

TEXARKANA parent

SEPT/OCT 2023



UPCOMING EVENTS

Texarkana's local scene is packed with events and fall fun within 100 miles.

FALL IS FOR FOOTBALL

Check out what local coaches have to say about the upcoming season.

NICU AWARENESS

Local stories, advocacy, and education on Neonatal Intensive Care Units.



Welcome, Dr. Huggins!

Dr. Leslee Huggins “Dr. Hugs” was born in Canyon, Texas and raised in Texarkana. She completed her Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry at Angelo State University. She then went on to complete her dental schooling at Baylor College of Dentistry. She is dual-trained having completed her orthodontic training at St. Louis University and her residency in Pediatric Dentistry at the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill.

Dr. Hugs is an active member of the American Dental Association (ADA) and a Fellow of the American Board of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD). Dr. Huggins is a Board-certified Diplomate American Board of Pediatric Dentistry.

She has been happily married for 20 years to her husband, Jim, and they have three kids and two dogs. When she isn't saving smiles, she enjoys traveling and exploring new places and cultures with her family. She also enjoys going for outdoor runs and hikes, along with reading.



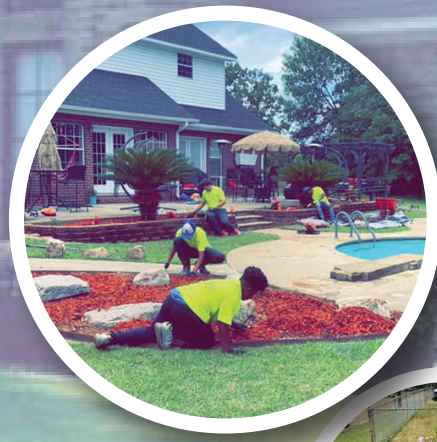
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PREV-NET is a **new** program within Community Healthcore that provides substance use prevention for youth.

We currently serve 12 counties including: Bowie, Red River, Cass, Marion, Franklin, Titus, Morris, Upshur, Gregg, Harrison, Rusk, and Panola.

Current Free Services:

- **Substance-use prevention education for ages 9-20** through our Too Good for Drugs Program (TGFD) by the Mendez Foundation. We implement 10-week curriculum, that provides youth with an interactive way of learning the effects of drug and substance use, and helps in developing healthy coping skills. Covers grades 4-12
- **TGFD Training:** We provide a free one-day training for individuals who are interested in implementing the TGFD program on their own, and also provide a free kit with all implementation materials needed.
- **College Students:** We provide a 5-part college Substance Abuse and Mental Health Seminar Series, where we cover the following topics: Today's Marijuana, The Fentanyl Epidemic, Alcohol, Vaping & Law Enforcement, Intro to Mental Health, and a Q&A with Expert Panel
- **We offer one-time presentations** on coping skills, Marijuana, Fentanyl and prevention of other substances

More information :

prev-net@communityhealthcore.com

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I will never forget the excitement from my daughter, Sophie, when she was invited to attend a Texas High football game at Grim Stadium. She raised a lot of money for her school, so she was able to run through the big inflatable Tiger head at the start of the football game. She was so proud, and so was I! Going to the football game was not something I was able to do growing up. That was always a dream to me. So, it brings me so much joy to celebrate at football games and other school functions with my daughter! From the hot days of Field Day to the cool nights sitting at the stadium, we will always cheer on our school district! I am excited for the cooler weather and doesn't everyone know that Fall is for Football?!?!
-Katie Stone

What is my favorite season? FOOTBALL SEASON! I love my Aggies and I love my Texas High Tigers! As much as I like this time of year, I feel like I never catch up on anything, but I know my kids feel equally stretched. My younger son plays middle school football. He is at school at 7:00 am each morning for early morning practice before the school day even begins. Then he has a game or afterschool practice at least two times each week. My oldest is in the Tiger Band. They are on the practice field by 7:00 every morning as well. On game day he never comes home until the game is over. In October, they will have marching contests each Saturday. They will be at Grim Stadium for a practice run-through around 6:30 or so, then get on busses to go to the marching competition for the day. The band has had great results and typically makes the finals at each competition, which means they are competing well into the night. They usually don't return home until at least 1:00 or 2:00 am. There are so many other kids that participate along side my kids and in many other activities as well. From sports, to drill team, to academics... the list goes on forever. Each participant puts in so many long hours of hard work and dedication. And let's not forget that teachers, coaches, sponsors, and parent volunteers are also at these events.

I am so glad that we get to highlight some local schools in this issue. No matter where you live, and whether or not you have kids in school, I encourage you to pick a Friday night to go to a local high school football game. This is a great way to support to the kids, coaches, teachers, and others who put forth so much effort inside the classroom and outside of it as well. They all will appreciate your support, and I promise you will be impressed with their efforts! It goes without saying that fall is a very busy time of year for so many! As crazy as it is, and as hard as it is for me to keep up with my own kids' schedules, I wouldn't trade a second of it! Gig'em Aggies, and Go Tigers!

