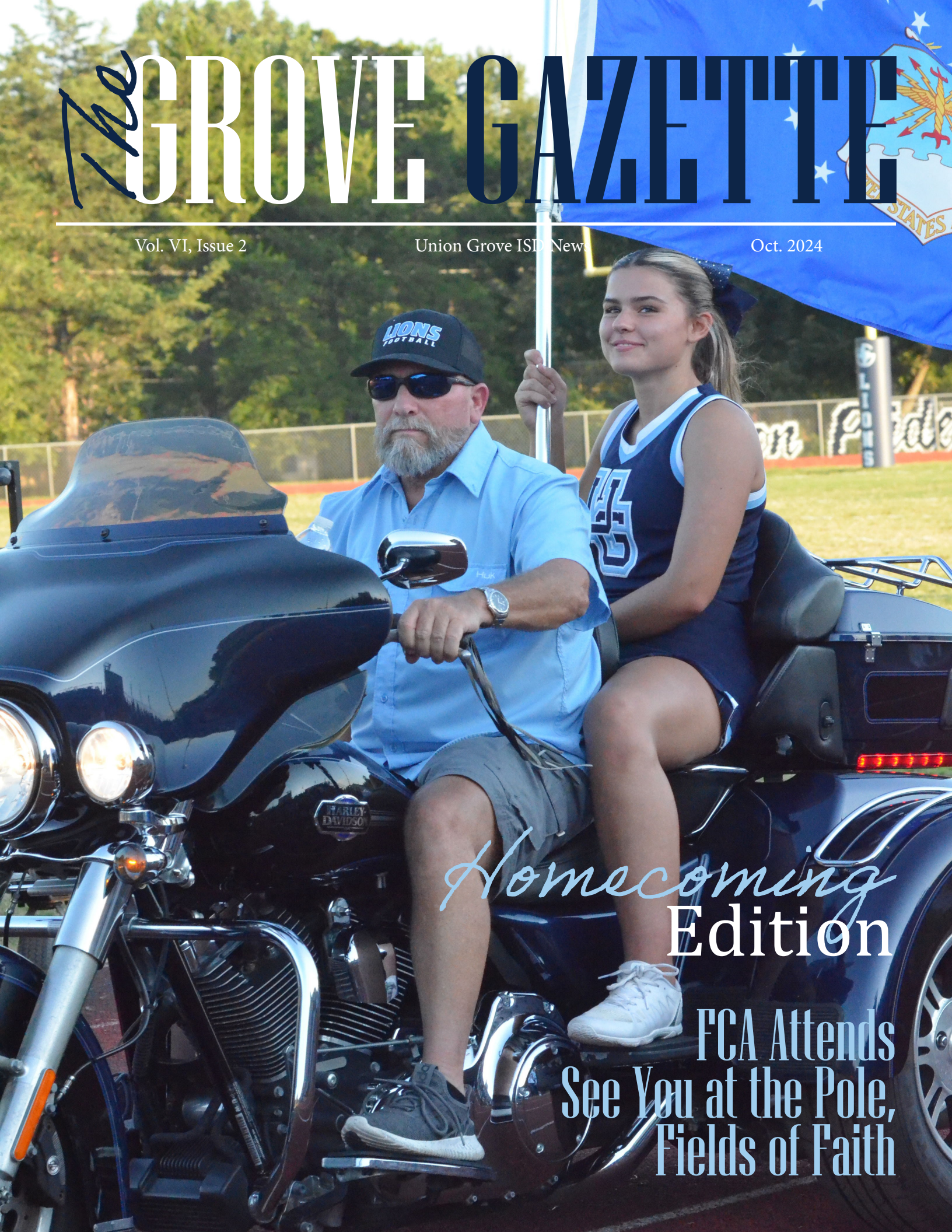


The GROVE GAZETTE

Vol. VI, Issue 2

Union Grove ISD News

Oct. 2024



Homecoming
Edition

FCA Attends
See You at the Pole,
Fields of Faith

On the *Cover*

Freshman Mia Mullican rides with her grandfather David Shaver. "It's was so fun and also special because I got to share it with my grandfather," Mullican said. "I felt very grateful that he asked me to ride and that I got to have this opportunity. It will be a moment I never forget." Photo by Jamie Russell

