



Union High School

Headmaster's Newsletter

Term 1 | March 2022



ABOVE: We are proud of our Matric Class of 2021, who, despite spending the majority of their FET academic career clouded in a global pandemic, achieved a **100% pass rate**. While we highlight the top achievers, we also acknowledge the hard work and personal accomplishments of each learner and appreciate the dedication and commitment to their learning. Their achievements, despite the unprecedented circumstances, are truly exceptional. **Congratulations to James Rose-Innes, who, with six A's and one B symbol, was our top performer of 2021.** James received distinctions for Afrikaans FAL, Mathematics, Life Orientation, History, Physical Sciences and Tourism and was a mere 1% short of getting another distinction for English HL. James has been awarded the Johan Rupert Achievement Award for being the joint-TOP MATRIC in Graaff-Reinet for 2021, and received a generous cash prize which has been paid towards his studies. James is currently at Stellenbosch University.

Dear Parents

How grateful we all are to have come to the end of a school term during which we have been able to enjoy all of the usual activities and celebrations to which we are accustomed.

There has been a wonderfully positive spirit on the school campus whenever a school event

has taken place, and, in a general sense, our learners are getting back into a healthy routine.

Please support your children whenever you are able, and encourage them to do their best in all of their school activities.

We are grateful to you all for your unstinting support and loyalty.



James Rose-Innes, who, with six A's and one B symbol, was Union's top matric of 2021.

News from Term 1

Staff Matters

We were very fortunate to be able to start our year off by celebrating some of our staff's **long-service milestones**. While we continue to reiterate that the commitment, dedication and hard work by all staff is noticed, greatly appreciated and worthy of recognition, in this particular event we honoured members of staff who have been with us for 10 years (2 awardees), 15 years (1 awardee) and 20 years (1 awardee).

Over the years, these loyal colleagues have helped to make this institution and the Union community who we are today. **Please join us in congratulating** Mr Hanno Sparrius (10 years), Mrs Cathy Pringle (10 years), Mr Joseph Oormeyer (15 years) and Mrs Nelia Read (20 years).

At the beginning of this term, we welcomed Mrs Linda Rowe, who is teaching Afrikaans to our Grade 8 & 9 classes; Mr Calvin Beck, our Senior Sports Administration and Hockey coach; Mr Collen Chiyindiko who is teaching Geography, and Ms Nolitha Ndlazi, who joined us in a state-paid temporary contract.

Our thoughts are with **Mr Stephen Bezuidenhout** who has been on extended sick leave. We trust that he is on the road to recovery and look forward to his return later in the year. We also think of Mrs Hanli Rose-Innes who recently underwent a procedure and will be on leave at the start of term 2.

Mr Hannes Lombard, who will be familiar to many of our school families has been redeployed to our school from the beginning of term 2. He has been teaching at Narsingstraat Primary. We look forward to welcoming Mr Lombard back.

Mrs Elizabeth Sylvester who has worked at the school as a general worker for more than twenty years has been boarded owing to ill health. Mrs Sylvester has been a loyal colleague and will be sorely missed.



Mr Calvin Beck



Mrs Linda Rowe



Mr Collen Chiyindiko.

Academic Matters

The annual Academic Awards Assembly was held on Friday, 21 January.

Academic Bars were awarded to the following Grade 6 learners based on the Grade 5 results of 2021:

Antonia Adams, Gerda Clarke, Cate Cochrane, Isabella Hulleman, Phillip Kayster, Owen Paxton, Carlen Prinsloo

Academic Bars were awarded to the following Grade 7 learners based on the Grade 6 results of 2021:

Richard Murray, Sixolile Singeni, Zach Verwey, Kirsten Collett (Re-award), Tara Piercey (Re-award), Aimee Short (Re-award), Amber Slater (Re-award)

Academic Bars were awarded to the following Grade 8 learners based on the Grade 7 results of 2021:

Misha Newton, Anebel Norval, Josh Arends (Re-award), Amber Bezuidenhout (Re-award), Samantha Charles (Re-award), Taegen Hamid (Re-award), Ciara Kivedo (Re-award), Jade Palmer (Re-award), Katelyn Trollip (Re-award)

Academic Ties were awarded to the following Grade 9 learners based on the Grade 8 results of 2021:

Sasha Cochrane, Tara Ferreira, Erin Gedult, Pieter Hulleman, Sarah Jacobs, Kenza Neill, Megan Nortje, Aaminah Steele

Academic Ties were awarded to the following Grade 10 learners based on the Grade 9 results of 2021:

Sarah Wilmot, Caytah-Leigh Koeberg (Re-award), Na'eem Mahomed (Re-award), Sadé May (Re-award), Joy Merifield (Re-award), Charlize Vorster (Re-award)