-Ben King



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Cymone Cornelius
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September/October Events

SEPTEMBER 19- NOVEMBER 25

"From their Texarkana to Our Texarkana: A Reimagining of Photographic Images"

TRAHC, Texarkana Museums System, and TXK 150 are hosting "From Their Texarkana to Our Texarkana: A Reimagining of Photographic Images." This art exhibition is in celebration of Texarkana's Sesquicentennial. These fifteen selected artists were paired with a photo from the Museums System archive to then reimagine in their own way! Learn more and register at trahc.org.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 15-16

Miller County Fair: It's about to get Western

Miller County Fair Grounds, 403 E. Lewis St, Fouke, AR. Join in for two days packed full of fun for the entire family! Featuring Little Mr. & Mrs. Western, Mutton Bustin', Junior Rodeo & MORE! Find them on Facebook for more information!

SATURDAY, OCT. 7

Jeans & Bling 2023

7 p.m., Texarkana Convention Center, Texarkana, Texas. The bling is back with a fun night out for parents. At the 13th annual Jeans & Bling gala, enjoy a lip sync contest, silent auction, BBQ dinner, live music and dancing—get a babysitter! All proceeds support Hospice of Texarkana, the only hospice care center in the region. Learn more at hospiceoftexarkana.com/jeans-and-bling.

SATURDAY, OCT. 14

Battle of the Bands

12pm-11pm. Downtown Texarkana. Presented by Recovery Road Productions. This event will feature 10 local bands downtown at Hopkins Icehouse, 301 E. 3rd St, Texarkana, AR. Find their event on Facebook.

STARTING IN OCTOBER

Fall Fun at Spring Lake Park

Texarkana Texas Parks & Recreation has scheduled a lineup of events at Spring Lake Park this fall! Don't miss:

- **Movies in the Park**, Oct. 12, 19 & 26, 7 p.m.
- **Fall Festival**, Oct. 19, 5-7 p.m.
- **Community Yard Sale & Electronics Recycling**, Oct. 21 starting at 8 a.m.
- **Trunk or Treat**, Oct. 31, 3-6 p.m.
- **Bark at the Park**, Nov. 4, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

TUESDAY, NOV. 7

30th Annual Taste of Texarkana

5-8 p.m., Four States Fairgrounds Arena. Voted one of the top 5 Best Charity Events in Texarkana, the 29th annual Taste of Texarkana offers local restaurants the opportunity to showcase their specialties for more than 1,800 attendees. All proceeds benefit the hunger relief programs of Harvest Regional Food Bank. Family friendly with live entertainment! \$25 in advance; \$30 at the door; \$50 for VIP tickets. Children 6-10 are \$10; ages 5 and under are free. Learn more at harvestregionalfoodbank.org.

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FALL FUN WITHIN 100 MILES

OF TEXARKANA

35 MILES

Oktoberfest in DeKalb

October 7. Downtown DeKalb.

Various groups and clubs in their community gather together and provide excellent events and activities. As a result of all the sponsors, vendors and volunteers, they were able to give-back over \$25,000 to local organizations. The purpose of Oktoberfest has always been to promote and benefit the DeKalb community. For more information, visit dekalbtexasoktoberfest.org.

50-60 MILES

Omaha Fall Festival

October 7th, 10am-5pm. Omaha City Park, 301 E. Main, Omaha, TX.

This annual festival features a chili cookoff complete with trophies and bragging rights. There will be vendors, kids carnival, treasure hunting, and a mechanical bull! Take a short drive for a lot of fun. Find more information at www.omahatx.com.

60-70 MILES

Dixie Maze Farms

9596 Sentell Road, Shreveport, LA.

Starting September 3rd, Dixie Maze Farms will host their annual Fall Festival. This festival features a corn maze, pumpkin patch, pony rides, outdoor movies, and MORE! They also feature Murder Mystery Dinners every Friday in October. During October, you can also find a few haunted attractions like the Haunted Corn Maze. Visit www.dixie-maze.com for more information.

77-80 MILES

Arkadelphia Fall Festival

2555 Twin Rivers Dr, Arkadelphia. October 28th 11am-2pm.

Join us for a spooktacular Halloween Fall Festival at 2555 Twin Rivers Dr! Get ready for a frightfully fun time with friends and family. Dress up in your most creative costumes and enjoy a day filled with thrilling activities, delicious treats, and exciting games. From pumpkin carving to haunted houses, there's something for everyone! Don't miss out on this hair-raising event. Mark your calendars and get ready to have a boo-tiful time at the Halloween Fall Festival!

85-95 MILES

Beavers Bend Folk Festival & Craft Show

Forest Heritage Center, Beavers Bend State Park, OK.
November 10th-12th

This showcase of turn-of-the-century arts and crafts will feature 70 exhibitors and vendors celebrating rarefied skills like candle making, woodturning, lye soap making,

knife making and quilting. Herbalists will be on hand to share their knowledge of natural remedies and instrument makers will exhibit their best work. Meanwhile, an outdoor stage against the colorful backdrop of a Southeast Oklahoma forest will lure visitors with the soothing sounds of Celtic and early American folk music. This year's food options focus on sweets like sugared pecans, kettle corn, caramel apples and funnel cake, along with the ever-popular cowboy tacos, macho nachos, roasted sweet corn and burgers. This year marks the 25th festival, and its sure to be one of the biggest yet. For more info call 580-494-6497.

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QUESTIONS FOR COACHES



REDWATER HIGH SCHOOL



BRANDON LAYNE

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR/
HEAD FOOTBALL COACH

Q: WHAT IS THE THEME FOR THE REDWATER DRAGONS FOR THE UPCOMING SEASON?