This page: Junior Corbyn Mullins leads the student section during the homecoming football game. "Football has always been my favorite sport to watch, and I am always happy to show school spirit for my friends," Mullins said. "Coincidentally, [a peer] had a Cumby jersey, and to show my spirit, we brought it to the game and used it as a flag when the Lions scored." Photo by Jamie Russell

Correction: In the September issue, the Grove Gazette staff mistakenly identified the mascot in the cover photo as high school mascot Tinsleigh Webb (9) instead of junior high mascot Zoey Johnston (8).

The GROVE GAZETTE

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Calendar of Events

Below: Pigskin Bob and Harlen the Sports Guy from KYKX award senior Brendon Deary a \$500 scholarship. Seniors Taylor Campbell, Hannah Coulter, Brendon Deary, TJ Fowler, Jacob Hart, Jace Roberts and junior Gracelyn Head won "of the week" awards, entering their names in the contest for additional scholarships.

Blakely Poole and Loyal Trice enjoy the parade from the elementary parking lot. Photos by Jamie Russell

Ember Burnett, Macie Langley, Avery Johnston and Ashlyn Jones perform the school song with the rest of the fifth grade during the Sept. 6 pep rally. Photo by Jaxon Ledbetter



LETTERS FROM THE PRINCIPALS

We have had a great start to the 2024-2025 school year here at Union Grove Elementary! We are in full swing, and our staff and students are working hard every day!

Here are some of the things we've been up to:

- MAP testing (K-6) to find out where our students are academically
- Grandparents Lunches on September 9th and 10th
- Homecoming and Homecoming parade
- Snowcones! Charlie's Snoballs comes on the last Friday of every month

We have a lot coming up:

- Scholastic Book Fair September 30-October 4
- Muffins with Moms on October 9 and Donuts with Dads on October 10
- 1st grade field trip to Ecoland on October 11
- Awards Assemblies on October 25
- Red Ribbon Week will be October 28-November 1
- Harvest Carnival October 31

And that's just some of it!

You can follow us on Facebook at Union Grove Elementary to keep up with all that's happening. As always, if there is something you need, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Sherrill Ballard
Elementary Principal
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The UG Lions are off to a great start in 2024!

The fall semester is in full swing with many awesome things going on in the classroom and a lot of student activities. While we anxiously await some cooler weather, here are a few items of interest.

- District Cross Country Oct. 9
- Yamboree Oct. 16-19
- HS PSAT Testing Oct. 21, 22 & 25
- FFA Harvest Festival Oct. 21-26
- Regional Marching Contest Oct. 15
- Band State Marching Oct 28-29

I hope everyone has a great October!

Go Lions!

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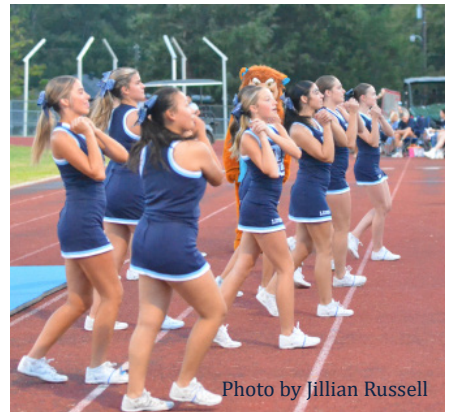
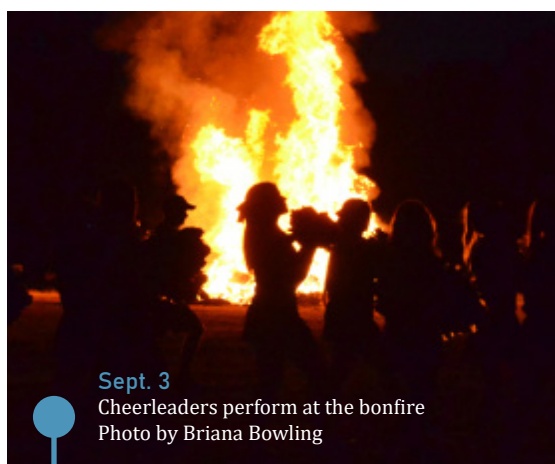


