

February 8, 2016

When traveling beyond the Del Rio city limits, either for business or pleasure, we can almost always count on someone asking us where we are from. Our response, most often, provides a lesson in Texas geography. Beyond indicating that we are from Del Rio, we also have to explain that Del Rio is a city on the border with Mexico; that it is not in the Rio Grande Valley, and that we are three hours north of Laredo along the Rio Grande River. Still, with these explanations, people often proceed to look at us with a perplexed face. After taking a few hours to reflect on this past week's endeavors, I couldn't help but smile with pride as so many of our students provided exemplar lessons in Texas geography and Del Rio showmanship. Our students left the entire state wondering how so much athletic, academic, and professional talent can come from a city that so many people have barely heard of.

It is without a doubt, a true honor to be a member of the Del Rio community. It is an even greater honor to know that our students are a direct product of our organization, their parents and the community who cares for them. Students throughout our schools competed and won in so many events across the entire state this past week. Our middle school students traveled to Judson Middle School to compete in UIL; our welding team, under the direction of [Mr. Tod Townsend](#), competed in Skills USA District 11; our high school swim team, under the direction of [Coach Colleen Durham](#), participated in Regional competition; our Boys Golf team, under the direction of [Coach Oscar Cardenas](#), participated in the Brown Automotive Boys Invitational Golf Tournament here in Del Rio; UIL announced state honors, which included many of our athletes; the Texas Association of Soccer Coaches have announced their Academic All Team selections; and our basketball teams under the direction of [Coach Hefner](#) and [Coach Nieto](#) are headed to the playoffs.

For three consecutive weeks, including this past weekend, our sixth grade, seventh grade, and eighth grade [UIL teams](#) have traveled to San Antonio and won First Place in three out of three meets – that's a total of 9 first place trophies. Students who have placed in acting, speaking and academic events at each of these meets will advance to the South Texas Academic Literary League Tournament of Champions and eventually the Texas Math and Science Coaches Association (TMSCA) competition at UTSA in San Antonio. Congratulations to our middle school coaches and students.

Another constant in the winner's circle has been the [High School Welding Team](#). For months, our students have been working late hours and into the weekend building their [projects](#). This past week they loaded up their projects and traveled to San Antonio and Floresville where they received [First Place honors](#) in each of the eight competitions they entered. Their next step is the state level competition in Corpus Christi, TX. Congratulations and best of luck at State!

In honoring individuals by name, I cannot help but ask, how many of you have impacted the life of [Wolfgang Von Aspe](#)? This past weekend, swimmers across the state got to know what we already know about him. He is an incredibly well mannered, highly dedicated student and community member (Eagle Scout) who most recently won second place in the Boys 100 Backstroke and third place in the Boys 200 IM at the State Regional Competition in Brownsville, TX. Very Nice!

In the world of golf, [Charles Gambrel](#), has been on a streak for the past two weekends. Last weekend he shot 77 & 74 for a two day total of 151 to win an 85 player tournament at Laredo United. This past weekend he shot a 78 & 75 for a two day total of 153 to win a 130 player tournament here in Del Rio. As if that wasn't enough, Coach Cardenas then asked Charles to play a two-hole playoff to break a third place tie with the United Longhorns - Charles did not disappoint. Awesome!!!

Even though football season is over, most of us have not forgotten the thrilling season that culminated with three tremendous post-district appearances. This was absolutely one of the best seasons, if not

the best season, in the past ten years. This past week, Coach McCrea proudly announced that three of his football players received All State Honors: [Gaston Flores](#), a junior, was named Second Team Wide Receiver; [Marcus Braswell](#), a senior, was named Second Team Linebacker, [Felipe Garza](#), a senior, was named Third Team Defensive Back. These honors are memories to last a lifetime! I know DRHS will reminisce on these successes!

Last, but certainly not least, can you imagine running up and down the field for two 40- minute half's, no time-outs, constantly being pulled and kicked, and still have energy to hit the books? The Texas Association of Soccer Coaches noted that four of our young ladies had the energy to be examples on and off the field and honored them ([AnnaLee Beltran](#), [Alisah Cervantes](#), [Chelsea Hopkins](#), and [Dalila Morales](#)) to the All State Academic Team. Congratulations ladies!

Next, I want to congratulate our boys and girls basketball teams for qualifying for post district competition. Coach Hefner and his girls have reached the second and third round of competition in the past few years and have come to expect nothing less. Although Coach Nieto started his first year as a head coach with a completely brand new starting lineup, he never doubted his student athletes would rise to the occasion. I was happy to be in Eagle Pass this past weekend to see him [celebrate](#) with his [players](#) and [family](#) as he just about seals the deal. Congratulations!

I also want to congratulate three of our student athletes who have signed letters of intent to enroll and compete at the collegiate level. [Marcus Braswell](#) has signed on to play at West Texas A&M; [Carlos Lopez](#) Oklahoma Panhandle State University; and [Gabby Santos](#) signed on to play at Marywood University in Pennsylvania. Thank you to each of these students for their dedication to greatness, for representing themselves, and their family in an excellent manner, and for making everyone around them better students and athletes. Go Rams!!!! Go Queens!!!!

Someone once quoted that "every accomplishment starts with the decision to try". This week, our students by far have demonstrated that not only can they accomplish just about anything they set their minds to, but they can compete successfully in an arena outside our small city. We have so much to be proud of, and our student's achievement speaks volumes of the talent we have and commitment our teachers and coaches have in mentoring our kids. That's truly amazing!

**"Impossible is just a big word thrown around by small men who find it easier to live in the world they've been given than to explore the power they have to change it. Impossible is not a fact. It's an opinion. Impossible is not a declaration. It's a dare. Impossible is potential. Impossible is temporary. Impossible is nothing." – Muhammad Ali (World Champion Boxer)**