



# RED OAK ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

THE *Heart* OF SOUTHWEST IOWA

By the Red Oak Heritage Foundation

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## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Red Oak Graduate Judi Sheppard Missett  
Image from Inc.com

Judi Sheppard Missett, born and graduated from Red Oak, Iowa, founded Jazzercise, Inc. is the world's leading franchiser of dance and fitness classes. Judi was born in Iowa in 1944. As a toddler, she was pigeon-toed, and had to wear leg braces. Because of this her doctor recommended she take dance classes as physical therapy, and she took her first class at the age of three. Apparently, her talent was evident from the beginning. Her mother especially encouraged young Judi, though it was difficult to find qualified dance teachers in the small town of Red Oak. So her mother recruited dance teachers to settle near Red Oak, promising the recruits a place to teach, students, and offering her own bookkeeping and costume-sewing services. By the time Judi was ten years

old, she was teaching dance herself. After she graduated from high school, she moved to Chicago and enrolled in the theater and dance program at Northwestern University.

The history of Jazzercise can be traced back to 1969 when Judi was a student at Northwestern University in Chicago and taught dance classes at a jazz studio. Her classes had a 90 percent dropout rate, and she searched for ways to improve retention. One day it dawned on her that her students attended the class to lose weight, have fun and get in shape — not to become professional Broadway dancers. As an experiment, she turned them away from the mirrors and became less critical of their movements. Her students loved the concept, and she soon doubled and tripled her class attendance until the room was packed.

To meet the high demand for classes, Judi trained 11 instructors at her home. Later as the number of instructors grew, Judi and Jack turned to a new technology at the time — the home VCR — to train the teachers. The couple drove to San Diego to purchase two VCRs and a video camera, and Jack, a former Chicago CBS news reporter, filmed Judi's dance routines, made copies of the videotapes one by one and mailed them to the teachers.

When the Jazzercise instructor numbers grew to 100, the couple started their own production company to produce the tapes for Jazzercise as well as clients nationwide. Judi also took her concept to the next level by selling franchises nationwide and worldwide and provided business opportunities for thousands of women. Jazzercise instructors are across the United States and in Europe, Japan, and Latin America. The company has over 5,000 franchises, and an estimated 450,000 students worldwide.

Jack Missett is Judi's husband. The two met on a blind date during the summer of 1965 and married a year later. They have two children, Shanna and Brendan plus grandchildren.



Jazzercise by Judi Sheppard Missett Vintage Workout Fitness Dance Record -- Retro 1980's Cardio Work Out Vinyl

# RED OAK BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

## DAVIS TAYLOR INSURANCE: INSURING RED OAK FOR 40 YEARS.



Here is our first Alumni Business Spotlight. It just so happens that this business that includes at least four Red Oak Community Grads. Rick Taylor Class of 1970, Sue Taylor class of 1973, Nathan Taylor class of 2005 and Ryan Beeson class of 1998.

Davis-Taylor Insurance was originally founded by William Peterson in 1906 and was known as the Peterson Agency located on the northeast corner of the square in downtown Red Oak. Upon his passing, Ross Davis purchased the agency. Since then a member of the Davis and Taylor family has owned and operated the agency. Rick Taylor, with more than 40 years in the insurance industry, is the current owner and president of the company.

Rick, was born just north of Red Oak and lives on the family farmstead that was established in 1871. He attended the Stennett Consolidated school until the 8th grade, graduating from Red Oak Community High School with the class of 1970.

Rick attended Iowa Western Community College, graduating with an AS degree in 1972 and a BS degree from Iowa State in 1974.



Rick Taylor Class of 1970, Nathan Taylor class of 2005 and Ryan Beeson class of 1998.

After a short time in business in Illinois, Rick returned to Red Oak in 1976 to join his father-in-law Ross Davis in the Davis Insurance Agency. In 1984 Rick became a partner in the agency which became the Davis-Taylor Insurance Agency.

