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AUGUST 2024

Making History

Scott Towns named Ellis County's Best Teacher

A Texas Baseball Legend

Nolan Ryan's name is huge in these parts

Also inside:
Scavenger Hunt

In the Kitchen With
NaCole May

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

2024 VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULES



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 9/13 CEDAR HILL LONGHORNS (FINE ARTS SENIOR NIGHT)
 9/20 AT KILLEEN ELLISON EAGLES
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 11/8 AT TYLER LIONS

8/16 SCRIMMAGE 1
 8/23 SCRIMM - FAUSTINA
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BACK TO SCHOOL!

**First Day of School:
Wednesday, Aug. 14**

**Elementary Meet the Teacher:
Monday, Aug. 12**

**Meet the Hawks:
Wednesday, Aug. 21**

For more information, please visit
RedOakISD.org or contact the school.

DATES TO REMEMBER

**ROMS 6th Grade / New Student Talon Camp:
Thursday, Aug. 1**

ROMS Schedule Pickups:

6th Grade: **Tuesday, Aug. 6**

7th Grade: **Wednesday, Aug. 7**

8th Grade: **Thursday, Aug. 8**

**ROHS 9th Grade Camp / Schedule Pickup:
Monday, Aug. 5**

ROHS Schedule Pickups:

Wednesday, Aug. 7 - Friday, Aug. 9

ROMS 101 Family Nights:

6th Grade: **Tuesday, Aug. 27**

7th Grade: **Wednesday, Aug. 28**

8th Grade: **Thursday, Aug. 29**

REDOAKISD.org



DRESS CODE 2024-25

The Red Oak ISD Board approved the
2024-2025 Student Dress Code.

**VISIBLE
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- Shirts/jackets with hoods allowed to be worn in school, but hoods not allowed on the student's head in District buildings
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- No sagging or visible undergarments
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ON THE COVER



A career in law enforcement, in part, inspired Scott Towns to educate others toward writing their own histories.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Lesson plans ...

As a mother and former educator, I know sending children back to school is both a relief and a stressor for parents. Sharing school-related responsibility makes this time easier and shows children that both Mom and Dad consider education (and each other) important. If one parent is primarily responsible for running the household because they do not work outside the home, they may agree to the lion's share of school-related planning. This doesn't absolve the other parent from knowing about their child's learning, however. And if both parents work outside the home, it is essential that neither be the "default parent" when it comes to schooling. An advanced plan for which parent handles what aspect of education is key. Not only does it help avoid resentment between the parents, it enables your child to better succeed in the classroom because the whole family is involved.

Before school starts this year, try to set aside time as a family to outline expectations. Who helps younger children with morning prep vs. nighttime routines? Does Dad do school drop-off and Mom afternoon pick-up? Will both parents receive school communications? Who will be on volunteer duty for class parties and field trips? Determine which parent is stronger at each school subject, so children know who to go to for homework help. A wall calendar or phone app can be used so both parents (and older children) are aware of school/extracurricular schedules. Consider a series of simple meals for each day of the week, and share responsibility for the grocery shopping, meal prep and cleanup. Have children pack lunches and choose school clothing the night before (or earlier, if possible). Defined roles and routines mean a better school year for everyone.

Make the grade together!




Angel

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MAKING History

— By Angel Morris

Educator Scott Towns believes it takes more than textbooks for students to understand history. Encouraging students to analyze without the filter of someone's personal perspective, his classroom offers primary sources like artifacts and copies of original documents. Faith is also integral to Scott's lessons. "As a teacher in a Christian school, the days are filled with opportunities to show students how to write a good history for their own lives including means to meet the challenges which come to all of us."

A 30-year career in law enforcement exposed Scott to some of life's obstacles firsthand. "We tend to disregard the difficulty of law enforcement. Citizens call 911 because a problem, frequently traumatic, has arisen in their lives which they cannot solve," he noted. "The problem is so large, so significant, they are willing to invite a total stranger into their lives to solve it for them. These scenarios are fraught with life-altering outcomes."