Half Colours were awarded to the following Grade 11 learners based on the Grade 10 results of 2021:

Lana Bouwer, Brent Hesselink, Jenna-Lee Jansen, Lwanda Ntlonti, Simoné Prinsloo, Sinazo Soyana, David Venter, Ngomusa Zweni

Full Colours were awarded to the following Grade 11 learners based on the Grade 10 results of 2021:

Cadee Arends, Siyamthanda Desha, Tayla Kingwill, Siphosethu Malotana, Gemma Naude, Brigitte Oelofsen, Anna Pringle, Caitrin Spence, Andrué Victor, Trinity West

Half Colours were awarded to the following Grade 12 learners based on the Grade 11 results of 2021:

Jamie Jaftha, Matthew McNaughton, Mihan Campbell, Tamsin James, Jacobus (JJ)

Liebenberg, Daniel Nell, Lauren Waddelow, Hannah Bodenstein (Re-award), Alexandra Imrie (Re-award)

Full Colours were awarded to the following Grade 12 learners based on the Grade 11 results of 2021:

Marli Brummer, Amber Binney, Michelle Doyle, Chloe Shires, Matthew Basson (Re-award), Kendall Krige (Re-award), Kathryn Odendaal (Re-award), Grace Merifield (Re-award).

Robotics

Coding is becoming a vitally important skill in the 21st century and having the fundamental knowledge will help a child in any field of study. It is, therefore, with great excitement that we held our very first Robotics lesson, with learners being introduced to this exciting subject. The enthusiasm of the learners was tangible as they

played around with basic coding languages and studied the principles of coding.

We extend our gratitude to the Care for Education Foundation whose donation of several Mindstorm EV3 robotic kits have made this a possibility. We also extend our thanks to our educators who have made themselves available to study and, in turn, teach our learners all about Robotics. Lastly, we thank Mr Ross Hulleman for his willingness to assist with the lessons.



Grade 8 Orientation Day

Our Grade 8 class started their year with a fun-filled orientation day. The aim of this activity is not only to promote positive interaction among the Grade 8 group, but also to establish a relationship of mutual respect and collaboration between the Grade 8s and the school's prefects.



Mathematics Olympiad

PHOTO BELOW: On Thursday, 10 March, 40 Grade 8–12 learners participated in the first round of the 2022 South African Mathematics Olympiad. The following learners qualified to take part in the second round on 12 May: Grade 8: Samantha Charles, Shiraz Pedersen; Grade 9: Tara Ferreira, Erin Gedult, Trystan Hulleman; Grade 10: Sarah Wilmot; Grade 11: Cadee Arends, Siphosethu Malotana, Gemma Naude; Grade 12: Matthew McNaughton.



RCL and Class Representatives

The School recently elected class representatives as well as a new Representative Council of Learners (RCL). The class representatives and members of the RCL are, at all times, expected to carry themselves with excellence and epitomise what a Union learner should be: kind, caring and sensitive to the needs of others; hard-working and motivated to bring about positive change in their environment; honest, trustworthy and dependable; but, most of all, proud of their school and the opportunity to serve others. This is what the RCL of our School strives constantly towards. Congratulations to:

2022 Class Representatives:

Grade 8: Tristan Hope, Taegan Hamid, Shiraz Pedersen, Kimberley Menos, Josh Arends, Rebecca Copeman.

2022 Representative Council of Learners:

Grade 9: Siyolo Somgqeza, Sasha Cochrane, Trystan Hulleman, Erin Gedult, Aaminah Steele, Shaakir Kazi.

Grade 10: Na'eem Mahomed, Caytah-Leigh Koeberg (*Vice-Secretary*), Tyra Binney, Joshua Swartland.

Grade 11: Ryan Jenneke, Dennisha Fortuin, Joshua Horne (*Secretary*), Ngomusa Zweni (*Treasurer*), Cassidy Goliad, Shona Zana.

Grade 12: Ijabulile Mtwazi, Singalakha Mapekula, Ruzhe Hendricks (*Vice-President*), Kathryn Odendaal (*President*).

Learners' Attentiveness at School

We are increasingly finding that learners are overly-tired in class.

It is our feeling that learners are given access to their cellphones and other devices overnight and are sitting up till very late when they should be sleeping. Please do address this in your homes and ensure that learners get a good night's sleep.



Prefects attend Leadership Summit

On Wednesday evening, 2 March, our prefect body joined those from Nqweba Secondary School, Hoër Volksskool, Spandau Secondary School and Asherville Secondary School, at the second annual Youth Leadership Summit in Graaff-Reinet.

