

# GROVE GAZETTE

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Union Grove JH/HS Newsletter

November 2021

## Band Hosts Annual Fall Concert

### Taylor See

The junior high band will host their annual fall concert Nov. 1 at 6:00 p.m. in the Lion Center. The performance will include "March Zuma", "The Noise in the Basement", and "Dr. ROCKenstein" and students will wear their Halloween costumes.

"I think they are going to play very well on all of the music we have been preparing the past few weeks!" junior high band director Jonathan Stafford said. "The band is filled with a ton of talented and hard-working individuals. That makes it a blast to teach them!"

## Dancing Queens

## Theater Readies for Mamma Mia

### Sydney Pritchett

The theater department will perform the musical "Mamma Mia" on Sunday, Nov. 14th at 2 p.m. and Monday the 15th at 6 p.m. Tickets will be sold at the door for \$5. The musical surrounds a daughter's quest to find her father before her upcoming wedding. In order to do so, she must dredge up the details of her mother's romantic past.

The play features music from ABBA that will make viewers want to sing along and choreography crafted by theater students. The double-cast play stars Kyler Littlejohn (11) and Sarah Clowers (11) as Sophie Sheridan and Katelyn Vaughn (12) and Daytona Vaughn (10) as her mother, Donna.

"I expect this to be a great show since it is so well-known and fun," Clowers said.

## Girls' Cross Country Wins Regional Meet, Advances to State Competition

### Faith Woodall

The girls' cross-country team competes for the state championship Nov. 6 after winning the regional competition at Huntsville on Oct. 25th. The team hopes to beat last year's 13th place state finish.

At the regional meet, Sophie Pyle (10) placed 16th, Gracie Stanford (11) 17th, Keira Taylor (9) 18th, Gracie Winn (11) 22nd, Analeice Jones (11) 42nd, Jenna Scott (10) 45th, and Kenia Velazquez (11) 47th. Ava Wightman (10) and Taylor Campbell (9) did not run due to injuries. Will Wilson (10) placed 14th, Preston Woodall (11) 36th, Brendon Fuller (11) 69th, Lane Turner (10) 120th, Isaiah O'Neal (10) 131st, Jaxson Daniels (10) 140th, and Gavin Boutin (11) 144th.

Both teams advanced to regionals after the district meet Wednesday, Oct. 13. The varsity girls won first overall, with individual medals for Stanford (1st), Pyle (2nd), Campbell (3rd), Taylor (4th), Velazquez (7th), Scott (8th), and Jones (9th). The varsity boys placed second overall, with medals for Wilson (2nd), Woodall (7th),

Fuller (9th), Turner (11th), O'Neal (13th), Boutin (16th), and Daniels (18th). James Evans (11) won third place in the JV division.

The meet concluded the junior high season, but both boys' and girls' teams won the district championships, the seventh consecutive year for the girls' team.

Kohl Sirmans (8) won 1st, Kody Nutt (7) 3rd, Rachel Potter (7) 3rd, Mason Stanley (8) 4th, Madyson Lowe (8) 4th, Celson James (8) 6th, Jill Taylor (7) 6th, Gracelyn Head (8) 7th, Kolby Nutt (7) 8th, Makynlie Young (8) 8th, and Hudson Wightman (7) 9th.



PHOTOS: RHONDA BAKER Union Grove's high school cross-country team ran the Lindale meet Oct. 7. The girls placed seventh of the 28 1-4A teams, the highest placing 2A team in attendance. The boys' team placed 22 of 28.



PHOTO: KIMBER SMITH Rachel Potter (7) finishes the district meet in third place, narrowly missing the silver medal.

# FFA Sells More Than Fresh Country Orders

## Staff

FFA members will deliver Fresh Country product orders after lunch on Nov. 2, before LDE teams compete at the Lindale Invitational Nov. 4th and Waskom Invitational Nov. 6 in preparation for the district contest Nov. 12th at Dangerfield. If teams place in the top three at district, they advance to area competition Nov. 17 in Marshall.

