



The GROVE GAZETTE

Vol. V, Issue 3

Union Grove ISD News

Nov. 2023

FFA WINS BIG IN YAMBOREE SHOWS

CROSS COUNTRY, BAND RETURN TO State

On the Cover

Chloe Brooks (10) prepares Goose, her 18-month-old steer, for the Yamboree's FFA show. Brooks has shown steers for three years and heifers for seven. "My favorite thing about Yamboree is getting to show my livestock and spend time with friends and family," Brooks said. PHOTO: Bre Reynolds

Junior high cheerleaders Landry Harris (8) and Susanna Sturkie (7) perform "Let's Go Lions" in the Oct. 17 pep rally. "We were trying to show awareness for breast cancer and get the crowd involved," Harris said. PHOTO: Anissa Barton

 GROVE GAZETTE



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Union Grove High School
11220 Union Grove Rd.
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Editor-in-Chief: Faith Woodall
Business Manager: Sydney Pritchett
Sponsor: Kimber Smith

Seth Birch	Andy Peck
Kadence Frey	Lillie Phillips
McClane Handorf	Bre Reynolds
Emma Holder	Jamie Russell
Bailee Hosak	Daytona Vaughn
Aidan Jones	Lucky Woodard

Junior Staff

Anissa Barton	Bree Cox
Kinleigh Birlew	Jaxon Ledbetter
Briana Bowling	Konner Long
Hannah Caperton	Isaac O'Neal
Hailey Carter	Connor Stanford



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PHOTO: Faith Woodall



PHOTO: Daytona Vaughn

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LETTERS FROM THE PRINCIPALS

Wow! Fall is such a busy time of year at Union Grove Elementary! Here are some of the awesome things we've been doing:

- We welcomed our grandparents for lunch two different days.
- We had Open House, where our students and teachers showcased all the things we've been working on!
- Our annual Scholastic Book Fair earned over \$13,889, and we get to keep almost half of that! Thank you to our wonderful librarian, Mandy Cox, for setting this up and working so hard to make it successful! Thank you to all the parents and grandparents who came and shopped with us!
- Our second and third grade classes took a field trip to Piney Park in Marshall.
- We had three days off for Yamboree! Several elementary students showed animals in the livestock show!
- We had Red Ribbon Week, where we dressed up each day in a different theme to support being DRUG FREE!
- Our PTO sold Boo Grams for Halloween.
- We had our Annual Harvest Carnival, where our wonderful PTO and many, many parents helped make a wonderful environment for our kids to have fun.
- In the meantime, lots of learning has been happening in our classrooms!

Y'all, it takes a village to be successful, and Union Grove Elementary has the BEST village! Thank you to all our staff, students, parents, grandparents, and friends who helped us make this season so successful! We appreciate you!

As always, if you need anything, my email is ballards@ugisd.org and my number is 903-845-3481.

Sherrill Ballard
Elementary Principal
903-845-3481 / ballards@ugisd.org

2023-24 is going to be the best year yet at Union Grove Elementary!

What a GREAT nine weeks we have had here at the Grove! We have had so many things to celebrate. A few highlights are listed below:

- Volleyball girls going to playoffs
- Thomas Navarro going to the FFA National Convention to complete in Spanish Speaking Creed competition
- XC girls team going to regionals and STATE
- David Shaver and Isaiah O'Neal going to the Regional XC meet
- Our UG High School Marching Band Runner Ups at the STATE Marching Contest
- Our FFA Livestock Teams have been to multiple shows and have received numerous awards
- Our Ag Mech students have competed at the Yamboree and the Harvest Festival with great success

So many things to brag about and we're just getting started!

- Junior High is working hard to prepare for the UIL Academic meet that will be in early December.
- Basketball coaches are preparing for the upcoming season.
- FFA is beginning the LDE season.
- Band is preparing for the Christmas Concert.
- Mrs. Spears's theater kids are working hard to prepare for JH OAP competition in December and the upcoming HS Musical.

Our kids are the best around!
It is a GREAT day to be a LION!

Facebook: Union Grove Junior High/High School
Instagram: [uglionpride](https://www.instagram.com/uglionpride)

Rachel Evers
JH/HS Principal
903-845-5506 / eversr@ugisd.org



Making History

SOPHOMORE HEADS TO FIRST NATIONAL SPANISH FFA EVENT

Sophomore Thomas Navarro-Gonzalez will represent Texas in the national Junior Spanish Creed competition at the 96th National FFA Convention and Expo in Indianapolis Nov. 1.