The event, which was held at the Profcon Resort, was a Prescient Foundation SCI project, organised by Mrs Hestie Clegg. The aim of this annual summit is to gather the young leaders of Graaff-Reinet in a single forum to share their contributions, experiences, and knowledge on pertinent issues and to motivate these youngsters

to be good leaders in their respective schools and communities. Through the course of the afternoon, Mr Luphumlo T Joka (OUA 2011), founding director of Global Leadership Consultants, a leadership and business development firm based in Port Elizabeth, introduced the learners to various qualities and challenges of leadership. The day was filled with fun, exciting and challenging moments to help these learner leaders identify and maximize their leadership skills, create a local network of peers, and obtain the tools and training to make positive change happen in their community and school.

Mentorship Programme

Last year, the School launched a cross-age peer mentoring programme to promote the learners' physical, social and emotional well-being.

The programme is constructed on the relationship between the older and younger learners, with mentors being assigned to specific class groups so that the younger learners can benefit from the experience and knowledge of the older ones.

Our mentors for 2022 are:

Kendall Krige, Bubele Thibini, Matthew Basson, Chloe Shires, Tessa James, Daniel Nell, Brigetté Oelofsen, Likhona Batala, JJ Liebenberg, Tamsin James, Kathryn Odendaal, Ndalo Qwalela, Sisipho Arnols, Caitrin Spence, Asa Matross, Ruzhé Hendricks, Trinity West, Cadee Arends, Lisakhanya Mvandaba, Sinazo Soyana, Jude Langmead, Kaitlin Kenmuir, Buhle Rolomane, Jenna-lee Jansen, Ngomusa Zweni, David Venter, Lana Bouwer, Brent Hesselink, Grace Merifield, Aashiq Hartley, Simamkele Soyana, Liyabona Binqela, Jamie Jaftha and Matthew McNaughton.

CONGRATULATIONS

to Union High School Grade 8 learner **Ben Lemke** who was recently selected to represent EP Biathlon at the 2022 SA National Biathlon Championships being held in Gqeberha during the first weekend in April.



Biathlon

A group of learners travelled to Oudtshoorn on Saturday, 5 February, to represent the Eastern Province at the **30th Highgate Interprovincial Championships**, the first Inter-provincial biathlon meet in two years. By all accounts they did exceptionally well and were a credit to themselves and their school.

Congratulations to the following biathletes who were selected to **represent the Eastern Province biathlon team**: Samantha Gilfillian (u/13 Girls B team), Ben Lemke (u/15 Boys B team), Misha Newton (u/15 Girls C team) and Hayden Pienaar (u/17 Boys B team). **Ben** was recently selected to represent Eastern Province Biathlon at the 2022 SA National Biathlon Championships being held in Gqeberha during the first weekend in April.

Interhouse Athletics

The annual **Junior Interhouse Athletics Day** was held on Thursday, 27 January. Despite the sweltering heat, our young athletes were determined and enthusiastic, delivering some outstanding results on the day.

A total of six records were set by our junior athletes: Mia Botha broke the u/12 100m as well as u/12 1200m records; Cu-Shan Hofman set a new record in the u/12 150m event; Nadine Murray gave an impressive performance in the u/12 Long Jump to set a new record; Dvallene Fas broke the u/11 Shot Put record; Keanu Linch claimed the record in the u/13 100m as well as u/13 200m events; and Owen Paxton set a record in the u/12 Long Jump event.

The top individual performers of the day were: u/13 Victor Ludorum – Keanu Linch, u/13 Victrix Ludorum – Imivuyo Nondlazi, u/12 Victor Ludorum – Owen Paxton, u/12 Victrix Ludorum – Mia Botha, u/11 Victor Ludorum – Jordan Maritz, u/11 Victrix Ludorum – Miley Burger.

Our u/13 athletes also ran the 400m track event for the first time ever, with Kuhle Nqumashe coming in first among the girls and Keanu Linch among the boys. At the end of the day, Arnott won the day with 522 points, a mere three points more than Daly's total tally of 519.

On Wednesday, 26 January, the **Senior Interhouse Athletics Day** was held at the school. Thanks are extended to the House Captains of Daly - Ijabulele Mtwazi and Keratile Nqabeni - as well as those of Arnott - Bubele Thibini and Yandisa Sinyanya - for ensuring that spirits remained high throughout the day.

Competition was fierce but fun and several standout performances were delivered on the day: Sisipho Arnols was a joy to watch in the Boys Open 100m (11.03s) and 200m (24.16s), Musa Zweni put forth a stellar effort in the Girls u/17 Shot Put (8,19m).

As always, the Boys u/17 100m event was a thriller, with Joshua Swartland coming out tops in 11,5s., Dylan Petitt received two first places – one in Shotput and one in the Discus event, Grade 12 girls, Chloe Shires and Kendall Krige, both claimed three 1st places, Grade 8s Ben Lemke and Misha Newton also performed very well in their track events. This year's winning house is Arnott, with 941 points to Daly's 816.

