

# Blue Ribbon News

ROCKWALL/HEATH

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Volume 10, Issue 5 | August/September 2022 REAL. GOOD. NEWS.

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~Dawn Redig  
Publisher/Managing Editor

About Blue Ribbon News

Blue Ribbon News is Rockwall County’s No. 1 source for positive hometown news and events, in print and online at [BlueRibbonNews.com](http://BlueRibbonNews.com). Our Rockwall/Heath print edition is published 8x/year and delivered to about 17,500 homes and businesses throughout Rockwall County. Pick up free copies while supplies last at the Rockwall County Library, Chamber of Commerce, YMCA, and various local businesses.

Our small but mighty team comprises professional journalists, contributing writers, guest columnists, social media managers, graphic designers and marketing experts who share a passion for local business and community.

Submit your good news & events to: [editor@blueribbonnews.com](mailto:editor@blueribbonnews.com)

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Adventures with BRN  
New local attraction immerses families in fun

Shenaniganz in Rockwall captures the hearts of local families with everything from arcade games and bowling to lazer tag and axe throwing – but its latest addition has dropped a fully immersive, state-of-the-art virtual rollercoaster right in our backyard.

Our Blue Ribbon News team was invited to experience XD Dark Ride first hand. The 8-seat, interactive roller coaster has a massive movie screen and the latest 3D technology – allowing you to ride, blast, and compete your way into other dimensions.

My family and I enjoyed a fun-filled day trying out XD Dark Ride. At first it appears like a flashback to the old Six Flags Over Texas ‘Right Stuff’ with modern improvements. It is a cinema-style room with an attendant in front of you looking at a few monitors, and more monitors mounted overhead with video of what you’re about to play.



You head up a small ramp and immediately notice the chairs are plastic but still more than comfortable for the 5-minute ride. There’s a lap belt to secure yourself in place, a blaster in the holster at your side, and a curved screen in front of you. Once strapped in, the attendant hands you 3-D glasses and asks which adventure you’d like to go on. You can choose from evil Western era robots made by a mad scientist (think Wild Wild West featuring Will Smith), a werewolf outbreak based in the late 1800’s, your normal present day zombie outbreak, and (my personal favorite) an alien invasion.

You sit back not really knowing what to expect while the attendant leaves the area and closes the large curtain behind. A loading screen pops up allowing you to test your skills in a shooting range. After about 30 seconds, the shooting gallery comes to an end and shows how well you did with a score for each of the blasters (each one is color-coded so you know who is who).

Then the real fun begins. There’s someone moderating in the speakers behind your head, giving you the overview of where you are and why you’re there as your seats begin to move. The scene begins, and you start blasting your way out of the situation you find yourself in the middle of.



As you start moving faster, the fans in front of you turn on (like driving in the back of a vehicle, on top of a locomotive, or in a helicopter) and the seats begin to vibrate/shake to help simulate moving. Each one of the scenarios is fun, but some are definitely scarier than others.



If you have small children, I’d recommend sticking with robots or aliens; my six-year-old didn’t care for the zombies or werewolf simulations, but they didn’t cause him to cover his eyes.

Once done, you’re able to see how you did compared to the other players – but when you walk outside, the main screen shows how well you performed against everyone that has played that machine before. Good luck trying to beat my high score! On the alien adventure, I am currently beating second place by over 20,000 points!

Story and photos by Blue Ribbon News Man About Town “JR”, Lead Designer and Layout Editor, shown here enjoying time at Shenaniganz with his son.

**CONGRATS**  
to the winners of our Shenaniganz Unlimited Play Passes: **Jan Eliza, Carrie Byrd, Pamela Pounds and Amanda Campos!** FOLLOW our Blue Ribbon News Facebook page for more adventures and more opportunities to WIN!





**Sports Physicals \$25 & Immunizations**

The Health Center is a community-supported, non-profit medical facility and has a low cost for services in order to continue serving its patients. When you choose Helping Hands as your medical provider, the competitive costs help provide essential services for those who cannot afford to pay.

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Be a ‘Hunger Hero’

Food insecurity is a reality in Rockwall County. To help fight hunger, Helping Hands is participating in the nationwide Hunger Action Month campaign in September. Hunger Action Month mobilizes the public to take action. Everyone can be a hunger hero and no action is too small!

Make a commitment to help to close the hunger gap and provide more healthy meals to food-insecure neighbors. Sharing, volunteering, pledging, fundraising, and donating are just a few ways to help end the impossible choices of hunger. Take action to make food a certainty, not a choice.

**LEARN**

- ✔ Read the latest posts and current food pantry needs at [rockwallhelpinghands.com/food-pantry/](http://rockwallhelpinghands.com/food-pantry/).
- ✔ Research food insecurity statistics near you at [healthyntexas.org/indexsuite/index/foodinsecurity](http://healthyntexas.org/indexsuite/index/foodinsecurity).