This is the first year of national competition for Junior Spanish Creed competitors. Navarro-Gonzalez won the inaugural Texas FFA Jr. Spanish Creed speaking contest last December and subsequently became the first state champion.

"Bro, I flipped," he said. "I couldn't believe it then they called Union Grove. Never did I think I would get this far, but when I got my banner and my pin and I walked down that aisle, I felt like I did it. I felt so happy and accomplished."

Navarro-Gonzalez did not know at the time that he would speak at nationals. "It's crazy," he said. "I didn't think anyone would hear me say it in Spanish. I went from just trying to pass a class to being accepted into nationals."

Navarro-Gonzalez will compete against the other state champions by reciting the five-paragraph creed and answering questions — all in Spanish.

"There's nothing I'm better at than my own language," Navarro-Gonzalez said.

PHOTO: Lillie Phillips

RIGHT: Ava Wightman (12) approaches the finish line at the district meet at Hawkins. Oct. 11 Wightman won the varsity girls' race with her time of 13:25.



BELOW: The varsity Lady Lions placed first overall in a heat of 43 runners and advanced to region as a team. This is the Lady Lions' ninth consecutive district championship. PHOTOS: Faith Woodall



BAND, XC RETURN TO STATE

By Faith Woodall

After earning straight ones from the judges at the regional contest in Mount Pleasant for the 34th consecutive year, the band headed to Waco on Oct. 24 to perform in the state marching contest at the Baylor Stadium Oct. 25. The band's 11:30 a.m. preliminary performance earned their spot in the finals.

"I left the last four years of my marching career on the field during prelims," senior Paige Parman said. "Hearing the loudspeakers announce our band as the first finalist was the most rewarding experience."

After marching again at 6:45 p.m., band members just had to wait for results.

"Standing on the Baylor stadium turf with the top 10 bands in the state of Texas was exciting enough. Little did I know the last four years were about to pay off with just one announcement from the press box," senior and band president Jenna Scott said. "The most discipline I have ever had was when they called our

placement while I stood at attention out of respect for the other schools."

They'd won second place, state runners-up.

"As soon as the announcer said that we could break rank I immediately burst into tears and ran to my fellow seniors to embrace them with hugs and to celebrate our last steps on the state marching contest turf," Parman said. "Hearing the results made all of the long practices and difficult pass-offs worth it."

This year marked the 34th consecutive year for the band to receive a sweepstakes award at the regional contest.

"I am incredibly proud of the sacrifice and efforts my band has made since we started in July," Scott said. "Marching with this band is something I'll never forget."

The varsity cross country girls will have their turn to compete at state Nov. 4, their fourth consecutive trip to the state course at Round Rock, after placing

fourth as a team in the Region III 2A meet at Kate Barr-Ross Park in Huntsville Tuesday, Oct. 24.

"Running at the state meet was the goal since the beginning of the season," senior Ava Wightman said. "Since this will be my last XC meet, I plan to give it everything I have and soak up every last memory with my amazing team."

In the regional race, Sophie Pyle (12) placed 14th individually, finishing the two-mile course with a time of 14:00:49, followed by Wightman in 19th at 14:13:51. Danica Vestal (9) finished in 37th place only 22 seconds later. Rachel Potter (9) finished in 43rd, Jenna Scott (12) 53rd, Gracelyn Head (10) 72nd and Averi Cook (9) 110th.

"After running XC for the last six years, I have learned one major lesson: teammates are the key to a successful season," team captain Pyle said. "A team that is mentally strong and strives to win cannot be defeated."



PHOTO: Hailey Carter



David Shaver (9) and Isaiah O'Neal (12) qualify for the regional cross country meet after O'Neal places sixth with a time of 18:50, and Shaver places seventh at the district meet at Hawkins on Oct. 11. At the regional meet, O'Neal finished the boys' 5000-meter run in 52nd place at 20:13:4, followed closely by Shaver in 63rd at 20:26:3. PHOTO: Faith Woodall



ABOVE: Gracelyn Head (10) leads the JV girls through the district course. Head finished in second place, and the team won overall. PHOTO: Faith Woodall

LEFT: The band marches in the preliminary round of state competition Oct. 24 in Waco. PHOTO: Hailey Carter