Photo by Jillian Russell



Photo by Jamie Russell



Sept. 3
Cheerleaders perform at the bonfire
Photo by Briana Bowling



Sept. 6 Above: Haiden Evans (8) crowdsurfs during the pep rally. "Crowd surfing's super fun, but I was scared they were going to drop me on my head," Evans said. Photo by Jaxon Ledbetter
Left: Fifth graders plead for candy during the parade. Photo by Jamie Russell

Left: Head coach Kyle Adams speaks to the team after the homecoming win. Right: Junior Corbyn Mullins and senior Jaycie Mullins manifested her win as homecoming queen with his spirited body paint. "My brother asked if I could paint him five minutes before I had to leave," Jaycie said. "I was already in my dress and heels, painting my little brother dark blue. It's always a struggle to work around my family's work schedule, so anytime they are able to make it to something I appreciate it more than they know. My family means the world to me, and it would've been a whole different night if they wouldn't have been able to make it there." Below: Jace Roberts (12) recovers a Cumby fumble. Roberts also scored two touchdowns and threw a touchdown pass to senior Judson George. Photos by Jamie Russell



Lilly Hutton (10), Madison Byers (12), Rylee Aiken (12), Jaycie Mullins (12), Natalie Woodard (11) and Natalie Spruell (9) pose with prince Jeremy Kennedy & princess Parker Springfield after Mullins is named homecoming queen. Photo by Jamie Russell

Minute to Win It

Lions Clinch Last-Second Homecoming Win

by Jamie Russell

Things didn't look good for the Lions when the Cumby Trojans caught junior Luis Fernandez's kick-off at the 40-yard line and ran it 60 yards for a touchdown.

They didn't look good when the scoreboard read 14-0.

And they really didn't look good when, with less than two minutes left in the game, the Lions were down 20-17.

But with eight seconds on the clock, senior quarterback Jace Roberts ran the ball in for one final touchdown, and the Lions won homecoming.

"After we went down 14-0, I knew we had to dig ourselves out of the hole we created," head coach Kyle Adams said.

By halftime, Roberts had scored and thrown a touchdown pass to senior Judson George. With two extra points from Fernandez, the Lions tied the game 14-14. After halftime, Adams said the team "locked in". Junior Carter Cooper led the defense with two sacks and 16 tackles, senior Jesse Fulmer and George each caught an interception, and senior Kayden Day recovered a fumble and grabbed a sack and seven tackles.

"We were a different team during the second half," Adams said. "The sideline was full of energy."

In the final moments of the game, spectators cheered for Fernandez, who had already scored one field goal, to kick another. While Adams knew Fernandez could take the game into overtime, he wanted the win.

"The game wasn't over," Adams said. "We still had 18 seconds left."

The Lions took their chance and called a pass play for Roberts to scramble for the endzone. He rushed the 19 yards they needed, Fernandez kicked another extra point, and the Lions won the night 24-20. The community celebrated the Lions' final-moment victory over Cumby's Trojans with the annual firework show.

"The firework show is much more enjoyable when you win," Adams said.



Photo by Jamie Russell



Photo by Briana Bowling

JH Football Focuses On Improvement

by Charlotte Wright and Hannah Caperton

The junior high football teams will play at Ore City on Tuesday, Oct. 8 starting at 5 p.m.

"I'm very excited for the upcoming games, and I'm looking forward to the rest of this season," safety Tripp Humphreys (8) said. "The difference between our team at the end of last year and now is a huge difference."

The boys previously played at Waskom Sept. 19, when the eighth grade lost 16-8, and the seventh grade lost 30-6. Then they played at home against Hawkins Sept. 26. The eighth grade won 46-0, and the seventh grade tied 0-0.

