to a special performance at the showcase, students will audition for theater camp scholarships and the opportunity to represent Iowa at the National High School Musical Theatre Awards in New York City this summer.

Red Oak High School will also be recognized with the following awards and honors:

- Outstanding Musical Production.
- Outstanding Ensemble
- Outstanding Performance in a Principal Role: Lena Torbett and Jonah Wemhoff.
- Special Recognition for Performance in a Principal Role: Grace Goldapp, Lily Marsden, and Josie Rengstorf.

Tickets to the showcase, which start at \$15, are on sale now at DMPA.org, the Des Moines Civic Center Ticket Office, and by phone at 515-246-2300.

The awards showcase will be live-streamed at IowaPBS.org as part of a collaboration with Iowa PBS. Iowa PBS will also broadcast a highlights special of the event on Friday, July 14, at 8:30 p.m. and on Sunday, July 16, at 1 p.m.

## Stanton Honor Rolls

### THIRD QUARTER A HONOR ROLL

**6th grade:** Tristan Elwood, Carson Ewing, Makensey Henneman, Rhys King, and Quinn McDonald.

**7th grade:** Nolan Case, Cooper Dreyer, Gabrielle Grebin, Brett Hart, Addison Jones, Hayden Jones, Gabriel Kingery, Addie Peterson, Lauren Roberts, Josiah Shipp, Jayden Snow, and Kennedy Stites.

**8th grade:** Lilly Ford, Addelyn Gettler, Corinne Hopf, Chloe Newsome, and Adrianna Valdez.

**9th grade:** Jasmine Osher, and Meredith Roberts.

**10th grade:** Riley Burke, Kiela Franzen, Evan Gettler, Kyla Hart, Lauren Johnson, Brianna Mitchell, Hannah Olson, Anna Peterson, Ella Peterson, Emma Sallach, and Clark Spencer.

**11th grade:** Alli Baker, Preston Carpenter, Alexis Frank, Dacey Henneman, Evan Hopf, and Axel King.

**12th grade:** Abigail Burke, Alice Duckett, Joshua Martin, Addison Olson, Brooklyn Silva, Carli Smith, and Jenna Stephens.

### THIRD QUARTER B HONOR ROLL

**6th grade:** Maven Allen, Drew Handley, Elisabeth Kutzli, Titus Mitchell, Cooper Stephens, and Cailex Williams.

**7th grade:** Deacon Bruce, Cash Culver, Piper French, Hannah Gibbs, Owen Marsh, Victoria McFarland, and Janae Schwery.

**8th grade:** Jaiyenne Castillo, Zachary Haley, Nicholas Herrick, Treyton Jordan, Caedmon Olson, and Grant Spencer.

**9th grade:** Clayton Culver, Rylan Grebin, Adrian Haynie, Kennedy King, Eric Kutzli, Alizabeth Maranville, William Roberts, Britney Silva, and Brodee Sowers.

**10th grade:** Zoey Allen, Gavin Ford, Brody Gibbs, Andrew Johnson, Jacob Martin, Jameson McDonald, Beau Sallach, and Simon Showalter.

**11th grade:** Izabella Beam, Nolan Grebin, Alexis Jones, Ellyanna McDonald, Carly Roberts, and Leah Sandin.

**12th grade:** Brandon Huddle, Marleigh Johnson, Damian Meek, Dartangan Most, Marissa Strough, Kywin Tibben, and Jonan Wokey.

## Two area students receive scholarships from Better Business Bureau

Better Business Bureau (BBB) is pleased to announce the winners of the 2023 BBB Student of Integrity Scholarships.

These scholarships were created to promote ethics and integrity among young people so they may be motivated to continue incorporating moral values into every aspect of their lives. Public, private and home-schooled high school seniors from BBB's service area were invited to apply.

"These students personify the best aspects of ethical behavior in their personal choices and actions," said BBB President and CEO Jim

Hegarty. "They serve as role models for others to emulate. These students are receiving these scholarships because of their commitment to honesty and accountability inside and outside of the classroom. The Better Business Bureau and its Foundation are proud to honor these amazing young adults with these scholarships."

2023 BBB Students of Integrity Scholarship Recipients from Southwest Iowa are:

- Megan Wells, graduating from East Mills High School in Malvern. She will attend the University of Nebraska at Kearney and

plans to pursue the Speech Pathology program with an emphasis of study on communication disorders.

- Trista Swain, graduating from Griswold High School. She will attend the University of Nebraska at Omaha and plans to pursue a degree in Molecular and Biomedical Sciences. Swain hopes to become a medical doctor and an anesthesiologist one day.

## Stronger the Press, Stronger the People

### VIEWPOINTS

THE TIME CAPSULE | ROY MARSHALL

### Letters appreciated

Regardless of my personal thoughts about men dressing like Chicken Ranch hookers (okay, I wasn't at the drag performance and don't know what the guys were wearing), I applaud the debate that took place in letters to the editor.

Both sides stated their case. They expressed opposing views on a controversial issue and in doing so made this page the forum it was intended to be.

I wish our editorial section hadn't been minimized, but regardless—the cross-dressing, homosexual matters referred to brought to mind a series of letters and editorials that appeared in *The Express* between March and November, 1980.

This was a presidential election year, with Reagan trying to unseat Carter during a time of high inflation and the Iran hostage crisis.

Chuck Grassley was challenging John Culver for a seat in the U.S. Senate and Cal Hultman, a local boy from Stanton who later moved to Red Oak, was running against U.S. Representative Tom Harkin.

Also on the ballot was an Equal Rights Amendment to the Iowa Constitution.

Pollsters were predicting this to pass easily. The measure had bipartisan support, having been approved by two consecutive sessions of the Iowa Legislature and needing only a simple majority of the vote in the 1980 general election.

The amendment essentially stated that men and women "were created equal by nature" and had certain inalienable rights, with several listed including that of pursuing and enjoying "safety and happiness."

Letters and editorials appearing in *The Express* were heavily in favor. Peg Anderson, Chair of the Iowa ERA coalition, made stops in Montgomery County to meet with newspaper editors, speak at a Red Oak Kiwanis gathering, and talk with other groups as she traveled about the area urging support.



Roxanne Conlin, federal prosecutor who was a former Iowa Assistant Attorney General and future gubernatorial candidate, spent a day in Red Oak to further the cause.

Ms. Kappie Spencer, representing the State Legislature's Association of University Women, stopped at the *Express* office, the high school and multiple retirement homes to speak on behalf of the amendment, then delivered a similar message during a get-out-the-vote dinner at Red Oak's Victorian Oaks.

In late October a multi-column ad urging a vote in favor was printed in this paper.

It included 123 names, and if you were around in 1980 you'd be familiar with some of them.

On Oct. 30, with the election just days away, *The Express* took a position in favor.