DISTRICT MEET RESULTS

HS BOYS		V. GIRLS		JV GIRLS		JH BOYS		JH GIRLS	
6TH	Isaiah O'Neal (12)	1ST	Ava Wightman (12)	2ND	Gracelyn Head (10)	5TH	Ryder Martindale (8)	1ST	Landry Harris (8)
7TH	David Shaver (9)	2ND	Sophie Pyle (12)	3RD	Arianna Gibboney (9)	9TH	Brady Pritchett (7)	6TH	Susanna Sturkie (7)
20TH	Kenneth Flanagan (10)	3RD	Danica Vestal (9)	5TH	Hailey Griffin	14TH	Liam Mayhan (8)	16TH	Natalie Delaney (7)
27TH	Lane Turner (12)	7TH	Rachel Potter (9)	7TH	Jill Taylor	19TH	Connor Stanford (8)	19TH	Bree Cox (8)
34TH	Mateo Lara (9)	14TH	Jenna Scott (12)	8TH	Kadence Frey	25TH	Connor Mead (8)	38TH	Jillian Russell (7)
35TH	TJ Fowler (11)	19TH	Averi Cook (9)	11TH	Miley Nono	31ST	Konner Long (8)	41ST	Briana Bowling (8)
3RD (JV)	Josiah Sturkie (10)	32ND	Keira Taylor (11)			34TH	Kynan Birlew (7)	47TH	Morgan Morrow (7)
						40TH	Isaac O'Neal (8)		

Hogs, Hens and Heifers – Oh My!

FFA Wins Big in Yamboree Livestock, Project Shows

Hogs

- Bre Reynolds (9): two class winners, grand champion overall, intermediate showmanship finalist
- Katherine Potter (12): class winner, made sale, senior showmanship finalist
- Emori Lemming (9): class winner, made sale, grand champion senior showman
- Rachel Potter (9): second in class, made sale, intermediate showmanship finalist
- Boyd Potter (5): fourth in class, made sale, grand champion junior showman
- James Lemming (3) fifth in class, sale alternate

Goats

- Rylann Venn (4) fourth in class, made sale
- Sam Stanley (11): ninth in class

Rabbits

- Cooper Swinford (4): fifth in class, made sale
- James Lemming, Liam Mayhan (8), Jeremiah McGee (12), Madeline McGee (12), Olivia McGilvray (3), Boyd Potter, Katherine Potter, Rachel Potter, Riley Velin (3) and Regan Walts (5) also showed

Broilers

- Camryn Morrow (5), Gauge Hulsebus (4) and Derick Anderson (7) showed

Steers

- Chloe Brooks (10): two class winners, fourth place overall

Heifers

- Venn: two class winners, including the grand champion Red Brahman heifer, champion junior showman
- Swinford: second place Beefmaster heifer, second place junior showman
- Emori Lemming also showed

Herefords

- Brooks: champion Red Brangus and champion Hereford females, showmanship finalist
- Madison Byers (11): class winner
- Rachel Potter: champion intermediate showman

Projects

- Swinford's shooting target: class champion, showmanship finalist
- Juliana Navarro's (3) firepit: reserve champion
- Sam Stanley's flat-top cooker: third in class
- Seniors Mason Byers, Matthew Gipson and Rowdy Williams's 18ft bumper-pull utility trailer: reserve champion
- Kayden Day (11) and Peyton Laake's (12) 16ft entry gate: reserve champion
- Amelia Dougherty's (3) picnic table: third in class
- Jaxon Hobbs's (8) oilfield-themed bench: fourth in class, showmanship finalist
- Garrett Staley's (10) mineral feeder: fourth in class
- Morgan Mayhan (11) and Cason Cowan's (11) hog trap: fifth in class

While these FFA students showed at the Yamboree, Scarlett Edwards (1) earned four banners at the State Fair of Texas in Dallas. Edwards won the miniature Hereford/yearling heifer, Pre-Junior mini Hereford heifer calf, and miniature Hereford calf divisions, and her miniature Hereford female was named reserve grand champion.



Rachel Potter (9) shows her pig Lainey in the Yamboree Market Hog Show Oct. 19. PHOTO: Bre Reynolds



Boyd Potter (5) PHOTO: Bre Reynolds



Peyton Hancock (9) and Blaiklee George (7) attend the Yamboree All Service Club Luncheon Oct. 19 to read their first-place essays. "I was excited to win, but I was nervous to speak in front of all those people on that tall podium," George said. "The closer the day got, the more nervous I got. At the end, I realized I was nervous for nothing because it ended up being fine." PHOTO: Kimber Smith



Chloe Brooks (10) and Madison Byers (11) PHOTO: Bre Reynolds

THE FLAVOR OF Fall

Pumpkin Spice Product Reviews by Jamie Russell




 Little Debbie Pumpkin
 Delight Ice Cream with
 Spiced Swirl

Review: Ice cream in the fall may seem unusual, but this amazing treat is worth the chill. The pumpkin flavor was on point with just a little swirl of spice. I loved the sweet taste and could easily over-indulge on this pumpkin spice dessert.