"Our eighth graders have done a really good job with the new offense and defense," athletic director Kyle Adams said. "Seventh grade has improved tremendously, but they still have a long way to go. From where they were at the beginning of the season to now is like a night and day difference."

The boys started their seasons with scrimmages against Cushing on Sept. 5, which helped them build skill and learn to work together. During practice, they run pursuit drills to build their defensive skills and cut drills to build their offense.

"I feel really good about future games because I think we've been running the plays correctly during practice," running back and linebacker Noah Hart (8) said. "I think we have improved a lot since our first game, but I think we can keep improving with more practice."

The teams have also established rituals that bond them together. Before the games, the boys observe quiet time in the locker room, when they sit or lay on the ground and listen to music or go over the play in our head to "lock in" on the game. Right before leaving the locker room, they huddle and pray.

"I think that our team has grown closer together a lot since the beginning of the season," running back and linebacker Elijah Cook (7) said.



Photo by Hannah Caperton

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Photo by Charlotte Wright

Lady Lions Score Pre-District Win

by Olivia Dabreu

The Lady Lions scored a tough win against Overton on Friday Sept. 20.

The girls pulled through five sets, fighting back after losing the first set to win the second and third but losing the fourth 25-16. They took the final set 15-12.

"I think we showed growth," senior Taylor Campbell said. "We played hard without one of our main hitters and pulled through with the win."

Junior Karen Chavez and junior Gracie Lawrence served four aces apiece, and Lawrence grabbed 15 of the team's 50 digs, while Chavez dished up 21 assists. Campbell led the team in kills with 12, and junior Mallorie Cannon followed with six.

"I felt like we actually played as a team and our attitudes were up the whole game, which was definitely a reason why we won," Chavez said.

The Lady Lions will play district games Sept. 27 - Oct. 29, with key matches against Hawkins on Sept. 27 and Oct. 15 and Ore City on Oct. 11 and Oct. 29.

Hannah Coulter (12) and Karen Chavez (11) attempt to double-block West Rusk's outside hitter at the Sept. 6 game before homecoming. Photo by Jaxon Ledbetter



Brady Pritchett (8) checks his lead during the Sept. 28 home meet where he took second place. "During that race, my legs hurt, and I knew I had to keep pushing until I crossed the finish line," Pritchett said.
Photo by Hannah Haggard





From Top: Susanna Sturkie (8) and River Martindale (7) finish fifth and sixth respectively out of 117 junior high girls running the home meet. "The workouts that we do in cross country practice are very hard, but it's very rewarding," Sturkie said. "When our team goes to the meets and gets first, it's very motivating. Whenever I felt like I was losing motivation in the race, I would think about my team and about how I couldn't let them down." Kenneth Flanagan (11) and Kadence Frey (10) run the Sept. 28 home meet. Frey placed ninth in the JV girls division, followed by teammates Bree Cox (9) and Charlotte Wright (9). Photos by Hannah Haggard



Landry Harris (9) separates from the pack. "Cheering the night before at an away game was tiring, but I pushed through the best day and was able to give it all I had and get fifth," Harris said.
Photo by Hannah Haggard

Cross Country Team Sets Pace for Season with Success at Large Meets

Cross country runners will compete in the district meet at McLeod on Oct. 9. High school will begin at 8:30 a.m., and junior high races will start at 3:30 p.m.

"I feel confident going into district because we've worked so hard as a team this season," freshman Emma Wadle said. "We've been to some bigger meets this season, which were challenging, but I know they have made us better."

Team members previously ran the McLeod course on Sept. 12, and they competed at home on Sept. 28 and at Pine Tree Sept. 21. At the home meet, 103 varsity girls ran the course. Freshman Landry Harris finished fifth, sophomore Danica Vestal 10th and sophomore Rachel Potter 31st. The girls tied with Mineola for third place out of 11 teams. Sophomore David Shaver finished in 38th out of 119 varsity boys after recently recovering from an injury. Sophomore Kadence Frey finished ninth among the JV girls, followed by freshmen Bree Cox in 16th and Charlotte Wright in 17th.

