



Union High School

Headmaster's Newsletter

Term 3 | September 2024



After much planning and anticipation, the Grade 10s set off on the 9th Annual Odyssey on Friday, 13 September. The objective of Odyssey is to place the Grade 10s for 5 days and 4 nights in true wilderness, where they have the opportunity to push themselves physically, learn more about themselves emotionally and engage with their peers socially in a challenging environment without the distractions of electronics or the pressures of everyday life.

Dear Parents

The third term is always busy and productive for our learners who engage in a wide variety of school activities.

I take this opportunity to thank you **for your ongoing support of the children and** and to appeal to all parents to meet their financial obligations to our school.

We cannot operate without school fees.

New School Bus

The School was recently blessed with the acquisition of a new 23-seater VW Crafter school bus. We extend our gratitude to the trustees of the UHS Development Trust for this purchase.

This valuable addition to our school transportation fleet will greatly enhance the commuting experience for our learners, staff and community alike.

Staff Matters

We recently had the privilege of paying tribute to long-serving staff members, **Mr Gavin Marlow, Mr Trevor Zali and Mr David (Neil) Meyer**, each of whom has dedicated a decade of his life to the school.

Additionally, much-loved junior school educator, **Mrs Louise Vorster**, and our diligent estate manager, Mr Donald Kingwill, were recognized for their exceptional commitment, having served the school for an impressive 25 years.

Mr André Human has joined the staff as our new Director of Rugby. Mr Human has dedicated the past 17 years to the sport of rugby, working as a professional full-time coach at various levels, both nationally and internationally.

We also welcome **Mr Albert Smit** who brings with him 19 years of experience teaching Mathematics. His extensive background and dedication to education have already begun to inspire and engage our junior learners, making maths an exciting and enjoyable subject.

News from Term 3

Academic Matters

Many of our learners have realised their academic potential and are committed to their academic journey, and we are grateful for this. However, there are many learners who do not fulfil their academic obligations, and the vast majority of demerits issued are for "Homework not done".

Your child's education is a partnership with the school, and preparation for tests and exams and the completion of assignments and daily tasks must be supervised at home by parents.

There are many learners who run the risk of not being promoted at the end of the year, and should your child fall into this category, it is time to take decisive action. Please supervise homework and study time, supervise online activity and cell phone use, encourage your children to read good books and to participate in healthy outdoor activity, whether at school or beyond.

No parent can claim to be uninformed of their child's academic performance, and we will not entertain such comments at the end of the year. We ask you to support our efforts by taking control of your children's after-school and weekend routines.

Please make a point of studying your child's report with care. Feel free to arrange to meet with educators should you have any queries. Our Grade 12's, in particular, have a busy time ahead if they are to do justice to their academic futures. We would like to urge parents to make every effort to assist and to encourage your Grade 12 sons and daughters to make full use of the time available to them.

We would like to congratulate learners who have achieved well during this term. At the same time, we must call on those who have not performed well, to make every effort to improve their marks during these last few weeks. This is the last chance for some of our learners to get their marks up to the required standard if they are to be promoted to the next grade. Parents are also urged to play a role in this. Please note that the reports will reflect whether or not your child is in danger of not being promoted – there is no reason at all for any parent to say, at the end of the year, that he or she was unaware of the fact that his/her child was not achieving the necessary standards.

Please encourage your children to co-operate with educators and to do their best. The more time teachers have to spend disciplining children; the less time they have available for positive teaching.

Please Note: Pass requirements for 2024 are identical to those that were applicable at the end of 2023. Pay particular attention to requirements pertaining to Gr 7-9: Mathematics (40%); to Languages (50% for English HL, 40% for Afrikaans FAL), of the remaining subjects 3 at level 3 (40%) and 2 at level 2 (30%).

It is obligatory to pass all subjects at the required levels otherwise a learner is NOT ready to proceed to the next grade. In Grades 10 – 12 a learner MUST achieve a minimum of 40% in three subjects of which English Home Language is one and 30% in two of the remaining subjects.