 Favorite Day Pumpkin
 Spice Kettle Corn

Review : A white chocolate drizzle balanced the pumpkin spice flavor perfectly. The kettle corn itself could've been better, but that is my only complaint. I loved the sweet taste and spice kick. This popcorn quickly became an addicting pumpkin spice snack.




 General Mill's Limited
 Edition Pumpkin Spice
 Cheerios

Review : This flavor was weaker than the others but not particularly bad. I could taste the pumpkin more than the spice. I enjoyed the cereal more with milk, but that did dampen the flavor. I wouldn't recommend this as a pumpkin spice treat.




 Chardelli Chocolates
 with Caramel Filling

Review : The idea of mixing chocolate and caramel with pumpkin spice didn't sound like a good idea, but the flavors blended so well. I didn't love the boldness of the taste, but this delicious treat definitely surpassed my expectations.




 Starbucks Liquid
 Creamer

Review : This creamer was full of flavor, but not overly strong. In fact, I expected it to be sweeter and bolder, but the creamer didn't mask the coffee flavor; I loved how it complimented my coffee and brought me such happy fall vibes, so it became my new daily creamer.

Freaky Friday

Elementary Enjoys Harvest Festival

Photos by Daytona Vaughn



Elementary students attended the annual Harvest Festival Friday, Oct. 27, thanks to the PTO and family volunteers.

Parents from each grade sponsored games for Pre-K through sixth grade students' enjoyment. From race cars, dancing, a cake walk and lucky ducks to ring toss, pick or treat, a giant inflatable Connect 4 and Farkle, the newly-surfaced gym was full of opportunities to have fun and win lots of candy and other prizes.



First Quarter Elementary Honor Roll

ALLA's

Third Grade: Weston Acton, Ryder Adkinson, Gabriella Bowling, Ryker Canaguier, Karah Crump, Lylah Delaney, Braxlee Dinkins, Leah Guthrie, Allie Halcumb, Jake Kessler, Eric Mullins, Leslie Ramos Gomez, Aerilyn Reeves, Madison Ryan, Garrett Saye, Kieralyn Smith, Reagan Steele, Harrison Wright; **Fourth Grade:** Ember

Burnett, Caitlin Daugherty, Cameryn Davis, Devin Ferrell, Eli Fleming, Raynlee Head, Jim Hogue, Avery Johnston, Skye Love, Sophia Norris, Emmett Orr, Braxton Rich, Charles Shelton, Owen Smith, Charlee Spruell, Kenslee Steen, Maddox Strong, Rylann Venn; **Fifth grade:** Olivia Barbee, Kaydence Deller, Noah Dippold, Trenton Easley, Brody Gumm, Hunter Hogue, Amber Lee, Embrie Long, Khloe Payne, Ryleigh Phillips, Lucie Pirtle, Blakely Prince, Brooklyn Scott, Reagan Walts; **Sixth Grade:** Aubree Cooper, Kayson Forster, Hannah Hill, Hailey Lee, Cooper Littlejohn, River Martindale, Alexander Moncada Sanchez, Brooklynn Scott, Grayson Selph, Kinley Smith, Nicholas Spears, Sara Spears, Emmett Wright

A & B's

Third Grade: Gunner Allen, Brooks Brantley, Hunter Copeland, Leighton Donaldson, Amelia Dougherty, Aubrie Ducote, Dillon Ferrell, Caleb Freeman, Maycee Gipson, Jack Handorf, Melany Hulsebus, Phoenix Knight, Victoria Lara, James Lemming, Jacob McDougal, Joshua Morgan, Juliana Navarro, Elliott Orr, Ariel Owens, J. Ryan Powers, Maren Thomas, Riley Velin, Everly Waddle, Oliver Yaktiyol; **Fourth grade:** Beau Bayne, Kohen Birlew, Raylee Bridges, Charleigh Cannon, Skylar Coddington, Gunner Coppedge, Alayna Dole, Karsyn Ferrell, Justin Gable, Alexis Gipson, Jaxon Glaze, Indy Gregg, Aliyah Hammett, Levi Hart, Allison Hradecky, Gauge Hulsebus, Aristyn Johns, Ashlyn Jones, Hadleigh Lake, Abigail Lakey, Halle Martin, Daniella Navarro, Addison Orms, Cambree Randolph, Raylen Ravellette,