125 boys ran the junior high race, where eighth-graders Brady Pritchett finished second and Kynan Birlew finished 12th, and eighth-grader Susanna Sturkie finished the

girls race of 117 runners in fifth, followed by seventh-grader River Martindale in sixth. The junior high girls placed second out of ten teams.

At Pine Tree, Harris placed fourth and Vestal 23rd out of 165 runners, putting the varsity girls in seventh overall out of 23 teams. The JV girls placed ninth overall, and the JV boys placed 12th.

The teams also practice three times a week before school.

"During practice, as a team, we push each other to be the best versions of ourselves," freshman Bree Cox said. "I love cross country so much because of the support my teammates give me throughout the season."

While Union Grove's cross country teams are larger than some and more successful than most, Pritchett says cross country is not a very popular sport because of the effort required.

"It takes a ton of dedication to succeed," Pritchett said. "It's hard getting to the school at 6 a.m. three times a week and having to push myself to keep going even though it hurts."

FCA Comes Together for See You at the Pole, Fields of Faith Events

The Fellowship of Christian Athletes and other religious students gathered in the junior high gym the morning of Sept. 25.

With threats of rain, the gym was the best place to house the largest club meeting of the school year.

The annual See You at the Pole event, which usually happens at the flag pole, started with "Praise" by Maverick City Music, sung and played by Sal Bonamy of the Grace Creek worship team.

"See You at the Pole really brings students together across the globe to worship God," eighth-grader Lilly Lane said. "I'm glad that it's a thing that everyone can go to, especially if they are having a bad day."

During the gathering, multiple students read scriptures and prayed over the school and all the people in it.

"This year was different because it gave us a moment to pray with ourselves and peers and to soak in God's presence in a circle while we sang another song," eighth-grader Kale Reeves said.

Once See You at the Pole ended, classes resumed with first period, but after school, a busload of students traveled to the Lobos' stadium in Longview for Fields of Faith, where student groups from across East Texas gathered on the field in fellowship. Students shared their personal testimonies and guest pastors shared a message.

"We heard other people's stories about how the Lord has brought them closer to him and how it's ok to not be okay and to have hard times but to find the Lord along the way," eighth-grader Morgan Morrow said. "There was praise for the Lord and praying with our group of friends, encouraging them to find the lord, and that made it a better experience."

Above: Junior Luis Fernandez and freshmen Bella Foster and Layla Kirk worship at See You at the Pole. "I felt moved by the Holy Spirit," Foster said. "I was really impressed and excited about how many people showed up. Since I was sharing a Bible scripture, I was also really thinking about how See You at the Pole will impact and has impacted everyone there." Photo by Jamie Russell

Right: Freshman Natalie Spruell and eighth-grader Aubree Cooper take in the messages, and freshmen Emma Dabreu and Layla Kirk embrace during Fields of Faith. Photo by Briana Bowling





Above: Students from across East Texas gather for Fields of Faith in Longview.
Photo by Briana Bowling



Left: Grace Creek worship team member Sal Bonamy performs Maverick City Music's "Praise" during See You at the Pole, and eighth-grader Addison Ellis shares a verse close to her heart during the time of worship. "Isaiah 41:10 is one of my favorite verses because it reminds use that we are not alone and that God is always with us every step of the way."
Photos by Jamie Russell