Please understand that these requirements are not at the discretion of the school. Should a learner not achieve the minimum standards, the learner will repeat the grade.

In the event of your child being absent from school for a formal test or examination, a valid doctor's certificate must be handed in at the office. Failure to do so will result in your child getting no mark for that specific paper.

Governing Body Matters

Our school is truly blessed to have parents of this calibre serving its needs and I extend my gratitude to those parents who give so willingly of their time in service of our school.

Parents' Annual General Meeting

All parents are informed that the Annual General Meeting, at which the 2025 budget will be presented, will be held in the Tony Burrell Union on **Monday, 11 November 2024 at 17:30.**

All parents are encouraged to attend this important occasion. Please regard this as official notification of this meeting.



Our Grade 7 entrepreneurs in action. (Story below.)

Academic Enrichment Activities

GRADE 7 MARKET DAY

Our Grade 7 learners put in a lot of extra effort to make their market day, which took place on Tuesday, 20 August, a huge success. Market Day involved creating an 'open market' atmosphere, where the entire school had an opportunity to purchase goods on sale from our budding Grade 7 entrepreneurs. Items on sale included food and drinks, crafts, toys and novelty items, along with some fun activities such as spin-the-wheel, a boba stall and the ever popular sponge-throwing station.

GRADE 10 ODYSSEY

The Grade 10 Class participated in this venture during the last week of the term. It was a five-day outdoor adventure where a variety of life and educational activities occurred. I thank all parents and friends of the school who have assisted in the realization of this project, and especially Mr and Mrs Langmead for their initiative and hard work.

TABLET TECHNOLOGY

The current Grade 7's will be working on tablets in 2025. Please find enclosed in this report envelope, a letter concerning which tablet is compatible with our system and is recommended. Please consult Mr Donovan Burger at Compu-Serve at 23 Church Street, opposite the old post office. His contact details are: 049 8910084/5 or csv@wam.co.za.

Participation in Sport

Participation in organised school sport has been an integral part of holistic education for centuries and is part of educating the whole person.

Organised sport raises the aspirations and improves the behaviour of young people, gives them a purpose and a sense of belonging.

Should your child not be committed to a sport, he or she is being alienated from a large part of the ethos of this school. I urge you to support us in ensuring that your child is fully involved.

As they say, idle hands are the devil's playthings.

Anne Beagley Junior Rugby & Hockey Festival

During the June Holiday, the Junior Sports Department hosted a successful 22nd annual Anne Beagley Junior Rugby and Hockey Festival sponsored by Astron Energy Eastern Cape and Botha's Garage, with many schools gathering in the name of sport.



Cricket

We congratulate Mr Njoloza and Mr Gouws who recently completed a Level 3 cricket coaching course.

The school hosted its first-ever social **6-A-SIDE** cricket tournament. We thank all the teams that participated, including our Old Boys and the various clubs from Graaff-Reinet who came out to support the day.

Our 1st XI attended the annual **Pearson High School Cricket Festival** in Gqeberha from 30 August-1 September. The 2024 edition saw 25 of the top cricket-playing schools in the province in action, including Union High School.

CAPE SCHOOLS CRICKET

The 1st XI attended the Cape Schools Cricket Festival hosted by Queen's College in Komani from 20-24 September.

Hockey

Maribel April made her mark at the 2024 Inter-Provincial Tournament (IPT) in Paarl recently where she represented the Eastern Province u/13B hockey team. In a thrilling final match against Eden, Maribel scored the winning goal, leading E.P. to a 1-0 victory over their opponents.

PIETIE COETZEE u/13 HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

Our u/13A hockey team had the privilege of participating in the annual Pietie Coetzee u/13 Hockey Tournament in Bloemfontein, ending the tournament in 6th place out of the ten competing teams.