According to Ag teacher and FFA sponsor Andrea Shafer, 37 FFA members competed at the annual Yamboree with great success. Senior Avery Brooks won champion arb heifer, Chloe Brooks (8) won champion red Brangus heifer, and Maddie Byers (9) won champion Hereford heifer. Avery also won reserve grand champion market steer and reserve black Brangus heifer. Bre Reynolds (7) won reserve grand champion market hog.

Avery, Chloe, Byers, Josh Baker (11), Rachel Potter (7), Reynolds, Emori Lemming (7), and Alana Cox (7) also won showmanship awards.

Livestock show students collectively made \$17,350, and Ag Mechanics students earned \$5,890, with division champion awards for Josh Joyner (12) and Bradley Madding (12), Kenia Velazquez (11) and Jeremy Stewart (11), and Reed Cooper (11) and Brayden Pirtle (11).

Hunter Cannon (12) and Trevor Moore (12); Jaxson Daniels (10), Cade Sullivan (10) and Lane Turner (10); Sam Stanley (9); Cole Barkley (10) and Matthew Gipson (10); and Tyler Barkley (12) also won awards for their shop projects.



**PHOTOS: DAYTONA VAUGHN** The newly-formed student council met midfield and exchanged gifts with STUCO members from Beckville High School before the Oct. 8 home game.

# Majorettes Prepare for UIL Competition

## Taylor See

Majorettes will compete at UIL Twirling Solo and Ensemble at Bullard High School on November 10 at 4:00 p.m. .

“The Union Grove girls always perform admirably and will do an outstanding job,” head band director Andy Thompson said.

All five girls will compete solos in addition to their quintet to either “Hit Me With Your Best Shot” or “I Want You Back”.



**PHOTO: DAYTONA VAUGHN** Carsyn Hudgens (11) and Bri Blalock (11) perform their “Centuries” routine during the Oct. 21 game against Frankston.

# Second Blood Drive Scheduled for 11/17

## Taylor See

The second of three blood drives will run from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on November 17th.

Anyone 16 or older can sign up, but 16 year olds must have a parent-signed permission slip. Students must register through the Carter Blood Care link sent via email from the nurse and bring a picture ID or driver's license.

# Annual Veterans' Day Program Live Again Student Groups To Honor Vets

## Olivia Hudgens

Veterans will return to the Lion Center for the annual Veteran's Day program Nov. 12 at 9:30 a.m.

Due to concerns regarding potential exposure to illness, last year's program was completely virtual. This year, a buffer of empty seats will protect the veterans from extended contact with students. To make room, junior high will not attend.

Various student groups are involved in the presentation, including Mr. Lynch's Print Shop class creating the programs and cheerleaders, NHS members, and Student Council escorting veterans to their seats. The band will play the national anthem, “Veterans Salute”, “America the Beautiful”, “Sounds of Sousa”, and marches for the processional/recessional music.

Cheerleaders will perform a routine to “Courtesy of the Red, White, and Blue” by Toby Keith, and theater students will perform a play. Daytona Vaughn (10), Hope Rogers (12), Katelyn Vaughn (12), Madeline McGee (10), Sarah Clowers (10), Kady Matthews (12), and Kyler Littlejohn (11) will sing “American Heart” by Faith Hill.

FFA students will walk the flags of the military branches when the band performs “Armed Forces Salute”, and lunch will be provided by Tamara Merritt's culinary class in the cafeteria after the program.



# Opinion/Editorial

## Band Jipped At State Contest

Faith Woodall

The band stepped off the state military marching contest field with hearts full of joy after their best performance of the year, but an audible gasp resounded through the stadium and tears filled the participants' eyes when results were revealed. Out of the four bands that competed at state, UG received fourth place.

Personally, I was more than disappointed by the results. I felt jipped.

Subjective contests always include bias, but the first and second place teams didn't even recover from busted drills while video by several parents confirmed our clean performance. Judging feedback made it sound like the judges chose based on their opinion of the drill itself instead of the bands' performance.

UG isn't used to losing. But it would be easier to swallow if it felt fair.