Our editor urged readers to vote accordingly, emphasizing that the amendment made no reference to homosexual marriage, men using the same bathroom as women, abortion or abolishment of family values, and therefore was not a threat in any of those areas.

Anderson, Conlin, Spencer, our *Express*, a total of 123 reputable citizens of Red Oak who paid for an ad, subscribers who wrote letters to the editor, elected officials from both parties and many others believed concerns that a judge's interpretation of any part of the bill, including "pursuit of happiness," could lead to "immoral rulings" were unfounded.

That fear, however, along with the belief that the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 made an Iowa amendment unnecessary, was the

### Letters to the Editor

The Red Oak Express supports healthy community discourse and encourages readers to submit a letter to the editor. Letters must be signed and include a phone number for verification purposes. They can be submitted by mail or dropped off at 2012 Commerce Drive, Red Oak, Iowa, 51566, or emailed to news@redoakexpress.com, or entered through our website at redoakexpress.com. Letters should be concise and centered on a single topic. All letters are subject to editing for length, taste, accuracy, liability, or other reasons. The *Express* is under no obligation to print any letter. If you have questions, contact the *Express* office at 712-623-2566 or news@redoakexpress.com.

crux of the opposition.

Some scoffed at the idea of everyone being equal "by nature" because that simply isn't true, and putting it in the constitution doesn't make it so, but I'm not aware of this being cited as a reason to vote against.

No one was suggesting the amendment allowed homosexual marriage of homosexual adoptions but opponents, at least many of them, felt it was a potential step in that direction.

In looking back and re-reading letters and editorials I'm struck by the fact that supporters, every one of them that shared an opinion conveyed in this paper, felt there was no way the amendment opened that path.

Not a single one, and some in that group were well left of center, argued that if it did, why not?

Proponents might have suggested that homosexuals deserve the same right to marry as anyone else, but either they didn't feel that way at the time or declined to say so.

This was 43 years ago, make of it what you will, but the Iowa ERA didn't open a door to anything.

The measure failed statewide by 55%-45%. In Montgomery County 1,561 voted "yes," 2,506 voted "no."

Reagan defeated Carter. Grassley went to Washington, where later this year he'll turn 90.

Cal Hultman lost to Harkin, but served 18 years in the Iowa Legislature before stepping down to move to Des Moines and become a lobbyist.

Roy Marshall is a local historian and columnist for the Red Oak *Express*. He can be contacted at news@redoakexpress.com.

#### DEADLINES

Newspaper Inserts: Noon Wednesdays.  
Submitted News Items and Letters: 4 p.m. Thursdays.  
Public Notices: 4 p.m. Thursdays.  
Display & Classified Display Advertising: 4 p.m. Wednesdays.  
Classified Line Ads/Garage Sale Ads: 10 a.m. Thursdays.  
Obituaries: 9 a.m. Mondays.

#### CONTACT US

Office: 2012 Commerce Dr., 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday.  
Mail: Box 377, Red Oak, IA 51566.  
Phone: 712-623-2566. Fax: 712-623-2568.  
Website: redoakexpress.com.  
Advertising Email: advertising@redoakexpress.com.  
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The rates are \$49.99 per year for those in Montgomery County, \$64.99 for out-of-county and in Iowa addresses, and \$77.99 for out-of-Iowa residents. Digital-only subscriptions are \$44.99. Other rates and terms apply. Print subscribers receive online access at no extra charge.

## THE RED OAK Express

Dedicated to Freedom Since 1868

ISSN 0747-3281

Phone 712-623-2566 • Fax 712-623-2568

Email: news@redoakexpress.com

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#### WHO WE ARE

Employees in order of continuous service: Trish Deitchler, Graphic Design; Peggy Boeye, Office Manager, News; Ann Watt, Mail; Nick Johansen, News Reporter; Charm Carpenter, Sports Reporter; Tracy Schelling, Driver; Nanny Crowe, Circulation; Joshua Byers, Regional Publisher.

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Spirits; United Farmers Cooperative. Single copy sales are also available from a coin rack in front of the Red Oak Express.

Community Calendar

18 May

12:30 p.m., Bingo, Red Oak Senior Center, 2700 N. 4th St. Call 712-623-3497 or Carolyn at 402-926-8683 for more information.  
4 p.m., Community Prayer Time, Fountain Square Park. Call Bonnie at 623-4759.  
7 p.m., Alcoholics Anonymous, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1101 Summit St.

5:30 p.m., Alcoholics Anonymous, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1101 Summit St.

22 May

12:30 p.m. Bingo, Red Oak Senior Center, 2700 N. 4th St. Call 712-623-3497 or Carolyn at 402-926-8683 for more information.  
7 p.m., Alcoholics Anonymous, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1101 Summit St.

19 May

Red Oak Public Library, Popcorn Friday, all day.  
10-11 a.m., Core 52 Bible study at the Red Oak Presbyterian Church, 511 E. Coolbaugh St.  
5-9 p.m., Lifeguard certification class at the Montgomery County Family YMCA, \$225, must be age 15 or older to participate.  
5:30 p.m., Alcoholics Anonymous, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1101 Summit St.  
7 p.m., "Love Again," theatre #1; "Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret," theatre #2; Red Oak Grand Theatre.

23 May

8:30 a.m., Montgomery County Supervisors, North Meeting Room in courthouse basement, open to public.  
9-11 a.m., Intro to pickleball at the Montgomery County Family YMCA, 101 E. Cherry St. Equipment provided. Free for members of the YMCA, non members \$5 per session.  
9 a.m.- noon, Free facial cancer screenings at Montgomery County Memorial Hospital, 2301 Eastern Ave., call 623-6708 to schedule an appointment.  
Noon, Rotary Club meeting. For location, go to rotarydistrict5650.org/clubinfo/red-oak.  
1 p.m., Card games (pitch and/or cribbage) Red Oak Senior Center, 2700 N. 4th St. Call 712-623-3497 or Carolyn at 402-926-8683 for more info.  
2-3:30 p.m., Journeys Grief Support Group, Faith Community Church, 2701 N. 8th St.

20 May

8 a.m.-6 p.m., Lifeguard certification class at the Montgomery County Family YMCA, \$225, must be age 15 or older to participate.  
7 p.m., "Love Again," theatre #1; "Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret," theatre #2; Red Oak Grand Theatre.

24 May

1:30-5 p.m., Christ's Cupboard Food Pantry and Clothing Cupboard, 206 E. Coolbaugh St. Donations accepted 1-5 p.m. at back door.  
3:30 p.m., Mobile Food Pantry at Red Oak School football field/Montgomery County Fairgrounds parking lot, 1798 N. 1st St. No line up before 2 p.m.