Scott was trained to assist in such scenarios after entering the police academy following his graduation from Baylor University in 1980. He became an adjunct instructor at the police academy two years later. "That was my introduction to teaching," Scott noted.

Born and raised in Northern Virginia, outside of Washington, D.C., teaching was not initially on Scott's radar. "After growing up in Virginia, after being surrounded with so many layers of history, when our family left and eventually settled in the Dallas area, I was done with history!" he admitted. "Now, I thrill at the prospect of each academic year to



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share a growing passion for the history of this state and nation.”

Upon retirement from law enforcement in 2010, Scott’s love of history and government spurred him to continue teaching. Two of Scott’s own children with wife, Donna, had attended Waxahachie Preparatory Academy, and three attended Ovilla Christian School. A sister-in-law who worked at OCS encouraged Scott to consider working there. “I began in the 2013-2014 school year teaching eighth grade U.S. History,” Scott recalled.

Since then, Scott has added seventh grade U.S. History, 11th grade U.S. History and 12th grade Government/ Economics to his roster. He utilizes his officer experience, as well, serving as the school’s safety and security coordinator.

Through the years, Scott has

mastered the logistics involved with being a professional educator, and gradually incorporated real-world experiences into his lessons. “There is only so much a teacher can accomplish inside the four walls of a classroom,” Scott shared. “Organized field trips add depth and perspective to the knowledge acquired in the classroom setting.”

To that end, Scott initiated travel programs at his school. “Our seventh grade Texas History class travels to Washington-on-the-Brazos, Goliad, San Antonio and Austin. Students experience Independence Hall, the Presidio La Bahia, The Mission Trail, the Alamo, the Texas State Capitol and the Bob Bullock Texas History Museum,” he outlined.

Eighth-graders travel to Philadelphia, Charlottesville, Richmond, Williamsburg and Washington, D.C. “Students walk through Independence Hall, Constitution Hall, Antietam Battlefield, Harper’s Ferry, Monticello, St. John’s Church, the Smithsonian, U.S. Capitol, Library of Congress, U.S. Supreme Court, Museum of the Bible, Arlington

National Cemetery and the monuments of the National Mall,” Scott listed.

“Freshmen science classes experience a Texas STEM trip to NASA, where they meet with astronauts, see the Lone Star Flight Museum, the Ocean Star Museum, State of Texas Aquarium, State of Texas Deep-sea Fish Hatchery and chase dolphins off the coast of Corpus Christi,” Scott continued.

Scott is perhaps most proud of a trip guided in part by his daughter, Dr. Lydia Towns, who is a member of the history department at Stephen F. Austin State University. “Our juniors and seniors have the opportunity to travel to Great Britain to experience London, Cambridge and Oxford!” he enthused.

Besides field trips, Scott is known for helping students be purposeful toward their own histories. “Students write essays from each of their breaks. The purpose is to capture three key memories they would like to cherish,” he explained. “This creates a source to share with their own children as well as reflect upon their own history in years to come.”

Classroom artifacts students can

learn from span the colonial period to the early 21st century, including original newspapers, photos, posters, speeches, books, tools and even a piece of the Berlin Wall. Two of Scott’s most significant artifacts are pieces created in the trenches of World War I. “One is a German crucifix with the words ‘God is with us’ inscribed,” Scott described. “The students are challenged with the dilemma of a nation with Judeo-Christian influence being a part of the initiation of two wars, which resulted in the world becoming engulfed with war. These pieces help students consider how they will influence their nation, their world, *before* war occurs.”