PHOTO: KIMBER SMITH Staff members Inga Davis, Marsha Kerby, Kim Mayhan, Mandy Cox, Bethany Ledbetter, and Blaine Pace celebrate Red Ribbon week by dressing as tacky tourists Oct. 27

## ASVAB to Provide Insight for Future Careers

Olivia Hudgens

The ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) test is scheduled for Monday, November 15 at 8 a.m. 10th-12th grade students who signed up with new counselor, Mrs. Applegate, by Oct. 15 will take the ASVAB for free.

The ASVAB gives students an opportunity to explore career options and could be helpful to anyone wanting guidance into their potential careers. The test does not obligate participants to talk with military recruiters or consider a military career but can be used for military enlistment and

## Softball Coach Inducted to Hall of Fame

Sydney Pritchett

University of Arkansas at Monticello inducted Coach Julie Martindale, one of only four elite athletes chosen for the prestigious honor this year, into the college's sports hall of fame Oct. 14, 2021.

"I credit my college coach, the late Alvy Early," Martindale said. "He took a chance on a small town girl and believed in me more than I did myself at times and always pushed me to be better."

Martindale played softball for the UAM Cotton Blossoms from 1999-2002

under her maiden name, Julie Bowen. Since her graduation in 2002, "Bowen" has topped the Blossoms' record books for career RBIs (205) and career at-bats (749) and is tied for RBIs in a single season with 71. Her name sits in the top 10 in nine different career categories, including top five spots for doubles and hits. So it's no wonder the university chose Martindale, who the assistant athletic director calls a "softball sensation".

"Hard work pays off, and I'm proud to know that my hard work was recognized," Martindale said.

As a student, being in the hall of fame wasn't one of Martindale's goals.

"It wasn't something I was even aware of while at UAM. Naive maybe, but I was there to do a job and play the game, and I had so much fun doing that and putting in the work to get better," Martindale

said. "I never stopped to think about 'after it was over' or the 'end'."

Martindale savored her time, making memories and lifelong friends while playing at UAM, and now feels "blessed to have

been part of the softball program there."

"I would be honored to send any of my three children there for their post secondary education," Martindale said. "Go Cotton Blossoms!!!"

Martindale urges other student athletes to "soak in" their experiences and make the most of their time, too.

"Be present in each moment because one day they will only be memories," Martindale said. "I relished every pitch, game, season, semester and would go back and do it all over again."



PHOTO: DEBBIE BOWEN

## Basketball to Host Annual Tourney

Katy Parman

The UG Invitational basketball tournament is scheduled for Nov. 18-20. Both the varsity girls' and boys' teams will play the tournament, along with teams from Ore City, Quitman, Beckville, Sabine, Spring Hill, and Harleton, among others.

Spectators must pay \$5 each day but gain access to both gyms. Since both the junior high and high school gyms will be used on Thursday (18) and Friday (19), so P.E. classes will be moved.



PHOTOS BY FAITH WOODALL Above: Samantha Coleman (12) tips Brady Colby's (10) set to score a point Oct. 19. Right: Hannah Coulter (9) swings for a kill and Paige Parman (10) tips the ball back to Union Hill during the Oct. 19 JV game.

## Lady Lions Clinch Playoff Berth with Key Win, Face Timpson in Round One

Faith Woodall

The varsity volleyball team will play Timpson at Henderson High School on Monday, Nov. 1 at 6:30 p.m. in round one of the playoffs.

The Lady Lions clinched their spot with a three-game winning streak that climaxed with Senior Night on Tuesday, Oct. 19, when the girls claimed victory over the Union Hill Bulldogs in only three sets and underclassmen honored the seniors with gifts and kind words. UG took the first game 25-11 and the second game 25-11.

The Lady Lions also pushed through the - significantly closer- last game, making the final score 25-18. Senior Avery Brooks earned 14 kills and three aces, while setter Brady Colby pitched in 20 assists and senior Samantha Coleman five kills and six aces. Senior Sydney Chamberlain added eight digs and five aces.

Although playoffs were confirmed Oct. 19, the girls had to wait until Big Sandy beat Carlisle on Friday, Oct. 29, to find out they officially placed third in the district.

## JH Basketball Prepares for Season

Jaycie Mullins

On November 8th at 11 a.m., the junior high girls' basketball team plays Carlisle in their first game of the season.