A: FAITH- FAMILY, ACCOUNTABILITY, INTENSITY, TOUGHNESS, HEART

Q: WHAT IS THE BEST PIECE OF ADVICE YOU CAN GIVE PARENTS OF STUDENT OR PLAYERS?

A: SUPPORT AND LOVE YOUR PLAYERS AND THEIR COACHES. NOBODY TRIES TO DISAPPOINT, AND THEY ARE HARD ENOUGH ON THEMSELVES WHEN THEY MAKE A MISTAKE. THEY NEED YOUR SUPPORT AND LOVE.



2023 VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

09/01-	ATLANTA	@ ATLANTA	7:00 PM
09/08-	WINONA	REDWATER (HOMECOMING)	7:00 PM
09/15-	NEW DIANA	@ NEW DIANA	7:00 PM
09/22-	NEW BOSTON	REDWATER	7:00 PM
09/29-	PEWITT	@ PEWITT	7:00 PM
10/05-	PRAIRILAND	REDWATER (PINK OUT)	7:00 PM
10/13-	CHISUM	@ CHISUM	7:00 PM
10/20-	HOOKS	REDWATER	7:00 PM
11/03-	DEKALB	@DEKALB	7:00 PM

Redwater

PLEASANT GROVE HIGH SCHOOL



JOSH GIBSON
HEAD FOOTBALL COACH

Q: ARE THERE ANY PLAYERS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO HIGHLIGHT FOR THE UPCOMING SEASON?

A: I WOULD LIKE TO HIGHLIGHT OUR WHOLE TEAM, BUT ESPECIALLY THE 2024 SENIOR CLASS. WE HAVE 23 AWESOME YOUNG MEN THAT ARE SO MUCH MORE THAN FOOTBALL PLAYERS. THEY HAVE HELPED US BUILD A CULTURE THAT WE FEEL IS THE BEST IN THE NATION! THEY BUY IN AND PUSH THEMSELVES TO GROW THEMSELVES IN SO MANY AREAS. I COULDN'T BE MORE PROUD OF THEM. THIS GROUP IS SPECIAL.

Q: WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR THE SEASON?

A: WE WANT TO MAKE A HUGE IMPACT IN OUR SCHOOL AND GROW OUR KIDS IN ALL FACETS OF THEIR LIVES. ON THE FIELD, WE WANT TO END UP IN ARLINGTON ON DEC. 16TH WITH A STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY!



2023 VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

09/01-	BYRD	PLESANT GROVE	7:00 PM
09/09-	MIDLAND CHRISTIAN	@PROSPER	7:00 PM
09/15-	FRISCO MEMORIAL	PLEASANT GROVE	7:00 PM
09/22-	PARIS	PLEASANT GROVE (HoCo)	7:00 PM
10/06-	GILMER	@GILMER	7:00 PM
10/13-	PITTSBURG	@PITTSBURG	7:00 PM
10/20-	LIBERTY-EYLAU	PLESANT GROVE	7:00 PM
10/27-	NORTH LAMAR	@NORTH LAMAR	7:00 PM
11/03-	SPRINGHILL	PLEASANT GROVE	7:00 PM



PLEASANT GROVE
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

MAUD HIGH SCHOOL



SUBMITTED PHOTO

JOSH TURNER
ATHLETIC DIRECTOR/HEAD
FOOTBALL COACH

Q: WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT FOR THE UPCOMING SEASON?

A: I AM REALLY EXCITED ABOUT SEEING THE GROWTH OF THIS TEAM. WE WILL BE PLAYING A LOT OF NEW FACES IN KEY POSITIONS. I AM ALSO EXCITED ABOUT THE LEADERSHIP THIS SENIOR CLASS HAS BROUGHT. I HAVE BEEN REALLY IMPRESSED WITH HOW THEY ARE HANDLING THEIR BUSINESS AS WELL AS MENTORING THE YOUNG GUYS.

Q: WHAT IS THE BEST PIECE OF ADVICE YOU CAN GIVE TO YOUR PLAYERS?

A: KEEP DOING THE RIGHT THING. IT WILL PAY OFF EVENTUALLY. IT MIGHT NOT BE TOMORROW. IT MIGHT NOT EVEN BE IN HIGH SCHOOL, BUT THE WORK ETHIC AND THE LESSONS YOU LEARNED BY DOING RIGHT WILL PAY OFF EVENTUALLY.

