



BONITA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education

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NEWS RELEASE

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Bonita Unified's 54th Annual Smudge Pot Celebrates Community, First Responders in Honor of 9/11

SAN DIMAS/LA VERNE – Bonita Unified students honored first responders and remembered those affected by the Sept. 11 attacks during the 54th annual Smudge Pot rivalry game, which opened with a pregame ceremony and moment of silence on the 25th anniversary.

The Sept. 11 matchup at Mt. San Antonio College's Hilmer Lodge Stadium brought Bonita and San Dimas high schools together for an evening of community and remembrance. For students whose parents serve as first responders, the tribute carried a personal connection.

"It's really nice to celebrate all the people who are helping others and everyone who is in need," said San Dimas High School senior Mia Ayon, a dance team member whose father is a police officer. "It's a really special game to remember everyone who was affected by 9/11 and all the people who help out."

School colors filled the stands, with several students wearing red, white and blue in recognition of the anniversary. Bonita's football players honored the occasion with American flag designs clad onto their helmet logos.

Bonita High School football player and senior Ryder Grosenbach said watching his father serve as a firefighter has influenced the effort he and his brother put into school.

"My dad being a first responder was very motivational for us because we want to be firefighters too, just like him," Ryder said. "A lot of prayers still go out to those families. It's a very emotional day. It's why we take it very seriously."

Bonita High School earned a 28-16 victory, extending its Smudge Pot winning streak to eight games and improving their record to 4-0 while San Dimas High finished the night 3-1.

"The Smudge Pot gives our students a chance to celebrate their schools and the community they share," Bonita Unified Superintendent Matt Wien said. "We are proud to see students from both campuses honor our first responders and keep the families affected by Sept. 11 in their thoughts as they carry on this longstanding tradition."

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PHOTO CAPTIONS

BUSD_SMUDGEPOT1: Bonita High School football players celebrate with the Smudge Pot trophy after defeating San Dimas High School 28-16 on Sept. 11 at Mt. San Antonio College. The victory marked the Bearcats' eighth consecutive win in the annual rivalry game.

BUSD_SMUDGEPOT2: San Dimas High School band members bring school spirit to the 54th annual Smudge Pot rivalry game on Sept. 11 at Mt. San Antonio College. The evening included a pregame ceremony and moment of silence honoring first responders on the 25th anniversary of 9/11.

BUSD_SMUDGEPOT3: San Dimas High School Associated Student Body members show their Saints pride during the 54th annual Smudge Pot rivalry game on Sept. 11 at Mt. San Antonio College.

BUSD_SMUDGEPOT4: Cheerleaders from Bonita and San Dimas high schools show their school spirit during the 54th annual Smudge Pot rivalry game on Sept. 11 at Mt. San Antonio College.

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