"Many of my girls have been playing together for years in Little Dribblers, and a few even played together in the spring after their season ended. Many also attend the TABC skills camp that Coach Littlejohn helps with during the summer," Coach Julie Martindale said. "They are a great group of girls that will work hard. I look forward to the season and what they will accomplish."

The boys start the season a week later with a home game against Big Sandy Nov. 15 at 4:30 p.m.

Coach Cody Wilson says he is "excited for the season" and "ready to see the boys work hard".



# Upcoming Events

**Nov. 1**  
**Fall Band Concert — 6 p.m.**

**Nov. 2**  
**NHS Induction — 6 p.m.**

**Nov. 4**  
**Lindale FFA Invitational LDE**  
**JH/JV Football at Hawkins — 5 p.m.**

**Nov. 5**  
**Junior Class Tailgate Supper — 5 p.m.**  
Parents of Josh Baker and Lainey Ledbetter and junior class supporters Jeff and Janet Webb will smoke ribs, brisket, chicken, and sausage with potato salad, corn on cob, beans, and delicious homemade desserts and drinks provided by other junior parents.  
**V Football v. Hawkins (Senior Night) — 7:30 p.m.**

**Nov. 6**  
**State Cross Country Meet at Round Rock**  
**HS UIL at Lindale Invitational**  
**FFA at Waskom LDE Contest — 8 a.m.**

**Nov. 8**  
**JH Girls Basketball at Carlisle — 5 p.m.**

**Nov. 9**  
**HS Boys Basketball at White Oak — 5 p.m.**  
**HS Girls Basketball v. Hughes Springs — 5 p.m.**



**PHOTO: KIMBER SMITH** Kody Nutt (7) attempts to work an Oreo from his forehead to his mouth during the Oct. 19 pep rally. “10 out of 10 I wanted to win,” Nutt said. “I enjoyed it, but it was hard.”

Nutt, Averi Cook, McClane Handorf, and Coach Kris Kelley represented the seventh grade against eighth-graders Natalie Pritchett, Madyson Lowe, Wrigley Roberts, and Coach Cody Wilson. Wilson successfully landed two Oreos, but the crowd voted victory for the seventh-grade.

**Nov. 10**  
**UIL Twirling Solo & Ensemble Contest**

**Nov. 12**  
**District FFA LDE Contest at Daingerfield**  
FFA members will compete in various LDE contests, which include skill demonstrations, agricultural quizzes, creed speaking, broadcasting, and job interviews.  
**HS Boys Basketball v. Rains — 5 p.m.**

**Nov. 13**  
**HS Girls Basketball v. Gladewater — Noon**

**Nov. 14**  
**“Mama Mia” High School Musical — 2 p.m.**

**Nov. 15**  
**ASVAB Testing — 8 a.m.**  
**JH Boys Basketball v. Big Sandy — 4:30 p.m.**  
**JH Girls Basketball at Big Sandy — 5 p.m.**  
**“Mama Mia” High School Musical — 6 p.m.**



**PHOTO: KIMBER SMITH** Junior James Evans prepares taco bowls for the Shark Tank judging panel September 23. Mrs. Tamara Merritt invited various staff to assess her Culinary Arts students’ presentations and cooking skills during this hands-on activity.

**Nov. 16**  
**HS Girls Basketball v. White Oak — 5 p.m.**  
**HS Boys Basketball v. Alumni — 7:30 p.m.**

**Nov. 17**  
**Blood Drive**  
**FFA Area VI LDE Contest**

**Nov. 18-20**  
**V Girls and Boys UG Basketball Tournament**

**Nov. 22**  
**HS Boys Basketball at Canton — Noon**  
**HS Girls Basketball v. Harmony — Noon**

**Nov. 22-26**  
**Thanksgiving Break**

**Nov. 29**  
**JH Boys Basketball at Overton — 4:30 p.m.**  
**JH Girls Basketball v. Overton — 5 p.m.**

**Nov. 30**  
**HS Basketball at Spring Hill — 5 p.m.**



**PHOTO: DAYTONA VAUGHN** Little league football players and cheerleaders take the field Oct. 8.