

# dolphin PRIDE

Marathon High School  
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## Welcome Back!

By: Josh Frank

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Reset your alarm clocks, school is back in session. Summer is over and it's time to break out the books. Marathon High School welcomes its family, old and new, to the beginning of the 2007-2008 school year. With a new school, new classes, new teachers, and above all, a new principal, Marathon is ready for a fresh start.

The new school brought with it not only new classrooms and supplies, but also new course electives for the students. Culinary Arts and Driver's Ed are a couple of the new electives offered at Marathon High School this year.

The Culinary Arts class came fully equipped with materials and a kitchen "local restaurant owners will be envious of," says new principal Harry Russell. In fact, the class will be catering at Marathon's home football games to the new box seats, located on the second floor of the 7000 building.

Drivers Ed, taught by Kevin Freeman, will teach students driving safety rules, laws of the road, and the students will even get a little time behind the wheel.

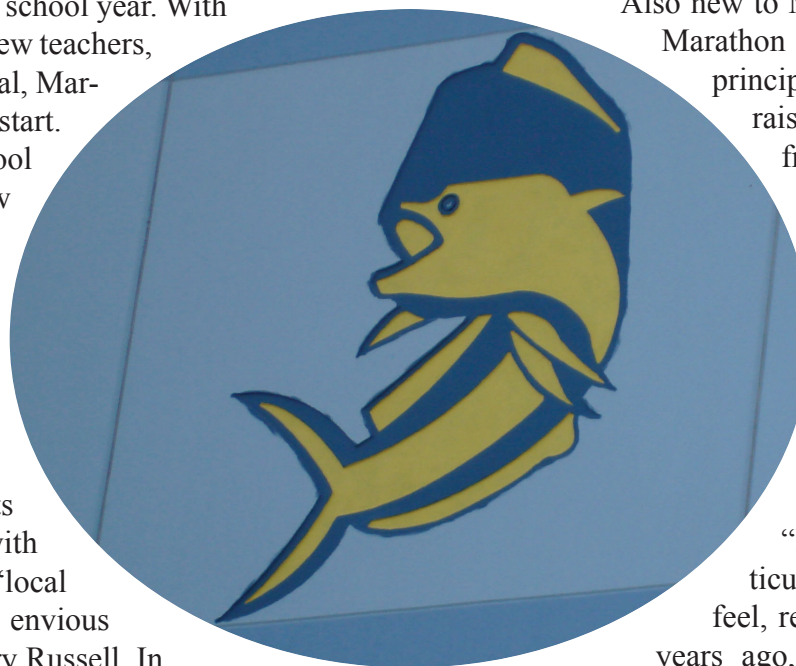
Marathon is home to 17 new teachers this year. The teachers come from all over the nation. Everyone is eager to see what they can add to Marathon's education.

Also new to Marathon, is Harry Russell.

Marathon High School's new head principal. Mr. Russell is born and raised in the keys. Originally from Key West, he came to Marathon because he heard there was a job opening for the position of principal. Previously Mr. Russell was the principal at Horace O'Bryan Elementary School, in Key West, and Stanley Switlick Elementary School, in Marathon.

"I love Marathon, and particularly the small close knit feel, reminds me of Key West 25 years ago," says Russell. His main goal this year is to get Marathon back on the track of being an A+ school.

Starting off with a bang, Marathon High School hopes to make everyone, old and new, feel at home in the new school's environment. If anyone has any questions or concerns there will always be someone to talk to. Have a great year.



Above: The MHS dolphin mascot on the new auditorium  
Below: Dolphin Pride Staff Members



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## Ben Craig

By: Michael Koppel

"While in high school I discovered that I enjoyed tutoring other students," said Marathon High School special education teacher Ben Craig, when reminiscing on what first inspired him to teach.

"Both of my parents were educators so I saw some of the benefits of being in the [teaching] field." Mr. Craig attended Florida State University, earning a bachelor's degree in education and a master's in emotional disturbances and learning disabilities.

A fifth-year teacher, Mr. Craig has taught in Chicago and Tallahassee, as well as in Taiwan for four weeks in a high school's Summer English program.

He felt a warm greeting when he arrived in Marathon. "Our school's administration and the Marathon community as a whole have made me feel so welcome, it's been remarkable."

He was drawn to Marathon High due to the great surroundings and the anticipation of a new school. "It will be exciting to see how the school is transformed as the construction comes to a close."

## Anthony Green

By: Michell Sardiña

There are all kinds of new dishes being whipped up in the state-of-the-art Culinary Arts classes taught by Anthony Green. I had the chance to sit down with Mr. Green in his new classroom and find out a little bit more about him. After being an Executive Banquet Chef at Hawks Cay Marina and Resort, and the Ritz Carlton, Green decided to take the position of head chef offered at Marathon High. This will be Mr. Green's first year as a teacher and he is anticipating many more years to come.