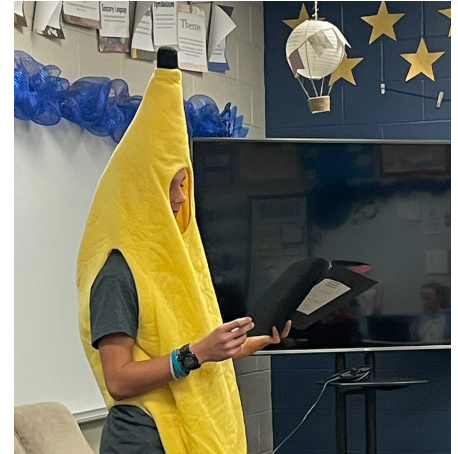


LEFT: First grade parents made a pumpkin putt-putt game and a candy corn bean bag toss that tested students' athletic prowess.

BELOW: Second grade parents sponsored a homemade PLINKO game and bucket toss.



GO BANANAS Brady Pritchett (7) presents his poem "What Should I Write?" to his second period English class. The students created a five-poem portfolio and chose one to read to their peers. "I just thought it would be a funny costume to wear," Pritchett said. "But it made me feel a bit more comfortable reading my poem in front of the class because I was wearing a banana."



Alum Kaci Jones helps students apply temporary tattoos in the third grade booth, which also featured a chance to spin the wheel for prizes.



Seventh-graders Susanna Sturkie, Blaiklee George, Addyson Woodfin and Jacob Rogers win the poetry analysis tournament for their work on Emily Dickinson's "I Cannot Live Without You." "Seeing our poem stay up there round after round surprised me," Sturkie said. "It feels really nice to win something when I know I worked hard for it." All seventh-graders participated in the project. "I feel really good that out of fifty-some-odd people in this grade, we were able to win everything," Rogers said.

Austin Reed, Courtney Smith, Leah Stegall, Cooper Swinford, Alexander Warren, Conner Westmoreland; **Fifth grade**-Ian Adams, Ethan Archer, Landon Caperton, Olivia Diaz, Faith Druschke, Trinity Haydel, Harley Herrin, Lily Holland, Kristopher Kent, Charles Lelong, Gabriel Lormand, James Madding, Skye Perez, Boyd Potter, Gavin Pritchett, Paul Shreves, Xavier Tennison, Elijah Torres, Iker Uribe, Kris Villamendez, Steffan Wallace, Scarlet Webb, Adyn West, Joseph Wilson; **Sixth Grade**: Breanna Badgett, Coleton Burnett, Wyatt Clift, Phaedra Cole, Jackson Coulter, Gunner Davis, Matthew Delaney, Lucious Dotten, Adalyn Hampton, Kenadie Holder, Leilani Hubbard, Maycee Lewis, Bentley Long, Graysen Mullins, Kearney Mullins, Isabella O'Neal, Lacey Ratcliffe, Andrew Rhodes,

Ruston Roberts, Claire Rogers, Kianah Smith, Garrett Travis, Landon Wadle, Isaiah Yaktiyol

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

Third grade: Weston Acton, Caleb Freeman, Jameson Gable, Jace Monk, Elliott Orr, Ariel Owens, Aerilyn Reeves, Kieralyn Smith; **Fourth grade**: Charleigh Cannon, Devin Ferrell, Justin Gable, Indy Gregg, Jim Hogue, Skye Love, Halle Martin, Charles Shelton, Kenslee Steen, Conner Westmoreland; **Fifth grade**: Kaydence Deller, Charles Lelong, Landyn Peck, Jayden Perdue, Elijah Torres; **Sixth grade**: Coleton Burnett, Lucious Dotten, Adalyn Hampton, Hannah Hill, River Martindale, Pistol Mitchell, Graysen Mullins, Kearney Mullins, Sean Pilcher, Claire Rogers, Brooklynn Scott, Kianah Smith

TOP 3 ACCELERATED READER STUDENTS

2ND GRADE

- 1) Lee Smith, 2) Rhyder Mullins
- 3) Brayson Rich

3RD GRADE

- 1) Weston Acton, 2) Leah Guthrie
- 3) Kieralyn Smith

4TH GRADE

- 1) Ember Burnett, 2) Caitlin Daugherty
- 3) Avery Johnston

5TH GRADE

- 1) Paul Shreves, 2) Blakely Prince
- 3) Brody Madding

6TH GRADE

- 1) Cooper Littlejohn, 2) Colton Burnett
- 3) Aubree Cooper

RIGHT: Hadleigh Lake (4) wants a fist-bump from Karen Chavez (10) during the Oct. 11 Little Bumpers practice.