**COMMIT**

- ✔ **Donate.** Your gift could help provide groceries to homebound elderly and disabled clients through our Pantry to Pantry delivery program or to food insecure areas in Rockwall County through our Mobile Food Pantry. Consider making a one-time gift or setting up a monthly donation to help us fight hunger all year at [rockwallhelpinghands.com/donate!](http://rockwallhelpinghands.com/donate!)
- ✔ **Host a Virtual Food Drive.** Any person, business or organization can host a virtual food drive with their own unique page to raise funds for the Helping Hands Food Pantry. Virtual food drives raise dollars instead of cans, which helps the Food Pantry provide even more food for the families we serve. Start your own Virtual Food Drive Fundraising Page by emailing [events@rockwallhelpinghands.com](mailto:events@rockwallhelpinghands.com).

- ✔ **Volunteer.** Helping Hands relies on volunteers to help us fulfill our mission. We welcome all volunteers over the age of 12 (with an adult) and have a variety of volunteer opportunities available for individuals, families, businesses and groups! Visit [rockwallhelpinghands.com/volunteer/](http://rockwallhelpinghands.com/volunteer/) to learn more.

**SPEAK UP**

- ✔ **Connect and share on social media.** Use the power of your social network to help us reach even more people and inform them of the work we do every day to help end hunger in Rockwall County. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.
- ✔ **Sign up for our emails.** Keep up with the latest news and updates from Helping Hands by signing up for our monthly enewsletter on our website.
- ✔ **Go Orange on Hunger Action Day.** Help highlight the issue of hunger in our community by wearing orange on Friday, Sept. 17. Snap a selfie and share it on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter with the hashtag **#HungerActionMonth!**
- ✔ **Write Congress to tell them that food shouldn’t be an impossible choice.**

While the fight against hunger is ongoing, together, we can feed hope for our neighbors in need. For more information, visit [rockwallhelpinghands.com](http://rockwallhelpinghands.com).

Want to support Rockwall County Helping Hands in a different way or have a question? Contact Melody Hail, Senior Director of Philanthropy, at [melodyhail@rockwallhelpinghands.com](mailto:melodyhail@rockwallhelpinghands.com).

Sponsored article by Rockwall County Helping Hands, a Blue Ribbon News advertiser.

# Rockwall County celebrates Marine veteran’s 99th birthday

**GOOD LIVING** Over 60 members strong, CWO2 (Chief Warrant Officer 2) James W. Randolph Detachment 1465, Marine Corps League, gathered recently to celebrate one of its own – Rockwall resident Donald Van Handel. Don turned 99 on July 23.

Don’s daughter and son-in-law brought him to the Veterans Resource Outreach Center (VROC) in Rowlett, where Detachment 1465 meets the second Saturday of every month. Don was honored with a birthday cake, accolades from fellow Marines, and an emotional singing of The Marine’s Hymn.



## A lifetime of achievements

As the story goes, Don and his best friend Bob Johnson were driving home one February day in 1942 when they made a deal. If they arrived home safely, they’d join the Coast Guard. If they got into an accident, they’d join the Marines. Bob drove off the road into a ditch – so they joined the Marines together.

Months later, as they were in line getting their uniforms at Marine Boot Camp, a Private barked orders at Bob. Don told Bob that the Marine was just a Private, so they didn’t have to do anything he told them to do. Within seconds Don was flanked by two Marines, his feet no longer on the ground. He was carried outside and was “encouraged” to follow orders.

Boot Camp continued without incident, but shortly before he and his buddies were to ship out, Don fell ill and had to stay behind. Once recovered, he was sent to Navy Pier in Chicago for Aircraft Mechanics School and was then stationed at Marine Corps Air Station in Mojave, CA. During his off time, Don played the double

bass in a Marine dance band. When taking a break between sets at a gig in Tehachapi, CA, Don struck up a conversation with a young man, Jerrell Clements, who admired Don’s playing. Don noticed a beautiful girl walk into the room and commented to Jerrell how pretty she was.

“She’s my sister,” Jerrell said.

Nine weeks later that beautiful young woman, LaVena Clements, only 16 at the time, became Mrs. Donald Van Handel. Their marriage lasted 72 years.

While in Mojave, Don qualified for pilot training after taking an aptitude test and was accepted into the Navy Pilot Training Program. He attended pilot training at Navy Dallas and did his carrier qualification in Corpus Cristi. In the meantime, he studied Aeronautics and physical sciences at Louisiana State College, Baylor University, the University of Georgia, and Cornell College.

In 1946 Don trained to fly the F4U Corsair and was then based at Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro until his discharge in 1948. The F4U Corsair was a single seat aircraft – and your first flight in it was solo. The aircraft was prone to unrecoverable spins. Don got into a spin in the Corsair and, after several attempts, managed to recover at the last minute. Spins were a prohibited maneuver, so Don never acknowledged he had been in one.

