



Marathon High School

December 2007

Volume 2 -Issue 4-MHS Digital Design

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SAC: WHAT DOES IT STAND FOR ?

By: Kelsey Wonderlin

Have you heard about our school's School Advisory Council yet? Well, I hadn't either! Not many students here in Marathon are aware of the SAC. I got the privilege of sitting down with Katrina Wiatt, the SAC Chair, to really get to know more about SAC.

The School Advisory Council is an advisory committee, and it is required by state law that each school has a SAC. The purpose of this committee is to assist in the development of the school improvement plan. The SAC is made up of parents and community members who represent the school population. SAC juggles several projects at once. They are currently working on closing the achievement gap, approving SAC spending, and reviewing Title I parent involvement policy.

SAC has recently awarded money to different departments of our school. They awarded the MHS Band (Mr. Whitfield) \$516.50, the Video Production club (Mr. Frank) \$500.00, the MHS Math Dept (Mrs. Richard) \$315.00, the

Reading ESE (Ms. Bollig) \$150.00, and the Media Center (Ms. Dodamead) \$500.00 to put towards student success. Where did they get this money? By state law, the SAC gets \$10 per student attending MHS in the beginning of the year to spend on the enhancement of school performance.

"If you too want to get more involved, then you are welcome to attend the SAC meetings"

Mrs. Wiatt joined SAC "to get more involved with programs at the school" If you too want to get more involved, then you are welcome to attend the SAC meetings, as they encourage more people to get involved. Meetings are held monthly, on the first Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. in the Media Center.

This year, the SAC even had a traveling meeting at the Eastwind Apartments. They have a keynote speaker with a different topic each month. SAC meetings also include regular reports from the Student Government Association President, the school Principal, the Assistant Principal, and the Athletic Director. Sound interesting to you? Think about attending one sometime to really get the idea of our school's School Advisory Council.

New Year, New Dates

By: Jeanette Betancourt

This year, students started school a little later than usual and they will be ending the school year much later than usual; but do you know why this is? In 2006, the Florida legislature amended Florida Statute 1001.42(4) to require that the opening date of classes cannot be any earlier than 14 days prior to Labor Day. The main reason for adopting this policy was to get some uniformity amongst schools. In other words they wanted all the public schools in Florida to start and end around the same time.

One of the reasons that schools wanted earlier start dates was to have more class days prior to the FCAT testing date; this could possibly lead to better test scores. This was what some of the school districts thought and this is the

reason that they continued to move the starting dates earlier. School board member John Dick stated "I feel that school districts put far too much emphasis on the FCAT and go overboard in their reactions to it." Superintendent Randy Acevedo also pointed out that "What I like about moving the start dates to a later time is that all counties have a level playing field as far as FCAT preparation."

By starting the school year later, we also reduce our chance of missing school due to a hurricane. John Dick says "I have always felt that as we moved the start date up we then add more days of possible hurricane forced school closing, as it's the heart of the hurricane season."

(Continued on page 3)

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Three Minds, One Mission

By: Vanessa Sardiña



Only three students of the entire Marathon Middle School student body possess the qualities that it takes to become leaders: leadership, service, citizenship, and character. Eighth graders Marina Kay Wiatt, Haylie Heller, and Alana Vassil are the members of the National Junior Honor Society. These girls do charitable projects, excel in school, and are leaders that the other students can look up to. President Marina Kay Wiatt mentions, "We have worked hard, even though it is kind of pathetic that there are only three of us, but as a result we are in the spotlight."

They meet about twice a week to discuss future plans. Their first successful project was the middle school canned food drive. Unlike other years, they decided that the winning class will not receive a gift in return. Sponsor Mrs. Moodley explained, "We want to teach kids to give to charity because they care," not because they want to win something.

Currently the girls are working on a holiday project, Kare for Kids. This project involves both middle school and high school students donating toys in good condition. NJHS will give the collected toys to San Pablo Catholic Church just as they did with the cans. Treasurer Alana Vassil said, "I think this project is a great idea. Now we can help people that can't afford to buy gifts, to still enjoy the holidays, and share it with their family."

NJHS prepares these girls for their entrance into high school. Secretary Haylie Heller claims, "This club gives us a head start into high school. We will be prepared to join clubs, and make our way into the National Honor Society."

Schubert Puts The "S" In Success

By: Cody Stricklin



Jesse Schubert is a two-year rookie here at Marathon High. He teaches English and is an assistant coach on the varsity football team. Schubert replaced Ms. Van der Linden as junior class sponsor. President of the junior class Vanessa Sardiña says, "He is always there if we need him for any type of help whether it be academic or interscholastic." Schubert is from Indiana and a graduate of De Pauw and Indiana University. Living in the Keys now for a year and a half Schubert says, "I came for an interview and was instantly sold on the teaching position offered. The weather and laid back attitude makes it an awesome place to live." His motivation to be a teacher is that he always learns something new and his job keeps him on his toes.

