

Bountiful Bobcat Thanksgiving

By John Chapman

Over several hundred years ago, the Pilgrims found themselves in a world without the freedom to worship as they chose. Therefore, they made their way to Holland from the area of England, where life was better, but as time wore on, they saw their children reverting from their own ways to those of the Dutch people. In order to keep their children within their circle, they decided to make the trek from Holland to the New World, present day America. Originally, they were to land in Virginia, but as their journey was wrought with storms and strife, they finally landed in Plymouth, Massachusetts. The first winter in the New World wasn't all they thought it would be...but with persistence and an overwhelming faith, the next autumn proved to be bountiful. As they befriended the Indians, they learned how to do many things that helped them survive. They also taught the Indians things from their own culture. After the first harvest in the New World, they had a huge feast and invited the Indians. The Indians brought several things to eat such as deer, turkey and wild game. In the spirit of Thanksgiving, the feasting lasted approximately three days. What a party that First Thanksgiving probably turned out to be!

Several lessons can be learned from this monumental experience that happened long ago. The first lesson learned was the way the Pilgrim people changed their entire life because of religious faith. They chose to move, not just one family, but several families to a new place, not one, but two times. This is an example of how change, although not easy, is sometimes required in order for things to improve—much like our school system. We have to allow ourselves to step out of the box, out of our comfort zones, in order to give things a chance to work and productivity to increase. The Pilgrims and Indians forged a positive relationship which in the beginning was probably not that easy. Our own athletic director came into our system last spring and changed some things. Although it was not easy, Coach Chip Mayfield made some much needed changes within the athletic department. His journey reminds me a little of that voyage the Pilgrims made in order to get to a new land in which they hoped would show prosperity. During his first days on the job in Comfort, he literally ate, slept and breathed his job. While being a strong family man, he and his family made the choice to be separated so he could start the job, while his wife, Courtney, along with their two small little girls tried to sell their house so they could move to Comfort. As a father and husband, one can only assume to understand how hard that must have been. However, he persevered and summer rolled around which brought his family to Comfort. During that time of temporary separation from family and beginning a new job, we saw two very important characteristics emerge from Coach Mayfield—a tenacity to improve our athletic organization and a perseverance to hire one of the best coaching staff's a district can

hope to have. He is succeeding in both. Although his journey did not have a smooth beginning, he and his family are to be applauded for handling it so well.

During the autumn of the first year in the New World, the Pilgrims harvest yielded a bountiful crop. Their hard work paid off, but they suffered losses along the way. Much like our athletic system, things will not always be perfect, but we have a lot to be thankful for because our new staff of coaches put academics and ethics before winning. I will tell you that I love to win as much as the next person, but as an educational system, it is our job to educate our students academically as well as ensuring character education within the realm of extracurricular activities. Coach Mayfield not only expects strong positive sportsmanship among the students, but of the coaching staff. Comfort athletics is only as strong as its leadership...which is proving to be increasing in strength.

As the Indians and Pilgrims reaped the reward of plenty of food and a positive camaraderie from all of their hard work, the CHS Bobcats are advancing to the second round in the playoffs. The Bobcats went to Boerne to play ball Friday night and play ball they did! It was refreshing to see the enthusiasm of the coaches and the players as they came closer to the final buzzer. It is gratifying to know that Coach Rich did not pull any muscles as his excitement increased. Thankfully, the coaching staff is intact and **ready to face Hempstead in the area playoff game in Leander on Friday, November 20, at 7:30pm.** We all have so much to be thankful for this Thanksgiving season! Go Bobcats!!