In 1973 Rick married Susan Lee Davis, daughter of Ross and Coralee Davis. They have two sons, Jason, Red Oak class of 1998 and Nathan, Red Oak class of 2005, and four grandchildren.

Jason also married a Red Oak grad, Lindsey Sickles Taylor Red class of 2001.

Rick has been very involved in Red Oak life. His leadership in the Red Oak Chamber and Industry Association, Red Oak Ambassadors, the Elks club and the Classy Chassis Car Club, along with fundraising for many charitable organizations has kept him very busy. Earlier in his life he coached little league baseball and youth basketball. He is also professionally active in many insurance industry groups. Rick and Sue's son Nathan joined the firm after graduating from Iowa State in 2009 and has been a licensed agent since 2010. Nate is married to Jaime Taylor who also works in the agency as a customer service representative. They have a son and a daughter.

Red Oak grad Ryan Beeson, Red Oak class of 1998, has been an agent with the company since 2003 after graduating from Northwest Missouri State University. Ryan resides in rural Red Oak with his wife Samantha Thomas Beeson, Red Oak class of 2006, and their three children.

Rick and the Davis Taylor Insurance Agency has been active in insuring Red Oak's future growth.



# RED OAK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Written by: Mark Erickson, Activities Director

The Red Oak School District Activities Department is proud to highlight our students, participants, and athletes from our winter seasons! Our coaches, directors, and sponsors strive to instill positive character qualities within our programs. Our activities department would like to publicly thank our alumni, businesses, and entire community for their ongoing support! Please read the exciting news about our programs and students below.

## WINTER 2023

Since our last article, we have learned of many awards earned by our winter participants. 11 our senior participants earned Hawkeye Ten Conference All Academic recognition by earning a 3.5 GPA or above throughout their high school career. Those participants were involved in basketball, bowling, cheerleading, and wrestling. All of our sports programs finished with a team GPA of 3.0 or above. The girls basketball team led the group with a combined 3.70 GPA.

We had two boys basketball players earn H-10 All Conference recognition with one of those being a unanimous first team player. One girls basketball player



Congrats to Landon Couse, Riley Fouts, Jack Kling, & Brayden Sifford for qualifying for the Drake Relays!



earned honorable mention H-10 All Conference status. We had one girls wrestler and three boys wrestlers make the state tournament. Dawson Bond was your 2A State Champion at 160 pounds.

## BAND

During the honor band season, we had one student selected to participate in the University of Nebraska at Lincoln Winter Winds Festival in February and another student chosen as an alternate. Eleven students were selected to participate in The University of Iowa Honor Band in February.

Red Oak hosted The Iowa High School Music Association's solo/small ensemble contest on April 1st. In the band program, we had 3 ensembles and 11 soloists perform. We are happy to announce the students received the following scores:

- 1- Division III (Good Performance)
- 4- Division II (Excellent Performance)
- 6- Division I (Outstanding Performance)

One band student was selected as the Outstanding Performer in their center.

## VOCAL

The 6th Grade Choir, 7th/8th Grade Choir and Junior High Minnisingers performed their Spring Concert Thursday, April 20th at 7pm. The concert involved almost 100 students and featured a student accompanist, a student who played their flute in one of the selections and several soloists, and students sang in three different languages as well!

Red Oak High School had 7 students selected for the Nebraska Wesleyan University Honor Choir which took place February 9-11 at the Nebraska Wesleyan University Campus in Lincoln, NE.

The Red Oak High School Vocal Music Department presented the musical “Fiddler on the Roof” on February 24-26. The musical involved over 55 high school and junior high students. The musical was adjudicated by the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards and will receive awards and accolades on June 1 for the IHSMTA showcase in Des Moines, IA.

The Red Oak High School Varsity Choir was one of 3 regional choirs to be invited to sing at Nebraska Wesleyan University for their Big Sing concert. The other choirs in the concert were the Nebraska Children’s Choir, Millard South High School Choir, and the Nebraska Wesleyan ensembles. The concert featured each choir individually and then all the ensembles joined together for mass choir number. The concert was held on March 27 at the Rogers Performing Arts Center on the Nebraska Wesleyan University Campus in Lincoln, NE.

