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On December 8, 2011, Preston Caver of Moore and Caver CPA firm presented the Union Hill ISD Board of Trustees and community members with an overview of their annual audit for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2011. Mr. Caver informed the board that even with the difficulties districts face today, Union Hill had an excellent set of financials to report. Mr. Caver stated that if a district wishes to keep their basic educational expenditures stable in times of reduced funding, they need a strong safety net and he believes that is the practice of this district's administration. During Mr. Caver's report, he emphasized to the board that they could be proud of the excellent report.

He said the district has no findings to report to the state, taxes were being collected at a good rate and internal controls in central office were all in compliance and good standing. Revenues reported an increase above what was budgeted while expenditures reported a decrease from those budgeted.

After reviewing the changes in basic education expenditures relating to just classroom (function 11), the district increased just over 3%. Mr. Caver said even in tough times Union Hill continues to make sure the majority of expenditures budgeted are appropriated to functions related to edu-

cation for all students. "The taxpayers of Union Hill are seeing a tremendous return on their taxpayer dollars spent for student education," he stated.

Sharon A. Richardson, Superintendent of Schools stated that Union Hill ISD Board of Education, Administration, Faculty and Staff have worked extremely hard to earn this report. She said the school district will continue to provide quality educational opportunities and resources to all students equally and to teach skills required to pursue a higher education or to enter into this diverse, ever-changing society.

Union Hill Honors Veterans

Union Hill ISD honored veterans in the community on November 11, 2011. The event was hosted by Mrs. Connie Johnston and her students.

Veterans were treated to a breakfast prior to the beginning of the program. Principal Brad Watson served as moderator of the program. The program included the singing of the National Anthem, the pledge and posting of the flag, playing of taps, special passage readings and remarks from some veterans. The highlight of the program was a video presentation featuring pictures of military individuals. Names of veterans, their rank, military branch and service time were provided by family members. Elementary read the roster during the video presentation.



UNION HILL STUDENTS VOLUNTEER TO HELP UPSHUR COUNTY FAMILIES

Students from Union Hill volunteered to ring the Salvation Army Bell at Wal-Mart (Gilmer) during the Christmas Holidays. The students tolerated the cold weather to collect funds in the Salvation Army Kettle. The funds collected are used strictly to assist Upshur County Families during their times of need. Katelyn Grunden volunteered for 2 days. She and Brittney Giles enjoyed it so much that they stayed an additional 2 hours. Cheerleaders Katelyn Grunden, Brittney Giles, Jessica Lewis and Kayla Campbell volunteered along with Hannah Bolt. The volunteer hours acquired by these students will be submitted to the National Headquarters.

UNION HILL STUDENTS SELECTED TO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Xavier Johnson and Katelyn Grunden were selected as leaders for the upcoming Model United Nations project hosted by Region 7 ESC. The project will take place at Region 7 ESC in Kilgore on February 1-2, 2012.

These students were selected out of a pool of more than 100 applicants. Xavier was selected to the top position of Secretary General moderate over the entire project. Katelyn was selected as Sergeant at Arms and is responsible for keeping students in order. They received additional training in December.



YEARBOOK SALE

The Digital Interactive Media Class is currently taking orders for the 2011-2012 Yearbook. The Cost of the yearbook is \$30 (\$5 discount until 02/01/12). Ads may also be purchased at this time. Cost- Full page \$100, Half-page \$50, Quarter-page \$25 and 1/8 page (business card size) \$15.00. Contact Union Hill for additional information 903-762-2138 Ext.206

January 3, 2012



Dear Parents/Guardians:

Union Hill ISD'S first semester will be coming to a close on January 12, 2012. The school board, administration, faculty and staff will continue to place strong emphasis on high expectations, mutual respect, and life long learning for all students PK – Grade 12. We will continue to provide quality educational opportunities and resources to all students equally and to teach skills required to pursue a higher education or to enter in to this diverse, ever-changing society.

Our second semester will be the best ever! By the end of this school year, student's performances will improve in all academic areas of math, reading, science, social studies, foreign languages, fine arts and athletics.

Please feel free to contact us if needed. **Keep lines of communication open, stay involved, and think positively.**

Ms. Richardson ~ Superintendent of Schools

From the desk of the Principal.....



It's hard to believe that we are into our third six weeks already! We've had a very successful year so far and it is important that we help the kids remain focused and organized with their school work. Thank you in advance for helping us, as you have all year, with keeping the kids on track for a strong finish to the first semester.

I ran across this in some of my reading and would like to share.