Mr. Schubert's hobbies include coaching football, working out and reading. He says he plans on teaching for a long time because he loves what he does. Schubert has also started an intramural sports league open to all high school students interested in learning new skills and playing non-contact sports. As you can see, Jesse Schubert is very dedicated to his work but still seems to make time for fun too.

The Presidential Role

By: Nicky Smith



Charismatic, hard working, down to earth, and responsible are just a few of the terms used to describe Melanie Lane Boyd by some of her peers at MHS. Melanie is a senior here at Marathon High School, and student body president. She has lived in Marathon her entire life and has bright plans for her future. One of these plans include going to the University Of Tampa to major in Athletic Training.

Her role as the Student Body President entails such duties as making reports for SAC meetings, paying attention to everyone in the school, and putting a lot of time and effort into her position. On the first Tuesday of every month Melanie goes to the SAC (Student Advisory Council) meeting where they discuss what is planned for the student body and for the classes in each grade level. Melanie explained, "Student government President entails myself getting more involved in everything, not only what the seniors are doing, but every other grade as well. I try to find ways to make the education environment fun and enjoyable."

Melanie has a busy schedule considering she is taking classes like AP Biology, AP English, DE Government, DE Humanities, and AP Probability and Statistics. In her free time however she likes "having fun in the sun," participating in community activities, and surfing the web.

Logan in the Halls, Order in the Classrooms

By: Alex Hoffman



You have all probably seen her walking through the halls and checking up on classrooms, she's our Assistant Principal Elizabeth Logan. Originally from Wisconsin, she received her undergraduate degree from Wisconsin University, and her Masters from USF. Ms. Logan moved to the Keys with her son two years ago, and has spent those two years working at the school. She moved to Florida because her son has an interest in marine biology, so she moved somewhere near the water.

When asked about working in the new buildings she said she was excited, and that those who were in the portables for two years would appreciate them the most. One personal goal of Ms. Logan's is to learn the names of all high school students. That is no small feat, considering that's around 400 students, but she seems determined. Like many other teachers at the school, Ms. Logan wants more people to pass the FCAT. This year, mid-terms are being held after Christmas break instead of before, and she feels this may be a good thing. She thinks it gives students downtime, and a chance to rest. Overall, Ms. Logan is very involved in the school, and is wearing a smile whenever you see her.

From Pain To Gain

By: Cory Fulcher

Does someone in your life keep saying “stop slouching and stand up straight?” Well, if so, you may have scoliosis.

Most people would consider surgery their last choice; however, it was my only option to halt the progression of my scoliosis (curvature of the spine). My family and I went to Miami Children’s Hospital on September 28 to visit a doctor and to see how to treat my scoliosis. He took a look at my x-rays and measured the degrees of my spinal curves. He stated, “Because of his age and the severity of his curves the only choice is surgery.” Once I heard this, I knew my life would forever be changed.

I was very nervous and worried when I heard that I was going to undergo surgery. I knew there were severe risks that could result from this. The whole idea of being on an operating table at the will of the surgeons scared me a little. However, when I heard my doctor say he performs about 150 of these types of surgeries a year I knew that I would be in good hands.

Also, I was very worried about the amount of pain that I would experience. My doctor assured me that I would be given morphine the first two days to treat the worst of the pain. After the second day I would be on oral pain medication that would treat my pain.

On November 15, I traveled to Miami Children’s Hospital for my operation. My actual surgery wasn’t until the next day, but I had to be there a day early for some tests and x-rays. On the actual day of my operation, I was extremely nervous and frightened but my parents were there to reassure me. Around six o’clock in the morning a nurse came and picked me up to

“I measure an inch and a half taller than before!”

proceed to the operating room. Three hours and twenty-two minutes later, I woke up in my hospital room a changed person. I now have twenty screws and two metal rods in my back, a straighter spine, and I measure an inch and a half taller than before!

The recovery process takes a full year during which the vertebrae heal and fuse together. The restrictions I must follow decrease through time. In the first three weeks I cannot bend or twist, participate in any physical activity except for walking, lift anything heavier than a gallon of milk, and I will be on prescription pain medication. I can, however, return to school four weeks after my release from the hospital. After three months, I can bend about ten degrees, swim and ride a bicycle, and lift eight pounds. After six months, I don’t have any restrictions except I cannot participate in any contact sports ever again.