Don held the temporary rank of 2nd Lieutenant from May of 1946 to May of 1947 and was discharged as a Gunnery Sergeant. He flew in the Marine reserves from November of 1957 to November of 1962, where he became jet qualified in the T-33. Don went on to fly for United Airlines, Flying Tiger Airlines and eventually became a chief operation inspector with the CAA, the FAA, and

eventually ICAO (the international FAA) where he and LaVena were stationed in Frankfurt, Germany; Jeddah, Saudi Arabia; Beirut, Lebanon; and finally Montreal, Canada.

Don holds a flight license in virtually every kind of flying machine from fixed wing single and multi-engine aircraft, both land and sea, to helicopters, balloons, and blimps.

## Serving Veterans, Youth, and Community

With a heart for service, members of the CWO2 James W. Randolph Detachment 1465, Marine Corps League are always on the lookout for ways to help others. They walk the Heroes Memorial Bridge (the bridge connecting Rockwall and Rowlett) on the 22nd of each month, bringing awareness to the 22-plus veterans and first responders who commit suicide every day. They partner with local community groups like the Third Watch Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club, Terry Fisher American Legion Post 117, and the Boys Scouts. They participate in Rockwall’s Annual Fourth of July Parade, help raise funds for Lone Star CASA, and support Toys for Tots. This past Memorial Weekend, six of their members walked from Royse City to the Rockwall County Courthouse as part of Carry the Load.

In addition, they speak about the Marine Corps, citizenship and patriotism at local elementary schools. They teach flag etiquette. They are launching a Young Marines program called the Lake Ray Hubbard Young Marines Unit, for ages 8 through high school, helping to fill the gap for not having JROTC in local high schools.

*By Dawn Redig, Blue Ribbon News, in collaboration with Ron Smith, Public Affairs Officer and Jim Randolph, Detachment 1465; and Nico Van Thyn.*



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## Did you know...?

- One in three seniors lives alone.
- Every day our senior clients receive a call from a volunteer as a safety check and to assess their needs.
- Our Allan's Companions program offers seniors additional fellowship and friendship.
- In addition to nutritious meals for our seniors, our Ani-Meals program feeds over 120 pets monthly, plus vet care as needed.
- Our seniors receive rides to doctor appointments courtesy of Toyota of Rockwall.
- Our oldest client is 100 and our youngest is 28, because we serve those on disability under the age of 60.
- Your support helps ensure our seniors are never on a waiting list.

## BY THE NUMBERS

- Serving Rockwall County for 44 years
- 120+ faithful volunteers
- 95,000 meals delivered in 2021
- Over 50 veterans on our program
- 26,000 people are over the age of 60 in Rockwall County
- \$35 feeds a senior for one week
- \$1680 feeds a senior for a year

# In Colour

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ONE SENIOR AT A TIME.

October 22, 2022  
6:30pm Rockwall Hilton Lakefront

For event info, event sponsorship and tickets, scan QR code

# On Faith: God's Great Big, Wonderful World

## GOOD FAITH

Kids returning to school will no doubt learn some amazing things their parents never knew or else have forgotten. Some of us could benefit from studying along with them, suspending part of our daily grind in exchange for a bit of amazement over this big world.



History's appeal increases as we age since we've lived through some events now deemed historical. We might wish we'd paid more attention to famous figures and wars we now realize weren't so different than current ones. At least the motives that drove them haven't changed. The observant King Solomon noted that "what has been done is what will be done; and there is nothing new under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9\*).

The study of science should also interest those of us long removed from the classroom. We've experienced miracles,

after all, especially the birth of those kids, who from a single cell turned into sprinters, artists, math whizzes, and musicians. And some became researchers and explorers.

Psalms 107:23-24 says, "Some went down to the sea in ships, ... they saw the deeds of the Lord, his wondrous works in the deep."

One team of scientists comprised of zoologists, oceanographers, and marine biologists worked for nearly a decade toward the goal of finding a certain monster in the deep North Pacific Ocean. They "went down to the sea" with a manned submersible.

In 2012, about 600 miles south of Tokyo, that team made around 100 dives and used a lure to mimic the bioluminescent light of a jellyfish. Then they turned off their submersible lights and waited. Finally, they came face-to-face with the object of their long search: a super-size squid.

The silver- and gold-colored creature appeared before them at a depth of 2100 feet (640 meters). With eyes as big as dinner plates, it could absorb light in its deep-water habitat. An underwater camera captured live footage as the squid wrapped its arms around the bait for 20 minutes before letting go. The 26-foot squid—about the size of a 3-story house—had an estimated 10-foot-long body and 16-foot tentacles.

