



## Year 11 ASDAN Community Linking - Lindal & Marton

### Library News



The 2008 Spellbinding Book Award, judged by students across Cumbria, has got off to a flying start. The reading group recently enjoyed a lively first meeting in the Library, discussing the books read so far

and playing charades using their titles! We are looking forward to further meetings and plan to get together with groups from other nearby schools. In the meantime readers can review and discuss the books on a special blog. The final vote takes place in June, when representatives from all participating schools will also meet an author.

The Library marked National Storytelling Week with a competition inviting students to practice their storytelling skills using drawing rather than writing as the main focus.

Graphic novels are very popular in the Library and we received wonderful



ly imaginative entries in the form of comic strips. Rebecca in Year 9 won first prize for her stunning design.

We celebrated World Book Day on 6th March with a Library quiz and a competition to match the teacher to their favourite book. Suffice to say the fan of The Very Hungry Caterpillar does have young children! Students received £1 book tokens that can be used at bookshops or at the Library's book fair later this month.

Local author Gareth Thompson returned to the School to talk about his latest book Sunshine to the Sunless on 17th March. There was a chance for students to ask him questions and to buy a discounted, signed copy of his book.

UVHS Librarians.

Visit the UVHS website for up to date news:

<http://www.ulverstonvictoria.cumbria.sch.uk/>



Year 11 ASDAN continue the development of the Outdoor Classroom at Lindal. Here they are carrying out basic maintenance and general upkeep of the garden areas.

Throughout this link the UVHS students have been responsible for the planting and development of all areas including the building of a New Zealand Composter that helps break down any organic

matter which is then recycled and placed back into the planting areas as a mulch providing essential nutrients to the plants.

Thank you to all the Year 11 ASDAN students for their hard work and diligence.

### Brewery Schools Dance Platform in Kendal

On the 19th March 12 students studying either GCSE or A-Level dance are performing at the Dance Platform. Schools come from all over the country to perform in a professional theatre to an audience of 300.

This is UVHS's 4th year at the platform and we have gained a reputation for getting standing ovations for our dancers.

This year's piece is titled 'Danger on the street' and the dancers are; Siledi, Alex, Lewis, Shaun, Thomas, Jess, Sophie,



### Languages Activities

31 Year 8 students and 9 Sixth Formers taking part in new intensive language week in Normandy run by French animateurs involving all activities in French (hope they get the ingredients right for the bread-making).

Sixth Form students will be getting vital speaking practice in a mock exam, visiting the courts and a fire station. Sun 2nd- Sat 8th March

German school links are flourishing with regular correspondence between Year 8 and a school in Bad Schussenried and between Year 10 and our link school in Bollendorf. Year 10 have the added anticipation of meeting their correspondents in September when they visit Germany.

### Intermediate Maths Challenge Success

We have ever increasing numbers of our bright young mathematicians achieving awards in the nationally run United Kingdom Mathematics Trust competition.

In particular we have four Year 10 boys and two Year 9 girls all winning Gold awards and four of these are through to the next round, strangely called the European Kangaroo, and will compete against young people from 26 countries.

## The Marines Are Coming!

UVHS will again be visited by The Band Service of Her Majesty's Royal Marines on the weekend of the 11th and 12th April. UVHS is the only school to be a partner with the Band Service and this will be the fourth year that they have visited Ulverston in as many years - a 'first' for any organisation and an unprecedented accolade for the Music Department.



On Friday 11th April the Band will be joined for lunch by 24 of our senior musicians, renewing old acquaintances

and making new ones; then an afternoon workshop in the Main Hall at UVHS going over music for the next day's concert. In the evening we are holding a social event at The Coot (Urswick) which will feature performances from the UVHS Senior Swing Band and the Royal Marines Dance Band - tickets are £3 each, available from the Music Department and must be purchased in advance.

On Saturday afternoon, our senior musicians will again join the Royal Marines, but this time at the Coronation Hall for a sound check and rehearsal. Then the Big Event!

At 7.30pm there will be a joint concert in the Coronation Hall. UVHS Wind Band will perform the first 35 minutes, presenting a mixed programme of music, some of which are new to their repertoire and being 'debuted' prior to the Summer Tour to Paris. After an interval, the Royal Marines will play a 30 minute set on their own, showing off their skills in a wide variety of styles. After a short break our senior musicians will join the Marines on stage for a 45 minute 'massed band' set which promises to be a spectacular finale to the concert.

This is an event that has always been a sell-out and the few remaining tickets are available from the Coronation Hall Box Office at a

## Governors Report

Like you when the Ofsted verdict was delivered we were disappointed. We are proud of our school and we want it to be the best.



However you must rest assured that everything possible is being done by everyone connected with UVHS with the support of the LA to rectify the situation.

