



RED OAK ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

THE *Heart* OF SOUTHWEST IOWA

By the Red Oak Heritage Foundation

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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Written by: Adam Branting Reporter
at the Papillion Times March 30, 2022

Megan Hylok [Red Oak '93 Alum] a science teacher at Papillion La Vista South High School, has been selected by the nonprofit organization Ecology Project International to participate in an eight-day Teacher Fellowship in Costa Rica. From April 2 to April 10, 2022 Hylok conducted research in the rain forests and beaches of Costa Rica's Caribbean slope, collecting data and planning hands-on lessons near Pacuare Reserve, a field research station managed by EPI.

She and 11 other fellows worked alongside researchers and instructors monitoring leatherback sea turtles, collecting data on nesting during nightly turtle censuses and restoring their beach habitats. Hylok and her group will also explore the Tirimbina Biological Reserve, a rainforest in the northern region of Costa Rica. They will also be meeting with teachers and students from a local high school. "I am looking forward to this amazing opportunity to engage with the incredible biodiversity, both on the

coast and in the rainforest," Hylok said. "During the visit to the sea turtle reserve, I am excited to monitor the leatherback sea turtle and its hatchlings on the beach, while working alongside trained research mentors.

"Conducting research on sea turtles has always been a bucket list adventure for me, so I hope to gain a better understanding of how to conserve this keystone species."

Hylok has been teaching for 23 years, and currently serves as the science department chair at PLSHS. She teaches AP Biology and Environmental Science, coaches cross-country, and sponsors the science club. She is a graduate of Creighton University (B.S.), the University of Nebraska at Omaha (M.S.) and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (Ph.D.). She was awarded the 2010 Nebraska Biology Teacher of the Year.

The EPI Teacher Fellowship was established in 2013 as a professional development program, giving educators an opportunity to collaborate on real-world conservation projects and learn methods for teaching field science, according to EPI's website. "I believe students learn best when given the opportunity to experience and 'do' science," Hylok said. "Students must be able to ask scientific questions and then be allowed time, resources, and guidance to research questions of their interest. I feel learning develops best from the experiences students encounter, as well as the experiences they create. It is important for students to become scientists in order to understand science."

This will be Hylok's second research trip to Costa Rica. In 2000, she was "one of 50 educators in the United States chosen by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation to participate in several mini-research projects in Costa Rica."

"One of my independent field research projects involved collecting and analyzing data on the foraging behavior of leaf cutter ants," she said.

She has also done field research at the University of Nebraska's Cedar Point Biological Station in western Nebraska, exploring differences in parasite diversity at various ages among the *Fundulus zebrinus*, commonly known as the "plains killfish."

Hylok said that with her three children grown older, she wanted to travel and conduct research again.

"I found this program to fit my philosophy of empowering educators to inspire a love of science and conservation in their students," she said. "I feel it is one of my primary roles as an educator to expose students to as many experiences as I can, to help students find their passion. By allowing students to experience and 'do' science, I hope to instill a life-long learning of science."



Photo by David Troeger on Unsplash

RED OAK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Written by: Mark Erickson, Activities Director



Marching Band placing second in the parade awards

FALL 2022

The Red Oak School District Activities Department is proud to highlight our students, participants, and athletes from our spring and summer 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.

TIGERPALOOZA 2022

The Red Oak Activities Department, the Red Oak Athletic Boosters, the Red Oak Music Boosters, and the Red Oak FFA Alumni and Supporters invited all Red Oak area businesses to take part in the TIGERPALOOZA 2022 event that was held on Monday, August 22nd. The Red Oak School District Activities Department hosted their community pep rally on this day at 7:00 PM at the football field which included all of the fall activity programs. The annual TIGERPALOOZA event is all about bringing our community together and encouraging community members to shop local and eat local on this special day and then continue their Red Oak support by



MARCHING BAND

On Saturday, October 1st our high school marching band participated in the 67th Southwest Iowa Band Jamboree in Clarinda. Our marching band placed 2nd in the parade awards and field competition! This is the highest placing for the Red Oak High School Marching Band since at least 2008! Your last chance to see this marching band in action at a Red Oak football game is on Friday, October 14th.

FOOTBALL

The 4-0 beginning of the season is the first such start in over 50 years. Overall we ended the season 5-4.



Red Oak Marching Band Performing
All photos taken from Red Oak Bands & Red Oak Jr. & Sr. High Facebook Pages

FOOTBALL CHEER

Our football cheer team consists of 12 cheerleaders and our mascot - O.B. The cheerleaders have been instrumental in pumping up the crowd on Friday nights. The team decorated the Jr-Sr High School for Homecoming as well as organized all of the pep rallies that week!