On April 1, Red Oak High School hosted the IHSMA Solo/Ensemble District Music Contest. The Red Oak Vocal Music Department had 24 entries in the contest that were made up for 35 students. 14 of the groups/solos received I-Superior ratings, 9 groups/solos received II-Excellent ratings, and 1 soloist performing for comments only.



Congratulations to the 2023 Red Oak Prom Court!

## JH PLAY/MUSICAL

Our junior high play “Murder in the Knife Room” was outstanding! Our students and directors worked overtime to make these events a pleasure for all who attended!



## ATHLETIC BOOSTERS, MUSIC BOOSTERS, FFA ALUMNI AND SUPPORTERS

Our activities department is blessed with the amazing support of our Red Oak Athletic Boosters, Red Oak Music Boosters, and the FFA Alumni and Supporters. The groups help raise funds and volunteer for our activities programs. Without these amazing people, our students would not have the funds to purchase items for their programs. The work they do also goes toward providing opportunities for students to be involved in ways that would not be otherwise possible. If anyone is interested in donating time, money, and/or wants to learn more about how to support these groups, please contact Activities Director Mark Erickson at [ericksonm@redoakschools.org](mailto:ericksonm@redoakschools.org) or 712-623-6610.





# RED OAK JUNCTION DAYS

Written By: Dave McFarland

Recently, I was asked to write an article about Red Oak Junction Days. Chasing down facts turned out to be more of a challenge than I expected. Having lived in Red Oak for quite a few years now, I found myself unable to quickly recall when it all started.

I remember seeing a reference to the idea of Junction Days as a resurrection of the old “Monte Festo”. A centennial celebration of the founding of Red Oak. After a little searching, I found the answers I needed. In 1979, Chamber Manager Randy LaBounty and the Chamber planned a community-wide “day” to celebrate Red Oak’s historic past.

The celebration would include ceremonies at Fountain Square Park; music at the Chautauqua; dancing at the Red Oak Plaza; events at the High School, Public Library, Fire Station, and Hysham Club House. So many events that it required a shuttle bus. By the way, a ticket for the shuttle was twenty-five cents.

Through the years, the celebration has grown with some years being particularly memorable. One day grew to three and always the last of June. I remember the year Jan and James Norris chaired. It had a wild west theme and included a children’s rodeo. Who could forget how they invited the Blue River Regulators (reenactors) from Nebraska to stage a recreation of an Old West gunfight in Fountain Square Park. Pretty much standing-room-only.

I sure everyone has had their favorites through the years. Carnivals, baking contests, bed races, you name it and they probably had it. The River Raft Regatta was big for several years until problems arose. My future wife competed and came in around fourth in the first river race. The race was popular to the point it got too big and there was too much disparity; those who were strictly competitive, those taking their time and enjoying the river, and those who were not cut out for river racing maybe. Mainly, a little too much fun and after several mishaps the race was dropped.

Then there was the Great Pleasant Jones Race. Pleasant Jones was an early founder of Red Oak Junction. A



marathon run from the Square to the intersection of Old 34 and new 34, where they tagged a team mate, who in turn rode their bicycle to Viking Lake. The torch was then passed to a canoe team, who paddle their way around the lake. Retag the bicycle riding reversing the order back to the Square.

I had my first exposure to the History Center when I help with several events there. I met Lee Honeyman, local historian, there for the first time. He was giving talks about the history of Red Oak and how it was originally name Red Oak Junction from which the celebration takes its name. He told how the town was named after the Red Oak trees growing along the creek and how the ‘Junction’ was added as a note of optimism and to give more substance to the name of town. The post master had claimed it was too long, but it stuck. Often just called Red Oak, officially it was Red Oak

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Junction Days 2023 | June 22-25*