The annual **Junior Interschools Athletics** event between the Union Schools and Laer Volkskool was held on Tuesday, 8 February. The meet was hosted by Union with various items such as long jump, high jump, shot put, sprints, middle-distance running and relays taking place on Union High School's sports grounds.



General Athletics News

Congratulations to the following athletes who were selected to represent the **Graaff-Reinet High Schools' CMC Athletics Team** at the Sarah Baartman Athletics Meet held at the Oval in Gqeberha on Thursday, 17 February: Kyle Liebenberg (u/15 shot put), Ethan Linch (u/17 3000m), Jayden Odendaal (u/17 shot put), Sisipho Arnols (u/19 200m, 100m, long jump), Dylan Petitt (u/19 discus), Joshua Swarland (u/17 100m). *Their selection follows their success ful participation at the Camdeboo Zonal Meeting held at Hoër Volkskool on Saturday, 5 February, where our athletes claimed 7 Gold, 3 Silver and 2 Bronze medals.*

Well done to Jayden Odendaal who came fourth in the Shot Put event for Boys u/17; to Kyle Liebenberg who claimed the bronze medal in the Shot Put event for Boys u/15; Dylan Petitt who won bronze in the Open Men's Discus event; and Sisipho Arnols who claimed bronze in the Open Men's Long Jump event and silver in the Open Men's 100m final. Sisipho was subsequently invited to participate in the Eastern Cape Athletics Championships held in Gqeberha at the beginning of March.

Grade 7 athlete Keanu Linch dominated the boys' sprints at the Sarah Baartman District Championships at Gqeberha's Westbourne Oval. Keanu sprinted his way to a **GOLD MEDAL** during the final of the Boys' u/13 200m event. Keanu, following another stellar performance on the athletics track, represented Eastern Province at the SA National Primary Schools Track & Field Championships!

Senior Cricket Festival

Our 15th annual Senior Cricket Festival took place from 12-15 January. Matches were played on the Minnaar and Puttick fields, as well as at the Botanics Sports Club and at Hoër Volkskool with each venue's idyllic setting in the Gem of the Karoo providing the perfect backdrop for cricket at the height of summer.

This year, teams from eight schools, Daniël Pienaar Technical High School, Marlow Agricultural High School, Queen's College Boys' High School, Stirling High School, Edgemoor High School, Milnerton High School and Nico Malan competed in T20s, declaration matches as well as 50-over encounters.



Cross Country



It was a beautiful day for the Union High School Interhouse Cross Country competition held on Tuesday, 22 March, with perfect running conditions greeting the close to 500 runners who had come to compete for their houses in this annual whole-school event.

The atmosphere was electric as all of the runners were cheered on at the start and finish of the course by fellow learners, staff and parents that had come to spectate!

Each race was full of children who were keen to achieve their personal best and make their school proud.

A big well done to all the learners who participated and assisting members of staff who contributed to the success of the event.



Thank You!

The School extends its thanks to Old Unionite, Mr Jason Jacobs, of Brian Bands Sports Graaff-Reinet for his kind donation of Gilbert **rugby match balls** for the 2022 rugby season. The official handover of the **2022 1st team sports kits** was conducted at the School on 17 March, and we are all grateful to our very generous sponsors, Botha's Garage, for presenting our players' kit, which includes warm-up tops and bags for the season ahead.

School Attire

We request that parents who are purchasing sports tackies for their children please consider whether the colour of the tackies is appropriate for use with the green and white Union sports uniform. Red tackies, for example, do not look good when worn with our uniform. Further, when attending a school function, whether at school or at another school or venue, learners are expected to be dressed in school attire.

We request that parents support the school in this matter.

Head of Culture

Mrs Sanette Brink has stepped down from the internal promotion position of Head of the Cultural portfolio. The position is now held by Mrs Bronwen Langmead.

Chess

Every Wednesday afternoon between 15:00 and 16:00, a group of learners gather in Mrs Rose-Innes' class to develop their chess skills and match wits over the cherished chequered board. Why is it that these youngsters are willing to devote their time to the game? It's undoubtedly the fact that chess involves an intense intellectual challenge that's very good for the health of your mind.



Founders' Weekend 2022

Friday, 28 January, marked the occasion of the School's 103rd birthday. As is tradition, the day was celebrated with a Founders' Day Assembly, which felt particularly special, as we were all able to come together again in the school hall after a trying two years.

A very special addition to this year's assembly was the presentation of a white Honours blazer, which was presented to Old Unionite Ms Sulette (neë Damons) Kotzee, who was a special guest, in recognition of her Honours Award she obtained while at school for exceptional all-round achievement and meritorious service to the school. (An Honours Award is one of the highest accolades presented at Union and is only awarded on very rare occasions.) Mr Dave Stern, Chairman of the Old Unionite Association, presented her with the blazer. The standing ovation Mrs Kotzee received was a reflection of the approval of all those present. After the cake was presented and the candles lit, the learners filed their way out of the hall to fetch their doughnuts and watch the sports for the afternoon.