VOLLEYBALL

Our varsity volleyball team is currently 17-12 overall. They are 6-1 in the Hawkeye Ten Conference which has them in 2nd place. As always, this group has one of the toughest volleyball schedules in our class in the state of Iowa. The season has been highlighted by a second place finish in our own tournament. The team finished runner-up to Mount Vernon who is currently ranked #1 in our class.



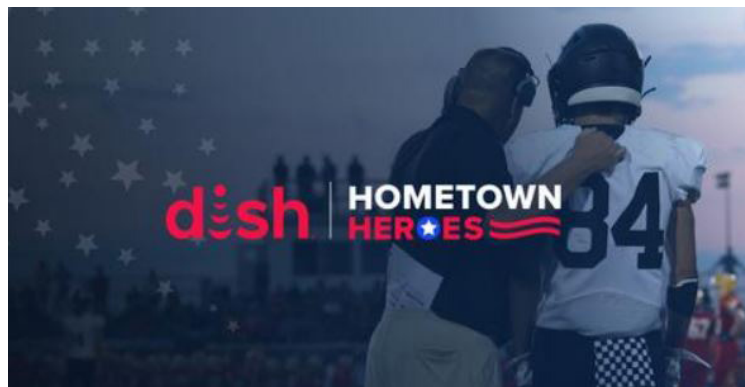
Red Oak Tigers Football Team in Homecoming Parade



Red Oak Marching Band Performing

CROSS COUNTRY

The cross country team has been setting individual personal records at almost every meet as of late. The team is highlighted by some outstanding junior high runners who consistently finish in the top 10 of each junior high race.



DISH NETWORK HOMETOWN HERO HIGH SCHOOL COACH OF THE YEAR

Info pulled from Red Oak Jr.-Sr. High School Facebook Page

Our activities department is excited to announce that Coach Michael Nordeen was presented with the DISH Network Hometown Hero High School Coach of the Year Award on Friday, October 14th at Russ Benda Field! Coach Nordeen received over 15,000 votes! What a show of support from the Red Oak community! The Red Oak Athletic Boosters opened the concession stand early, so everyone could dine at the field. In celebration of our outstanding community support, DISH Network generously offered to pay for the first 500 hot dogs! Thanks to KCSI for livestreaming the presentation! The presentation was followed by senior night. Thank you for attending to support Coach Nordeen and our senior participants in football, marching band, football cheer, and cross country!



RED OAK CHAMBER

Written by: Elaine Carlson
Director of Membership & Finance at the
Red Oak Chamber & Industry Association

Fall is one of my favorite seasons in Iowa. The cooler temps, fresh air, and many gorgeous colors of variety of trees and foliage are just a few reasons why I enjoy fall so much, especially in Red Oak! The fall season also brings those fundraising efforts of our area churches and organizations hosting those yummy comfort food dinners that are always so well supported.

COLD CASH

As the planning of Chamber Holiday events are in the works, one of the dates so many look forward to is the sale of Cold Cash! This year, \$25,000 of Cold Cash will be sold at the Red Oak Chamber office on Saturday, November 5th from 8 am until we sell out! The public will be able to purchase \$100 worth of Cold Cash for only \$80 with a limit of \$300 per household. The City of Red Oak continues to support this program with their investment of \$5,000 to make up the 20% discount. We appreciate the City's commitment for their continued support of this successful program. One distinct difference between Cold Cash & Red Oak Bucks is the expiration date. Cold Cash certificates will be valid from November 5th, 2022 through January 31st, 2023, giving purchasers three months to spend them. The Red Oak Bucks do not have an expiration



date. Red Oak Bucks and Cold Cash available for purchase by the public. The Cold Cash program continues to be a successful program that keeps those dollars local during the holiday season.

HOLIDAY SEASON

"Feel the Magic of the Holidays in Red Oak, Iowa" is our theme this year and we have so much going on throughout the season! The Holiday Extravaganza, aka Ladies Night Out event, has sold out two weeks prior to the event again this year! Also on the schedule are lighting of the Community Christmas Tree, horse drawn carriage rides, hot cocoa with Santa, lighted fire truck rides and a live reindeer display which are all happening downtown Red Oak. Other events that are the calendar include a morning of Holiday kids' crafts, a couple of free matinee holiday movies as well as promotions and events offered by other organizations and businesses again this year. We have planned for

and are looking forward to a magical family fun holiday season!