21 May

8 a.m.-6 p.m., Lifeguard certification class at the Montgomery County Family YMCA, \$225, must be age 15 or older to participate.  
2 and 7 p.m., "Love Again," theatre #1; "Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret," theatre #2; Red Oak Grand Theatre.



Students honor Maher

Melissa Freiberg's 10th grade seminar class was at the YMCA May 4 to help staff take care of the outside of the Y. The clean-up day was in memory of George Maher. (Photo submitted)

Elks honor local first responders



Red Oak Elks Lodge #1304 recently paid tribute to area first responders with a meal on May 9. Members of the Iowa State Patrol, Red Oak Police Department, Red Oak Fire Department, and the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office were in attendance. (Photo submitted)

Mobile Food Pantry May 24

Live Well Montgomery County's next Mobile Food Pantry will be at the Red Oak School football field/Montgomery County Fairgrounds parking lot at 1798 N. 1st St.

There is no cost to participate and no documentation is required. Distribution begins at 3:30 p.m.; there is no line up before 2 p.m. Only two vehicles per household may participate in



Happy Birthday!

Celebrating birthdays are:

- Carolyn Laird - May 19
- Nick Johansen - May 20
- Ruby Godfrey - May 20
- Jasmine Elwood - May 22
- Neva Slump - May 22
- Jeanette Blair - May 22
- Fran Olson - May 23
- Marjorie Greenfield - May 23
- Alvin Hayes - May 23
- Erin Munns - May 24
- Margee Swanson - May 24
- Sue Drake - May 24
- Will Pollock - May 24

To be included on the free "Happy Birthday" list, e-mail your birthday (and those of your friends and family) to news@redoakexpress.com, mail to P.O. Box 377, Red Oak, IA 51566, or drop by our office at 2012 Commerce Dr.

Lifeguard certification classes at the Y

Lifeguard certification classes will be held this weekend at the Montgomery County Family YMCA, 101 E. Cherry St. Participants will qualify for a 2-year lifeguard certification and be rescue ready to work at our YMCA or other pools. Certification includes Lifeguard/CPR/AED/First Aid. Cost is \$225. Classes will be held from 5 to 9 p.m. on May 19, and from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. May 20-21. Call Michelle at 621-1552 with any questions.



**Happy Anniversary!**

Celebrating their anniversaries this week are:

Alan and Karen Dean - May 19  
Gary and Jenice Mercer Barton - May 19  
Jake and Jayden Eggleston - May 20  
Jim Jr. and Angela Uhlmann - May 23  
Robert and Doris Evans - May 23  
Braidon and Shana Barkman - May 23  
Deane and Darlene Brees - May 24

Congratulations and happy anniversary to you!

To become a member of the free "Anniversary Club," e-mail your anniversary (and those of your friends and family) to news@redoakexpress.com, mail to P.O. Box 377, Red Oak, IA 51566, or drop by our office at 2012 Commerce Dr.

Senior Menu

Thursday, May 18: Spaghetti casserole, Italian vegetable blend, broccoli florets, lemon bar, beverage mix.  
Friday, May 19: Salisbury steak with brown gravy, whipped potatoes, lima beans, baked cookie, beverage mix.

Monday, May 22: BBQ rib patty on a bun, scalloped potatoes, diced beets, fresh seasonal fruit, beverage mix.  
Tuesday, May 23: Chicken stuffing casserole, glazed cooked

carrots, Brussels sprouts, multi-grain bread slice, baked cookie, beverage mix.  
Wednesday, May 24: Chili on a baked potato, corn, cornbread, pineapple tidbits, beverage mix.  
For more information, call the

Senior Center at 623-3497 or Carolyn at 402-926-8683. Please call for reservations by 9:30 a.m. the day before you plan to eat lunch.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Advent Christian

300 S. 2nd Ave., Villisca, Rev. Jeff Eason, Sunday School, 9:30 a.m., Worship, 10:30 a.m., Celebrate Recovery, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.

Assembly Of God

1005 Senate, Red Oak, 623-2174, Services, 10:30 a.m.

Baptist

The Bridge (First Baptist Church), 406 N. 3rd St., Red Oak, Rev. Len Taylor, Worship, 11 a.m.  
Grace Baptist, 1510 N. 6th St., Red Oak, Gary D. Walters, Bible class, 10 a.m., Worship, 11 a.m., Worship, 6 p.m.; Wednesday, Prayer, 7 p.m.  
Grace Baptist, 525 Main St., Griswold, Victor Maxson, Bible study, 10 a.m., Worship, 11 a.m. Online: 11 a.m. livestream.

Southern Baptist

Crossroads Community Church, 303 E. Oak St., use the alley entrance, Rev. Ricky Rohrig, Sr., Celebration Services with Kids' Church, 9:23 a.m., Wednesdays in the Word, live on Facebook, 6:30 p.m. 712-357-1060, crossroadsredoak.com. Online: 9:45 a.m. approx. live on Facebook.

Catholic

St. Joseph's, 131 W. High, Villisca, Father Sylvester Okoh, Sunday

Mass, 8:30 a.m.  
St. Mary's, 1510 Highland Ave., Red Oak, Father Lazarus Kirigia, Saturdays, 5 p.m. (1st, 3rd, 5th Saturday); Sunday, 10:30 a.m., in Spanish, 1 p.m.

Christian

First Christian, 1909 Summit St., Red Oak, Pastor AJ Baratta, PreKindergarten - Sunday School, 9:30-10:15 a.m., Fellowship, 10 a.m., Worship, 10:30 a.m. Online: 10:30 a.m. live on Facebook.

Christian & Missionary Alliance

Citylight Southwest Iowa, 705 Bradford, Emerson. Co-lead pastors Matt Keller, Tyler Mass. Worship with children's church, 10 a.m. in-person gathering. Online: 10 a.m. live on Facebook.  
Faith Community, 2701 N. 8th St., Red Oak, Pastor Dan Wetzel, Associate Pastor Stephen Beaulier, Worship, 9:30 a.m. Connection Classes for pre-kindergarten-adults, 11 a.m. Wednesday activities: Faith Kids, Pre-K grade 4, 6-7:30 p.m. Faith Midpoint, grades 5-6, 6-7:30 p.m. Faith Youth, grades 7-12, 7-8:30 p.m. Online: 9:30 a.m. on KCSI, 9:30 a.m. on Facebook.

Church Of Christ

Church Of Christ, Elliott, Sunday Bible School, 9 a.m., Worship, 10 a.m., Men's and Women's Bible study and breakfast, first Sunday of the month at 7:30 a.m.  
River of Life Church, Hwy. 48 North, Red Oak, Interim Minister Kevin Berry, Sunday School 9 a.m., Worship, 10 a.m.

Church Of The Nazarene

Red Oak, 401 E. Prospect St., Rev. Lori Lathrop. Radio ministry, 8:30 a.m., worship with children's church at 10:30 a.m.