When I asked Mr. Green what he thought of the new school and its new facilities, he responded "I love the new facilities; they are top of the line and very nice to work with." Mr. Green also owns the restaurant called Christiano's Café, and he seems to find the time to be a teacher too. "I leave the school and go straight to the restaurant. I'm used to working sixteen hour days, so it doesn't bother me too much."

I wanted to know what Mr. Green's motivation was for being a teacher, "God has given me the talent to do what I love and giving my knowledge to teach gives me a great sense of satisfaction." Even with his busy schedule, Mr. Green finds time to enjoy his family, playing soccer, volleyball, and listening to music. Mr. Green says that his wife and two boys are behind him one hundred percent in supporting his new career.

We'll all be looking for what's cooking in the new Culinary Arts class at Marathon High.

## Eric Rolfe

By: Johnny Milo

New teacher on campus, he's ready for the school year with a stern love for math, all the way from Michigan! Eric Rolfe. Born and raised in a little place called Flint, Michigan (about 60 miles away from Detroit) he is very enthusiastic about this school year in the brand new building! Mr. Rolfe earned his bachelors in computer science at the University of Michigan and received his teaching degree at the Saginaw Valley State University.

Mr. Rolfe also spent about four years as a computer programmer before becoming a teacher. He moved down to the Florida Keys because, "I love the climate and environment, the weather is beautiful and just about everything I need is within walking distance." Like the students, he agrees that the fire alarms are WAY too loud! His goals for this year are to get students interested in math. He would also like to teach them to use problem solving skills used in math and everyday life.

Mr. Rolfe is the only person in his family who moved down into the Keys. All of his family is still in Michigan and Zephyrhills, Florida. His hobbies include reading, biking, movies, and surfing the web. In the past, he has done such adventurous activities as skydiving and down hill skiing and he also likes to collect DVD's and anime.

Let's give Mr. Rolfe a good year as a new teacher and show him why Marathon is the best place to be!

## Jim Murphy

By: Andrew Vassil

Jim Murphy is a new Middle School Social Studies teacher. He grew up in a place called Royal Oak Michigan which is located near Detroit. He went to a Wayne State University and graduated with a major in Social Studies and Psychology.

Some of Mr. Murphy's interests include reading and playing and watching sports. He is married to another teacher here (Andrea Murphy, the Computing for College + Careers Teacher.)

## George Childress

By: Michell Sardiña

Always wanting to live by the ocean, math teacher and football coach George Childress jumped at the opportunity to come to the Keys and teach at Marathon Middle School. Growing up in a very small town called Newport, Ohio, Mr. Childress is accustomed to living in a calm atmosphere, like the Keys. When he was 18 he moved to Columbus, Ohio where he attended Capital University. There he played four years of football, and three years of percussion in a rock and roll band. Mr. Childress stated he has wanted to be a teacher since high school, graduating college with a major in Middle Childhood Education. He taught 4 ½ years in Columbus before coming to Marathon Middle School.

Currently, Mr. Childress is teaching 7th grade regular, advanced, and intensive math. Mr. Childress is a big sports fan and is also the Marathon High School football coach for the wide receivers and defensive backs.

Just because Mr. Childress is a teacher, does not mean he has no life outside of school. When I asked him what some of his interests were, he said "When I'm not in school, I love to hang out with friends, listen to music, and do anything associated with sports. I also enjoy going to concerts, sporting events, and going camping."

As a young teacher with a long career ahead of him, I also asked Mr. Childress what were his plans for the future. He responded "In the future, I hope I continue to teach and coach. I am lucky enough to love what I do, and most people aren't fortunate enough to say that."

## Melody Dodamead

By: Vanessa Sardiña

As a resident of the Florida Keys for over twelve years, Melody Dodamead is ready to be part of MHS, and to spread her love of literature. Ms. Dodamead was born in Pennsylvania, and raised in Maryland. From there, she attended college at Towson State University. She moved here twelve years ago, because she loved the Keys atmosphere. She always wanted to live on an island, and now she is able to teach on an island as well.

Currently she is a partner in Sea Wiz Marine Systems and Technologies, a business that sells various systems for yachts like air conditioning, steering, electronic systems, etc. Now she is also working Marathon High School as the new media specialist. "The library right now is just a big empty room, but I have a vision of lots of students spreading on the tables working on homework." Ms. Dodamead said.

She loves the new building, and all of its great new technology. She also said "There is a feeling of possibility and opportunity that I am really excited to be part of." Ms. Dodamead loves books, for any reason. She loves to read a book for inspiration, to make her laugh, or even just to have a good time. She can't wait for students to start checking the stacks for that good book.