RED OAK UPDATES

Progress is happening on the Richard Simpson Memorial Stage renovation! It is exciting to see the enlarged footprint of the stage which will allow larger entertainment options for future events. If the weather cooperates, the timeline of completion is mid-November.

This is also the time of year when we are working on ROCIA Membership & Sponsorship Renewals for the next year. As we receive confirmation of those renewals, it helps us to then put together the overall budget and event budgets for 2023. Collectively, Red Oak Chamber and Industry Association members can achieve more than one business or individual can do alone. Their partnership impacts our community, area tourism, small business growth, education, and many other areas for our region. We value our relationship

with our investors and recognize it would be impossible to accomplish all that the Chamber does throughout the year if it were not for their continued support and investment.

Our Chamber is the only entity that markets Red Oak. We strive to market not only our member businesses and organizations but our community as a whole. We promote our own events and programs but also promote community events as well. If you haven't done so yet, please check out our website www.redoakiowa.com, 'like' our @RedOakChamberandIndustryAssociation and @RedOakJunctionDays Facebook Pages, and follow us on Instagram to keep up on the latest news and information!

Until next time!
Elaine Carlson



Ongoing progress on the stage in downtown Historic Fountain Square Park

Red Oak
Chamber and Industry Association

RED OAK ARTS DESTINATION

Written By: Jim Hoskinson

Adding art and color has started in Fountain Square Park! ROAD (Red Oak Arts Destination) a committee of the Southwest Iowa Arts Council, spearheaded the project to paint the eight concrete planter boxes, two at each intersection. Led by local artists Jim Hoskinson and Phillip Lamb, ROAD requested design ideas from the community. Beginning in August, the first two planters were cleaned and primed, ready to paint.

The first selected by the committee was submitted by Gannon Sallach, a 2022 graduate of Red Oak High School. Gannon's design depicted colorful native flowers,



Planter box designed & painted by Gannon Sallach



Planter box designed & painted by Samantha Williams

animal tracks of deer, bobcats, geese and ducks, and railroad tracks showing the importance of the railroad to our region.

The second by Samantha Williams, was designed to show the transition of the four seasons of the year in Iowa, on each side of the planter box, based on the coloring of oak leaves.

Design ideas are still needed for the remaining six planter boxes and can be sent to heritageportraits@yahoo.com. More information can be found at www.swiartscouncil.com and www.thefiveone8.com.

southwest iowa
Arts
council

RED OAK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Written By: Kathi Most, Librarian

This year the Red Oak Public Library is 113 years old. The library has seen numerous changes throughout this time, including three additions and a full remodel that was completed by the library's 100-year anniversary. One thing that hasn't changed, is the public's love of the library. Everyday people come to the library to find a good book, learn something new, or enjoy spending time with others.

Currently the library houses over 48,000 items and serves over 12,000 patrons. In the past few years, the library has started offering e-books, movies, music, and shows. They are also providing internet for in house use as well as WIFI hotspots for connections away from the building. One goal since the renovation was to add as many new programs as possible for patrons of all ages. Some of the recent additions to our services include: relaxation programing, local history displays (such as the People's Art collection), book clubs, genealogy



meetings, blood pressure checks, and numerous fun parties and events for kids and adults alike.

Libraries have traditionally encouraged a love of literacy, acceptance of others, and self-actualization. It is wonderful to see that 113 years later that tradition remains. This year, the library's main focus has been on how we can help others. Currently, we are looking into ways we can connect others with additional services that could offer aid to job seekers, people struggling with substance abuse, anyone in need of emotional or mental help, those who are without basic items and/or needs. To assist in this process, we are planning to provide a resource area with information about organizations that can assist those who need these services the most. We are also looking into doing food and clothing drives to provide resources to local charities so can disperse these items others.

One might also say, the library has added "Finding Ways to Cheer Others" to its mission. As part of the renovation, the library added a garden and patio area to the back

section of the building. This area is known for its eye-catching color and constantly changing scenery. There is also twenty-four-hour free internet which makes this area ideal for patrons who enjoy blending reading with the great outdoors.

As the weather begins to change, many of our patrons opt for the warmer indoor spaces that allow them to also enjoy our "Free Cup of Cheer" warm beverages while they read or study. Every new program and service that we have offered this year has been received with open arms and an incredible amount of support. Unending support is yet another tradition this library is truly grateful to receive.