BELOW LEFT: Natalie Woodard (10) helps Skye Perez (5) with hitting technique.

BELOW RIGHT: Little Bumpers follow Tinsleigh Webb (9)'s tips for proper hand positioning when setting.
PHOTOS: Bailee Hosak



RIGHT: Libero Jordyn Bishop (8) passes to setter Hannah Caperton during the Big Sandy game Monday, Oct. 16. "During the games, I do feel a lot of pressure always being on back row, but its a lot of fun," Bishop said.
PHOTO: Briana Bowling



In October, We Wear



ABOVE: Seventh-graders Nevaeh Bean and Alexis Ferrell work through an English assignment on Oct. 6. Pink-out means more to Bean than the average student "I had a grandma who had breast cancer," Bean said. "So when I dress up in pink, it makes me think of her." Bean "felt great to show love to people who have survived cancer." PHOTO: Kimber Smith



ABOVE RIGHT: Varsity cheerleaders perform "Two-Bits" at the end of the Oct. 6 pink-out pep rally. The Lions played Harleton at home that night. PHOTO: Lucky Woodard



RIGHT: Junior Hannah Coulter jumps to block a Lady Indian kill during the home win against Carlisle Friday, Oct. 13. The Lady Lions will play their round-one playoff game against Garrison Tuesday, Oct. 31 at 5 p.m. in Marshall. PHOTO: Bailee Hosak

In November, We Give

Thanks

Student Groups to Honor Vets with Annual Program, Lunch

By Jamie Russell

The district invites local veterans to attend the annual Veterans Day program Friday, Nov. 10. The Lion Center doors will open to veterans at 8 a.m. for a light breakfast with coffee, and the program will begin around 9:15 a.m.

"UGISD is a school district that recognizes the sacrifices of the men and women who have served our country," Superintendent Kelly Moore said. "Freedom is not free and those who serve our country stand in balance so that we may enjoy the things that we have and do everyday. This program is one way that we can collectively show our love and support for our veterans."

Members of different student groups, including fifth grade music, theater, band, majorettes and cheer, will perform for the veterans.

"I think that it is important to honor our veterans because they are the ones who have put themselves at risk to ensure our country's safety and freedoms, so it is necessary that we show appreciation and respect for all that they have done," senior cheerleader and Student Council President Katy King said. "We prepare our routine knowing that it is for extremely honored guests, so we always try our very

best to create an enjoyable performance. This upcoming program is no different."

During the performances, Culinary Arts students will prepare barbecue pulled-pork sandwiches, pinto beans, chips, and desserts, with lemonade and sweet or unsweet tea to serve the veterans and their families.

"It's an honor because I am serving people who served my country good food we have worked hard to make," senior culinary student Paulina Navarro-González said. "I've done this for four years now, and there is always a lot of pressure. It's so rewarding, though, because they compliment and enjoy every bit of it."

Sixty to 75 veterans are expected to attend, and performers and culinary students have been planning and preparing for weeks to create the perfect day for the special guests.

"I appreciate the dedication to detail and the hard work that everyone puts forth to make the program a success," Superintendent Kelly Moore said. "Our school and community should be proud of that."





ADRENALINE

By Lucky Woodard
and Faith Woodall

Rush

Swigart Brothers Take Life by the Handlebars

Wind hissing past.
Dirt clods colliding against their gear.
The overpowering reverberations of
other racers' bikes closing in.
Family cheering from the fence.
All familiar sensations to brothers
Jayse and Jaden Swigart, who have been
racing motocross for years.

"I think I was 11," Jayse said. "I don't
really know. My grandpa had a dirtbike
that was just laying around the house,
and I decided to hop on one day and ride
it."

What Jayse thought would be a one-
time attempt turned into a hobby, and,
pretty soon, Jayse, Jaden and their dad
each had their own bikes.

"I didn't really like doing it at first,"
Jaden said. "I didn't have a big enough
bike, so I struggled to make it up hills
and through obstacles."

But now, the brothers race almost
every weekend.

"I enjoy just taking the weekend and
going to the track and hanging out with
everyone," Jaden said. "It takes my mind
off of other things. It's like my own
world. It's awesome because it's just a
whole family thing."

