



BONITA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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NEWS RELEASE

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Bonita Unified's 53rd Smudge Pot Game Unites Generations of Students in Display of Friendly Rivalry, School Spirit

SAN DIMAS/LA VERNE – For more than half a century, the Smudge Pot has been more than just a football game in Bonita Unified – it has been a showcase of community pride, student talent, and family tradition. On Sept. 13, that legacy continued as Bonita and San Dimas high schools brought their rivalry to Mt. San Antonio College (Mt. SAC) for the 53rd annual matchup.

This year marked the first time the storied contest was played at Mt. SAC's Hilmer Lodge Stadium, where Bonita High secured its seventh consecutive Smudge Pot victory with a 28-14 win.

Beyond the scoreboard, the annual Smudge Pot tradition has long been a celebration of the entire Bonita Unified community, District students' talents in athletics and the arts. Students on both sidelines kept the energy high throughout the game; San Dimas High and Bonita High Associated Student Body (ASB) leaders led their sections in chants, while cheer and dance teams from both schools performed.

The Bonita High Marching Bearcats and color guard performed a dynamic rendition of David Bowie's "Space Oddity," while the San Dimas High cheer squad energized the crowd by performing a mix of pop hits from artists including Chappell Roan, Katy Perry, Taylor Swift, and Chelley.

For many, the Smudge Pot represents more than competition; it is a family tradition passed down through generations. San Dimas High School senior football player Joseph Zamorano carried on a legacy that began when his father played in the 2006 game.

"The Smudge Pot means a lot to my family, we have all gone to San Dimas, and now it's my turn," Zamorano said. "It's my last year playing and I just want to bring it home by giving my best effort on the field."

On the Bonita High sideline, senior cheerleader Madison Scranton reflected on continuing a family legacy that began with her father, who competed for Bonita in 1995.

MORE



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"For me, the Smudge Pot is about carrying on the tradition of being bold in our spirit and taking heart in everything we do," Scranton said. "My dad is proud to see me continue something we are both passionate about – being loud, confident, and giving it my all."

This year, Bonita was led by Jacob Maddox, who ran for 76 yards, scored a touchdown, and added seven tackles on defense. Sebastian Vasquez also rushed for 103 yards and a score. San Dimas fought back with key contributions from Jacob Gallegos, who caught a 36-yard touchdown pass from Brandon Meredith and added 77 rushing yards, and Liam Loyola, whose 39-yard interception return got the Saints on the scoreboard first in the game.

"Smudge Pot is more than just a football game," Bonita Unified Superintendent Matt Wien said. "It's an opportunity for our students, families, and community members to come together, celebrate our shared history, and show pride in our schools. Seeing the energy, talent, and dedication on display at this year's game was truly inspiring."

PHOTOS:

BUSD_SMUDGEPOT1: Bonita High School's football team carries off the Smudge Pot trophy in celebration of its 28-14 win over San Dimas High on Sept. 13.

BUSD_SMUDGEPOT2: San Dimas High School ASB students energize the crowd throughout the game in support of the football team during the Smudge Pot game on Sept. 13.

BUSD_SMUDGEPOT3: Bonita High School cheerleaders present a gift basket to the San Dimas cheer and dance teams during the Smudge Pot game on Sept. 13.

BUSD_SMUDGEPOT4: During halftime of the Smudge Pot game, the Bonita High School Marching Bearcats perform a rendition of David Bowie's "Space Oddity."

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