RED OAK 'JUNCTION'

Written By: David McFarland
Montgomery County History Center



Postcard of Thomas D. Murphy Calendar Co. Red Oak, Iowa

In 1858, Red Oak Junction was a sleepy little village, half-a-dozen houses and a small store. It was started on hope at an intersection of several roads along an oak lined creek and then came a spark. They had just moved the Post Office from Oro (north of Red Oak) to the Junction. When is the last time you visited Oro? The village began to take on the appearance of a town, but the county seat was at Frankfort to the east. Then came the future under a head of steam. At the end of 1869, the railroad came, the Burlington Missouri River Railroad first. That little town was on the right-of-way and Frankfort was not. So during a record breaking snow storm Red Oak Junction became a seat of local government and she began to look like a city in the making.


The Junction has always had a strong base in agriculture, but industry and commerce began to come. Around 1870 newspapers started to pop up. Two young gentleman in 1889 became partners in a printing concern. A newspaper at first then branched out into calendars. They struggled at first and they had several failures, but they stuck with it until success found them. They borrowed \$800 from a local bank to fund a business venture. They made enough money to keep going, but this venture eventually failed. Edmund Osborne and Thomas D.

Murphy were friends, college roommates, and total opposites when it came to personalities. the art printing and went back east; the art printing and went back east; Thomas took the newspaper portion, which he built into the Red Oak Express newspaper. The agreement they made was Edmund would do art printing, such as calendars. Thomas agreed to have nothing to do with art printing for five years. There was some bumping of heads, and the five years past quickly and they remained friends. After the five years past, Thomas and his brother-in-law decided to try calendars and art print again. Success would give birth to the Thomas D. Murphy Company that would become worldwide. Edmund's American Art Printing Company was success for many years and would become part of Hallmark Greeting Cards.

It has been claimed that Murphy's made Red Oak the birthplace of the art calendar industry.



Thos. D. Murphy Calendar Company Display at the Montgomery County History Center



The Art Blotter Wins Valuable Space as a Desk Billboard

THE THOS. D. MURPHY CO.
RED OAK, IOWA
The Birthplace of Art Calendars

1935 JANUARY 1935						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

1935 DECEMBER 1935 1935 FEBRUARY 1935



Ask to See Our Special Booklets

The Thos. D. Murphy Co.
Red Oak, Iowa
The Birthplace of Art Calendars

1945 JANUARY 1945						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

1945 DECEMBER 1945 FEBRUARY 1945

Sample Ads Calendar for Thos. D. Murphy Company
Images shown from www.etsy.com

It would be more correct to say Red Oak was not the birthplace, rather Murphy's became the finest.

Osborne-Murphy Company started just off the Square in Red Oak on Reed Street. Later, it would move to Coolbaugh Street. Where it became the Thos. D. Murphy Company. Then in 1904, Murphy began building his factory on the south end of town. The factory would be built in three phases, ending up with a hundred thousand square foot building with its own railroad spur, fire department and power plant. A couple interesting things caused the evolution of these things. In 1902, there was a fire on the south side of Square. Murphy nearly lost his business and gained a fear of fire. Following World War I there was a worldwide strike in the coal mining industry. The power plant in Red Oak had to shut down and so did Murphy's for lack of electricity. Thomas vowed to not let that happen again, so he built his own power plant. Thomas sold bonds to help raise capital to build this new factory, promising to pay them off with interest within ten years. He did it in less than five. It was said that he put in fire doors, sprinklers and fire alarms in his new building almost unheard of at that time. Thereby saving enough on fire insurance to pay the interest on those bonds and keep the company growing.

On a final note, Thomas traded all the stock in Thos. D. Murphy Company for stock in the American Art Printing Company, Edmund's company. The bank that they borrowed the \$800 dollars from in 1889, reported at the company business meeting in 1921, that Thos. D. Murphy Company has done twenty-three million dollars worth of business with them.

A foot note, in 1902 Red Oak would officially drop the 'Junction' from the community name and the era of great retail business and finance would begin. Coming was the time "Green Rivers" and Junior College, and so many other things. If you have to ask what a "Green River" is, you're probably not from Red Oak or at least weren't around before the 1970's.



RED OAK ALUMNI "DID YOU KNOW"

Alec Carlson (Class of 2009) is an alumnus of the Wolf Trap Opera Studio and the Houston Grand Opera Young Artist Vocal Academy. He is a recent graduate of the Ryan Opera Center and has performances worldwide. For more info visit his website at www.aleccarlsonetenor.com

Kyle Fiddelke (Class of 1992) is a partner at OJB Landscape Architecture out of San Diego, CA. Currently working on the \$300M RiverFront project that will connect three existing, but separate parks. The project will connect Omaha to the Missouri and be a catalyst for growth and economic development in the area.

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/>

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>

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

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

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"](#)

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 the first week of January 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