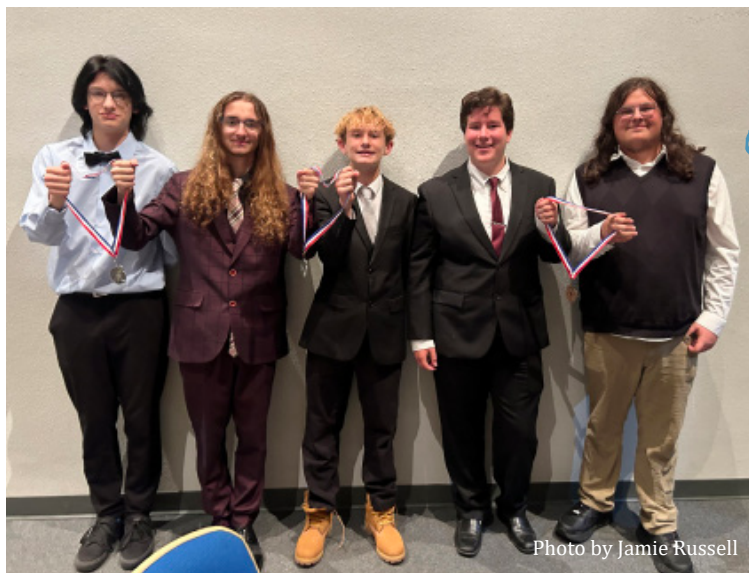


Photo by Jamie Russell

Guardian Angels Debate Teams Compete in Novice Tournament

Two of the three debate teams who competed in Sabine High School's Angel Tournament medaled at the Sept. 14 meet. Peyton Hancock (11) and Connor Mead (9) won silver and Shane Deaton (11) and Brendon Deary (12) won bronze medals.

At angel tournaments, an experienced debater "angels" for novice debaters, prepping them for the debate by helping write their case and coaching them through questioning. Over the course of the day, the novice debaters rely less on the angel, who provides more emotional support than anything else by the end of the day.

For this meet, Colton Mead (12) angelled for Hancock and Connor Mead, Parker Haley (11) angelled for Deaton and Deary, and Jamie Russell (12) angelled for Briana Bowling (9) and Hannah Haggard (9)

Russell also competed in Prose Interpretation and Persuasive Speaking and earned first place in her room in both events.



Reserve your 2024-2025 yearbook online at <https://yearbookforever.com/>

Yearbooks cost \$50 until Nov. 1, but families don't have to pay it all now, as online orders will have a payment plan option. Books will be distributed in August of 2025, a change from recent yearbooks which were distributed in May and supplemented by an insert in August.

Senior parents and businesses can also purchase ads in the 2024-2025 yearbook. Ad prices will remain the same until the deadline of Dec. 20. (Full Page - \$250; Half Page - \$135; Quarter Page - \$75; Eighth Page - \$50) Lions Roar staff will design ads according to specifications and send proofs for approval before publication.

The Weight of Expectations

Detoxifying Masculinity

Opinion/Editorial

by Briana Bowling and Konner Long

Masculinity in itself isn't inherently bad.

In fact, stereotypically masculine characteristics are often considered desirable: strength, assertiveness, protective instincts.

But when boys are told that being strong means not showing emotion, when assertiveness turns to aggression, when protection becomes control, masculinity can become toxic.

Toxic masculinity has become one of those buzzwords that you get tired of hearing, but it's also an important concept to understand for young men who want to do better and parents who want to break the cycle.

Toxic masculinity is taking masculine characteristics to the extreme - aggression, violence, dominance. It's usually learned in childhood and passed down through generations with sayings like "boys don't cry" or "man up". It's applying similar pressures that progress to a cycle of harmful attitudes and behaviors - traditions that follow generation after generation.

Traditions that need to stop.

Showing emotion is masculine.

Emotional suppression keeps men from expressing how they feel and leaves many feeling numb or disconnected from others. This suppression can lead to multiple mental health issues including feelings of loneliness or depression. Emotional suppression can also cause difficulty maintaining healthy relationships, especially if it takes the form of sexist, patriarchal behaviors or

abuse toward a partner. However, emotions do not equate to weakness. It takes strength to be vulnerable.

Accepting help is masculine.

The idea that men have to be so strong and completely independent, never accepting help, discourages them from truly successful collaboration, as recognizing the strengths of others allows us to work together for a greater goal. More importantly, fear of being considered weak prevents some men from getting the mental and medical health care that they need. But everyone needs care to prevent plagues of issues. Everyone needs help - at least sometimes. Asking for help does not make a man inadequate.

Conflict resolution is masculine.