Ms. Dodamead would like to see some change in the school. She wants more school spirit to build, so she is now proudly the sponsor of the Marathon High pep squad.

## Stephen Whitfield

By: Sarah Bradshaw

You can hear the sound of music from the third floor of the 7000 building now that Stephen Whitfield has joined our school's faculty as band director. He came from Ohio and picked the Keys because it's a "good job, and even better weather!" Mr. Whitfield says "I love it down here; I fish, dive, and breathe the fresh air." In his free time, he enjoys fishing, swimming, and hanging out with friends around a BBQ pit. No snow is a very nice change for him and his wife. He has always wanted to teach, but he is also a performing musician.

His teachers had a huge impact on his life, and he wanted to do the same for other people. Watching students learn is a great pleasure for him. When asked if he had a job before teaching he replied, "Would you like fries with that?"

The objectives set for this year's band class is to learn great music, be better people, and for the program to grow as a whole. More communication between departments and more interest in the arts are two things that Mr. Whitfield would like to see accomplished. Overall, he thinks the new school is great and he can't wait for it to be finished.

## Colleen Baldino

By: Alex Hoffman

Even though Cheri Ann Knight may be new to Marathon High, she is certainly not new to teaching. Mrs. Knight's inspiration to become a teacher was her father, who was also a teacher. After attending Illinois State University, she went straight into teaching! Originally from Shelbyville, Illinois, Mrs. Knight taught in the Springfield area for 15 years and in northern Florida for the last three years.

Mrs. Knight now lives here with her husband Greg, son Christopher, and daughter Ashli, who wanted to spend her senior year at Marathon High. Aside from teaching math, Mrs. Knight is also the cheerleading coach and says she likes to stay active. She says she is happy with the new school and doesn't think any changes should be made yet. When asked what one of her objectives for her calculus class this year was, she said, "To prepare my students well for the AP calculus exam." As one of her students I think Mrs. Knight will be

## John Kirk

By: Cory Fulcher

John Kirk, a new Middle School English teacher here at Marathon, moved here from New Jersey in August, to enjoy "the beauty and wonder of landscape" that is the Florida Keys. He wanted to change his lifestyle and "recharge his batteries."

Mr. Kirk brings a wealth of 25 years of teaching experience in English and Theology to Marathon. Also, he spent 12 years as a broker for insurance companies.

He attended Mount Saint Mary's University in Emmetsburg, Maryland (12 miles south of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania). After college, he was hired by the government as a treasury agent. However, he was needed at home to take care of his mother. The local principle offered him a teaching position and he has been teaching ever since.

Mr. Kirk believes the new school facility is "awesome!" He hopes every student realizes of how fortunate they are to have such a great facility. Nonetheless, he would like to see a slight change here at Marathon High. "I would like to see about five to ten minutes added to the lunch periods." He believes a few added minutes would, "enable students to eat and socialize at a pace appropriate to the environment of the keys as well as to the digestion of their food."

## Jeanette Meresma

By: Annabelle Walker

Our new middle school math teacher, Jeanette Meresma, is a South Florida local. Born in Miami and raised in Islamorada, she knows what the Keys have to offer.

After receiving a business administration major at Florida Atlantic University, Ms. Meresma jumped into teaching. "I started very young," she said. Ms. Meresma originally started teaching because she wanted the schedule. She wanted a good job, but she also wanted time off. She quickly grew to love her teaching career, and she feels quite at home teaching at Marathon Middle School. Ms. Meresma's ambition for her math classes is "...to teach my students how math can be fun, I want them to leave my class knowing as much as they could learn in a year's time." Being in the middle school, she doesn't really get to use the great new building but, the only thing she had to say was; "The new building looks great from way over here!"

Now that Ms. Meresma found the perfect career, she has all that extra time to spend with her family and friends in Islamorada and play with her brother's dogs. She also loves any outdoorsy activities. She says, "I love anything outside, I love anything in the water."

Ms. Meresma is already mesmerized by Marathon. "I love Marathon; it's so cool and laid back. I don't want to leave."

## Kevin Sunderman

By: Sergio Howard

He loves Harleys and loves to teach. Kevin Sunderman is a new teacher at Marathon High School. He was born in the summer of 1967. He has been riding dirt bikes since he was seven years old. That's also when he got his first ride on the back of a Harley for his seventh birthday present, he will never forget it.

He is excited to be at Marathon High School. He previously taught in Tampa as an ESE teacher. He attended Siena Heights University in Adrian, Michigan (BA in psychology). He also attended the University of Detroit/Mercy in Detroit (MA in Industrial/Organizational Psychology) and continues to work on his doctorate in psychology.