Participating costs the family quite a
bit. Beyond the initial cost of their gear,
they have to maintain their bikes, as well
as pay entry fees for each race in addi-

tion to the same fee spectators pay just to
get into the tracks. And while it is possi-
ble to win money in motocross — the
SuperMotocross World Championship,
for example, splits \$10 million among its
top racers — going pro takes time.

"I don't make any money," Jayse said.
"I'm not at that level yet, so it's just
spending money to have fun right now.
It's more just for bragging rights."

Jayse does consistently finish among
the top racers in his division. In fact, he
took second place in both of his Texas
Lone Star Series Round 5 races at Swan
MX in Tyler on Sept. 10. But racing isn't
all about winning for the Swigarts. To the
boys, racing has always been about the
time they spend together enjoying a com-
mon interest — and a little friendly com-
petition.

"I don't really win that much because
I'm not as fast as my brother," Jaden said.
"but I did feel proud when I beat my dad."

According to Jayse, racing has also
taught him important life lessons.

"Patience," Jayse said. "You have to
wait to make the right move, and that's
how I think life works, too."

Much like life, one wrong move can
result in catastrophe. Luckily, the
Swigarts have only sustained minor inju-
ries.

"I drove over a tire and flipped over
the bars, and sprained my wrist pretty
badly," Jayse said.

And Jaden once broke his arm riding at
home. He says he jumped their practice
hill, and Jayse pulled out in front of him.

"I hit him and fell over," Jaden said.
"He was laughing at me and making
jokes."

Jokes aside, the brothers support each
other on the track.

"It's cool we get to do it together,"
Jaden said. "When one of us is on the
track racing, we'll go down there and
help him out with their start and stuff,
cheer him on."

Jaden plans on racing "for a while" and
hopes to get a new bike next year. When
he does, he'll move up to class C with
Jayse.

"Hopefully I'll get faster," Jaden said.
"But he's probably gonna beat me a lot
because he actually wins races. It'll be
fun, though."



Jayse Swigart (10) jumps a hill in his first
race of the day at Swan MX in Tyler Sept.
10. PHOTO: Faith Woodall

Jaden (8-LEFT) and Jayse Swigart (10-RIGHT) ride in 2023 Texas Lone Star Series Round 5 races at Swan MX in Tyler on Sept. 10. Jaden placed sixth in the Two-Stroke Amateur (12+) heat and seventh in the Open Beginner (D) heat of 11 racers between the ages of 13 and 41. Jayse placed second in both the 250cc Novice (C) Jr. (12-16) and the 250cc Novice (C) division comprised of 14 -32 year olds. PHOTOS: Lucky Woodard



Tristan Thibodeaux peruses vendor booths during the seniors' trip to the Upshur County College and Career Fair at the Gilmer Civic Center Sept. 27. PHOTO: Daytona Vaughn / Daytona Vaughn attempts a pull-up at the Army recruiting station. PHOTO: Faith Woodall



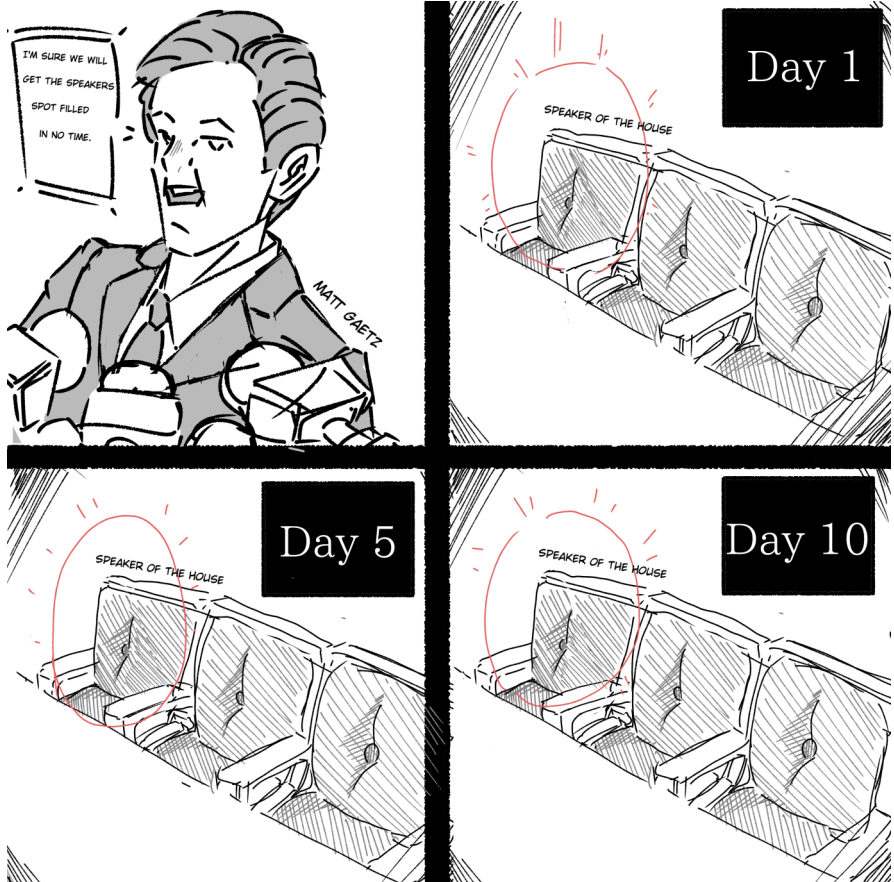
Eighth-grade junior high Student Council members Anissa Barton and Hannah Haggard create hallway signs to advertise Red Ribbon Week dress-up days. Red Ribbon Week honors DEA officer Enrique S. Camarena's anti-drug mission by encouraging students to stay drug-free. PHOTO: Jaxon Ledbetter