Rugby

Congratulations to rugby players **Ryonn Naude, Dante Mills, Likhona Bulembu and Lwandile Dali** who were selected for the Karoo Sub Union u/12 rugby team. Further congratulations to Likhona who has been selected to represent the Eastern Province at the u/12 Southern Regional Rugby Tournament to be hosted in Riversdal.

This tournament forms part of the u/12 talent identification process in aid of identifying talent for the 2025 u/13 Craven Week side.

Interschools

Interschools was characterised by fierce competition, healthy rivalry, overwhelming support from our community and Old Unionites and a sense of belonging and happiness.

The weekend, a wonderful celebration of our School's 105th year was a happy occasion. The support from past pupils was overwhelming and their comments of support throughout the weekend were very welcome and encouraging.

I was often reminded during the weekend of the wonderful warmth and kindness of the people of the Karoo. As is always the case, there is no easily won Interschools between Union and Volkskool.



Tennis

Tara Ferreira and Caytah-Leigh Koeberg reached a remarkable milestone as they proudly earned their 50th cap for the school's tennis team. Their commitment to the sport have not only brought them personal success but have also significantly contributed to the legacy of tennis at Union.

Our junior boys and girls tennis players travelled to Cradock to compete in the 2024 Cradock Primary Spar Tennis Tournament.

Senior tennis players Vincent Clarke, Peter-Daniel Clegg, Tristan Hope, Richard Murray, Samantha Charles, Misha Newton, Cayla Newton, Nadine Murray and Tara Ferreira travelled to Middelburg to participate in the annual Marco Wasserman tennis tournament held from 23-24 August.

Tri The Karoo

The 2024 edition of Tri the Karoo takes place on Saturday, 12 October on our school campus; this event promises to be a fantastic weekend full of fun, competition and community spirit.

The festivities begin on Friday evening at 17.00 with a fun 5km Colour Run.

This event is the perfect way to kick off an exciting weekend.

The start and finishing point will be located at the School, making it accessible to everyone. Following the Colour Run, join us for a delicious Steak Evening hosted by the Old Unionite Association at the Tony Burrell Union clubhouse.

Bright and early on Saturday the action kicks off with four exciting races:

- **Olympic Event:** 1.5km Swim | 40km Cycle | 10km Run
- **Sprint Event:** 750m Swim | 20km Cycle | 5km Run
- **Kids Event:** 50/100m Swim | 4km Cycle | 1km Run
- **Tri Hootenanny:** 50/100m Swim | 4km Cycle | 1km Run

While the athletes are competing, the Union Schools' campus will transform into a lively hub featuring the Karoo Market's Spring Market.

With a variety of stalls, spectators will have plenty to explore and enjoy throughout the day.

For all the details you need to plan your weekend, visit the website: <https://trithekaroo.co.za/> You can also sign up directly here: <https://trithekaroo.co.za/enter-online/>



Cultural Matters

ART

Congratulations to Joy Merifield, in Grade 12, and Lisa McEwan, in Grade 5, on claiming the 2nd places in the Karoo Winter Wool Festival's OVK Art Competition's high school and primary school categories, respectively.

Their artistic talent has earned them a well-deserved prize of R5 000 each and an additional R5 000 each for the school.

On Monday afternoon, 26 August, the Art Club enjoyed a creative outing at the Jan Rupert Art Centre, participating in an enriching workshop on Abstract Expression hosted by the Rupert Foundation.

CHESS

The Schools' dedicated chess teachers organised an engaging Chess Boot Camp in the Tony Burrell Union, an event which brought together the junior and senior chess players, providing them with an excellent opportunity to deepen their understanding of the game. Throughout the boot camp, participants delved into various chess strategies and endgame techniques, guided by experienced instructors who shared their insights and expertise.

DANCE

Several dancers - affiliated to Chinelle School of Dancing - participating in the prestigious Nelson Mandela Bay Dance Festival in Gqeberha from 29-31 August. Well done to Melissa Marais, Nieke van Jaarsveld, Kate Scott, Micha Murray and Tiyanah Abader.