Such mindfulness undoubtedly played a part in Scott being named the 2023 Best of Ellis County Teacher. This school year, he continues to appreciate the impact of education. “What blessings come from standing before students as a teacher. Each student, for good or ill, is writing their own history,” he reminded. “This second career has continued to the point I can see former students married and having their own students. Retirement life is good!” **NOW**



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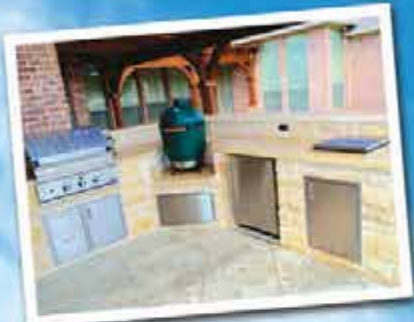
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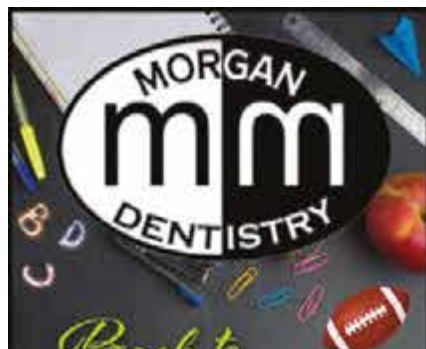
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— TALES OF TEXAS —

A TEXAS BASEBALL LEGEND

— By Sandra Walters

Some sportsmen are regarded as icons in their respective sports. One of Texas' most accomplished baseball players, Nolan Ryan, is well-known in the Lone Star State. He was born on January 31, 1947, in Refugio, Texas, as the family's sixth child. When he was 9 years old, Nolan began playing baseball in his hometown of Alvin, Texas, where he grew up. At the age of 11, he was selected for the All-Star team and went on to succeed. At that time, he threw his first no-hitter.

He continued perfecting his gift throughout the years, and following his high school graduation, Nolan was chosen by the New York Mets in the 1965 Major League Baseball Draft. Within four years as a team pitcher, he helped the Mets in their World Series victory. However, he was traded to the

California Angels in 1971. During this time, his name started appearing in the record books after winning games, striking players out and pitching his first career no-hitter in the major leagues. From 1972 to 1977, Nolan averaged 19 wins and 322 strikeouts per year. He assisted the Angels in winning the American League West title for the first time.

Eventually, he signed a deal with the Houston Astros as a free agent, returning close to his hometown as the first million-dollar-per-year player in league history. He accomplished the 3,000th, 4,000th and 4,500th strikeout milestones while playing for the Astros. The '80s signified many successes for Nolan, as he passed Walter Johnson's all-time strikeout mark, broke Sandy Koufax's major league record of four no-hitters with his fifth in 1981 and helped the Astros reach the postseason for the first three times in franchise history. He played as an Astro from 1980 to 1988.

Following his last season with the Astros, Nolan joined the Texas Rangers as a free agent. By continuing to throw a powerful fastball into his 40s, he became a national phenomenon. In 1990, Nolan pitched his sixth no-hitter, and a year later, at the age of 44, he produced his seventh. Nolan was selected in eight All-Star Games, started 773



times, achieved the lowest hits-per-nine-innings-pitched ratio, being 6.56. He pitched for the Texas Rangers from 1989 to 1993, bringing his career to a close.

Nolan retired after the 1993 season, and in 1999, they inducted him into the National Baseball Hall of Fame, becoming the first Texas Ranger to receive this honor. In 2003, he was inducted into the Texas Rangers Hall of Fame. Shortly after those accomplishments, the Rangers and Astros named him the Hometown Hero in 2006. He also earned a place in the Irish American Baseball Hall of Fame in 2011. Then, the Angels, Astros and Rangers retired Nolan's number. And because of his expertise in the industry, he served as president and CEO of the Texas Rangers from 2008-2013.

For many years, this tough competitor was among the most intimidating on the pitching mound. He acquired the nickname "The Ryan Express," and he played for four decades. "His 27-season career record is 324-292 with a 3.19 ERA, 222 complete games, 61 shutouts and a baseball best 5,714 strikeouts," according to astrosdaily.com. He continued to pitch after turning 46, but in September 1993, he blew out his elbow and made his final pitch. He earned numerous titles in Major League Baseball and is definitely considered a Texas baseball legend. **NOW**

Sources:

1. <https://www.tshmf.org/Ryan>.
2. https://www.astrosdaily.com/players/Ryan_Nolan.html.
3. <https://baseballhall.org/hall-of-famers/ryan-nolan>.