Covenant

Evangelical, Rev. Matt King, 308 Eastern, Stanton, Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Worship, 10:45 a.m. Online: 10:45 a.m. live on Facebook and later on Youtube.  
Faith Covenant Church, 212 Alice St., Essex, Pastor Gordon Scott, Pastor Staci Shearer, Worship, 8:30 a.m.  
First Covenant, Rev. Alan Dean, pastor, 3rd & Hammond, Red Oak, Worship, 9:30 a.m.

Jehovah's Witness

210 Argus Road, Shenandoah, Thursday, 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m., public Bible discourse.

Lutheran

Bethesda Lutheran, Rural Clarinda. Worship 9:30 a.m. Worship, Sunday School 10:30 a.m.  
Bethlehem Lutheran, 1101 Summit St., Red Oak, Rev. Jennifer Yeske-Drown, Sunday worship, 11 a.m.  
Strand Evangelical, Rural Villisca, Rev. Marietta Nelson-Bittle, Worship, 9:45 a.m.  
Fremont Lutheran (Nyman), 1147 Ironwood Ave, Red Oak, Pastor Ann Albert, Worship, 9:30 a.m., Sunday School, 10:30 a.m.  
Mamrelund Lutheran, 410 Eastern Ave., Stanton. Worship, 10:30 a.m. Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. Online: 10:30 a.m. FMTC Cable Channel 1, also live on Facebook.  
Mt. Calvary, 107 S. 5th, Villisca, Jerome Wagoner, Worship, 9:00 a.m. Shenandoah, Saturday Worship, 5:30 p.m.; Bible and Sunday School, 6:30 p.m.

Non-Denominational

Oaks Community Church, 41310 Ellington Rd., Emerson, Rev. Ron Perry, 712-824-7218, Sunday School, 10 a.m., Worship, 11 a.m.

Presbyterian

Center Ridge, 1546 N. 110th St., Red Oak, Caryn Pedersen, Worship 1 p.m., two times a month. Call 623-9023 for more information.  
First Presbyterian, 109 S. 3rd Ave., Villisca, Rev. Sandra Wainwright, Sunday School, 9:30 a.m., Worship, 10:30 a.m.  
Red Oak Presbyterian, 511 E. Coolbaugh, PO Box 402, Red Oak, Caryn Pedersen, redoakpresbyterianchurch.com, Service, 10:30 a.m. Online: 10:30 a.m. live on Facebook/Red Oak Presbyterian Church

Reformed Evangelical

Heartland Sovereign Grace Church, new church plant. Bible study Sunday, 5 p.m., www.swiacrec.com, contact@swiacrec.com.

United Methodist

First United Methodist, 600 E. Hammond, Red Oak, Rev. Jennifer Van Nostrand, Worship, Sunday, 9 a.m.; Youth group Wednesday 6:30-8 p.m., grades 6-12, snack is served. Online: 9 a.m. fumcro.org; click on the media tab to see previously recorded services.

Wesley Chapel UMC, Rev. Joni Hickey, M16 north off Hwy. 34 then west on Epperson. 624-8320. strahaniowachurch.org Worship, 8:30 a.m., Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.

Red Oak Circuit, Linda Westerhold; Hawthorne, 1248 210th St., Red Oak, Worship, 10 a.m.; Stratton, 1695 150th St., Red Oak, Worship, 11:15 a.m. Online: 11:15 a.m. live on Facebook.

Elliott United Methodist, Rev. Terry McClain, Sunday School, 9 a.m., Worship, 10 a.m. Online: 10 a.m. live on Facebook.

Emerson United Methodist Church, Rev. Denise Stevens, 801 Bradford Ave., Emerson, (712) 824-7368, Sunday School, 9:30 a.m., Worship, 10:30 a.m.

Grant United Methodist, Pastor Casey Pelzer, Worship services, 8:30 a.m. Online: 8:30 a.m. live on Facebook

United Methodist, 203 S. 3rd Ave., Villisca, Pastor Jennifer Van Nostrand, Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Worship, 10:45 a.m. Online: 10:45 a.m. live on Facebook.

Strahan United Methodist, Five miles south of Hastings on M16., strahaniowachurch.org, Rev. Joni Hickey, Sunday Worship service 9:45 a.m., Adult and child ren's Sunday School 10:45 a.m.

United Church Of Christ

First Congregational, 608 Reed St., Red Oak, Sunday Worship, 11:30 a.m. in the sanctuary with fellowship prior to the service at 10:30 a.m., Rev. Holly Scherff, interim pastor.

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Funeral Home - 623-2796

*Saturday, May 20 at 7:00*  
*Stanton High School Gym*

**CLASS COLORS**  
Purple & White

**CLASS FLOWER**  
Purple and White Carnations

**CLASS MOTO**  
"We didn't know we were making memories, we just knew we were having fun."



 <b>ABBIGAIL BURKE</b>	 <b>ALICE DUCKETT</b>	 <b>SAMANTHA HELBERG</b>	 <b>BRANDON HUDDLE</b>	 <b>MARLEIGH JOHNSON</b>
 <b>JOSHUA MARTIN</b>	 <b>DAMIAN MEEK</b>	 <b>DARTANGNAN MOST</b>	 <b>ADDISON OLSON</b>	 <b>KYLE PASTORE</b>
 <b>BROOKLYN SILVA</b>	 <b>CARLI SMITH</b>	 <b>JENNA STEPHENS</b>	 <b>MARISSA STROUGH</b>	 <b>KYWIN TIBBEN</b>
 <b>APRIL VANDERHOLM</b>	 <b>JONAN WOOKEY</b>	<i>Thank your local business for sponsoring this page</i>		
		<b>Fareway - Red Oak FMTC</b>	<b>Parker-Hannifin Corp. Subway - Red Oak</b>	
		<b>Greenbrier Rail Services - Red Oak</b>	<b>Montgomery County YMCA</b>	

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villages

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2023 Graduates*

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System USA, Inc.