JUNIOR SPEECH COMPETITION

Our primary department held its annual speech competition for learners in Grades 5 to 7.

In the **GRADE 5** category, congratulations are in order for Taylor Jacobs, who triumphed with the topic "Tennis." Joint runners-up Layla Ott, who spoke about "My Life at School," and Kate Scott, whose topic was "Piano," also delivered outstanding performances.

Moving on to **GRADE 6**, Kungawo Nako emerged as the winner with a heartfelt speech on "My Mother," while Lilly Hunter impressed the judges with her presentation on "My Favourite Sport," earning her the runner-up position.

The **GRADE 7** category saw Clea Clark take the top spot with her insightful discussion on "Art," while Chanté Bezuidenhout secured the runner-up title with her engaging speech on "Music."

CAMDEBOO EISTEDDFOD

The vision of our Cultural Department is to provide a platform to assess the disciplines of music, art and drama in our community.

This year's Camdeboo Eisteddfod was an astonishing celebration of exactly that. From 14-16 August, the Eisteddfod showcased the wonderful talent and skills of the Karoo children, and was a resounding success for the Cultural Department.

MUSIC

Congratulations to senior music students, Liso Sobantu and Joy Merifield for their outstanding performances in the 2024 SASMT Annual Music Competition held in Gqeberha from 23-24 August.

Liso competed in the High School Music Grade 4 - 6 categories with a captivating rendition of "*Folia*" by A. Scarlatti. Joy took the stage in the High School Music Grade 7 and up category, impressing the audience with her performance of "*La Plus Que Lente*" by C. Debussy.

Both learners were evaluated by the esteemed Dr. Mariechen Meyer, a dedicated professional double bassist.

Grade 5 learners, Mia Labuscagne and Carlie George, recently completed their very first Classical Debut piano exam with RSL. *Both talented musicians have passed with flying colours, earning a Distinction - Mia with an impressive 93% and Carlie close behind at 91%.*

Grounds & Buildings

We are pleased that the installation of closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras in all our junior school classrooms and the quad area is complete. This initiative represents a crucial step in our ongoing efforts to enhance the safety and security of our campus.



General Matters

GRADE 7 GIRLS' TEA

Grade 7 class teachers, Mrs Rose-Innes and Ms Matthews, hosted a delightful tea for the young Grade 7 ladies at the charming Coldstream Restaurant. The setting was perfect for an afternoon of tea and treats, where the conversation was both lively and enlightening.

Special mention must be made of the Grade 7 girls who assisted with the arrangements - well done to Micha Murray, Chanté Bezuidenhout, Rachel Wenham, Abonani Matushe, Liso Mamase, Asanele Mayekiso, Halyn Wessels, Erinn Anderson and Kate Charles.

Additionally, we are immensely grateful to our guest speaker, Mrs Elaine Stanley, whose valuable speech on realizing one's self-worth and loving oneself left a lasting impact on everyone present.

REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL OF LEARNERS

On Thursday, 17 July, Representative Council for Learners (RCL) embodied Mandela's wisdom by hosting an impactful event at their school hall. This gathering included guests from Hoër Volkskool, Spandau Secondary School, Nqweba Secondary School and Karel du Toit Hoërskool.

The theme for this year's 67-minute programme was "Drug Abuse and Its Impact on Education." The insightful and empowering presentations aimed to equip those present with the knowledge and tools to combat drug abuse, thereby enhancing educational programmes in their schools.

UNIFORM

All learners are to attend school in summer uniform in Term 4 and must bring their kit for P.T. in their kitbags. Lockers are available to learners in order to safeguard their kitbags and belongings.

WINTER SPORTS AND CULTURE AWARDS ASSEMBLY

The annual Assembly was held on Monday 19 August. The assembly served to recognise learners' achievements and service in winter sports as well as for their contributions to the school's cultural program.

The special event also saw the new school prefects inducted.