Excessive aggression promotes dangerous behaviors and the acceptance of violence as a way to assert dominance, often over a partner. In fact, a 2020 study titled "When Men Murder Women" found that 60% of victims murdered by someone they knew were partners. Communicating without violence creates solutions.

Toxic masculinity puts undue pressure on men to be tough, unfeeling, and unyielding through generational conditioning.

It's a cycle that needs to be broken, but to break it, all men need to do their part by communicating their emotions honestly, allowing other people to be their authentic selves, seeking or accepting help when needed and only responding with violence as a last resort of self-defense. Only then can their children grow up knowing that to be masculine, they don't have to be toxic.



Art by Alexis Lee

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I love how bracelets allow me to express myself. They say funny or encouraging words to make me laugh or smile. and they make me really want to show them to people. My favorite bracelets describe my personality.

I got my first bracelet because I was feeling very down. Making bracelets is so much fun. I love learning how to make bracelets in new ways and teaching other people how to make bracelets. It's just exciting to see how they come out, and everybody gets to see how hard you worked on them.

[My friendship bracelet] is really important to me, because it represents my school and what I do at the school. It makes me feel happy and encourages me. I'm so thankful I get to represent Union Grove. I got it for my birthday, from one of my friends. That's why it's really special.

This bracelet I actually got in fifth grade when I started being friends with Aiden for the first time. He still has his matching bracelet. This definitely reminds me of just how long me and Aiden have been friends.

Be happy is kind of just an easy reference point to go back and look at as a reminder. My others are basically just fond memories. I worked in all of these shows and VBS start to finish. So, my bracelets are a constant reminder of fun hard work and be happy.



BEEETLEJUICE BEEETLEJUICE

Cult Classic's Sequel Disappoints Audiences

The sequel to Tim Burton's 1988 film "Beetlejuice" has 77% on Rotten Tomatoes' Tomatometer, but many fans are unsatisfied with the project.

The biggest complaints target the weirdly graphic and disturbing "inner-child" scene, but moviegoers who don't know why Jeffrey Jones couldn't reprise his role as Charles also had questions about his claymation death scene.

Fans of the original Beetlejuice movie will be excited to learn Beetlejuice's backstory and to see several callbacks. The opening credit shot of the bridge where the Maitlands met their demise, Delia's statues at Astrid's school and outside their home, and "Banana Boat (Day-O)" playing at a family member's funeral, for instance, will have audiences reminiscing about watching the original.

However, while Winona Ryder looks almost exactly the same 36 years later, her character is much less likable, primarily be-

cause she comes across as gullible and weak when she allows her obviously up-to-no-good manager to manipulate her. He takes her meds and hijacks her family member's funeral. Everyone else can see the foolishness of Lydia's relationship, but she makes decisions prioritizing making him happy and sets a very bad example.

Lydia's stepmother Delia was already unlikeable in the original, but she's even worse in the sequel - though she does have some fun lines, and Beetlejuice was never really likeable, per se, but, in the sequel, he feels more like a supporting character than a member of an ensemble cast.

And the new characters aren't much better. Jenna Ortega, as Lydia's daughter Astrid, was the most "normal" character - a teen who doesn't believe in her mother. But her claim to have read "Crime and Punishment" three times is pretty unbelievable as even English teachers don't like that book, and she too makes terrible decisions that

should be a lesson to teenage girls but set up Beetlejuice's return to the screen.

The most likeable character only had a few scenes, and we won't spoil too much, but poor, poor Bob deserved better.

While the characters themselves aren't great, the actors do perform well, unlike the super-predictable plot. Astrid's and Beetlejuice's conflicts create zero tension and are both so conveniently and quickly resolved that the plot never climaxes. Plus Willem Dafoe's actor-who-thinks-he's-really-a-detective just keeps popping up with no real purpose.

In a nutshell, the movie delivers more gore, more characters and more macabre storylines than the original but with significantly less zany charm.

A dream sequence at the end sets up another movie (which should be called "Beetlejuice Beetlejuice Beetlejuice"), but after this one, we don't think we'd watch.