Another group of scientists, also seeking "wondrous works in the deep," worked together for over 25 years on the James Webb space telescope. On December 25th of 2021, they launched the more than 10-billion-dollar infrared

machine on its journey to view the universe. Along with gathering never-before-seen images, these scientists hope to discover how the world began.

While scientific research and tools serve to heighten our sense of wonder about our world, the apostle Paul warned of those who are "always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth" (2 Timothy 3:7).

Though knowledge is wonderful, truth is of greater value since it leads us to glorify God as we behold images of his works. God's word clearly tells us how the world came into existence:

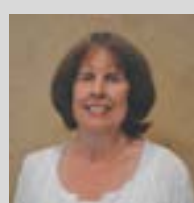
→ "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).

→ "[The Lord] determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names" (Psalm 147:4).

→ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him.... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.... Jesus Christ" (John 1:1-3, 14, 17).

So, while science continues to shed more light on God's world, and while history continues to record the effects of humanity's sinfulness in it, the older among us must teach the younger of God's great power and his perfect plans.

*\*ESV Bible*



Patti Richter writes and edits Christian faith articles and has co-authored *Signs of His Presence: Experiencing God's Comfort in Times of Suffering*.

Read more of her essays at BlueRibbonNews.com.

## THE TIMPA LAW OFFICE



### Welcome RISD New Teachers and Staff!

Thank you, Rockwall ISD teachers, for your service and commitment not only in the classroom, but also to our community. Your dedication helps make the world a better place by encouraging and inspiring students to achieve.

The Timpa Law Office extends a warm welcome to the district's newest employees. You have joined an incredible team!



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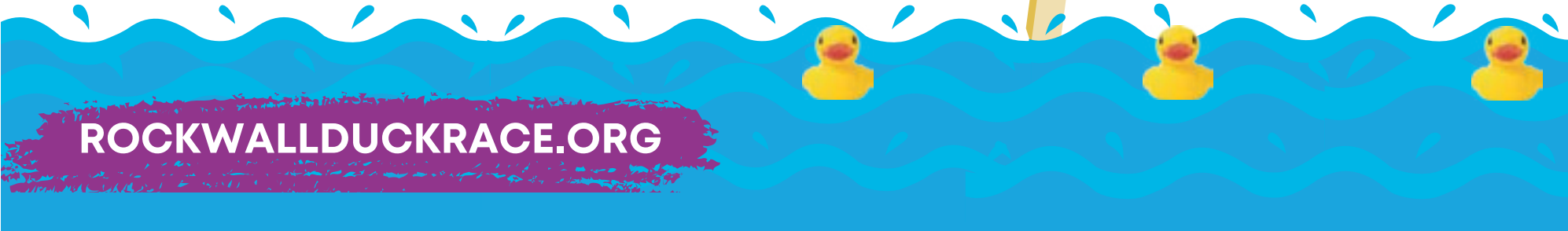
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WIN A JEEP!



The most spec"quack"ular event of the season is back and bigger than ever!

GOOD TIMES

The 10th annual Rockwall Rubber Duck Regatta will occur: Saturday, September 17th, 2022 at the Rockwall Harbor! Benefiting the Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeast Texas and the Rockwall Grace Clinic, the event is a great time for two great causes in Rockwall County. The Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeast Texas has two locations in Rockwall where they seek to ensure that every kid who walks through their doors, especially those who need them most, reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. Rockwall Grace Clinic is a faith-based nonprofit healthcare clinic addressing the medical needs of the uninsured and underserved adults and children in Rockwall County. In 2022, Grace Clinic opened their doors to serve youth as well as adults, making them an ideal partner for this fundraiser for kids!

The Rockwall Rubber Duck Regatta is a fun and unique fundraising event. This one day, community festival boasts a KidZone with inflatables and activities, a Market with vendors from across the region, a Quack Shack where you can purchase all of the rubber ducky swag your heart desires, and the

cornerstone of the event - the Rubber Duck Race.

Thousands of rubber ducks will race down the fountains at The Harbor in Rockwall with the hope of crossing the finish line first.

New this year!

In celebration of the 10th anniversary of the event, the 2022 Rockwall Rubber Duck Regatta will also host a Jeep Festival where you can peruse the Jeep Zone, view the Jeep Exhibition, and attend the Jeep Parade to close out the event!

But that's not the quackiest new addition this year - The Grand Prize of the 10th Anniversary Rockwall Rubber Duck Regatta will be a brand new 2022 Jeep Wrangler - that's right! Adopt a duck, win a jeep!

How does it work?

Leading up to the event, people from all over the area "adopt" a rubber duck online. Before the race, a random number generator is used to assign each adopter a number. Each rubber ducky in the race has a corresponding number on the bottom. When the ducks cross the finish line into the tube, the first duck is pulled, the number is compared to the list of

adopters, the winner is announced, and the winner wins a brand new 2022 Jeep Wrangler (please see rockwallduckrace.org for contest rules). The race will also give away a 2nd prize of a \$1000 VISA gift card and a 3rd prize \$500 VISA gift card.