Prefect Camp

Our newly elected prefects for 2024/25 attended their prefect camp from 29 September to 1 October. This year's camp was held at Leaders for Life near Addo. The prefects were accompanied by Mrs Read and Mr Sparrius, and spent the weekend doing fun-filled activities geared towards fostering the development of key skills such as confidence, self-belief, communication and team spirit.

2024/25 School Prefects

The prefect body, in alphabetical order, consists of: Muhammad Ahmed, Xavier Barlow, Farronique Booysen, Tara Ferreira, Erin Gedult, Trystan Hulleman, Sarah Jacobs, Shaakir Kazi, Kyle Liebenberg, Daniel Marais, Kenza Neill, Milano Pongoma, Ndodana Speelman, Aaminah Steele and Uyintando Ziswana.

We would also like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the outgoing prefects. Your immense contributions, unwavering commitment and remarkable leadership have left an indelible mark on Union High School.

You have been instrumental in guiding and inspiring your peers, and we commend you for your service.



My School Card

MySchool raises over R1.7 million every month for schools and charities. Union High has been amongst the top-earning schools in the Eastern Cape thanks to your support. **I would like to urge you to register for a MySchool card.**

The card does not cost you anything and can be accessed on-line at www.myschool.co.za
The download is very quick and very easy. Once you have the card you can swipe it at various shops – Woolworths, Waltons, Supa Quick, Engen, Reggies and others. The school will get between 0.25% and 5% of the value of your purchase. Once again, at no extra cost to you – this is paid by the business involved. May I also ask that, if you have a Woolworths account card, you ask them to link it to Union High School on MySchools. I would like to encourage you do make this little effort as it is a very painless (and cost free) way for you to assist our school fundraising efforts. You would also do well to encourage others (friends, uncles, aunts, etc.) to do the same – the more people we have involved, the more meaningful the fundraising will be.

UHS Development Trust

We are delighted to announce and warmly welcome Mrs Wilmari Spence as the new chairperson of the UHS Development Trust.

Mrs Spence is a respected member of our school community, having served three terms on the school's Governing Body, Mrs Spence has shown unwavering dedication to the development of the Union Schools. As Mrs Spence steps into this new role, we look forward to her vision and guidance in further enhancing the UHS Development Trust.

Together with the support of our community, we are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead.



Clothing Shop Hours

The e-mail address for Mrs Clegg in the Clothing Shop is clothing@unionschools.co.za
The opening times for the shop are from 08:00 to 13:00 Mondays to Fridays.



Important 4th Term Dates

School re-opens: Tuesday 1 October @ 07:05.

Summer uniform is compulsory from the start of the term.

Summer school times: Mon – Fri: 07:05 – 13:30.

A-10 Dinner: Thursday, 3 October @ 18:00 in the UPS Dome.

Grade 12 OUA Induction: Monday, 7 October @ 13:30 in the Tony Burrell Union.

Junior Prizegiving: Thursday, 10 October @ 09:00 in the School Hall.

Senior Prizegiving: Thursday, 10 October @ 18:30 in the School Hall.

Valedictory: Friday, 11 October @ 11:30 in the School Hall.

Gr 12 NSC Examinations start: Monday, 21 October.

Gr 10 and 11 Examinations start: Monday, 28 October.

Gr 8 and 9 Examinations start: Monday, 4 November.

Gr 5 to 7 Examinations start: Monday, 11 November.

Annual General Meeting: Monday, 11 November @ 17:30 in the Tony Burrell Union.

Report collection: Details for report collection at the end of the year will be communicated via SMS and social media.

In Conclusion

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.

MR W.E. PRINGLE
HEADMASTER



In a thrilling chapter of Union's storied history, the 1st team hockey girls clinched a narrow yet glorious victory over Volkskool with a score of 1 - 0 during the **INTERSCHOOLS 2024** encounter.

Congratulations to our champions!

"Finish Strong. Two words. One powerful philosophy!" — **Gary Ryan Blair**