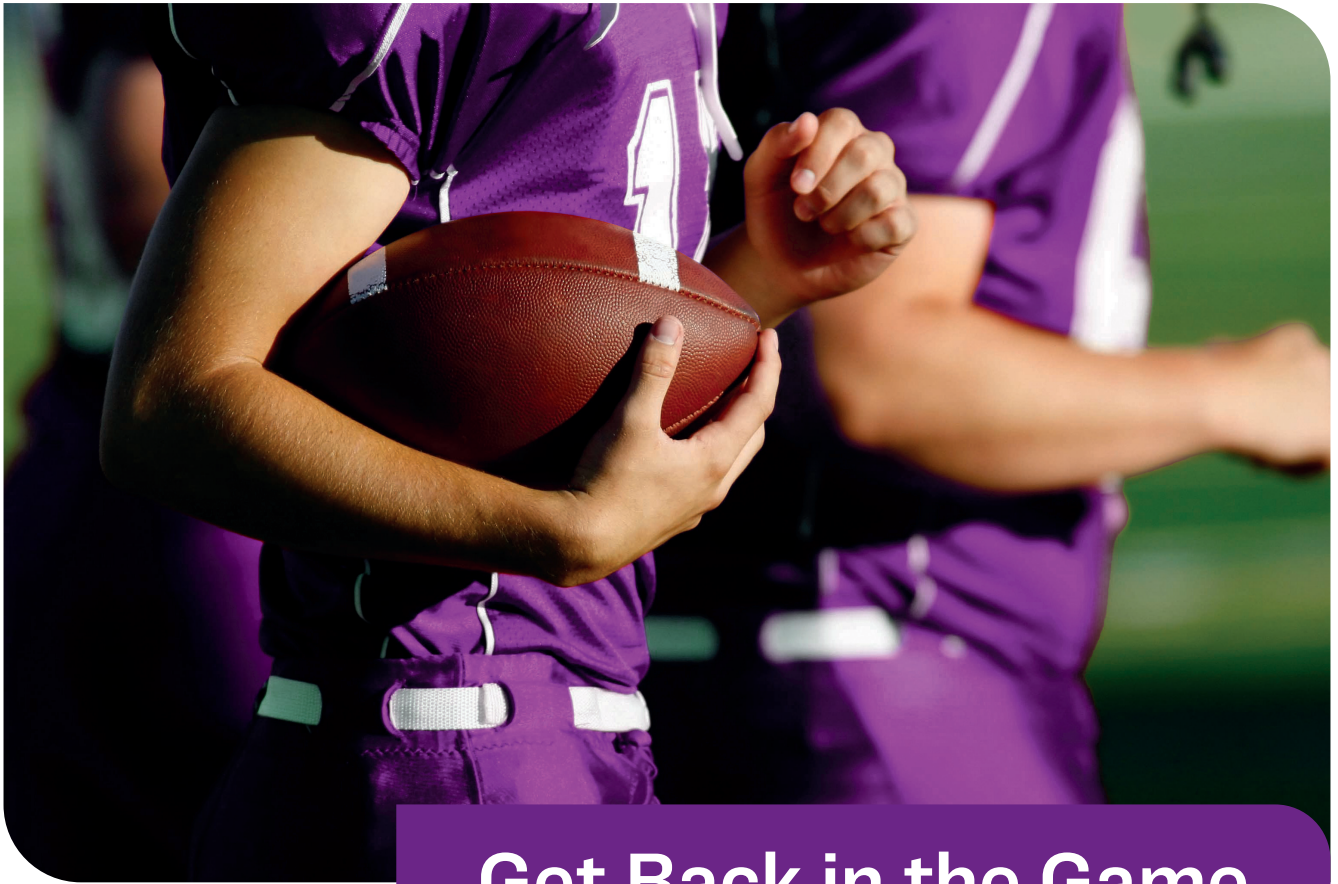


2023 VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

09/01-	NEW DIANA	@NEW DIANA	7:30 PM
09/08-	MT. ENTERPRISE	MAUD (HoCo)	7:30 PM
09/15-	HARELTON	MAUD	7:30 PM
09/21-	IOLA	@RUSK	7:30 PM
10/06-	JAMES BOWIE	@JAMES BOWIE	7:30 PM
10/13-	CUMBY	MAUD	7:30 PM
10/20-	DETROIT	DETROIT	7:30 PM
10/27-	CLARKSVILLE	@CLARKSVILLE	7:30 PM
11/03-	LINDEN KILDARE	MAUD	7:30 PM



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TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL



PHOTO BY: TEXARKANA GAMEDAY

GERRY STANFORD

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS/
HEAD FOOTBALL COACH

Q: WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT FOR THE UPCOMING SEASON?

A: JUST THE GROWTH PROCESS YOU SEE A TEAM GO THROUGH EACH YEAR. YOU SEE KIDS GROW UP IN FRONT OF YOUR EYES AS THEY WORK THROUGH ALL OF THE ADVERSITIES IT TAKES TO BE AN ATHLETE.

Q: WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT COACHING?

A: THE RELATIONSHIPS, BOTH PROFESSIONAL AND WITH THE KIDS. THE JOURNEY OF COACHING...EVERYDAY IS A NEW DAY.



2023 VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

09/01-	COLLEYVILLE HERITAGE	@COLLEYVILLE	7:00 PM
09/08-	BENTON	TEXARKANA	7:00 PM
09/15-	TYLER LEGACY	@TYLER	7:00 PM
09/22-	HALLSVILLE	@HALLSVILLE	7:00 PM
09/29-	MT. PLEasant	TEXARKANA	7:00 PM
10/13-	MARSHALL	@MARSHALL	7:00 PM
10/27-	WHITEHOUSE	@WHITEHOUSE	7:00 PM
11/03-	PINE TREE	TEXARKANA	7:00 PM



TEXARKANA

Independent School District

NEW BOSTON HIGH SCHOOL

Q: WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT FOR THE UPCOMING SEASON?

A: WE HAVE SEEN HUGE IMPROVEMENTS IN OUR ATHLETES OVER THE PAST YEAR IN STRENGTH, SPEED AND OVERALL FOOTBALL KNOWLEDGE. THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE LOCKER ROOM AND IN THE COACHING STAFF IS IDEAL FOR GROWTH AND WINNING. WE HAVE EVERYTHING IN PLACE TO BE SUCCESSFUL AND IMPROVE ON LAST YEAR'S BI-DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON.