**How can you help?**

- Adopt a Duck! (or adopt 10!)
- Be a Sponsor
- Be a Vendor
- Volunteer
- Spread the word!

Take the plunge and join us for an event that is great fun for an even greater cause. Adopt a duck, be a sponsor, be a vendor, sign up to volunteer, and more at rockwallduckrace.org.

The more ducks you adopt, the greater good you do AND the more opportunities to win. So load up, duckies, and let's get ready to #duckduckjeep!

Sponsored article by Rockwall Rubber Duck Regatta. Blue Ribbon News is a proud Media Sponsor.



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# Cooking with Ease



## Toast the new school year

Growing up, Mom often made us toast for breakfast. It was fast and easy but still homemade. Some days just plain butter toast, some days with peanut butter and on special days, we had cinnamon toast.

A couple years ago, I posted my mom's cinnamon toast recipe on my personal blog and had several readers send me messages with their own mother's go-to toast recipes. So many people with cheese toast memories. I couldn't believe it. And as a lover of both cheese and toast, I was shocked I had not had it.

An old friend from church told me about her mom making chocolate toast, with the powdered chocolate milk mix. Everyone that wrote had such fond memories of these simple meals.

This one little thing can set the tone for the day. I want to keep my talking short so I can share all of

these recipes with you. The one thing I need you to know is, forgo the toaster. This toast is a job for the oven broiler. You heard me; you have to turn that oven on. Making toast in the oven does two things; one, it keeps the bottom of the bread soft and pillowy while the top gets buttery and crispy; two, it makes your house smell like heaven. Use the oven. If you have your own toast memories I would love to hear them! Email me anytime at [melissatetx@gmail.com](mailto:melissatetx@gmail.com). *Enjoy! Melissa Tate*



Melissa Tate of Rockwall is a freelance food writer and owner of Photo-Wagon mobile photo booth. She also helps her husband run their family farm, Tate Farms, and event center, Summerfield at Tate Farms. They are currently managing the Smirl Chapel Relocation & Preservation Project. Find Melissa at [melissatetx.com](http://melissatetx.com), on Facebook or Instagram at [@melissatetx](https://www.instagram.com/melissatetx) to follow the adventures. Headshot by Kelly Alexander Photography. Read more of her recipes online at [BlueRibbonNews.com](http://BlueRibbonNews.com).

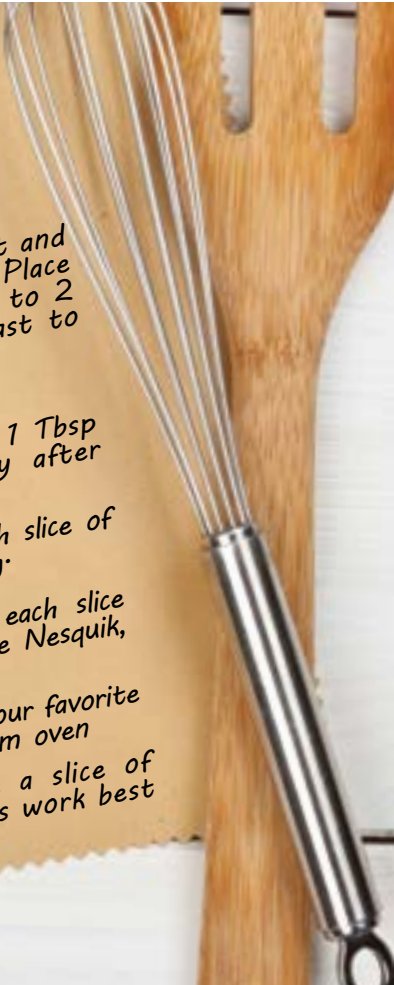
*Basic Toast Recipe*

Prep time: 3 minutes  
Cook Time: 2 minutes  
Total time: 5 minutes

Ingredients:  
2 slices white bread  
1 Tbsp softened butter or margarine

**Directions:**  
Preheat oven to high broil. Place bread on a shallow baking sheet and spread 1/2 Tbsp of butter on one side of each slice of bread. Place in heated oven and toast, butter side up, for approximately 1 to 2 minutes depending on your oven. You want the top of the toast to be golden brown and crispy. Remove from oven and enjoy!