On Saturday morning, 29 January, the gardens of Union Preparatory School brimming with more than 200 ladies dressed in their finery, delicious eats and plenty of laughter, for the annual Gisela Kingwill Mother & Daughter Morning hosted by Union High School's Grade 11 Matric Farewell Fundraising Committee.

The traditional Founders' Weekend hockey match between the School's 1st team and an Old Girls' team was played on Friday afternoon, 28 January. The game was a fiercely competitive one, which saw the Old Girls' giving it their all to obtain a 6-4 victory.

On Saturday, 29 January, the School hosted a clash between the Old Boys and the school's young cricketers in honour of the school's Founders' Weekend. The day saw 40-over matches being contested between Union's u/15 cricketers and their dads/Old Boys at the Botanics Sports Grounds, Union's 3rd team and Old Boys at Hoër Volkskool and Union's 2nd team and Old Boys on Union's Puttick Field, with a 50-over match being played on Union's Minnaar field between Union's 1st team and the Old Boys. In the end, the four Old Boys' teams managed to edge out their younger opponents in their respective encounters.

Scouts

On Saturday, 15 January, five intrepid Scouts, JJ Liebenberg, Kyle Liebenberg, Jayden Swart, Alex Neill and Ben Lemke, embarked on a hike up Nardousberg accompanied by Old Unionites John Finlaison and Richard Collett. These five young men acquitted themselves very well with good manners and a tough spirit and are a credit to themselves, their school and families. A word of thanks is extended to Mr Bruce Maree, Graaff-Reinet Scoutmaster, for making all the arrangements for the hike and also to Mr Kobus Olivier who once again allowed the Scouts access to this wonderful piece of land.



Hockey

A **hockey skills clinic** with former Proteas player, Olympian and Old Unionite, Sulette Kotzee (née Damons), took place on Friday, 21 January at the Union High School AstroTurf. The clinic saw Sulette share her experience and advice with the young players while focussing on field and stick work skills, along with speed and conditioning to assist with the players' pre-season training!

Our u/16B and 2nd team hockey teams participated in the **Gill College Sports Day** in Somerset East on Saturday, 5 March, achieving fine results. The day saw the 2nd Team draw 1-1 with Victoria Girls' High School, beat Brandwag's 2nds 4 - 0 and draw 1-1 against the Burgersdorp 1st team. The u/16B's faced Hangklip and Templeton's 1st teams, losing to them 0-3 and 0-2, respectively.

Our 1st team hockey girls competed in the **SPAR Schoolgirls Hockey Challenge** at DSG Grahamstown on 6 March.

The opening match saw Union take on DSG 0-1, then VG 0-2 and Brangwag 4-0. Well done to Kendall Krige on winning the competition's 'Bravery Award' and Misha Newton on winning a Spar gift bag.

On Saturday, 12 March, our 1st hockey team travelled to Gqeberha to participate in an **Eastern Province trials** weekend.

Our team was drawn with some tough opposition, coming up against Collegiate 0-1, Pearson 0-1 and Brandwag 3-0, but this served to bring out the best in the girls, who went on to play very attractive hockey, setting them up for what promises to be an exciting season to come.

The **u/14s** participated in the u/14 EP trials held at DSG in Makhanda on Sunday, 13 March.

The girls played in an Invitational Festival Team, so they had to adjust as quickly as possible to new teammates. Congratulations to Leigh-Ann Murray, Mecoli Vorster and Mischa Newton, who played exceptionally well throughout the day.

Our u/16A hockey participated in the Hoërskool Pearson High School u/16 Hockey Festival from 18-19 March.

The 1st team hockey girls, participated in the Gregg Beling Hockey Festival hosted by Mark Taljaard of Tallies Sports from 18-20 March in East London. Results: vs St. Michaels of Bloemfontein 2-0, vs St Mary's DSG of Pretoria 1-0, vs Hoërskool Montana of Pretoria 2-0, vs Cambridge High of East London 2-0.

Rugby

Our U/13's and 1st XV participated in Hoër Volkskool's **Drieë Druk Aand** at the Botanics Sports Grounds.

On Thursday afternoon, 3 March, several of our rugby teams enjoyed an afternoon of friendly pre-season matches against **Asherville Secondary School**. The boys played the game with fierce enthusiasm and we extend our thanks to the Asherville players for their participation and to our boys and their coaches for, as always, making their school proud by giving it their best. Results: U/14's 62-0; U/15's 55-10; U/16's 22-3; 2nd XV 14-17.