Q: WHAT IS THE BEST PIECE OF ADVICE YOU CAN GIVE PARENTS OF STUDENTS/PLAYERS?

A: COMMUNITY AND PARENTAL SUPPORT IS THE FOUNDATION OF ALL SUCCESSFUL TEAMS. WE ARE LUCKY AT NEW BOSTON TO HAVE A LOT OF PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT FROM OUR COMMUNITY LEADERS. PARENTS- SUPPORT YOUR CHILDREN'S DREAMS AND DO YOUR VERY BEST TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THEM. ALIGN YOURSELF WITH THE VISION OF YOUR CHILD'S COACH WHILE PROVIDING A CONSISTENT SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT AND YOUR CHILD WILL MAXIMIZE THEIR SUCCESS.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

JODY LITTLETON

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR/HEAD
FOOTBALL COACH



2023 VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

09/01-	QUEEN CITY	@QUEEN CITY	7:00 PM
09/08-	ATLANTA	NEW BOSTON	7:00 PM
09/15-	WINNSBORO	@WINNSBORO	7:00 PM
09/22-	REDWATER	@REDWATER	7:00 PM
09/29-	DEKALB	@DEKALB (HoCo)	7:00 PM
10/13-	PAUL PEWITT	@PAUL PEWITT	7:00 PM
10/20-	PRAIRILAND	NEW BOSTON	7:00 PM
10/27-	PARIS CHISM	@PARIS CHISM	7:00 PM
11/03-	HOOKS	NEW BOSTON	7:00 PM



NEW BOSTON

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

ASHDOWN HIGH SCHOOL



SUBMITTED PHOTO

MATT RICHARDSON
COACH

Q: WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT FOR THE UPCOMING SEASON?

A: OUR SENIOR LEADERSHIP; I AM VERY EXCITED ABOUT THE YOUNG MEN WE HAVE. THEY HAVE VERY HIGH CHARACTER AND GREAT LEADERSHIP.

Q: WHAT IS THE BEST PIECE OF ADVICE YOU CAN GIVE PARENTS OF STUDENTS/PLAYERS?

A: ENJOY THIS SEASON OF LIFE. UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS A SEASON. THIS NEXT 4 MONTHS WILL BE OVER SOON. ENJOY IT AND UNDERSTAND THAT YOUR CHILD'S PLAYING TIME WILL PROBABLY NOT DETERMINE THE REST OF HIS LIFE, BUT HIS ATTITUDE AND HOW HE REACTS TO ADVERSITY MIGHT.



2023 VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

09/01-	DE QUEEN	ASHDOWN	7:30 PM
09/08-	HOPE	ASHDOWN	7:30 PM
09/15-	IDABEL	ASHDOWN	7:30 PM
09/22-	WALDRON	@WALDRON	7:00 PM
10/06-	MALVERN	ASHDOWN	7:00 PM
10/13-	NASHVILLE	@NASHVILLE	7:00 PM
10/20-	ARKADELPHIA	@ARKADELPHIA	7:00 PM
10/27-	MENA	ASHDOWN (HoCo)	7:00 PM
11/03-	TBA	TBA	TBA



ASHDOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HOME OF THE **PANTHERS**

RED LICK ISD



SUBMITTED PHOTO

SHAWN HALL
ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Q: WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT FOR THE UPCOMING SEASON?

A: WHAT I AM MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO ABOUT THIS UPCOMING SEASON IS SEEING THE KIDS GROW FROM 6TH GRADE PRE-ATHLETICS TO 7TH GRADE ATHLETICS AND THE 7TH GRADERS GOING INTO 8TH GRADE. LAST YEAR WAS MY FIRST YEAR AS ATHLETIC DIRECTOR AT RED LICK, AND TO SEE WHERE THE KIDS STARTED IN AUGUST TO WHERE THEY ENDED GOING INTO THE SUMMER WAS TRULY AMAZING. I AM READY TO GET THEM BACK ON CAMPUS AND BACK TO WORK. IT IS TRULY REWARDING TO SEE WHEN A KID DOES NOT BELIEVE THEY CAN ACCOMPLISH SOMETHING, AND THEN THEY GO OUT AND DO IT. THIS PROVES TO THEMSELVES THAT EVEN WHEN TIMES GET TOUGH, YOU CAN PUSH THROUGH AND ACHIEVE ANYTHING YOU PUT YOUR MIND TO.

Q: WHAT IS THE BEST PIECE OF ADVICE YOU CAN GIVE PARENTS OF STUDENTS/PLAYERS?

A: ADVICE I WOULD GIVE TO PARENTS IS TO LET YOUR KIDS BE KIDS AND GIVE THEM GRACE IN THEIR MOMENTS OF FAILURE. TELL YOUR KIDS HOW PROUD OF THEM YOU ARE AND LOVE THEM EACH AND EVERY DAY. LIFE CAN BE CHAOTIC AND CHALLENGING AT TIMES, BUT KIDS NEED TO KNOW THEIR WORTH AND KNOW HOW IMPORTANT THEY ARE.



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ARKANSAS HIGH SCHOOL



TREY OUTLAW

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR/
HEAD FOOTBALL COACH



Q: WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT COACHING?