We know, as a Board of Governors, that our clear duty is to offer the Acting Head our support and guidance in his role at UVHS.

The recent LA monitoring visit was really encouraging and all the governors and the Senior Leadership Team are determined to support the staff in taking the school out of "Special Measures" as quickly as possible. There is a real desire to improve and to build on the good practice that is already here.

We hope you enjoy the newsletter and it will be the first of a

## Oxbridge Students

4 sixth form students have been offered places at Oxford/Cambridge University for September 2008:

Sarah (English), Katherine (Philosophy), Calum (Engineering) and Jonathan (Mathematics and Computing). Well Done!

## Mr Fay writes...

I thought I would use this newsletter to let you know something about me and my philosophy for a successful school. I hope you will enjoy the newsletter and be able to see the progress we are already making in taking this school out of "Special Measures" and restoring it to where it should be as one of the best schools in the county!

I have been a teacher for 28 years and despite my claims to the contrary my grey hair is real and not the result of some fashionable tint!

I have had experience in pastoral care throughout my career at Thorncliffe and Dowdales Schools and I have also been a Head, of a very successful, English Department.

For the last 18 years I have been Deputy Headteacher at Dowdales School where I have been fortunate to work with an inspirational Headteacher and a

brilliant leadership team; as well as very committed staff, student and parental bodies. As you will probably know, Dowdales recently achieved "Outstanding" in all aspects from Ofsted.

I decided to come to Ulverston Victoria High School because I believe that I can help start the journey for it, too, to become an "Outstanding School" and not just to help it come out of "Special Measures". The potential here is vast but then I am not telling you something you do not already know.

I believe that all students should be valued whether they are the most able or the least and that we should strive to enable every child to aim for his or her feeling of self worth.

As such I strive for the highest standards in school life and I am very much a tough carer. I believe that all students deserve to be taught in a stimulating, well ordered, caring environment which has a sense of collective purpose. Sometimes that will mean that I will have to make tough decisions for the benefit of the whole student body. I suppose I would want my teaching epitaph to be he was "firm but fair". As such I am very keen on achieving the highest standards in the basics of school life, such as school uniform, which were once described to me as the "little bricks" that form the structure of a successful school.

Of course you made one of the most important decisions of your life in that you entrusted your child to Ulverston Victoria High School. I hope the events of the last few months have not shaken your faith in that decision and I will do everything I can to convince you that, despite "Special Measures" your decision was correct.

Indeed I have been asked what parents can do to help. We have already had a tremendous response to our Parents' Advisory Group and we may soon have to close the roll. Yet not everyone can give that degree of time or would feel comfortable contributing to such a group. Therefore all parents can help by doing the traditional things that good parents have always done. Make sure your child attends school on time and wears the correct school uniform. Carry out regular assessments of your child's homework and let us know your feelings (I note that homework is a concern among many parents). Encourage your son or daughter to take a full part in school life in all aspects and support the school's standards in terms of behaviour. I would like all parents to be "Victoria Improvement Partners". On reflection that makes you V.I.P's and you certainly fulfil that role.

Denis Fay  
Acting Headteacher



## Parental survey

Thank you to all parents who returned the survey at the end of the Autumn term. We are very keen to improve the communication between home and school and seeking the views of parents and acting on those views will be crucial in moving the school's improvement agenda forward.

Parents identified a number of key areas for improvement and these areas have been included in our school action plan. The main points for development fell into three main categories. These were:

- Home-school relationship  
The need to improve the quality and frequency of how the school communicates with parents.
- The learning experience  
Ensuring that teaching engages all our learners and allows them to fulfil and exceed their potential.
- Student focus and behaviour  
Ensuring that all our students behave in an appropriate manner and allow effective learning to take place.

The survey revealed that the vast majority of our students are happy in the school and they enjoy their learning experience here. We intend to build on this principal and in partnership with parents continue to drive standards upwards.

## Calum competition win



Year 13 student at Ulverston Victoria High School, Calum, has triumphed in a prestigious mathematics competition open to anyone in the North West of England. The "Open Challenge" event is run by the Liverpool Mathematical Society and regularly attracts entries from gifted mathematicians who enjoy solving fiendish problems and who can communicate complex ideas clearly. Many of the winners go

on to study maths at Oxford or Cambridge and indeed Calum already has the offer of a place at Keble College, Oxford.

Calum, who lives in Elterwater, was delighted with his exceptionally high score of 43 out of 45. He is however no stranger to success, having this year achieved a Gold award in the United Kingdom Mathematics Trust national competition and progressed to the British Mathematical Olympiad, the preliminary round for choosing a team to represent the country in maths competitions abroad.



The student gets real hands on experience in the life of a fire-fighter and includes doing a home visit so they can become even more aware of health and safety in the home and how to use a smoke alarm properly.