**Celebrating  
Our Graduates**  
*Congratulations & best wishes!*

**Congratulations  
GRADUATING CLASS**

**CLARIOS**

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Tel 712.357.3650

**2023 Class  
OF  
congratulations**

As you celebrate the culmination of so much hard work and dedication, we wish you a joyful day and a rewarding future. **Congratulations and best of luck!**

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Graduates!*

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OF  
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*Commencement Ceremony*  
Sunday, May 21, 2023  
@ 2:00 p.m.  
Coming SWV Activity Center

CLASS COLORS  
Teal, Black & Silver

CLASS FLOWER  
White Rose tipped in Teal

CLASS MOTO  
"If you're not first, you're last"

CLASS SONG  
"Don't Forget About Me"  
By Simple Minds

## Congratulations to the Class of 2023



*Sending best wishes to our local graduates as they celebrate this milestone achievement!*



**Emily Adams**



**Robert Barnes**



**Alyssa Birt**



**Paighton Buffington**



**Howard Cooney**



**Skye Crawford**



**Bianca Dotson**



**James Drake**



**Cody Fast**



**Maggie Haer**



**Sawyer Hensley**



**Colin Jacobs**



**Anjali Kathikar**



**Marshall Knapp**



**Dakota Krause**



**Savannah Laughlin**



**Adyson Lundquist**



**Lindsay Maurer**



**Rylie McAlpin**



**Carlita McCoy**



**Logan McCuen**



**Julia Means**



**Avery Morgan**



**Ryanne Mullen**



**Newt Murren**



**Cord Nippert**



**Dakota O'Braint**



**Courtney Ransom**

Southwest Valley, Page 8A

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**2023 Class OF congratulations**  
As you celebrate the culmination of so much hard work and dedication, we wish you a joyful day and a rewarding future. Congratulations and best of luck!  
**PPI**

May 21, 2023 at 2:00  
in Trojan Hall

CLASS COLORS  
Teal & Rose Gold

CLASS SONG  
"Senior Year" by Drew Aldridge

CLASS FLOWER  
Peonies

CLASS MOTO  
"Only 47 more years and we are seniors again"

Class of  
**2023**



Olivia Baker

Preston Driskell

Mathew Givens

Nicholas Givens

Owen Hedditch

Brianne Johnson

Jacob Robinette

Victoria Sample

Jonathan Staley

Natalie Taylor

Thank your local business  
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As you celebrate the culmination of so much hard work and dedication, we wish you a joyful day and a rewarding future. Congratulations and best of luck!

**THE BEST IS YET TO COME**

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Achievement

Celebrating Our Graduates  
Congratulations & best wishes!

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Congratulations 2023 Graduates

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SOUTHWEST  
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7A

## 2023 Southwest Valley HIGH SCHOOL

Commencement Ceremony Sunday, May 21, 2023, @ 2:00 p.m.

Corning SWV Activity Center



Broderick Roberts

Allissia Runyon

Jayley Schlapia

Dalton Shadle

Dustin Shuler

Alanea Skelton

Mya Squibbs

Payge Tripp

Tyler True

Kameron Westlake

Logan Westlake

Rebecca Wetzel

Dillon Wright

Delaney Yates

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**Aim High!**  
Wishing our graduates the height of success and good fortune.

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**"WHERE THE COMMUNITY COMES TOGETHER"  
"FOOTBALL COMBINE"**



Under the direction of Red Oak High School football coach Michael Nordeen and his assistants and with local college scouts in attendance, the Southwest Iowa Football Combine tested the athletes' skills, speed, and agility. To do this, the combine featured a range of events which athletes performed at throughout the day. Pictured: Coach Nordeen preparing to time athlete Riley Fouts. (Photos submitted)



One of the athletes nearly clears the line in the long jump. The YMCA appreciates the coaches, volunteers, and college scouts for coming out and helping put together this great program. For more information about the Montgomery County Family YMCA, its programs, memberships, and volunteer/donor opportunities, call 623-2161, stop by the Y located at 101 East Cherry St., visit us on Facebook, or our website at www.mcmca.com.

**SOCCER RECOGNITION NIGHT**



Monday, May 8 was the Montgomery County Family YMCA Youth Soccer Recognition Night at Benda Field between games of the Creston vs. Red Oak high school girls and boys game.

The Y teams have been practicing since early March and have showed tremendous development in their soccer skills and game play. The teams competed in the newly formed Southwest Iowa Soccer League. The Y teams have had victories over numerous other towns and are league leaders in the rankings. The Y teams are comprised of players from not only Red Oak, but

also Stanton, East Mills, Clarinda, SWV and Essex.

All YMCA athletes play by the YMCA values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. The YMCA Sports Pledge is "I pledge to play the game the best I can. I will be a team player, respect my opponents, rules and officials. As a part of the YMCA I pledge to improve myself in spirit, mind and body."

Special thanks to our coaches Ashlee Vaughn, Charlie Brown, Chole Delay, Tyler Bell, Dan Case, Andy Wilkinson, Trina Rea, Corrine Jenkins, Eduard Grass, Ernesto Guerrero, and Jeremy Anderson.

**YMCA HOSTING RAFFLE**

The Y is going to raffle off a two-night stay in a lodge room at either Snow Mountain Ridge or Estes Park Center in Colorado. Proceeds from this raffle will go to the YMCA's Annual Campaign program. Each year the Montgomery County Family YMCA coordinates an annual campaign program so that we can honor our long-lasting policy that "no one is denied a YMCA membership or programming opportunities" due to financial limitations.

Tickets went on sale on March 31 and the drawing for the winner will be on June 23. The winner can use the cabin anytime between June 30 and May 1,

2024. Tickets can be purchased at the front desk of the Y, from any Y staff member or board member, or on online at [montgomeryco.reliquicore.com/programs/110032/special-events/?locations=13](http://montgomeryco.reliquicore.com/programs/110032/special-events/?locations=13). Pick up your tickets early.

For more information on the YMCA of the Rockies Raffle or how one can become a member, volunteer, donor, or simply involved with the Montgomery County Family YMCA, please stop in for a visit or tour of the YMCA, call the YMCA at 623-2161, or visit the YMCA on Facebook, or the Y's website at [mcmca.com](http://mcmca.com).

**NEW LOW IMPACT OPTION AT THE Y**

The Montgomery County Family YMCA received a \$5,300 grant made possible by the Montgomery County Community Foundation.

The grant assisted the YMCA in the purchase of two new low impact cardiovascular machines, a NuStep T5 Recumbent Cross Trainer and a CPO Octane Lateral X Machine. These two machines offer virtually no impact on joints and are helpful for individuals recovering from injury or who desire low impact cardiovascular exercise options.

Thank you to the Foundation Board along with the Community Foundations of Southwest Iowa staff for their time and willingness to help administer this program, which makes a profound impact on the many

worthwhile organizations within our county.

To learn more about the Montgomery County Community Foundation contact Iowa Foundation Director Stacey Goodman by mail at 3555 Farnam St., Suite 222, Omaha, NE 68131, by phone at 1-800-794-3458, email [info@omahafoundation.org](mailto:info@omahafoundation.org), or visit the foundations website at [omahafoundation.org/swiowa](http://omahafoundation.org/swiowa).

For more information about the Montgomery County Family YMCA and its programs, memberships, and volunteer/donor opportunities, call us at 712-623-2161, stop by the Y located at 101 East Cherry Street, visit us on Facebook, or the website at [mcmca.com](http://mcmca.com).

**MEMORIAL DAY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

The Montgomery County Family YMCA will be closed on Monday, May 29 in honor of Memorial Day.