**Toast Variations**  
**Peanut Butter Toast:** follow the Basic Toast Recipe but add 1 Tbsp of peanut butter to each slice of warm toast immediately after removing from oven  
**Cinnamon Toast:** follow the Basic Toast Recipe but sprinkle each slice of bread with 1/2 Tbsp of sugar & cinnamon mixture BEFORE baking.  
**Chocolate Toast:** follow the Basic Toast Recipe but sprinkle each slice of bread with 1/2 Tbsp of powdered chocolate milk mixture, like Nesquik, BEFORE baking  
**Jelly Toast:** follow the Basic Toast Recipe but place a slice of jelly to each slice of warm toast immediately after removing from oven  
**Cheese Toast:** follow the Basic Toast Recipe but place a slice of cheese on each piece of bread BEFORE baking. Kraft Singles work best





22<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL JURIED  
**FINE ART**  
SHOW & SALE

**SEPTEMBER 23-25, 2022**

**FRIDAY** September 23rd – Noon to 7:00pm  
**SATURDAY** September 24th – 10:00am to 7:00pm  
**SUNDAY** September 25th – Noon to 4:00pm  
*Meet the Artists – Sunday 2:00pm to 4:00pm*

ROCKWALL GOLF & ATHLETIC CLUB  
2600 Champions Drive, Rockwall Texas 75087

Visit us at [RockwallArtLeague.org](http://RockwallArtLeague.org)

Rockwall Art League is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization supported in part by a grant from the City of Rockwall. Please continue to support local hotels at [www.rockwall.com/hotels.asp](http://www.rockwall.com/hotels.asp)



**The 22nd Annual Juried Fine Art Show & Sale**

The Rockwall Art League Juried Fine Art Show & Sale showcases regional artists and provides art collectors a wonderful venue to purchase original art.

The exhibition will run at Rockwall Golf & Athletic Club from Sept 23-25, 2022, and will also be featured in a digital online gallery. Rockwall Golf & Athletic Club, 2600 Champions Dr., Rockwall, TX 75087. An Awards Presentation will be held Sunday, September 25, 2022 from 2:00-4:00pm, and is open to the public.

**THE CALL TO ARTISTS - \$2,700 IN PRIZE MONEY!**

For the Prospectus, go to: [www.RockwallArtLeague.org](http://www.RockwallArtLeague.org). Entries will be done through Smarter Entry. Deadline is September 6, 2022. Accepted artists will be contacted no later than September 12, 2022.

Categories include: Oil, Acrylic, Drawing, Watercolor, Photography/Digital Art, Sculpture, and Mixed Media

Visit [www.RockwallArtLeague.org](http://www.RockwallArtLeague.org) for more information or to join.

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## Cain Event Center Opens

### Rockwall Rotary Celebrates Renovation



The newly renovated Cain Event Center at Rockwall Rotary Hall is on its way to becoming one of Rockwall's top event venues. From corporate meetings and private parties to wedding receptions and rehearsal dinners, its open concept and impressive interior make it suitable for a large range of events.

According to Dana Macalik, a past president of Rockwall Rotary, the Rockwall Rotary Board of Directors decided two years ago to embark on a remodel. The event center (408 S. Goliad), which had been purchased in 1997, was becoming outdated and, like any other establishment, needed some routine maintenance and renovations. But the board was motivated to take their plans a step further. They saw a potential in their beloved building that required more than just a fresh coat of paint and a few repairs. To them, this was an opportunity to introduce an entirely new event space, available to Rockwall County and its surrounding communities.

"It is our goal to be an integral part of our community," said Macalik. "We believe that is what we were called to do."

Macalik went on to explain how Rockwall Rotary stands out as one of very few Rotary clubs in the U.S. to actually own its own building. Like the history that has shaped Rotary International as an organization, Rockwall Rotary is furthering the tradition of "service above self and one profits most who serves best" by extending the use of their new

building to the public for private parties, corporate events, and wedding receptions.

The venue gets its name from the Ted Cain family. Dwayne Cain, a Rotarian and Ted's son, made a generous contribution toward the building's remodel and renovation. Cain Event Center celebrates the legacy of Ted, a successful Rockwall businessman and Rotarian, and his beloved wife Maurine, a Rockwall ISD educator.

"Rockwall is becoming quite the mega center for a number of businesses that are relocating," Macalik continued, "so we're hoping from a corporate standpoint many of them will want to use Cain Event Center for strategic planning meetings, team building events, and things of that matter."

Cain Event Center also welcomes members of the community who wish to rent the space for private parties and celebrations. Examples of these might be a special anniversary, a quinceanera

or a nonprofit event. The Rotary would also like to extend the use of its building to host wedding receptions and rehearsal dinners. Please note, rental only includes use of the space itself; all catering and decorating must be provided by outside vendors.

The Rockwall Rotary Foundation Board, led by Stan Lowrance, selected Z Constructors, owned by Matt Zahm, as its general contractor. As a result, the newly renovated event center features a completely remodeled exterior and interior. "We couldn't have done it without their dedicated help," said Lowrance.