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Zoomed In:
Stephanie Purtle

By Angel Morris

A 20-year member of Bear Creek Baptist Church, Stephanie Purtle has directed Vacation Bible School for nine years. “I love to decorate and to make it fun and memorable. It’s a lot of work, takes a lot of people, but it’s always worth it,” Stephanie said.

Gaining inspiration from a Facebook group for VBS directors, Stephanie prays over each year’s theme. “I’m fortunate to have a church family that’s supportive with their time, money and ideas that help make it happen.” Stephanie noted.

Originally from Kansas City, Missouri, Stephanie enjoys biking, playing games and teaching kids about Jesus. She and her husband, Brad, have two sons. “I could not create such a successful VBS without my husband and our boys, as they usually build things that bring the theme to life!”



Ovilla Christian School Varsity Cheer squad attends the NCA Christian Leadership Cheer Camp at Dallas Baptist University.



Mollie Hamilton experiences carrying a hose at the Glenn Heights Fire Department Citizens Public Safety Academy.



Brandi Brown, Kayla Yasaan, Karen Thurmond and Tedrick Thurmond experience the Dallas Symphony Orchestra’s performance in Glenn Heights.



Girl Scout Troop 338 collects 171 boxes of cookies during cookie season and donates them to CASA of Ellis County and Texas Baptist Home for Children.



Cricket Wireless celebrates its ribbon cutting as a new Red Oak Area Chamber of Commerce member.



Allante Allison, of PawPaws Produce & Co. in Dallas, showcases fresh produce at East Ovilla Road and North Central Boulevard some weekends.



Avery Carroll and Bri Ortiz work the ROHS Hawkettes fundraiser car wash.



Red Oak and Waxahachie Chambers celebrate the opening of Batteries Plus in Waxahachie.

Presents the 20th Annual

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Sunday, September 15, 2024
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CookingNOW *In the Kitchen With* NACOLE MAY

— By Angel Morris

A longtime member of Red Oak's Discipleship Ministries International, NaCole May reaches people through food. "I have a passion to serve, so when we opened our food pantry, I was excited to be part of it," she noted.

A paralegal by day, the Waxahachie resident and her husband, Eric, have also run a catering business — ENJoyable EatZ — for almost nine years.

"Even when I'm not working, I find my way to the kitchen to cook or bake. It's my passion," NaCole continued. "I love the challenge of finding all types of new things to prepare." **NOW**

Broccoli Salad

3 Tbsp. white vinegar
2 Tbsp. sugar
1 cup mayonnaise
Salt, to taste
Pepper, to taste
8 cups broccoli florets, cut into bite-size pieces
1/3 cup red onion, diced
1/4 cup sunflower seeds
1/2 lb. bacon, cooked and cut into bite-size pieces
1/4 cup cheddar cheese, shredded

1. Whisk together the first 5 ingredients in a medium bowl; set aside.

2. In a large bowl, combine the remaining ingredients. Pour the dressing over the salad; mix well. Refrigerate for 1 hour before serving.

Strawberry Cake With Strawberry Buttercream

Cake:
3 cups flour
2 cups sugar
1 1/2 Tbsp. baking powder

3/4 tsp. salt
3/5 cup canola oil
1 1/2 cups strawberry puree
1 tsp. vanilla
1 tsp. lemon juice
4 eggs, beaten
Pink food coloring (optional)

Strawberry Buttercream:

1 stick butter, room temperature
1/8 tsp. salt
3 1/2 cups powdered sugar
1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
3 Tbsp. strawberry puree

1. *For cake:* Preheat the oven to 325 F. Grease and flour 2 9-inch cake pans.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the first 4 ingredients. Add the next 3 ingredients to the dry ingredients; stir until combined.
3. Add the eggs and food coloring, if using; stir until smooth. Do not overmix! Divide the batter evenly between the cake pans. Bake 25-35 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
4. Cool a few minutes before removing to cooling racks. Cool completely before frosting.