A question that I can answer now that I know is on everyone’s mind is if I can go through metal detectors. No, I will not get tackled by a security guard in the airport; the rods and screws are made of non-magnetic titanium and I can safely pass through any metal detector.

My type of scoliosis is known as idiopathic, meaning that there is no known cause. It frequently occurs in adolescents and is often detected first through observation. You can see signs of scoliosis if there is unevenness in the shoulders, a noticeable rib hump, or visible curves when the person bends. These first signs are no cause for alarm; however, you do need to watch the severity of the curves and if they get worse see a doctor. Don’t worry surgery isn’t the only option. If the scoliosis is caught early on and/or the spinal curves are below 45 degrees, a person can wear a brace that will stop the spinal curves from progressing. When the curves are above 45 degrees the person can experience severe back pain when older and the curves can even affect their breathing, and surgery is highly recommended.

For all the hype about the surgery, it wasn’t all that difficult. I was nervous at first but I knew that I was in very qualified hands. Overall, I knew that the benefits of the surgery greatly outweighed any objection to the operation. Now I just have to recover my strength and stamina.

Any Time, Any Place, Any Path, Any Pace

By: Annabelle Walker

It is always great to be a step ahead. Florida Virtual School gives you that chance. FLVS is a great option for all students. It doesn’t matter if you are working on credit forgiveness, or getting ahead, FLVS will help. Currently, MHS has about 40 students enrolled in FLVS classes and most are working successfully.

When asked whether FLVS is a good option, Dr. Sympton, one of our school counselors, agreed that it was a great idea, “Just make sure you do want to graduate early.” The only thing that would keep you from getting ahead would be the overload factor. This happens when you put too much on your plate and you get behind in everything. Dr. Sympton has seen a few MHS students fight the overload factor.

Dr. Sympton also said that FLVS could be a good idea for credit forgiveness. The only thing she had to say about students taking FLVS for grade forgiveness was “it is not as simple to complete an online course as you may think...” FLVS is not perfect, it has its flaws. One of those “flaws” is that not all of the classes on FLVS can replace in-school classes at MHS.

Our students are taking courses through FLVS for various reasons. Lisbet Lopez says that “sometimes it’s hard to make time for it but it’s an easy way to get ahead.” Another student at MHS, Marisa Brossard, is taking half of her classes on FLVS to work on her tennis career. Marisa says that FLVS is a great thing for her because of her constant traveling from one tennis tournament to another. “FLVS gave me the opportunity to pursue my tennis career with my crazy schedule.” Junior Nicole Irwin is currently taking Latin, a course that is not available at MHS. FLVS has a lot of courses that are not offered here such as Chinese and Spanish III.

It is very easy to start on FLVS. The online school is free to all Florida middle and high school students. Dr. Sympton did mention that students thinking about taking online classes should have a meeting with their school counselor first. If your counselor thinks that you’re right for FLVS then all you have to do is make a login and request your classes. To do this, you go to www.flvs.net and create a student and guardian account. From there you find the course list and request your courses and then you wait for classroom availability. Dr. Sympton recommended that if you are in a rush to make up credits you should stay in school because FLVS could leave you waiting for up to two months.

FLVS can help any student and the end of first semester is coming right up. This is a great time to ask for FLVS classes to complete during the second semester. All classes are given year round. It is just like school; although you can work in your pajamas!

New Year, New Dates

Continued from p. 1

Of course, in every decision involving schools, there are always parents involved. In this case, some parents organized a group called “Save Our Summers”. The parents started this group because they wanted to take their vacations in late July and early August instead of in June.

They also said that they wanted their children to attend certain camps that went on during the time we began school. Believe it or not Walt Disney World also had an effect on this decision. They didn’t like the idea of starting school in August because that’s one of their busiest times of the year and that’s when they need their summer workers.

Unfortunately, even though there are all these positive aspects involved in moving the start and end dates, there’s also always a negative side. The negative aspect is the fact that now the students have their midterms in January, after they return from their two week winter break. Superintendent Randy Acevedo also agrees that this is one of the negatives; “As far as my position goes the only thing that bothers me about the prescribed start date is that we are unable to finish the first semester before Winter break.”

You Can't Spell Dolphins without the "D"

By: Josh Frank

Determination, defense, and diligence are just a few ways to think of Kevin Freeman's 07-08 Marathon varsity basketball team. The team lets their fans know this by wearing their team shirts that say, "You can't Spell Dolphins without the 'D.'"

Coach Freeman describes his team in one word "family." The team has already started their season with a bang. After thumping rivals, Key West Conchs, 64-50 the Dolphins feel confident about their ability to come away with a very memorable season.