The Red Oak Scouts BSA, Montgomery County Court of Honor, and the Montgomery County Family YMCA's Togetherhood Program will be placing American flags throughout the Evergreen Cemetery and at the graves of veterans.

The Montgomery County Veterans Memorial Court of Honor will be placing large American memorial flags along the walkways throughout the cemetery starting at 6 a.m.

The Red Oak Scouts BSA will be placing small flags by the grave sites of veterans at 6:30 a.m. with flags to be taken down at 4 p.m.

For those interested in volunteering to place and/or remove flags, please meet at the Evergreen Cemetery, 1900 N. 8th St., at 6 a.m. for placing the larger flags, or at 6:30 a.m. to assist the Boy Scouts with the smaller flags and again at 4 p.m. to take down flags.

Please listen to KCSI/KOAK Radio 95.3 FM or 1080 AM before 6 a.m. for changes due to weather. If inclement weather occurs after flags are placed, the flags may need to be taken down early. Again, please listen to KCSI/KOAK for the most up-to-date information.

There will be a free concert given by the Marine Forces Reserve Band from Louisiana on Sunday, May 28 at 2 p.m. at the Wilson Performing Arts Center located at 300 Commerce Drive.

Seating is limited, so please stop at the Wilson Performing Arts Center, visit [wilsonartscenter.org](http://wilsonartscenter.org), or call 712-623-3183 to reserve your seats.

The concert is being sponsored by American Legion Post #67, Montgomery County Memorial Veteran Court of Honor, VFW Post #2265, Houghton State Bank, and Elks Lodge BPOE #1304.

The Y's Togetherhood program connects people from all backgrounds to plan and carry out volunteer projects that address a real need in our community. If

you would like more information, to volunteer with other projects, or to become part of the YMCA's Togetherhood Committee call 623-2161 or Committee Chair Jody Hossle at 712-370-4202.

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Advertisement for CORNING OPERA HOUSE Cultural Center. Includes an image of the opera house and text: 'Find Out More About LIVE ENTERTAINMENT VENUE RENTALS HISTORIC TOURS Call 641-418-8037 www.CorningOperaHouse.com'.

# County seeing alternative methods for bridge replacement

Nick Johansen  
The Red Oak Express

Plans for a bridge replacement in the county have hit a snag.

At the regular Montgomery County Board of Supervisors meeting May 9, county engineer Karen Albert said they were looking at alternatives for a bridge replacement project on L Avenue, near the intersection at L Avenue and 250th St.

"Originally, we had planned to replace the bridge with pipe structures, but due to the new laws regarding Waters of the U.S., it is not economically feasible, so we're looking at an alternative structure to replace that bridge," explained Albert.

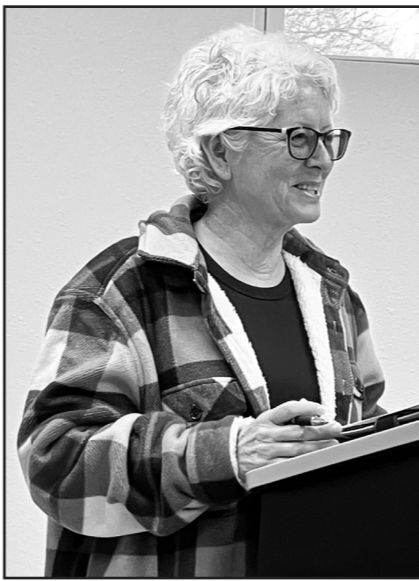
Supervisor Donna Robinson said she had heard the new law was under discussion but wasn't sure it had been put in place. After contacting the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albert confirmed

that it was

"We submitted the Corps a preliminary plan to see if there were any issues with the proposed pipe structure. The Corps contacted us and said based on the plans, it would have cost us around \$800,000 in fees due to the amount of stream we were losing," Albert said. After that initial contact, we heard there was a hold on the law being put into place, so we contacted the Corps to see if we could proceed, but we were told by the Corps that the law had been put into place and we could not do what we had originally planned."

Supervisor's Chair Mike Olson said the law was enacted by executive order and turned over to the Army Corps of Engineers. He questioned how long it would remain in place.

"I would assume after this gets taken back to the Supreme Court, it will likely be nullified. Basically the law enforces liquidated damages over 117 feet of



County engineer Karen Albert addresses the supervisors. (Nick Johansen/The Red Oak Express)

stream bed. If you disturb more than 117 feet of stream bed, you start paying a fairly healthy fee of liquidated damages to the U.S. government," advised Olson.

Albert confirmed that in the preliminary plan, if the bridge is replaced with culvert pipe, the stream bed would be used up.

"That pipe is part of the 117 feet of stream bed we're disturbing, because we're replacing the stream bed with the bottom of a pipe. The configuring of the pipe also affected the stream bed, so under the new law, the project just wasn't economically feasible.

Albert said they were still in the preliminary stages of finding an alternative project for the site and were looking at a project that would be the most economically feasible to the county.

Albert also advised they are seeking survey responses in regards to the updated comprehensive plan. A link

to the survey can be found at [swipco.mysocialpinpoint.com/live-montgomery-county](http://swipco.mysocialpinpoint.com/live-montgomery-county).

"There are pages posted that provide a QR code for phones that will take them to the survey. We're encouraging everyone to go online and fill out that survey," commented Albert.

The supervisors also approved a tax abatement on county-owned property north of 200th St. and west of G Avenue.

**In other business, the supervisors:**

- Approved the sheriff's report of fees for April, 2023, in the amount of \$17,600.
- Approved the recorder's report of fees for April, 2023, in the amount of \$16,730.
- Approved the renewal of an alcohol license for the Red Oak Country Club.

# RO School board approves bid for Inman roofing project

Nick Johansen  
The Red Oak Express

The Red Oak School Board is proceeding with a plan to do a partial re-roofing project at Inman Elementary.

The Red Oak School Board met in special session May 9, opening with a public hearing on the proposed plans, specifications, form of contract, and estimated costs of the partial re-roofing project.

Superintendent Ron Lorenz said the project would involve the removal of 9,500 square feet of the existing roof, and replacement materials, edging, and flashing. The portion of the roof being replaced was installed in 2001.

"The contract stipulates the work would be completed by Oct. 1, and there is a \$15,000 bonus to the contractor if the project was completed by Aug. 15," Lorenz said.

The district received two bids for the project. No oral or written comments were received, and the public hearing was closed.

The board then moved to discussion and approval of the Inman Elementary partial re-roofing plans and specifications. The plans and specifications were unanimously approved.

The board also approved a form of contract and the estimated cost projections for the project, roughly \$275,000, then approved a letter of agreement with Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture for design services and coordination of the bid process for the project, at a cost of \$12,000. Lorenz said it should have been put on the agenda earlier, as some of the services had already been performed, and Alley Poyner would also provide

administrative services during the project.