A carpenter uses a hammer and nails, a potter uses his hands and clay, a painter uses his

paint and brush, and a musician uses tune and rhyme to create a masterpiece. A teacher uses his/her heart and mind to create masterpieces in learning.

Your child is a masterpiece – unique, one-of-a-kind.

Thank you for sharing your masterpiece with us each day. I'm looking forward to watching them grow in their learning.

Mr. Brad Watson ~ Principal

DIFFERENCES IN SCHOOLS by Harrison Allen

When I first came to Union Hill, I found a lot of things different compared to my school in New Zealand. One big change was the size; my school New Zealand had about 2,700 kids, with 700 in my year which is massive compared to Union Hill. Another big change was coming to a co-ed school. The last 5 years I have done all my subjects in a class where there are only boys. One of the harder things to get used to was the time differences in schools. In New Zealand my school started at 9:30 and finished at 3:00 every day except Wednesday when it finished at 12:00. Therefore it has been really

hard getting up at at 7:00 to go to school. Also the fact that football is directly after school and runs to 7:00 or 8:00 every night makes it a lot more difficult.

One of the things I do like about the school is the classes are smaller. For example, my Algebra II class has only 12 people in it, whereas in New Zealand I would have about 30-40 students in class. It is a lot harder to get attention from teachers in New Zealand.

The only other real major change that I really like would be that we are allowed to

wear whatever we like. In New Zealand, we had to wear uniforms. These are the real major changes that I found hard to overcome. There are a lot of minor differences, but they haven't been hard to deal with.

My family consists of Greg Allen, my father, who is a Literacy Education manager; Lynley Macmillan, my mother, who is a nurse; Phoebe, my sister, who is 14 years old and in Form 3 (grade 9) and Madeline, my sister, who is also 14 years old and Form 3 (Grade 9).

District 18A UIL Academic District Meet was held at Sulphur Bluff ISD on December 7, 2011. **Union Hill Junior High (Grades 6-8) placed 3rd in the overall competition among 6 schools.** Mrs. Velma Clay and Mr. James Qualls coached 7th and 8th grades. Contests results are listed below.

Art :

Grade 6 Team 1st-Taylor Colbert 2nd, Keely Penner 3rd, Taylor Durbin 5th.

Dictionary Skills:

Grade 8 Team 2nd- Adam Davis 4th, Alexis Elledge, Ryan Griffith, Brianna DeSpain.

Editorial Writing:

Grade 7-Shylar Wilson 4th,

Grade 8-Brianna DeSpain 3rd.

Impromptu Speaking:

Grade 7-Dorothy Moss 6th.

Listening;

Grade 8 Team 3rd– Brianna DeSpain, Alexis Elledge, Ryan Griffith, Corey Rhymes.

Maps, Graphs & Charts:

Grade 6-Taylor Durbin 6th indiv;

7th Grade Team 1st-Skylar Bishop 2nd indiv, Riley Pate, Dorothy Moss

8th Grade Team 3rd– Ryan Griffith 5th indiv, Mickey Brewster, Brianna DeSpain.

Math:

Grade 6 Team 2nd– Taylor Colbert and

Samantha Collier tied 6th; Lindsey Threadgill

Grade 8 Team 3rd-Aubrey Buchanan, Gaven Jones, Kaylynn Mowery.

Number Sense:

Grade 6 Team 2nd-Dwight Cook 1st., Josh Yordy 6th, Jamari White

Grade 7 Team 3rd-Emili Hayhurst, Myah Hollins, Hannah Rogers;

Grade 8 Team 2nd-Aubrey Buchanan 5th indiv., Ryan Griffith, Kaylynn Mowery.

Oral Reading:

Grade 6-Jada Fisher 6th

Ready Writing:

Grade 6-Keely Penner 2nd, Samantha Collier 4th;

Grade 7-Hannah Rogers 3rd,

Grade 8-Brianna DeSpain 2nd, Amanda Giles 6th.

Social Studies:

Grade 6 Team 1st-Lindsey Threadgill 1st, Josh Yordy 4th, Brooklyn Nations 5th.

Grade 7 Team 1st– Riley Pate 1st, Bryce Venters 3rd, Darren Edwards.

Grade 8 Team 1st-Gaven Jones 1st, Aubrey Buchanan 1st, Matthew Sandison 6th.

Spelling:

Grade 6 Team 2nd-Kelly Penner 1st, Taylor Colbert 4th, Tayler Durbin.

Grade 8 Team 1st-Alexis Elledge 4th, Corey Rhymes 6th, Brianna DeSpain.

Chess:

Grade 8 Team 3rd-Amanda Giles 6th, Mickey Brewster, Hector Ramirez.