Lowrance and fellow Rotary Foundation Board member Ted Hoisington covered much of the groundwork for reconstruction and renovation of the building. From there, Macalik and her fellow members of the affectionately named "lipstick committee" led the interior design, putting finishing touches on the space. "I believe all of Rockwall can be proud of our new Rotary building," said Lowrance.

In addition to the remodels, the building was also expanded in square footage to allow for more guests. The space can now accommodate up to 150 people, while the previous space only accommodated about 100, comfortably.

Perhaps one of the most impressive features of the long-anticipated renovation is its completely updated audio-visual system. The system, implemented by none other than Rockwall Rotary's 2021-2022 Rotarian of the Year, Erik Oistad, boasts a much-needed departure from the layers of old and almost inoperable equipment used previously.

According to Oistad, a retired electrical engineer, the new system was clearly needed. After thorough research and collaboration with the Rockwall Chamber of Commerce, Oistad recommended the Rotary implement ZoomRooms - the newest version of Zoom conferencing. The Rotary building now features a 7' high 12' wide jumbo screen in the front of the meeting space, accompanied by several additional monitors placed throughout the meeting room. A new sound system rounds out the facility with crisp audio quality. "There are no 'bad seats'

in Rotary Hall," said Oistad.

After several committee meetings and countless hours of planning, Rockwall Rotary was finally able to enjoy the fruits of their labor during an Awards Ceremony and Installation of the Rockwall Rotary Board of Directors on June 30. It was an afternoon of new beginnings, as immediate past President Kevin Pate passed the gavel of authority to current President Greg Blair.

During a heartwarming acceptance speech, Blair praised the hard work of his fellow Rotarians over the past year for their many achievements and accomplishments. Many valued members of the Rockwall community looked on as the new board of directors promised "Rockwall Rotary may truly exemplify the highest standards of service above self."

In light of its newly renovated meeting space and increased square footage, Rockwall Rotary is also anticipating an expansion in members this coming year. Rotary invites interested community members to visit a weekly meeting and consider joining. Meetings are held every Thursday at noon. For more information visit [rockwallrotary.org](http://rockwallrotary.org).

Those interested in renting Cain Event Center for a private event can contact Dana Macalik at 214-679-2401 or visit the official Cain Event Center website for more information: [rockwalleventcenter.com](http://rockwalleventcenter.com).

By Amy Busch, Blue Ribbon News contributing writer/reporter.  
Courtesy Photos.



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# BLUE RIBBON REPLAY

So much good news and only so much space! See blueribbonnews.com and follow us on Facebook and Instagram for more highlights from our schools, clubs, and community!



**▲ Under the Big Top**  
JER Chilton YMCA hosted a circus-themed, end-of-summer celebration for Angel Campers and their families. Throughout the summer, the children with special needs enjoyed summer camp activities like horseback riding, canoeing, and sailing. *Photos by Nijee Cooper.*



**◀ Inspiring Innovation**  
Rockwall students Isaiah Fosnight, Audrey Smith, Jackson Griffith, and Carter deMerville of FIRST robotics competition Team 1296, Full Metal Jackets, went to Capitol Hill to advocate for STEM funding. The team was accompanied by mentor Danna Taylor and 1296 teacher sponsor Lane Doughtrie. *Courtesy photo.*

**B is for Beekeeping**  
Fate resident and Assistant City Manager Justin Weiss has published a children's book that teaches the ABCs of beekeeping with playful illustrations and easy-to-understand vocabulary. A portion of sales will be donated to the conservation and protection of honeybees. The book is available on Amazon. *Courtesy photo.*



**◀ The Sound of Music**  
The Von Trapp family is getting ready to take the stage as Rockwall Summer Musicals presents The Sound of Music, directed by Barbara Doudt, Aug. 5-7 and Aug. 12-14. *Courtesy photo.*

**Teacher Prayer Breakfast**  
This year's Teacher Prayer Breakfast featuring keynote speaker Lauren Atkins Bovie, Rockwall ISD Behavior Specialist, drew a record number of educators to the JER Chilton YMCA, with nearly 130 people in attendance. By sharing her personal story and faith in God, Bovie addressed the challenges educators face and offered ways to help teachers focus on their mental health. *Photos by BRN Media*



**▲ Welcome, Superheroes!**  
The Rockwall Area Chamber of Commerce and Rockwall ISD hosted a breakfast program for its newest teachers and employees at their New Teacher & Employee Welcome Expo at Dr. Gene Burton College and Career Academy. *Courtesy photo.*

# AROUND TOWN

To submit your events, email [editor@BlueRibbonNews.com](mailto:editor@BlueRibbonNews.com). Events are subject to change.

**Toyota Classic 130 Classic Food Drive | Thru Sept. 21**  
Help pack the pantry at Helping Hands with a food drive that kicks off at the Rockwall ISD Convocation on Aug. 8 and continues through Sept. 21 at each high school and elementary campus. The winning side of the community will be announced at the I-30 Classic football game on Sept. 23.