The last board action was to award the Inman Elementary partial re-roofing contract to Elevate Roofing.

"The good news is, the low bid came in at roughly \$55,000 less than the estimate, so that's exciting," commented Lorenz.

The board approved awarding the contract to Elevate Roofing for \$219,228.

The board also discussed a partnership with Green Hills Area Education Agency in hosting the Rising Hope Academy. Lorenz said the location was perfect for them, and they already had a Red Oak AEA office, and the district's centralized location would be easy for other districts to reach.

Lorenz added the Rising Hope Academy is a specialized program that serves students with challenging behaviors and mental health concerns.

"This is something the Green Hills AEA has done in Clarinda for several years. They're making a change there, and this is an opportunity for us. We'd like to use the portable classroom unit that we procured last year," said Lorenz. "We've been doing work with declining enrollment, and while we'll have to do some doubling up, we feel we can repurpose that room and provide some very helpful supports for some of our challenging kids."

Lorenz said the program would be limited to eight students, with around four of the students being from Red Oak. Lorenz said hosting the program provided a number of benefits.

"Green Hills would bring a behavior specialist, a teacher, and a paraprofessional that they hire. They would run the pro-

gram in that facility, and we would be able to piggyback on specialized training. Also, if we have students not in the program but in need of social skills instruction, they would be allowed to do that. Principal Jane Chaillie believes the program is possible, and the value we get from having those services so close would outweigh any inconvenience they have with the classrooms," advised Lorenz. "There are many requests for these kinds of services and it will fill up. With them working along with us, it puts us in a good position to just access the services. I don't know if we'd get any preferential treatment, but the arrangement and location would help us."

Lorenz closed his comments by saying both he and Chaillie are both on board with proceeding with partnering with the AEA for the program. No action on the item was taken, and Lorenz said his comments were informational only.

**In other business, the board:**

- Approved a request for School Beyond School students to travel to Omaha, Neb., and visit the Henry Doorly Zoo May 20.
- Approved the hire of Jesse Taylor as P.E. teacher at Inman Elementary for the 2023-24 school year.
- Approved the hire of Amy McClintock as special education

teacher at Inman Elementary for the 2023-24 school year.

• Approved the hire of Ron DeVries as varsity head boys basketball coach for the 2023-24 school year.

• Approved the hire of Alec Ruskell as varsity assistant softball coach for the 2023-24 school year.

• Approved the resignation of Bevin Anderson as English-language arts teacher at the junior/senior high school, effective at the end of the 2022-23 school year.

• Approved the resignation of Stuart Longworth as English-language arts teacher at the junior/senior high school, effective at the end of the 2022-23 school year.

• Approved the resignation of Mary Carlson as math teacher at the junior/senior high school, effective at the end of the 2022-23 school year.

• Approved the resignation of Ashley Gacke as fifth grade teacher at Inman elementary, effective at the end of the 2022-23 school year.

• Approved the resignation of Heather Hall as district nurse, effective at the end of the 2022-23 school year.

• Approved the resignation of Coleman Mullenix as physical education teacher, varsity head girls basketball coach, assistant varsity girls track coach, student council sponsor, and weight training sponsor at the junior/

senior high school, effective at the end of the 2022-23 school year.

• Approved the resignation of Dillon Wisner as assistant junior high football coach and assistant junior high wrestling coach, effective at the end of the 2022-23 school year.

• Approved the resignation of Taylor Wood as instrumental music teacher at the junior/senior high school, effective at the end of the 2022-23 school year.

• Approved the resignation of Tristan Johnson as head varsity

boys tennis coach, effective at the end of the 2022-23 school year.

• Approved the resignation of Nikki Rengstorf as junior class prom sponsor, effective at the end of the 2022-23 school year.

• Approved the resignation of Ron DeVries as varsity assistant boys basketball coach, effective at the end of the 2022-23 school year.

Lorenz said there were a number of hirings and resignations on the list, but the district is working hard to get open positions filled.

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# Davies Amphitheater

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Sunday, July 2..... US Air Force Heartland of America Band  
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Saturday, July 8 ..... Come Together Band  
Sponsored by Stouder Plumbing - Chad & Tina Stouder

Saturday, July 15 .....Dustin West Band  
George Strait Tribute  
Sponsored by Hilltop Animal Hospital

Saturday, July 22 ..... Taxi Driver  
Sponsored by Jim Hughes Real Estate

Saturday, July 28 ..... Touch of Grey  
Sponsored by Best Finish Auto

#### AUGUST

Saturday, Aug. 5 .....Bozak & Morrisey  
Sponsored by Creative Association Management, Joe and Mary Pittman

Saturday, Aug. 12 ..... Shadow Ridge  
Sponsored by Lincoln Trust

Sunday, Aug. 13 .....Glenwood Community Band  
Free Will Offering

Saturday, Aug. 20 .....Tanner Foss Project  
Free Will Offering

Sunday, Aug. 27 ..... Silas Creek  
Sponsored by Land Surveying Services

#### MAY

Saturday, May 27 .....Billy McGuigan  
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Admission \$15 or \$5 discount with Gold Card

#### JUNE

Saturday, June 3 ..... Those Guys with Kelly Evans  
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Saturday, June 10 ..... Relay for Life  
Community Event

Sunday, June 11 .....Acoustic Thieves  
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Saturday, June 17 .....High Heel  
Sponsored by Sugar Makery

Saturday, June 24 .....Nebraska Rock and Roll All Stars  
Sponsored by Bravo! and the Brendan Buchanan Family

# Supervisors approve multiple ARPA fund requests

**Nick Johansen**  
The Red Oak Express

The Montgomery County Board of Supervisors has approved American Rescue Plan Act funding for more key projects.

At the regular supervisors meeting May 9, the supervisors first met with Jon Spunaugle, speaking on behalf of the Montgomery County Conservation Board. Spunaugle said the first funding request was for the purchase of new Smartboards.

"This is for the education of the kids in the classrooms out there. The cost of the new Smartboards in the amount of \$3,400," Spunaugle said.

The second request was for \$15,525 for the purchase of a new side-by-side all terrain vehicle.

"Currently, conservation is using a 2003 four-wheeler, and the other is a UTV that was transferred from Montgomery County Secondary Roads after secondary roads got a new one. The new side-by-side will help with burns and all around trail work," commented Spunaugle. "I got with Olson's Outdoor Power in Atlantic and they cut us a really nice deal for the side-by-side, which includes a glass windshield and power steering."

The final request was for \$31,000. Spunaugle said that funding would be used for a much needed remodel of the Wolfe Nature Center.

"The renovations would include new drywall, painting, trim, and probably replacement of the windows. Also during that construction, naturalist Cassandra Alfstad wants to modify the turtle tank to make it more handicap-accessible and accessible to smaller children, which would mean lowering the tank and reconstructing it," stat-

ed Spunaugle.