GRADES 2— 5 Results. Mrs. Debbie Kuza supervised the coaching of these contests.

Creative Writing:

Grade 2-Lucy Davis 2nd, Krisan Mowery 5th

Chess:

Grade 2-Jefferson Young 5th

Number Sense:

Grade 5 Team 2nd-Omar Aguillon and Keelon Caffey tied 3rd, Madison McCurry

Ready Writing:

Grade 3-Dakota Moye 3rd

Grade 4-Cole Mayhan 5th

Grade 5-Madison McCurry 5th

Spelling:

Grade 3 Team 2nd-Jett Jones, Dakota Moye, Deago Haynes

Grade 4-Cyleste Buchannan 5th

Storytelling:

Grade 2-Elijah Young 1st

Grade 3-Brooklynn Richardson 1st, Annalynn Andrews 2nd, Londyne Fort 4th

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE INVITED TO SIGN UP FOR UIL ACADEMIC CONTESTS AT THIS TIME.

The District UIL Academic Spring Meet will be held on Friday, March 23, 2012 at Texas A & M University—Commerce.

CX Debaters Getting Ready for State

Union Hill CX Debate Teams participated in a tournament at Pine Tree High School in Longview on Friday, January 6, 2012. Each team competed in 3 rounds during the tournament. Team 1– Xavier Johnson and Jacob Johnston won 1 round, Team 2—Steredrick Goodjoint and Summer Styles won 2 rounds and Team 3(novice)—Datravon Duffey and Lakin Styles won 1 round.

These teams will participate in tournaments at Van High School in Van, Texas on Friday, January 13, 2012 and White Oak High School in White Oak, Texas on Saturday, January 14, 2012.

Mrs. V. Clay, District UIL Academic Coordinator, is also the Debate Coach.

Various Activities

Bettie Volunteer Fire Department visited Union Hill and presented two assemblies on October 12, 2011. Michael Kuza moderated providing activities that allowed students to interact. Students in grades Pre-K through 6 enjoyed playing games and learning at the same time. The events were more enjoyable for the students because each class received a bag of treats.

Drug awareness was celebrated with red ribbon week in October. Activities provided education about bullying, cyber bullying, drugs and tobacco.

The Yamboree was held in October with much participation from Union Hill students, faculty, staff, parents and supporters. Individuals in the parade included-Homecoming King-Gage Stokes and Queen-Summer Styles, Cheerleaders, Blue Dolls, Taylor Maness, Paige Stokes, Ashley Hensley, Jessica Giles, Akaysha Johnson and Brittney Giles.

Elementary students presented a Thanksgiving play. Theatre Arts Class presented a Christmas play.



Alumni Corner

Another Union Hill Family Tradition

Mr. Van Duffey has been a teacher at Union Hill since 1997. He graduated from Union Hill in 1977 and has seen many changes take place in the district. When Mr. Duffey started school, there was no Pre-K, Kindergarten and some classes shared the same rooms (1st and 2nd grades/3rd and 4th grades). Classes were first held in the new building (elementary) when he was in the 4th grade. Like the students now, Mr. Duffey was involved in almost everything offered serving as FFA President-Senior year, All-District Basketball-Junior and Senior years, Track Team, Rodeo Team and Beta Club.

After graduation, Mr. Duffey attended Kilgore College (1977-1979) and was a member of the Rodeo Team. He enrolled in Texas A & M University, College Station and graduated in 1981.

Mr. Duffey was employed as ranch manager of a 2,700 acre cattle ranch in Robertson County, Texas until it sold in 1986; Texas Farm Bureau Insurance Company in Victoria, Texas; and ranch manager for James Cavender Ranch in Tom, Oklahoma before giving in to teaching.



Mr. Duffey's first car was a 1966 Ford Fairlane that his sister gave him when he graduated from college.

V-rom! V-rom! V-rom!

Mr. Duffey is married to Stacey Ledbetter, the father of Marc and Angela and grandfather of Tate, Alana and Breanna.

Marc graduated from Union Hill in 1998. He attended Kilgore College and completed a heating/cooling course after working in a cattle feed yard in West Texas. Marc works in the welding and fabrication shop at Priefert Mfg.

Angela graduated from Union Hill in 1999. She graduated from Texas A& M University, College Station in 2001/ Angela was admitted to Parker Chiropractic School in Dallas after teaching Chemistry and Physics at Pittsburg High School for a year. She currently has offices in Hallsville and Jefferson.

James and Floy Duffey, parents of Mr. Duffey, both graduated from Union Hill.

Jimmie and Dianne, sisters of Mr. Duffey, are Union Hill graduates.