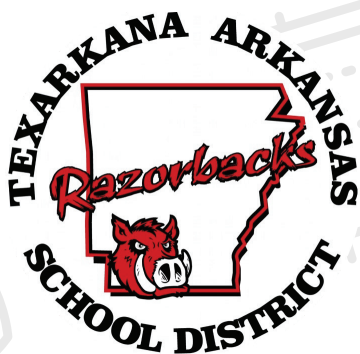
A: RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE PLAYERS, SEEING THEIR GROWTH AS MEN, AND THEN RECONNECTING WHEN THEY RETURN YEARS DOWN THE ROAD AS FATHERS, HUSBANDS, AND SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

Q: WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT FOR THE UPCOMING SEASON?

A: CONTINUED GROWTH FROM LAST SEASON. WE ONLY HAD 3 SENIORS LAST YEAR WHICH MEANT WE PLAYED A LOT OF UNDERCLASSMEN, SO WE'RE EXCITED ABOUT THAT GROWTH.

2023 VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

09/08-	ARKADELPHIA	ARKANSAS HIGH	7:00 PM
09/22-	MAGNOLIA	ARKANSAS HIGH	7:00 PM
09/29-	CAMDEN	CAMDEN	7:00 PM
10/06-	LAKESIDE	ARKANSAS HIGH (HoCo)	7:00 PM
10/13-	PARKVIEW	@PARKVIEW	7:00 PM
10/20-	HOT SPRINGS	HOT SPRINGS	7:00 PM
10/27-	HOPE	ARKANSAS HIGH	7:00 PM
11/02-	DE QUEEN	@DE QUEEN	7:00 PM



TEXARKANA ARKANSAS SCHOOL DISTRICT

Special Trusts for Special Needs

BY: BEN KING

A Special Needs Trust (SNT) is an important tool for providing supplemental income to a person who is collecting government benefits for a disability or illness. If there is someone in your life for whom you provide special care who will not be able to care for him or herself after you are gone, a Special Needs Trust might be something to consider.

In order to be eligible for need-based government benefits such as Medicaid and SSI (Supplementary Security Income), a recipient can only have money in their name. However, as their guardian and caregiver, you are permitted to spend your money on services and experiences to enhance their lives without affecting their eligibility. A Special Needs Trust is a way to set money aside so that this can continue after you are gone or are unable to care for them any longer because of your own incapacity or disability. You should consider this important tool if you have a dependent in one of the following categories:

> If the person meets the Social Security Administration's criteria for permanent disability and is already on Medicaid or SSI, he or she is a good candidate for a Special Needs Trust. Conditions such as Down Syndrome, blindness, paraplegia, cerebral palsy, chronic mental illness, and developmental disabilities will usually automatically qualify the person for benefits.

> If your child or spouse has a degenerative condition that is likely to get worse, you can establish an SNT to be prepared for the possibility that he or she will one day be unable to earn a living and will qualify for Medicaid or SSI after you are gone. If it turns out that they don't get to this point, the Trust can be terminated, and the money distributed according to the terms of the Trust.

> A dependent who is currently on Medicaid or SSI because of a disability may not always be eligible. If the disability is temporary, or there are changes in treatment options, workplace adaptability, and technology, the person may one day be able to earn a living. There is no way to predict this eventuality, of course, but there is no harm in creating a Special Needs Trust now in case the person does remain on benefits. The Trust can always be terminated by the Trustee if it is not needed one day.

WHAT Can Be Done With Money in a Special Needs Trust?

Your loved one with special needs will rely on government benefits for his or her day-to-day care. Leaving them even a small amount of money in a standard Will could immediately disqualify them from receiving this vital support. Through a Special Needs Trust, the Trustee you name will be able to pay for the things your loved one needs

that are not covered by Medicaid or SSI, without affecting their eligibility. This might include travel, entertainment, assistive devices, therapies not already covered, education, computers and appliances, transportation, and more.

CHOOSING the appropriate Trust, funding the Trust, and operating the Trust requires the input of an experienced estate planning attorney. Trusts are subject to both state and federal laws, as well as administrative rules, that must be adhered to in order to function as intended. The Special Needs Trust attorneys at Ross & Shoalmire, PLLC are here to help you understand your options in Texas and Arkansas and to make the decisions that will most benefit your loved one with special needs.

If you have concerns about a loved one's ability to manage the money you hope to leave them, but they do not have special needs that will qualify them for government benefits, there are other Trust options available. An estate planning attorney can help you choose the best Trust to accomplish your goals, protect your assets, and help your beneficiary.

**GO
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Ben King

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TO YOUR SENIOR YEARS**

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* Ben is not available to meet on Friday nights
due to a scheduling conflict

TEXARKANA PARENT PROFILE

By Cymone Cornelius

The saying is true when doctors and nurses refer to the Nicu, (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit) as a roller coaster ride. I experienced just that when I delivered my 1 pound 9 ounce 12.5 inches baby girl at just 25 weeks and 1 day. She could literally fit in the palm of my hand. Unlike most mothers, I was unable to hold CyMya after delivery. She had to be rushed to the operating room for immediate intubation due to extreme prematurity of her lungs. I also had to recover so it was 8 long hours before I was wheeled into the NICU to see my baby girl. The nurse that admitted my daughter into the NICU was amazing. She had lots of knowledge and was able to lighten my worries and ease my mind. She was very honest with me of how things would go moving forward. She informed me that the first couple of nights are known as 'The Honeymoon' which is where they expect babies to take a turn for the worst. Things always get worse before they get better is what she told me.