**The Sound of Music | Friday-Sunday, Aug. 12, 13, 14**  
Rockwall Summer Musicals presentation directed by Barbara Doudt: [rockwallsummermusicals.org](http://rockwallsummermusicals.org).

**Rockwall ISD First Day of School | Monday, Aug. 15**

**Royse City ISD First Day of School | Thursday, Aug. 18**

**Clays for CASA | Saturday, Aug. 20**  
8 a.m.-3 p.m. at Texas Gun Ranch: [lonestarcasa.org](http://lonestarcasa.org).

**Rockwall Senior Health Fair | Wednesday, Sept. 7**  
Hosted by Rockwall Parks & Recreation, 9-12:30 p.m. at The Center, 108 E. Washington

**Rotary Clay Shoot | Friday, Sept. 9**  
10:30 a.m. at Texas Gun Ranch: [rockwallrotary.org](http://rockwallrotary.org).

**Helping Hands Golf Tournament | Friday, Sept. 9**  
Buffalo Creek Golf Club, 7 a.m.-2 p.m. [rockwallhelpinghands.com/events/annual-golf-tournament](http://rockwallhelpinghands.com/events/annual-golf-tournament).

**Bubbles & Bags | Saturday, Sept. 10**  
Sold-out designer purse bingo event at Southfork Ranch benefiting Children's Advocacy Center for Rockwall County. Blue Ribbon News is the proud Media Sponsor.

**Caregiver Conference | Thursday, Sept. 15**  
Hosted by Meals on Wheels and Rest Haven, 9am - 2pm at Rest Haven, 500 SH 66 East: 972-771-9514.

**Rubber Duck Regatta & Jeep Festival | Saturday, Sept. 17**  
8 a.m.-5 p.m. at The Harbor, benefiting Boys & Girls Club and Grace Clinic. Adopt ducks at [rockwallduckrace.org](http://rockwallduckrace.org). Blue Ribbon News is the proud Media Sponsor.

**North Texas Giving Day | Friday, Sept. 22**

**Hunger Action Day | Saturday, Sept. 17**  
See article in this print edition and help be a 'Hunger Hero'! Learn more at [rockwallhelpinghands.com/food-pantry/](http://rockwallhelpinghands.com/food-pantry/)

**Bikes for Tykes | Sunday, Sept 18**  
Teddy Bear Motorcycle Ride benefiting Children's Advocacy Center for Rockwall County, starts and finishes at Rockwall County Courthouse: [rockwallbikesfortykes.org](http://rockwallbikesfortykes.org)

**ROCKWALL Art LEAGUE**  
**Rockwall Art League Juried Fine Art Show & Sale | Sept. 23-25**  
Rockwall Golf & Athletic Club Community Room | 2600 Champions Drive  
**Artists Reception & Awards 2-4 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 25**  
Call for entries deadline Sept. 6.  
Blue Ribbon News is the proud Media Sponsor.

**Family Fun Friday | Friday, Sept. 23**  
Movie at dusk (Air Bud) at Northshore Park, 609 Highland Drive.

**Swim Across America | Saturday, Sept. 24**  
Dallas Open Water Swim, 7 a.m. at The Harbor, Lake Ray Hubbard: [playtri.com/swimacrossamerica2022](http://playtri.com/swimacrossamerica2022).

**Pumpkin Patch Opens | Saturday, Sept. 24**  
The Blase Family Farm Pumpkin Patch opens thru Oct. 30, 1232 East Fork Drive, Rockwall: [blasefamilyfarm.com](http://blasefamilyfarm.com)

**Heroes Day | Saturday, Sept. 24**  
Community event honoring first responders featuring a 5K, 10K and half marathon, fitness challenge and kids' field day, food trucks, flyover, and live music at McLendon-Chisholm City Hall.

**Mother Son Dance | Saturday, Sept. 24**  
Springhill Suites, 2601 Lakefront Trail, 6-9 p.m. \$45 per ticket; \$33 discounted resident rate: [apm.activecommunities.com/rockwallparksandrec/activity/search/detail/2748](http://apm.activecommunities.com/rockwallparksandrec/activity/search/detail/2748).

**Patriot Paws Golf Tournament | Friday, Sept. 30**  
At Firewheel Golf Course in Garland, hosted by Brotherhood of St. Andrew: [brothersandrewdallas.org/golfer-registration](http://brothersandrewdallas.org/golfer-registration).

**Rockwall Farmers Market**  
8 a.m. to Noon  
Saturdays through Sept. 24  
Downtown Rockwall Square



**San Jacinto Plaza Music Series**  
7 to 9:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays through October  
San Jacinto Plaza, Downtown Rockwall

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