Upcoming Events

Oct. 1-4

Elementary Book Fair

Oct. 1

Fall Picture Retakes
Elementary Open House - 4:30-6 p.m.
HS Volleyball - 4:30 p.m.

Oct. 2

FFA Student Fundraising Reward Trip

Oct. 3

HS Cross Country @Lindale
JH/JV Football @Elysian Fields - 5 p.m.

Oct. 4

Dress Up Day: Pink Out
V Volleyball v. Linden Kildare - 4:30 p.m.
Mini-Twirl Night - 6:30 p.m.
V Football v. Elysian Fields - 7 p.m.

Oct. 5

Bass Fishing Team @Lake Tawakoni
FFA @White Oak FFA Lamb/Goat Clinic

Oct. 7

JH Volleyball @Ore City - 4:30 p.m.

Oct. 8

Fire Prevention Demonstration - 8 a.m.
HS Volleyball @Paul Pewitt - 4:30 p.m.
JH/JV Football @Ore City - 5 p.m.

Oct. 9

Muffins with Moms - 7:15 a.m.
FFA Ag Awareness Day @State Fair
Cross Country District Meet

Oct. 10

Donuts with Dads - 7:15 a.m.
Dress Up Day: Superheroes
Junior Class to Maude Cobb
College & Career Expo
Junior Class Tailgate
V Football v. Ore City - 7 p.m.

Oct. 11

First Grade Trip to Ecoland
FFA @No Limits Livestock Show
V Volleyball v. Ore City - 4:30 p.m..

Oct. 12

FFA Yamboree Clean-Up/Setup

Oct. 14

JH Volleyball @Paul Pewitt - 4:30 p.m.
Athletic Booster Club Meeting - 5:30 p.m.
School Board Meeting - 6 p.m.
PTO Meeting - 6 p.m.

Oct. 15-19

Yamboree

Oct. 15

UIL Marching Contest @Mt. Pleasant
HS Volleyball v. Hawkins - 4:30 p.m.

Oct. 18

V Volleyball @Big Sandy - 4:30 p.m.

Oct. 19

Band @Yamboree Parade

Oct. 21-26

Harvest Festival Livestock Show

Oct. 21

Regional Cross Country Meet
JH Volleyball @Van - 4:30 p.m.

Oct. 22

HS Volleyball @Linden Kildare - 4:30 p.m.
JH Fall Band Concert - 6 p.m.

Oct. 23

TSIA2 Testing (High School)

Oct. 24

JH/JV Football v. Harleton - 5 p.m.

Oct. 25

Dress Up Day: Soccer Moms v. BBQ Dads
Elementary Awards Assemblies
V Volleyball v. Paul Pewitt - 4:30 p.m.
V Football @Harleton - 7 p.m.

Oct. 26

Bass Fishing Team @Lake Bob Sandlin
The Lion's Players Theatre - 9 a.m.

Oct. 28

Band UIL State Marching Contest
FFA @Winona FFA LDE Inv.
JH Volleyball v. Hawkins - 4:30 p.m.

Oct. 29

Band UIL State Marching Contest
FFA @Winona FFA LDE Inv.
JH Volleyball v. Hawkins - 4:30 p.m.
First Grade Halloween Program - 6:30 p.m.

Oct. 30

FFA @White Oak FFA LDE Inv.

Oct. 31

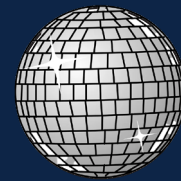
Harvest Carnival
Hooves & Halos @Leesburg - 9 a.m.
JH/JV Football @Beckville - 5 p.m.



Here's Your Sign

Student Council members Peyton Hancock (10) and Cooper Littlejohn (7) make spirit signs during the teacher workday Sept. 17. On Oct. 2, they chose Red Ribbon Week dress-up days:

Give Drugs
the Boot



Leave Drugs
in the Past

Don't Let Drugs
Turn You
Inside Out



Boo, Drugs!

Red-y to be Healthy





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