I prayed and I knew God had not brought us this far to leave us. I stayed with CyMya for a few hours and then went back to my room to try to get a little bit of sleep. When I got discharged the next day I went to the NICU and the respiratory therapist was in the room extubating CyMya. The tube she had down her throat to help her breath was not needed, and she was doing all the work on her own. CyMya went to high flow oxygen less than 24 hours of being born which is a lot of work for such small baby. She had a IV in her right arm to give her medications and nutrients that she needed to help her adjust to no longer being in my womb. CyMya was referred to as strong and mighty but very

dramatic. I was able to hold her in my hands at 4 days old and it was such an amazing feeling. My girl had an ultrasound of her brain to make sure she had no brain bleeds due to being born premature. After so many tests including, radiology and lab work, the results came back normal. She went on to have blood work done daily per protocol.

I traveled back and forth to Little Rock every weekend after CyMya was 3 weeks old because I had to go back to work. At 9 days old I was finally able to do kangaroo care (skin to skin) with CyMya. We both enjoyed that time with one another. She held her body temperature and didn't have any bradys (brachardia), which is when the heart rate drops usually when baby is sleeping because the baby forgets to breath. When this happened, I would have her or pat her and she would always self-resolve. After ups and downs, CyMya was stable enough to be transported to Texarkana. The nurse called to let me know that she was approved for transport and this would be happening. I had no time to think. I knew God already had this under control. Texarkana was smaller but they could do just as much as UAMS. She stayed in St. Michael's NICU. which is a level 3 NICU. I was scared and happy at the same time. Afraid because I don't like change, but happy because I could see her everyday. I was so happy that her family could meet her, too.

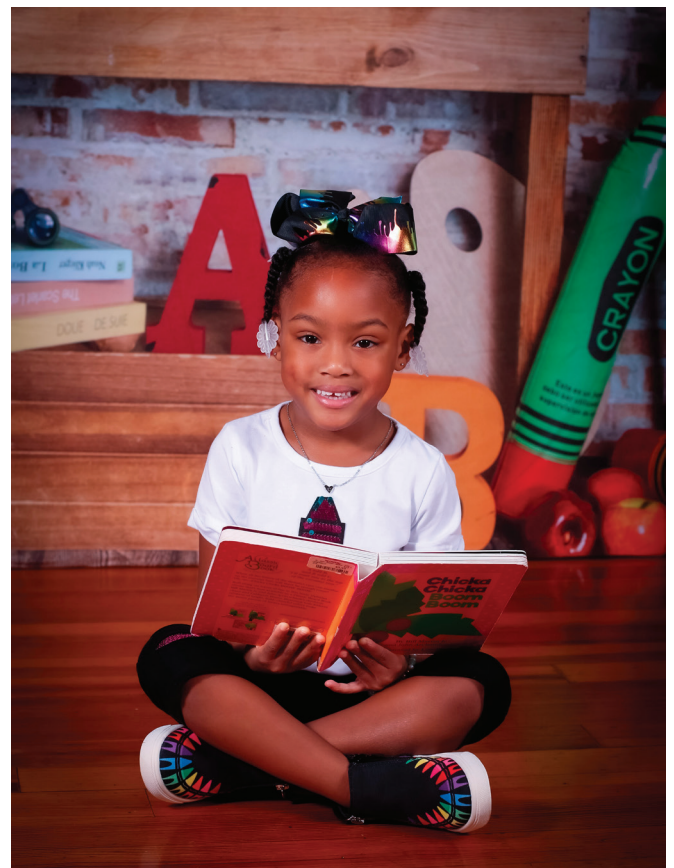
CyMya made big changes once she arrived in Texarkana. She was showing signs of no longer needing oxygen, and she was gaining weight. I fed her with a bottle for the first time, and her being home was amazing and the start of a lot of firsts for she and I. We stayed 115 days in between two NICUs. We met an endless count of nurses and doctors, whom have all become family. After almost 4 years later, we still talk to her nurses from Little Rock.

In the NICU, I learned premature babies can catch things easily. CyMya got the flu just a few days before discharge, which set us back. It was rollercoaster ride of emotions. There would be good days and then not so good days, but everyday was a blessing from God! CyMya was a micro-preemie, which is a baby born weighing under 3 pounds, but she has beat all the odds and currently needs no therapy. I am so grateful for everyone who played a part in CyMa's story. We like to personally thank Dr. Peeples and all the staff at UAMS, Dr. Keeney and all staff at St. Michael's NICU. Lastly, we are grateful for Dr. Jay and all the staff at Wadley Hospital and The Women's Specialists. CyMya is now 3 years old and weighs 30 pounds.

Although she may be tiny she is Mighty.

