

West Point...from Page 1A

fortunate to have two attending West Point," he said. "Cole is a recruited athlete, Emmi is not a recruited athlete, but they are 100 percent the same."

"If you want to put a monetary value on an education from the United States Military Academy at West Point, it is estimated at \$400,000 apiece. Standing here today represents \$800,000 worth of scholarships."

To Schakat and Wright, Kokaly added: "You guys are going there to study, and we, as a nation, are going to invest a lot into you. We're going to train you, we're going to equip you, and we're going to educate you. But more importantly, the two of you will become our nation's warriors."

According to Wright, after his verbal commitment to Army, attention from other colleges began to wane, and at no time did he ever regret his decision.

"After I committed, schools stopped contacting me," he said. "Stanford Football requested my transcript, but I never heard back from them. Still, I thought that was pretty cool. But once I committed to West Point, there were no thoughts of decommitting."

Despite playing quarterback during his final two years of high school, Army is looking at potentially using Wright as a receiver, a position he played as a sophomore.

"I'm still on their (recruiting) board as a wide receiver, but I will remain open to whatever position they need me for," Wright said.

And Wright has some words of wisdom to pass on to younger players regarding the recruiting process.

"My advice would be to start early and work as hard as possible," he said. "Once you get some game film, email as many college coaches as possible. You may get one response per 20 emails sent, but that's just a step closer. Never let anyone tell you you'll never make it, work hard, and go get what you want."

When asked what advice he didn't receive but wished he had as a younger player, he said, "I wish I would've tried to gain weight a little earlier so I could have been a better player my sophomore year."

According to Schakat, the last year-and-a-half has been extremely nerve-racking but worth it in the end.

"It's been so crazy but



UCHS senior Cole Wright surrounded by friends and fellow Panther teammates.

Photo by Todd Forrest

really rewarding," she said of the application process. "There is always something that you have to do, some responsibility

to be on top of, but when you accomplish something the feeling is surreal."

So, how did Schakat react when she first learned she'd been accepted to West Point?

"It didn't sink in all at once, it was kind of gradual," she said. "I didn't reach a peak moment of excitement, it was kind of steady."

"It's still that way, I'm still kind of taking it all in,

but it's just incredible. I just want to thank my parents, Col. Wickersham, Mr. Kokaly, Rep. Collins, but most importantly God. He's the reason that I'm here today."



Photo by Todd Forrest

UCHS senior Emmi Schakat, center, with parents Bill and Beth Schakat.

Rotary...from Page 1A

people that you'll ever meet in your life," said George. "I teach math at Union County High School, and I'm in my 10th year. I can be serious when I have to be, but boy do I have a lot of fun and I enjoy it."

When asked what made Woody Gap so special, Lisa Sweet said it came down to community support.

"Woody Gap began with a vision of a community, and it began with contributions of a community and the support of a county school system," said Sweet. "Woody Gap is based on a strong community tradition in our mountain valley, and we are blessed with the support of a strong school system that has supported us from the word 'go.'"

Added Sweet: "We really are a little school that dreams big, and we really are a little school that could and can and will continue to do so, as long as we have an opportunity to build a future for our students and our community."

Stubblefield, when asked what former teacher she wanted to be like most, said she wanted to be like the teachers "that made learning exciting."

"I want to be the fun teacher, where they're excited about coming to school, and they're not afraid to ask questions and get help," said Stubblefield.

As for Roxbury, who teaches math at the middle school, she shared with Rotarians a particularly useful math lesson that helped her students, which involved outside-the-box thinking - colored pencils in math class - to get them to see the bigger picture.

School leaders in attendance were: Primary School Principal Millie Owenby; Elementary School Assistant Principal Lisa Vaughn; High School Principal C.T. Hussion; Woody Gap School Principal Carol Knight; and the next Superintendent of Schools John Hill.

Amazing Grace catered the event.



UCHS Principal C.T. Hussion with John Hill, addressing the Rotary Club of Union County.