<b>[THURS] 22</b>	JUNCTION DAYS KICKOFF OPENING CEREMONY LETTUCE ENTERTAIN U
<b>[FRI] 23</b>	ROAR - RED OAK ALL CLASS REUNION EVERGREEN CEMETERY WALK
<b>[SAT] 24</b>	FUN RUN / WALK CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT VENDOR FAIR DOWNTOWN BEVERAGE GARDEN & LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
<b>[SUN] 25</b>	RED OAK AMBASSADORS FLIGHT BREAKFAST

**Red Oak**  
Chamber and Industry Association

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I competed several years west of town at the muzzle loading shoot that was an event. Black powder rifles and pistol puffed out flame and smoke in quest of trophies and bragging rights. There was even knife and tomahawk throwing. I still have (somewhere) a trophy for winning the tomahawk throw. But my favorite was the egg shoot. A raw egg was placed atop a wood post at fifteen yards. Each marksmen paid a dollar to enter with the object being that with you rifle you had to shoot the egg. The winner would take home the prize money, but if you missed you had to eat the egg. Each shooter took his turn, most missed, but four hit their mark, so we back up another two yards and tried again. One miss, three hits and another two yards added. First shooter...miss, second shooter...miss, then it was my turn. I sighted carefully and the trigger was squeezed. Flint struck steel and the old flintlock spoke. Through the smoke I was barely able to make out pieces of white shell and a yellow mass

becoming airborne. I will never forget those faces on that hot, June afternoon, when the question was posed, "Do we really have to eat a raw egg?" I never knew there were so many shades of green until then. There was even one protest, that if he had to eat a raw egg in the heat, we would have to call the rescue unit. In a moment of weakness, the organizers granted mercy and the eggs were return to their cartons.

Every year things change and yet the order of the day was the same. Morning til night, fun always seemed to be in order. The food was great, wonderful company and there was always the beer garden to look forward to in the cool of the evening. Competitor, spectator or just casual observer, you have to admit anything that draw so many people and creates so many memories is pretty special and is something to look forward to.

## 2023 UPDATES FROM MONTGOMERY COUNTY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL+ CLINICS



Montgomery County Memorial  
Hospital + Clinics

### RURAL HEALTH CLINICS

As always, we have many new and exciting things happening at Montgomery County Memorial Hospital + Clinics. We recently announced that three of our clinics are now certified Rural Health Clinics. A Rural Health Clinic (RHC) is a clinic that provides primary care and other health services in a rural medically under-served area in the United States. Founded in 1977, the Rural Health Clinic (RHC) program incentivizes physicians to provide primary care for rural residents while also encouraging the use of mid-level providers. RHC's go through a strenuous

federal certification process in order to benefit from a higher reimbursement plan from Medicare and Medicaid.

Benefits to our patients may include access to primary care that would otherwise be limited or non-existent; they provide local emergency care and life-saving services; and combat physician shortages by using mid-level providers. Our three Rural Health Clinics are Red Oak Medical Clinic, RHC which includes Internal Medicine and Surgical Services, Villisca Medical Clinic, RHC, & Malvern Medical Clinic, RHC.

### NEW MRI MACHINE

Another exciting piece of news is MCMH + Clinics has recently purchased an in-house MRI machine and is working to renovate our Red Oak facilities to house it. We are hopeful that the new machine will be operational by Fall 2023. This will provide our patients with increased availability for appointments!

MRI scans are often used to identify tumors or bone fractures that are too small for x-ray.

The scans are ideal for orthopedic, neurological, and vascular imaging, but can be used for other diagnoses as well. An MRI scan can take as little as 10 minutes or as long 2 hours. The duration depends on the specific purpose of the MRI scan. These scans are noninvasive and should not cause any pain. They are a great alternative to radiation-based scans.

## MLT PROGRAM

Currently at MCMH + Clinics, we have the unique opportunity for a students to attend a fully funded MLT program while receiving on-site job training/employment at MCMH. An MLT or Medical Lab Technician is a professional who collects and analyzes bodily fluids, tissue and other substances using lab equipment, tests

and procedures. They work in clinical, diagnostic or hospital laboratories and help diagnose disease or record normal findings by providing accurate test results.