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"Position Available" by Lucky Woodard

INTERESTED IN ADVERTISING YOUR BUSINESS IN THE GROVE GAZETTE? CONTACT SMITHK@UGISD.ORG FOR INFORMATION.

Upcoming Events

- Nov. 1-3
National FFA Convention @Indianapolis
- Nov. 1
FFA @White Oak Invitational LDE
UT Tyler Presentation 9:30 a.m.
- Nov. 2
JH/JV Football v. Beckville 5 p.m.
- Nov. 3
Dynamic Duo Day
V Football @Beckville 7:30 p.m.
- Nov. 4
Band UIL Twirling Solo & Ensemble
State Cross-Country @Round Rock
- Nov. 6
JH Girls Basketball v. Harleton
4:30 p.m.
- Nov. 7
FFA Major Show Entry Night
V Girls Basketball v. Trinity 5 p.m.
- Nov. 10
Veterans' Day Program
Early Release
FFA Daingerfield District LDE Contest @NTCC
JV Girls Basketball @Christian Heritage 4 p.m.
JV, V Boys Basketball @New Diana 5 p.m.
V Girls Basketball v. Avinger 5:30 p.m.
- Nov. 12
JH Musical 2 p.m.
- Nov. 13
FFA Greenhand Ceremony, LDE Showcase
JH Girls Basketball @Linden-Kildare 5 p.m.
- Nov. 14
HS Girls Basketball v. Harmony 4:30 p.m.
HS Boys Basketball v. King's Academy 5 p.m.
- Nov. 15
FFA Area VI LDE Contest @Marshall
- Nov. 16-18
UG Basketball Tournament
- Nov. 18
Elementary Turkey Trot 9 a.m.

- Nov. 19
JH Musical 2 p.m.
- Nov. 20
HS Boys Basketball v. Overton Noon
- Nov. 21-24
Thanksgiving Break

- Nov. 27
JH Girls Basketball v. Hawkins 5 p.m.
- Nov. 28
Painting with Kids (Grades K-2)
HS Girls Basketball @New Diana 5 p.m.
HS Boys Basketball @Arp 6 p.m.
- Nov. 29
Painting with Kids (Grades 3-6)
- Nov. 30
V Boys Basketball @White Oak
V Girls Basketball @All Saints

"Don't Jinx It" By Emma Holder





ALL SYSTEMS GO

This year's rocketry team of seniors Rowdy Williams and Addison Smith and juniors Tommy Branscom and Will Driggers introduce themselves to the board at the Oct. 9 meeting and formally make their request to travel out of state to launch their rocket. Each year, the group tests their rocket at White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico. After last year's launch didn't go as expected, most of the rocket remains.

LIFESAVER

Board members honor senior Jeremiah McGee at their Oct. 9 meeting for a decision that might have saved a life. McGee was on the way to pick up a boat with his father and brother when they saw an elderly man who had fallen in his yard. The man was unable to get up on his own and faced severe health issues in the August heat. Jeremiah could tell something was wrong. Instead of driving past, the McGee family lifted the man into their truck and called for an ambulance, which transported him to the hospital. PHOTOS: Kimber Smith

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