RIGHT PHOTO: CYMYA IS NOW IN PRE-K 4! (PHOTO BY KATIE STONE)

LEFT PHOTO: CYMYA WAS IN A SPECIALIZED CRIB FOR PREMATURE INFANTS THAT PROVIDES WARMTH AND PROTECTION AS THEY GROW. (SUBMITTED PHOTO)



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Twice as Nice NICU Care

BY CATIE SWENSON

EXPECTANT mothers usually look forward to all that their pregnancy has to offer. The special moments of feeling that little flutter inside her body and knowing her precious baby is growing and developing. Before too long those flutters turn into ninja kicks that can be shared with loved ones. The joy continues to grow as a mother's belly grows. Baby showers, picking a name, and getting the nursery just right are all things most moms are enjoying during her last trimester. However, some pregnancies are abruptly ended due to complications with the mother or with the baby, reasons vary in each situation. Some are expected due to age and high risk and others are completely unexpected. Either way, when a pregnancy ends and the new baby is rushed to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), this sends a mother and the expectant family into an unexplainable whirlwind of emotions. Being aware that Texarkana and surrounding families are able to have so many wonderful options in NICU care brings such a peace of mind to anyone facing those dreaded letters! NICU according to *dictionary.com* is defined as a specialized center in a hospital where intensive care is provided for newborn infants who are premature or have health problems. Though it is not the only reason, prematurity (birth before 37 weeks gestation) is the leading cause of NICU admissions globally. The Texarkana, USA slogan has been "Twice as Nice" as long as I can remember. Texarkana is blessed to have a Level II NICU at Wadley Regional Medical Center (WRMC) and a Level III NICU at Christus St. Michael Hospital (CSM).

According to Kim Glover, Maternal Child Program Manager at WRMC, the hospital has been recognized as having a Level II NICU since 2009. A Level II NICU is able to treat babies with some medical difficulties due to prematurity and other illnesses, (*handtohold.org*). To have a Level II NICU is a value to our community. "We are proud to be able to provide excellent care and services to both mothers and babies," states Glover. There are times when babies must be transferred out to a higher level of care. It is so wonderful when the two hospitals are able to work together for the health and support of these NICU families. Due to CSM's Level III designation since 2009, they are able to come alongside WRMC and other hospitals nearby to provide more comprehensive care for NICU babies born at all gestational ages and birth weights with critical illnesses. Rebecca Barr, clinical director of the NICU at CSM said, "Christus St. Michaels provides family centered care with 24/7 visitation, rooming in accommodations, and being close to home to have better support systems helps families through their stay in the NICU." There are times when it is imperative that a baby be taken to a Level IV NICU. We are blessed to be within driving distance to several of these in Dallas and Little Rock.

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that offers support to families that have babies in the NICU. We value the partnership with both hospitals in Texarkana. In 2022, these two hospitals together delivered 2,650 babies. Roughly 14% of those babies received care from a NICU. Almost 400 families from around the Texarkana area experienced NICU care. Most of those families were able to stay close to home because of the specialized care that they were able to receive from the knowledgeable, experienced, and compassionate staff at both hospitals.

As a NICU mom and co-founder of a NICU non-profit, I could easily talk all day about the NICU- the good, the bad, and the ugly,- but I will leave you with this instead: September is NICU Awareness Month. Though these tiny, little babies have a hard start into the world, don't dismiss them! NICU nurses and families are working hard and fighting daily to assure that each one of these babies have a fighting chance at life. During the NICU journey life can be challenging for the families and the nurses providing life-saving care to these babies. Both the families and nurses sometimes face tough issues, but little acts of kindness can help overcome or at least ease the burden. Although these acts of kindness may appear small, the impact is enormous. The staff of WRMC and CSM give selflessly of themselves daily to make a big impact on the tiniest humans in our community. You may not have had to experience the care of a NICU, or maybe you know someone that has, either way we are blessed as a community to have such wonderful services available to those families in need. Praying for nicu families and NICU staff.

The feet of Fearfully and Wonderfully Made,

Catie Swenson

For more information about this organization, find them on Facebook.



**NOVEMBER
1st - 4th**
TRAHC BUILDING



RRCUM
ELF
HUNT



Wednesday, November 1st

Join us for events throughout the day including DeClutter Christmas with Barbara LaFleur, Home for the Holidays with Jeff Loving



Thursday, November 2nd

Get your tinsel out a tangle with Katie Tittle, Painting for a Purpose with ColorHypeTXK



Friday, November 3rd

Rolling with my Snomies, Kids Decorate ornaments; Cookies with Mrs. Clause



Saturday, November 4th

Breakfast with Santa for kids; Family Pictures with Santa; Finally - Christmas tree auction and Gala.

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made is proud to host the first Festival of Trees at the TRHC building in Downtown Texarkana November 1st-4th, 2023. The goal of this event is to raise awareness about the NICU by ringing in the spirit of Christmas and its miracles. This event includes activities for all ages centered around designer quality Christmas trees.

All proceeds of this event will go to support the efforts of Fearfully and Wonderfully Made, a local non-profit ministry that offers support to families with babies in the NICU. For more information, please contact Catie Swenson at 903.733.6836 or visit our website at fearfullyandwonderfullymade.co.



10TH ANNUAL TURKEY TROT 5K

"Huffin' and Puffin' for the Gravy and Stuffin"

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<https://runsignup.com/Race/TX/Texarkana/ThanksgivingDayTurkeyTrotTexarkana>

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Race begins 8:30 am

Celebrity Lip Sync

featuring

Katie Stone
co-publisher of

TEXARKANA
parent



"Hospice has been a huge part of my life. I first started out as a Volunteer for a hospice agency in 2014, then transitioned into a the role of Volunteer Coordinator later that year. I loved working in the hospice care field. I am honored to be a part of this fundraiser and cannot wait to compete in this year's Lip Sync Battle!"

-Katie Stone

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