## FREEDOM FROM SMOKING GROUP QUIT PROGRAM

Registration is also currently open for our “Freedom From Smoking Group Quit Program.” For just \$9.00 join us in a 7 week program held here in Red Oak at MCMH + Clinics that has helped hundreds of thousands of people become smoke free through a Freedom from Smoking group Clinic which offers a structured, systematic

approach to quitting smoking. A facilitator oversees it and you will learn how to know if you are ready to quit, medications that can increase your success, lifestyle changes to make quitting easier, how to prepare for your quit day and more!

There is always something exciting and motivating happening at MCMH + Clinics. To stay up to date events, classes and your health, be sure to follow us on social media on Facebook @Montgomery County Memorial Hospital and on Instagram @mcmhiowa. We are proud to continue helping improve our community's health here in Southwest Iowa. Every person, Every time. If you are in need of medical care of any kind, talk to your primary care physician or call 712.623.7000.



Montgomery County Memorial  
Hospital + Clinics



**FREEDOM**  
FROM SMOKING®

### You can quit smoking. We can help.

Join the American Lung Association's 7-week quit smoking program, conveniently held at Montgomery County Memorial Hospital. Hundreds of thousands of people have become smoke-free through a Freedom From Smoking® Group Clinic which offers a structured, systematic approach to quitting smoking.

Overseen by a certified facilitator, you will learn:

- How to know if you're really ready to quit
- Medications that can increase your success
- Lifestyle changes to make quitting easier
- How to prepare for your quit day
- Coping strategies for managing stress & avoiding weight gain
- How to stay smoke-free for good

### Freedom From Smoking Group Quit Program

**STARTS: Thursday, May 25, 2023**


Call Tina Alder at (712) 623-8446 or email [tinald@mcmh.org](mailto:tinald@mcmh.org) to RSVP.

Visit [Lung.org/ffs](http://Lung.org/ffs) for more information about the program or our online Freedom From Smoking® Plus if a Group Clinic isn't right for you.



Montgomery County Memorial Hospital Respiratory Therapy Department (712) 623-8446

1-800-LUNGUSA | [Lung.org/ffs](http://Lung.org/ffs)



MRIs use a strong **magnetic field** and **radio waves** to collect images.

The **first successful MRI** scan performed on a live **human** patient was performed on July 3rd, **1977**.

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**TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT OR FOR MORE INFO CALL 712.623.7000**

**Did You Know...**

**MRI stands for Magnetic Resonance Imaging?**



If you would like to forward this email on so others can sign up have them follow the link below to join the Red Oak Alumni Network and receive the Red Oak Alumni Newsletter quarterly!

<https://www.redoakiowa.com/alumni/>

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

If you have a submission for someone you think should be next issue's Alumni Spotlight send us an email to [redoakiowa.alumni.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:redoakiowa.alumni.newsletter@gmail.com)

If you know a graduate of Red Oak Schools that has passed and would like to be included in next issues obituary section please send their name, year of graduation, and year of passing to [redoakiowa.alumni.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:redoakiowa.alumni.newsletter@gmail.com)

### RED OAK ALUMNI "DID YOU KNOW"

If you would like to submit any Red Oak Graduates for our Red Oak Alumni "Did You Know" Section click this link to enter their information!

[Red Oak Alumni "Did You Know"](#)

If you would like to join the Red Oak Iowa Alumni Facebook Group just follow the below link and request to join! It is a private Red Oak Alumni group where people can ask questions, post about upcoming events, etc.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/redoakalumni>

## THE RED OAK ALUMNI NETWORK

Have a wonderful week, and be on the lookout for the next issue of the Red Oak Alumni Newsletter coming out August 2023.



## RED OAK ALUMNI NEWSLETTER SPONSORED BY THE RED OAK HERITAGE FOUNDATION

The Alumni Newsletter is sponsored by the Red Oak Heritage Foundation, our community foundation. If you would like to help support them or for more information on them go to [www.redoakheritagefoundation.org](http://www.redoakheritagefoundation.org)