Spunaugle added, the interior of the building needed work, especially with the influx of kids at the center.

"Cassandra is doing a fantastic job with the education. She's done a lot of extra things, and we have a lot of kids that come through that building. It needs some attention, so that we can keep it functional. We also may look at some new flooring. As far as the renovations, we're planning to get as much as we possibly can out of that \$31,000," explained Spunaugle. "I don't know when the building was remodeled in the past, but it hasn't been remodeled for as long as I can remember."

Bids are currently being sought, and Spunaugle said they were looking for a happy medium in the bids. There is currently no timeline for the renovations to be completed.

Supervisor Donna Robinson, who sits on the ARPA committee, advised the supervisors that since they started funding things through the program, Montgomery County Conservation has asked for very little.

"We're trying to even things out a little and bring it to some closure. The Villisca kids come down to the center twice a year at least, so they are definitely getting plenty of foot traffic," Robinson said.

Spunaugle said putting the funding into the county's assets, such as the building, would be a good use for the funding.

Supervisor Mark Peterson also is a member of the Montgomery County Conservation Board. Peterson said Montgomery County Conservation is very active and quite deserving of the funding.

The supervisors approved the funding request of \$3,400 for Smartboards, \$15,525 for



Jon Spunaugle spoke on behalf of the Montgomery County Conservation Board. (Nick Johansen/The Red Oak Express)

the new side-by-side ATV, and \$31,000 for remodeling.

Maintenance supervisor Dan Wright was next to speak. Wright was seeking \$84,500 in funding for new windows.

"We're looking at replacing a total of 67 windows. In the attic, we'll be replacing 25 windows and 42 windows on the other floors of the courthouse. A lot of these windows have nothing left of the frames, and there's nothing holding the glass. I'm having glass fall on the outside of the building," Wright said.

"That will take care of almost all of the windows, except for maybe 12 or 15 vault windows, but they can probably be sealed, rather than replaced. If we do the 67 windows, we'll have virtually everything replaced. Even with the window replacements we've done now, it's made a dramatic difference in our heating and cooling."

Wright's second request was for \$200,000 for tuckpointing work on the courthouse roof.

"I did get Andrew Tuckpointing from Clarinda. We definitely need a bunch of tuckpointing done on the brick up top, all the way around the building. Any work that they do should be good for the next 30 years," advised Wright.

Wright was asked if the tuckpointing costs would be lower than the requested \$200,000. Wright said it was possible.

"Once the funding is approved, they'll order the materials and get done with the project by the end of summer."

County Auditor Jill Ozuna advised the supervisors there was a \$22,000 invoice for the county's IT upgrade, which may require less funding be allocated to the tuckpointing.

"We have scheduled these projects to the penny to use up the ARPA money. The supervisors may want to approve up to \$200,000 for the tuckpointing so there's some wiggle room for payment of the IT invoice," advised Ozuna.

Supervisor Randy Cooper asked if the costs would be over \$200,000. Wright said he's waiting on a full quote.

"There's a chance it may be less. They're still putting numbers together. If we get it approved, we can get on the list. If we don't get on the list now,

he'll be booked for the rest of the year and we'll be waiting," Wright commented.

The supervisors approved the request of \$84,500 for replacement of the windows, and funding of up to \$200,000 for the courthouse tuckpointing.

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# Hunting and fishing licenses available for Iowa veterans

The Express Staff

The new Armed Forces Hunting and Fishing licenses are now available to residents of Iowa who served in the armed forces of the United States on federal active duty.

The new annual fishing license, or hunting and fishing combo license, is \$7.

To qualify, veterans will need to submit a one-time appli-

cation for the Iowa Hunting/Fishing License for Resident Armed Forces Veteran along with a copy of their DD214. The application is available online at [iowadnr.gov/Hunting/Hunting-Licenses-Laws/License-Applications](http://iowadnr.gov/Hunting/Hunting-Licenses-Laws/License-Applications) under Residents Only Applications.

Upon approval, the applicant's account will be updated to reflect their status. They may then purchase the new license

anywhere Iowa hunting and fishing licenses are sold. Qualifying veterans who have already purchased a hunting or fishing license for 2023 may submit the application, and then purchase the veterans license once their current license expires.

If you have questions or want to purchase hunting and/or fishing licenses, please contact the Montgomery County Recorder's office at 712-623-4363.

## COUNCIL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

main. They've been running pretty much on schedule on that portion of the project."

Following that, Baird said contractors will be putting lines on both side of the street, and compacting the subgrade.

"They've had a little trouble with that portion of the project. The soil did not go back in very well on the water mains, so they are going to remove a portion and pack that back in, and add a rock sub base," Baird stated.

If all goes well, Baird said the street may be reopened to some traffic in early June.

"The plan is to re-open the street sometime after it's poured in the first week of June, depending on weather. That's what they've told us they're trying for as of this week. We'll see how the weather impacts that timeline. Also, when they do that, it will be local traffic only, and people will have to park on the street because they'll still have to pour out the concrete for the driveway approaches," advised Baird.

Lastly, Baird said conversations had taken place with emergency services.

"We've talked through the situation, and the contractors said they don't care if the concrete is wet, if emergency crews need it, they can come in. They'll

put in ramps, on either side for guaranteed emergency access. Also, if there is anyone that has a medical appointment, there's a possibility that they can take the

resident to and from their house if they know in advance," Baird commented.

No further action was taken by the council.

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Pack a lunch & a water bottle!  
A snack will be provided  
TWEEN CAMP  
2ND-6TH GRADERS  
JULY 24-28  
9AM-4PM  
\$150 before June 1 (\$200 after June 1)  
Price includes T-Shirt  
Pack a lunch & a water bottle!  
A snack will be provided  
For More Information or to Register:  
Call 712-623-3135 Email: [info@wilsonartscenter.org](mailto:info@wilsonartscenter.org)  
Or stop by The Wilson at: 300 Commerce Drive, Red Oak, Iowa 51566

The Wilson Performing Arts Center presents  
**The Marine Forces Reserve Band**  
SUNDAY, MAY 28  
2PM  
A Free Concert  
To honor our nation's fallen heroes  
SEATING IS LIMITED. FOR TICKETS, CALL 712-623-3183 OR GO TO [WWW.WILSONARTSCENTER.ORG](http://WWW.WILSONARTSCENTER.ORG)  
SPONSORED BY: AMERICAN LEGION POST #67, MONTGOMERY COUNTY VETERANS MEMORIAL COURT OF HONOR, VFW Post #2265, HOUGHTON STATE BANK, ELKS LODGE - BPOE #1304  
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We have a new suite with all the comforts of home!  
Receive all the care provided by our skilled nursing facility PLUS the benefit of services provided by a local Hospice Team!  
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