5. For buttercream: In a large bowl, beat the butter until fluffy. Beat the next 3 ingredients into the butter until combined. Add the puree; beat until light and fluffy. (Add more powdered sugar or 1 tsp. of milk until reaching the perfect consistency, if needed.)

**Brown Butter Chocolate
Chip Cookies**

- 1 1/4 cups butter
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 3/4 cups flour, measured correctly
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 2 to 2 1/2 cups semisweet chocolate chips

- 1. Brown the butter in a medium-large saucepan, stirring constantly over medium-high heat, until reaching a deep honey color. Remove from heat; pour into a mixing bowl. Cool in the refrigerator or freezer until room temperature consistency. The butter should be solid.
- 2. Preheat the oven to 375 F. Grease baking sheets with cooking spray or line them with silicone mats or parchment paper.
- 3. Once the butter has set, cream together the butter with both sugars for 1 minute. Add the eggs and vanilla; cream together for an additional 2-3 minutes until the mixture is pale and fluffy. (Make sure you get all those toasty brown bits at the bottom of your brown butter!)
- 4. Add in the flour, baking soda and salt. Mix in the dry ingredients until just barely combined — overmixing will make the cookies tough. Stir in the chocolate chips.
- 5. Shape the dough into round balls. Bake 8-10 minutes until the top and edges are just golden. Cool on the baking sheet for 2-3 minutes before moving to a cooling rack.

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WELCOME Back to School AUGUST

Some events may have been cancelled or rescheduled while we were at press. Check with individual organizations or your city or Chamber websites to verify dates and times.

8/1

Ellis Christian Women's Job Corps' Fall Classes:

Register now for free courses ranging from computer training and money management to setting boundaries, résumé writing and interviewing. Classes begin **8/26** and run 12 weeks with morning and evening times available, **Monday-Thursday**. Learn more at <http://elliscwjc.life/> or by calling (972) 937-6620.

8/3

Back-to-School Bash:

Free health screenings, immunizations, backpacks and school supplies. Spirit wear for sale. Organization booths and

community vendors. 8:30-11:30 a.m., Red Oak High School, 220 S. State Hwy. 342.

8/10

Glenn Heights

Back-to-School Bash:

School supplies, food vendors, free haircuts, kids' zone and more. 8:00 a.m.-noon. City Center, 1938 S. Hampton Rd.

8/13-10/29

Become a Master Naturalist Training Program:

Receive training in wildlife and natural resource management focusing on the native ecosystems of Ellis and Navarro counties. \$150. Classes on **Tuesdays**:

6:00-9:00 p.m.; as well as three **Saturday** morning field trips. Learn more at txmn.org/indiantrail/about/become-a-master-naturalist.

Second and Fourth Wednesdays

Hooks and Needles:

Crochet group for ages 16 and older. No experience necessary. Bring your own supplies and project. Members are happy to help newcomers learn. 11:00 a.m., Red Oak Library, 101 S. Live Oak St.

First Thursdays

Red Oak Lion's

Club Meeting:

Joining Lions Club is a way to network with other businesses, community leaders and civic-minded people while helping your community. 6:30-7:30 p.m., 207 W. Red Oak Rd. To learn more, call (469) 571-7265.

Third Saturdays

Mobile Food Pantry:

Please remain in your car. Food will be brought to you. 10:00 a.m.-noon, Red Oak Discipleship Ministries, 507 I-35E South. To volunteer, email communityoutreach@dmnc.org.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to angel.morris@nowmagazines.com.

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Email: Elections@co.ellis.tx.us

2024 General Election



Last day to register to vote: Tuesday, October 7, 2024

Early Voting: Monday, October 21, 2024 through Friday, November 1, 2024

****Main Early Voting Site: Ellis Co. Woman's Building (Davis Hall) 407 W Jefferson St. Waxahachie****

Election Day: Tuesday, Nov. 5, 2024 (Vote at any vote center polling location in Ellis County)

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