Congratulations to the 1st XV on winning their encounter against **Andrew Rabie** 20 - 5 at the Gill College Sports Day in Somerset East on Saturday, 5 March.

On Saturday, 12 March, the school played its first full derby fixture of the season against Bloemfontein's **St. Andrew's School**. The 1st XV went down 23-26, the 2nd XV 5-12, the U/16's enjoyed a 30-5 win, the U/15's won their match 22-0, the U/14A's won 31-0, the U/13's won 12 - 10 and the U/11's lost 5 - 15.

On Thursday, 17 March, our teams encountered **Spandau Secondary School** in an inter-school fixture. The 3rd's won 20-15, 2nd's 10-3, U/16's 32-12, U/15's 27-5 and U/14's 66-0.

Our U/13A rugby team, participating in the Kirkwood Sports Day, defeated **Frans Conradie Primary** of Despatch 19 -15 on Saturday, 19 March. The 1st XV also prevailed, defeated Hoërskool Cilliers of Gqeberha 19-8.

At the **Andrew Rabie Sports Day** on Saturday, 19 March, the U/14's defeated the hosts 28-0, the U/15's won 19-0 against Hoërskool Cilliers, and the U/16's went down 10-11 to Hoërskool Despatch.



New Parents' Tea

All new school parents were invited to a New Parents' Tea on Tuesday 18 January where new families were welcomed to our schools. This was followed by short introductory meetings with Grade 5 and 8 parents, which were run efficiently by staff and were appreciated by parents.

The new edition of the *Karoo Family Favourites* recipe book has arrived in Graaff-Reinet and it is looking wonderful. Copies are available to purchase from the school at R200 each.



Digital Citizenship Week



screen smarts

Are you **parenting a digital native** in a world you didn't grow up in? Perhaps your son plays Fortnite or watches YouTube clips? Perhaps your daughter adores TikTok or Instagram? **If online predators freak you out**, and you are battling to manage your child's screen time, you have to attend this event!

On Thursday evening, 5 May, at 17:30, the School is hosting a parents' evening facilitated by Estee Cockcroft, a personal development, digital life skills & reputation management coach of Gqeberha-based Screen Smarts.

In an endeavour to improve the entire digital landscape of the Union and Graaff-Reinet community for our kids, the event will be **open to any and all Graaff-Reinet parents interested in attending.**

Topics that will be covered with parents include: A parent's role: Monitoring & Mentoring, Harmful content, Pornography & addiction, Online predators, Filtering software, Safe Gaming, Social Media, Sexting & Cyberbullying, setting boundaries & digital citizenship, Being a digital role model.

The evening forms part of a **Digital Citizenship Week** that will be held at the School from 3 to 6 May, where learners will be engaged in a 4-day long interactive, fun, learning experience, during which they will be coached in managing screen time, digital life skills, cyber safety and everything else a netizen needs to know to make smart choices in cyberspace. *(Please see the D6 Communicator for more information on this.)*

Speech Evenings

The Junior and Senior Speech Evening winners are as follows: Grade 8: Endinako Jadezweni; Grade 9: Erin Gedult; Grade 10: Sobuhle Njambali; Grade 11: Caitrin Spence; and Grade 12: Kendall Krige.

Interact

An Interact Social was held on Wednesday 16 March in the school hall. While the occasion was a fun-filled release of pent up energy after the first-term test series, it was also an opportunity for our Interactors to raise funds towards a worthy cause, the Graaff-Reinet SPCA.

SCA

Mr Andre Brink ministers to all the learners in Max Kroon and Herby Arnott Houses. We have received positive feedback from learners and parents and some beautiful testimonies of lives that are touched by these bible clubs.

Mr Brink also leads the Senior SCA at Arthur Kingwill House. It is concerning though that so few of our high school learners attend this wonderful opportunity for fellowship. We are thankful for the eight committed learners who attend weekly.

Music

Congratulations to Grade 12 learners Jamie Jaftha and Barbara McNaughton, who recently participated in the Rockschooll Classical Grade 7 Graded Examinations. Jamie was awarded 91% (Distinction) for her efforts, while Barbara achieved 83% (Merit).

Both learners have been playing piano for five to eight years and have extended their advanced level playing.

New Classrooms

We are pleased to announce that the School will soon begin construction of a three-classroom addition to the Middle School on the corner of Donkin and Caledon Street. Once completed, this exciting development will provide 179 square metres in additional classroom space. Construction is expected to begin soon and to be completed and ready for use at the start of the 2023 academic year. The new building will

connect to the current Middle School and will feature modern classrooms, covered patios on the front and side of the building and contemporary breakout spaces.

While the overall design of the new building will "fit in" with the existing historic setting, the classrooms will consist of innovative learning spaces that align with the pedagogical vision of the 21st century.

Think beautiful spaces that are light, airy, fitted with the latest technology and that make learners feel good to be at school.