The also learn how the fire service has to deal with RTC's (Road traffic collisions) and shown powerful images of true life incidents which the students then assess as part of the course leading to a simulation where the students using the cutting gear under supervision get to cut a real car and

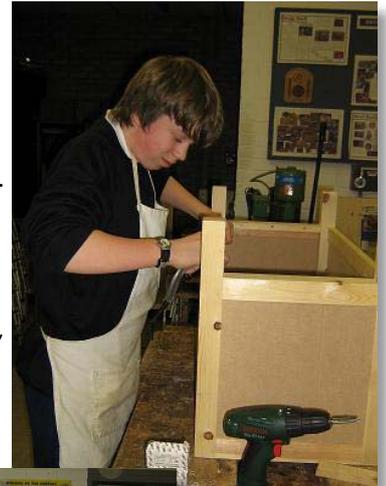
rescue the casualty inside, also practising their first aid skills at the same time.

The retained fire fighters at Ulverston all take an active lead in the successful training of the students and take extreme pride in helping the students develop in both confidence and awareness of exactly what they do for the community in more ways than they originally realised. This link is a major collaboration between UVHS and Cumbria Fire Service which is gratefully supported by Brian Woods and Lorraine Thompson of the Key Stage 4 Engagement Programme. A big thank you to all concerned and to the students and fire-fighters who work so hard to reap the rewards that this offers. Well done.

## Resistant Materials extended skills project

Year 11 students have been busy participating in a series of after school sessions to improve their practical skills in Resistant Materials. The group of 22 reinforced their knowledge and skills by manufacturing a small wooden storage chest using up-to-date industrial construction techniques. The sessions started in November and finished in February.

With a great deal of hard work, enthusiasm and skill, each student was able to produce a useful storage chest. Some students have



used their cabinet to show potential employers what they are capable of, whilst others are keeping their sporting equipment and workshop tools safe.

There will be an opportunity in the summer term for other year

## Year 10 Operation Phoenix rises again.

Year 10 Asdan youth award students have once again been involved in Operation Phoenix, working alongside Ulverston fire brigade the students have been getting an insight in to the role of a fire-fighter.

The students have been involved in team building skills and setting the rules and regulations whilst at the fire station, which allows them the ownership of the course.

During the 12 weeks the students learn first aid, team working skills, breathing apparatus and basic hose drills, all of which culminate in a pass off parade and award



## Mexico Link News

We are delighted to be able to welcome teachers and students from our linking school Secundaria Tecnica 44 Francisco Villa in Mexico City to Ulverston Victoria High this July. This is as part of our Mexican Linking project which has been developing over the past 7 years.



The July visit is the return leg following our visit to Mexico in October/November 2007, when 10 students from UVHS and four students from Sandside Lodge School stayed with Mexican families and explored issues of Human Rights, Citizenship and Sustainability together. We were able to travel with Alan Fitzgerald a local Musician who has brought a new dimension to the project this year.

The link has always had a strong citizenship and human rights focus. On this, the third visit for Mexican teachers and students to England, we plan a range of activities to show much of England's wide cultural and historical diversity. We will attend a town council meeting here in Ulverston and hope to visit various local significant religious sites such as Swarthmoor Hall and Conishead Priory. We have gained kind support from Ulverston Town Council and our Mayor Brenda Marr has offered to arrange a tour of our town hall. It is fantastic that on this visit we have the community so involved.

As well as showing our local area, the Lake District and surrounding areas, we also hope to give a trip to London and tour the Houses of Parliament and also visit the Regents Park Mosque in London where we hope to meet students from Bloomsbury High in London, a Muslim school with whom we are also developing a link.

While our Mexican friends are here we like to host them in a good English style! While we were in Mexico we experienced a wonderful welcome and we hope to be able to do the same when they are here. We need to boost our funds and we are doing various events to support this. As well as a bag pack at Booths supermarket on Easter



## Girls Rugby Success

Girls rugby as a new sport has made huge strides this school year with a large number of girls from all years training on a Tuesday night immediately after school..



As a result of this training and the link with Furness Rugby Club, a number of UVHS girls have been selected for the North West of

England squad. We had a number of our girls representing the North West in the fixture against the East Midlands. Claire and Emma Yr 10 were selected at U15, whilst Natalie and Sarah Yr 11 have been selected for the U18's squad. Hazel, Faye, Jemma and Rebecca have also impressed and selection is assured.

To be selected for these fixtures the players have attended a number of trials where they were assessed by the Regional Coaching Team. In the U15's there were a record number of applicants for places with players from clubs and schools from Lancashire, Cheshire and Cumbria amongst others. The calibre of the players was very high and the coaches had some hard decisions to make. Against such odds our duo of Emma and Claire have done very well to be selected when their own experience is so limited.