At the end of last season the team was lucky to lose only one senior. Now, there are five seniors. The team is led by standout senior guard, Blake Friedman. Coach Freeman says Blake is "playing his best basketball right now, and is also one of our hardest workers."

Also aiding the team this year is a noticeable increase in size. John Porter was the tallest player on the team last season, standing at 6' 2". With the addition of sophomore Travis Leachman and 8th grader Dwayne Ellis, who both stand at over 6' 4in, the team has definitely become a little more vertical. "I try and work on dunking as much as possible," says Leachman. Coach Freeman plans to take advantage of this new found height by "working the ball through the big guys more."

Even with five seniors and extra height the team still has a lot of work to do. "I am very satisfied with them as long as they continue to work hard... but we have to keep getting better," explains Freeman. Helping out this season are brothers Josh and Sean Whells. "With their help we have learned a lot," says senior Eric Carey.

The Dolphins still have a long way to go in their season. With no room for error, they will continue to strive. We are all anxious to see the results of their season.



Sergio Howard goes for a lay up against the Palmer Trinity Falcons.

Girl's Soccer Team Going Strong

By: Matias Pezzella

Coach Doll's girl's soccer team is still playing strong as they roll past the other teams with a significant amount of wins. The girls started the season a little shaky. Later, however, these talented ladies showed their true potential. During their most recent game, the Dolphins won 3-2 against Princeton. According to Coach Doll, "We did very good as far as keeping our composure and came up with a victory. Even though we were playing a tough game, I guess our team was tougher." He went on to say, "I think all of the players are equally level. All eleven are game people." Mr. Doll has good reason to have faith in his team. Last year, the team only won two games. This year, so far, they have won six games. Apparently, they have "met more than their expectations" says Mr. Doll. Their last regular season game will be against Coral Shores on January 11th and everyone is hoping that they come away with another win.



#4, Marina Kay Wiatt jostles for the ball.

Photo by: Kathy Lancaster

Making the Team

By: Justin Howe

On the tenth of December, Government and Web Design teacher, Mrs. Loggie, took 12 students with her to a practice competition for the Commissioner's Academic Challenge. The CAC is Florida's State-wide high school academic tournament, held among counties, followed by a state competition in Orlando. Each County competes in a separate division, based upon high school enrollment. It is a competition between various teams, each containing 6 students, answering questions ranging from History, to Humanities, to Calculus.

From this practice competition, Mrs. Loggie selected 6 students for Marathon's Academic Challenge team, who will be competing with the other high schools in our district on January 28th. These students are Michael Koppel, Reggie Paros, Justin Howe, Vanessa Sardiña, Katherine Tezanos, and Jay Hegland. All three high schools in the Keys have teams. Coral Shores has won for the past 2 years. The competition itself is structured as a three-tier round of questioning, each question worth 5, 10, and then 15 points respectively. If a team knows the answer, they buzz in. If they get the question right, they get the points, but if they get it wrong, it is subtracted from their score. At the end of each round is a team question, where each team must answer as many questions independently as possible before time is up.



MHS Academic Challenge Team

Young Women With A Purpose

By: Michelle Sardiña

The girls of Z-Club are an inspiring group who dedicate time to improving society, beginning with their local community. Z-Club is the high school version of the Zonta International Club. "The goal of Z-Club is to teach the young women the importance of service in our local community," said Mrs. Walker, the MHS Z-Club sponsor.

Z-Club is an all female organization that focuses their service on the women and children of the community, participating in projects such as Toys for Tots, and projects that benefit the Grace Jones Daycare. Currently the Z-Club members are helping with the Stanley Switlik Elementary Parent to Kid Nights where they help children find books to read. The members also have the opportunity to help at day care centers by reading to children and providing homework help. "Z-Club is a great way for high school girls to get involved in the community, and spend time with the experienced Zonta members," said Vanessa Sardiña, MHS Z-Club President.

As the holidays are approaching Z-Club is organizing numerous service projects to spread the Christmas cheer. "We're always looking for ways to make a difference," said Vanessa Sardiña. For the holidays the club is planning to 'adopt-a-family' who can't afford the traditional Christmas celebration.

They are also volunteering to do gift wrapping for the Toys for Tots charity program. In the future Z-Club will be continuing to do various service projects in the community and organizing fundraisers for charity purposes. All the money raised by the local Z-Club stays in the community to benefit local causes. The young women of Z-Club are always working to make a difference. This club is open to all female high school students, so if you want to be a part of making a difference contact Vanessa Sardiña, or Mrs. Walker for more information.