Senior Rugby & Hockey Festival

After a two-year hiatus, we will be hosting the 33rd annual Senior Rugby and Hockey Festival from 25 to 28 March.

The festival, sponsored by Caltex Eastern Cape and Botha's Garage, will see 1st rugby teams and 1st hockey teams participating in a weekend of rugby and hockey action. Schools participating in the rugby, include Union High School, Stirling High School, Gill College, Cradock High School, Cambridge High School, Camps Bay High School, Winterberg Agricultural High School, Burgersdorp High School, Grey High, Asherville High, Kirkwood High School and Hoërskool Andrew Rabie High School.

The following hockey teams will take to the AstroTurf during the festival: Union High School, Hoër Volkskool Graaff-Reinet, Stirling High School, Nico Malan High School, Cambridge High School, Hoërskool Pearson High School, Clarendon High School, Stellenbosch High School, Dirkie Uys High School, Cradock High School, Victoria Girls' High School, Jim Fouché High School, Burgersdorp High School and Hoërskool Witteberg.

Traffic Conjestion in Caledon Street

On 25 January, I wrote to all parents/guardians requesting your co-operation with respect to considerate and appropriate parking in Caledon Street at the end of the school day whilst parents and public transport are collecting children from school.

We shifted the release time of Grades 5-7 to assist parents in alleviating congestion and illegal three-abreast parking, which causes dangerous road conditions and frustration.

Our interventions and appeals to you have not had the desired impact. Parents simply park as they please. What sort of example are these parents sending to their children? **Once again, we appeal to you to obey the rules of the road in the interests of our children's safety.**

Outdoor Classroom

Our learners returned to school this year with an enhanced educational locale - an outdoor classroom.

The idea was conceptualised by the SGB during 2021, and, thanks to a generous sponsor, was completed at the start of 2022.

This addition to our campus highlights the advantages of outdoor learning and access to nature, both known to increase learner enthusiasm and as being beneficial to social, emotional and physical health.

Located next to the Tony Burrell Union, the outdoor classroom features new flooring, elegant desks and an outdoor whiteboard on the side of the building to aid the teachers.

The classroom has already proven a hit among learners and staff alike and is being utilised by classes from both the high school and middle school on a daily basis.

Obituary

Past member of staff, Dr Oskar Prozesky, passed away recently and a memorial service led by Archdeacon Dr Mark Marais was held in the school hall on Saturday 12 February.

Hygiene

The lack of respect and cleanliness in our girls' bathroom has been addressed regularly with our girls this term. The senior ladies' staff addressed the girls again on Wednesday 23 March about etiquette and lady-like conduct.

AK House News

Mrs **Mandy Sparks** has commenced work as Senior Matron at Arthur Kingwill House, and is settling in well.

A **Hostel Prefects' Camp** was held in Nieu-Bethesda from 15-16 January, and was a great success.

Swimming News

On Wednesday evening, 9 February, the annual **Interhouse Gala** was held in perfect conditions. Daly House emerged victorious, with 490 points to Arnott's 476. There were events for swimmers from U/12 through to Open and it was wonderful to see so many swimmers participating. The open boys' and girls' events produced some exciting finishes which were lovely to watch. The 2022 matrics ended the gala off on a high note with a fun relay.

The annual **Interschools Swimming Gala** between the Union Schools and Laer and Hoër Volkskool was held on Wednesday, 16 February. An excellent performance by the swim stars of these two schools treated spectators to an exhilarating show of athleticism. The gala ran exceptionally smoothly, with close to 80 individual events and relays being held. Union's swimming squad trained very hard for this event and made the school so very proud with their performances and marvellous team spirit.

A total of 69 swimmers represented our schools at the annual **Karoo Gala** held at Hoër Volkskool on Tuesday, 22 February. Schools which attended included Gill, Cradock, Volkskool, Marlow as well as a group of home-schoolers.



As always, competition was fierce in all events - 104 in total - but Union's swimmers never gave in, giving their best in all their races. The day's climax saw all age groups racing in relays. It was an incredibly close competition and thoroughly enjoyable to watch as a spectator. We are very proud of all our swimmers who committed and gave their time to swim for their school.

Congratulations to the following swimmers who were selected to represent the Karoo team at the **Inter-districts Gala**, which was to take place on Wednesday, 2 March, where they were to compete against schools from the Amatola and Albany districts: Samantha Gilfillan, Adriaan van Jaarsveld, Kayla Norval, Gerda Clarke, Alissa Trollip, Zoë Mills, Owen Paxton, Tristan Hudson, and Callum Jacobs. Unfortunately, this gala, the culmination of the first term's swimming events, was postponed at the request of the other districts.