Unfortunately some of the UVHS girls were unavailable for the East Midlands fixture due to prior commitments.. The coaching team are looking to re-assess these players at a later date for a tournament in March. There is every chance that we may have some more good news to celebrate.

In addition to their training, seven of the girls have attended the "Rugby First" coaching course and have qualified on the first step as coaches in Rugby.

Well done, girls!

## Rotary Young Chef's competition

Year 9 student Matthew headed for the kitchen once again last weekend as he pursued his dream in the Rotary Young Chef's competition.

His imaginative menu of delicious Salt-Marsh Lamb Kebabs had already triumphed in Keswick the previous week to earn him the title of Cumbrian Young Chef of the Year 2008. He now progressed to the North-West Regional Final, held on Sunday 2nd March in Winsford, Cheshire. Matthew and the other six finalists were praised by the adjudicator as "the best chefs at this age-group that I have ever judged." Although Matthew did not gain first place, he did not come home empty handed, having won



## A Level Music Recitals

UVHS Music students will be performing their final recitals on the following dates in the Main Hall.

These recitals are worth 30% of the A2 grade and are a chance for those students who have opted for the recital option (instead of presenting a 7 minute portfolio of compositions) to show off their performance skills.

Tuesday 15th, 22nd & 29th April from 7pm - finish between 8.30pm and 9pm

To keep up with all the Music Departments events, log onto the school website and click onto the calendar.

## Ofsted Criteria

**Outstanding:** Almost all learners make considerably better progress than might be expected, as a result of the very good teaching.



**Good:** Most learners make good progress because of the good teaching they receive.

**Satisfactory:** Most learners make at least satisfactory progress and no major group fails to do so.

**Not adequate:** Most learners, or a significant specific minority of learners, make less than satisfactory progress, whether this is due to unsatisfactory teaching or the impact of bad behaviour.

### Lesson observation:

Following the Ofsted judgment regarding teaching and learning we have worked closely with the LA to ensure we understand the Ofsted criteria and to meet the required standard.

Lesson observations have been a key focus for us over the last few months and the statistics below show that we are moving in the right direction. We are not content with satisfactory, our aim is to be at least good if not outstanding and we will pursue this rigorously over the coming weeks and months.

| Lesson Observation | Not Adequate | Satisfactory | Good | Outstanding |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|------|-------------|
| LA Review          | 6%           | 31%          | 60%  | 3%          |
| In-house round 1   | 7%           | 32%          | 57%  | 4%          |
| In-house round 2   | 0%           | 14%          | 58%  | 28%         |

### Continuous Professional Development:

UVHS teachers and support staff are committed to learning from and with each other. The two whole school twilight sessions in February and March were an excellent example of this. Our focus is very much on learning and teaching and ensuring our learners receive the quality learning and teaching they deserve.

## Joint Project between UVHS and Sandside Lodge Special School

Friday 7th March 2008 saw a fantastic joint performance between students from UVHS and students from Sandside Lodge Special School in Ulverston. The project was inspired by a visit to Mexico undertaken this year by ten UVHS students and four from Sandside.



The performance traced the history of Mexico from its Aztec beginnings to the rise of the modern state and included Drama, Dance and original

music and songs written in workshops led by Alan Fitzgerald - the professional musician. The show was a multi-media experience.

More than 100 parents and friends attended the performance - the culmination of weeks of joint workshops. Speeches of thanks were given by the Headteachers of both schools and the staff involved (Barbara Spence and Colynne Hicks). We all look forward to our next collaboration!



## Goodbye Mrs Leece

The school bids a sad farewell to Mrs Leece our Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).

Mrs Leece joined the staff at UVHS in 1974 as a teacher of Physical Education leaving us in 1983 to raise her family. She returned in 1989 and worked as a Special Needs and English teacher. Since 2004 she has worked tirelessly as the SENCO to gain the best educational outcomes for students with additional learning needs. She has led a large team of Learning Support Assistants who take their lead from her in the caring and highly professional manner in which they support our students.

Many students and parents will be immensely grateful for the difference she has made to young people's lives. Mrs Leece's husband is retiring and so she is joining him as they have plans to travel. We will miss her but are sure you will join us in wishing her well.

## Ulverston Victoria Climbs the Alps

National results show that our Sixth Form is significantly within the top 30% of all Sixth Forms in the country. This measure is known as Alps!

Indeed we were told that our performance in English has been so consistently outstanding in all areas that it could be unique! There are also strong performances in other subjects. Well done to all the students and staff who have contributed to this success.



## Congratulations!

Well done to all the hundreds of students who wear their school uniforms with pride! You look extremely smart and business like.

It is my duty to support you by asking those who do not to make sure that they are in proper school uniform after Easter and that their appearance meets the school standards in relationship to jewellery etc.