Eleven of our swimmers participated in the **98th annual River Mile** at the Sundays River Cannonville Slipway on 27 February. The results are as follows: Ben Lemke placed 7th in the Boys 13 & Under age group with his time of 22:49 minutes (53rd place overall); the 14 to 29 Years age group saw JJ Liebenberg place 45th, Max Price 48th and Dylan Petitt 51st; Mecoli Vorster and Rebecca Copeman placed 13th and 16th respectively; while the 14 to 29 Years age group saw Hannah Bodenstein and Kendall Krige crossing the finish line together, in what was their very last River Mile for Union. They claimed the 27th and 28th spot, respectively, in the 25th minute. Tyra Binney, Brigette Oelofsen and Alexandra Imrie finished shortly after, coming in 34th, 35th and 36th, respectively.

On Saturday, 12 March, seven swimmers participated in a **Level 1 Intra District Gala** at the Newton Park indoor swimming pool in Gqeberha. Many of the events had up to 10 heats of 8 swimmers participating, and our swimmers did well to place in the Top 3 positions in their respective age groups. Miley Burger placed second in the 50m Backstroke Girls 10 & Under; Gerda Clarke second in the 100m Backstroke Girls 11 Years; Zoë Mills third in the 50m Breaststroke Girls 11 Years; and Daniel Marais first in the 50m Backstroke Boys 14 Years, second in the 50m Freestyle Boys 14 Years and second in the 100m Freestyle Boys 14 Years. Our mixed relay team, consisting of Miley Burger, Zoë Mills, Connor Horn and Daniel Marais, placed second in the 200m Freestyle relay which made for an exciting finish to the day.

The following swimmers received ribbons for participation and ribbons for 1st, 2nd or 3rd place in their respective events: Miley Burger, Zoë Mills, Gerda Clarke, Brogan Koeberg, Jourdon Koeberg, Connor Horn and Daniel Marais.

Tennis News

On Wednesday afternoon, 9 February, our Top 4 Junior boys' and girls' tennis players competed against a visiting Gill Primary side. It was a wonderful afternoon for our players and we were very impressed by the sportsmanship and camaraderie shown by all those participating. Union won the fixture overall by 12 matches to 0.

CONGRATULATIONS TO the following tennis players on their inclusion in the Zone 2 Sarah Baartman District Teams:

u/12 Boys: John-Henry King, Owen Paxton, Brett Kenmuir, Ethan Raath, Triston Hudson, Aidan Ferreira

u/12 Girls: Mia Botha,

u/14 Girls: Tara Ferreira, Mischa Newton, Mecoli Vorster, Jourdan Koeberg,

u/16 Boys: Josh Neill, Angus McLaggan

u/16 Girls: Caytah-Leigh Koeberg, Charlize Vorster

u/19 Boys: Brent Hesselink

u/19 Girls: Marli Brummer



Congratulations to Caytah-Leigh Koeberg (Eastern Cape u/19 Girls) and Tara Ferreira (Eastern Cape Aloes u/15 Girls) on their selection to represent the Eastern Cape, in their respective age groups, at the National Schools' Week in Pretoria from 18 to 22 March.

Governing Body Matters

We extend our thanks to those parents who are willing to give so much of their time and energy in the service of this school and community.

Clothing Shop Hours

The School Clothing Shop, which is housed at the high school for parents' and learners' convenience, is open from Monday to Friday from 08.00 to 13.00.

In Conclusion

I wish all our learners and their families a peaceful and restful holiday. If you are going away, travel safely. I thank you for your continued support and the many letters of encouragement we receive as educators and as a school. We value your feedback, particularly when it is as a result of something well done.

Yours faithfully

MR W.E. PRINGLE
HEADMASTER

Important 2nd Term Dates

School re-opens: Tuesday, 5 April at 08:00. **Day 2.**

School times: Monday: 08:00 to 13:45

Tuesday - Friday: 07:05 to 13:30

Please note: If the first school day attached to a long weekend is not a Monday: 08:00 to 13:30.

After a public holiday - not attached to a weekend: 07:05 to 13:30. See Term Planner for Public Holidays

Summer Awards Special Assembly: Friday 8 April at 07:05

Winter Uniform:

Winter School Uniform will be compulsory from 3 May.

Report Collection and Parent Meeting: Thursday, 7 April at 17:00

Sassy Llama Digital Citizenship Workshop for Parents: Thursday, 5 May at 17:30

High School Musical Production: 26 and 27 May

Gr 5 to 12 Examinations:

- Grade 12 Common June Examination starts 30 May

- Common Tests/Examinations for all other grades start 30 May

End of Term 2 for Learners: Thursday, 23 June.



A bird's-eye view of Union High School's recent Senior Cricket Festival taken by Old Unionite, Ross Stanley.

"Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan, 'press on' has solved, and always will solve, the problems of the human race." – **Calvin Coolidge**