## Cindy Sanborn

By: Jeanette Betancourt

Look out! We have another Florida Gator teaching here at Marathon High School. Mrs. Sanborn, an English teacher, earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Florida. She just recently moved here but is very familiar with the area considering that she and her husband have been visiting the keys since their honeymoon 28 years ago. Her family consists of her daughter who is also a UF graduate; her son, who is a Green Beret and is attending college; and her other son, who is a freshman here at Marathon High School. She says that she has felt very welcomed here in the Keys and here at Marathon High School. She also believes that "Marathon has the size and warmth to give each student a more personalized education and each student is truly cared about by the faculty, administration and staff". In her spare time when she's not teaching, she likes to go snorkeling, sailing, kayaking and she also enjoys some fishing.

## Scott Kaye

By: Matias Pezella

Everyone in Marathon High School says "hola" to our new Spanish teacher, Scott Kaye. Mr. Kaye, who was inspired to teach by his high school teacher Sra. Robb, was born in Bremerton, Washington. He attended South Pacific University and then had various careers as a school bus driver, a pilot, and then a substitute teacher. He says he chose the Keys because "'Student Success, Whatever it Takes'. It is difficult to find a teaching assignment where the whole building works towards a common goal." He went on to say "often, I have found that in most schools each teacher is doing something different and there is no apparent common goal. Not here! I also firmly believe in student success and whatever it takes to create success among my students and hopefully, develop a love of life long learning. This school district is focused on that exact philosophy and it fits me perfectly."

Mr. Kaye's objectives for his classes are to help students understand, speak, and read Spanish in order to become part of a different culture. As for the school, Mr. Kaye had this to say, "This place is awesome! I come from a building where the only piece of technology was an overhead projector. The Keys maintain a pace of life that I was familiar with in Mexico. "It is a peaceful place to live"

## Andrea Murphy

By: Matias Pezella

Andrea Murphy is the new Computing for College and Careers teacher. She was originally in banking, before she came to the Florida Keys, she didn't like the banking business job up there so she went back to school and got her two degrees one in Business and one in Teaching. She said there is many more school teaching jobs down here than up there.

Andrea Murphy is a nice lady, she is outgoing and fun in class, she said she loves the teaching job here and she adores the new building. I asked her did she see any changes that Marathon high School needed so far this year, and her response was "no, so far everything is going good with the construction even going on".

Mrs. Murphy was born in Michigan, in Royal Oak, Michigan and attended Michigan State University. She said she likes it better down here she says because there is many more teaching jobs down here than up there, in Michigan. Before she gets ready for class she makes her lesson plans and researches on the internet.

Before teaching here in the Florida Keys at Marathon High School, she was a physical aid, and before that she was in the banking business. She said she got into teaching because she didn't like the banking job. She likes it down here because there aren't cold winters down here, also.

## Colleen Baldino

By: Robert Wright

Chicago teacher, Colleen Baldino, lost her cold feet when she moved to the Keys. She came here because it is a lot warmer and because of the pleasant people. She earned a masters in English, a masters in Education from DePaul University, and a bachelors degree from UCF. She taught for several years in Chicago before relocating here.

She believes that MHS is a great, new and exciting school, and that it is perfect the way it is. She teaches British Literature, DE English and Intensive Reading. By bringing in outside sources and technology she keeps her lesson plans interesting and centered on the students.

When she is not teaching she enjoys reading and writing, and she is also involved in the reading program at MHS. Ms. Baldino plans on making this school year memorable for all the students and staff.

## Victoria Fairbrother-Smith

By: Kelsey Wonderlin

A Marathon High alumna has returned to teach at Marathon! Victoria Fairbrother-Smith teaches ESE (Exceptional Student Education) and Reading for grades 6-8 along with Learning Strategies for grades 7-8. Her goals for her classes this year are to help students improve their reading and studying skills, and to help the students understand the material better.

Mrs. Fairbrother-Smith was born in Michigan, and moved to the Keys in 1976. She actually attended Marathon High School beginning in her junior year. She graduated from MHS in 1977 as a part of the school's 20th graduating class. After high school she went to Miami-Dade Community College to become a teacher, however, Mrs. Fairbrother-Smith left college after just one year to get married and start a family. She took 25 years off before returning to earn her teaching degree in Iowa in 1998. Stet same year her son went to college. Before becoming a teacher, Mrs. Fairbrother-Smith owned the Victoria Insurance Agency here in Marathon. She moved back down here to "reconnect with friends and to teach in paradise!" She also has family in the Keys, and all over Florida.

Outside of school, Mrs. Fairbrother-Smith likes to sing, and is even rehearsing with the Marathon Community Chorus. She also has an eight month old baby grandson, who just started walking on his own. Her dream for MHS is becoming a reality, and that dream was to have a nice and new school. Mrs. Fairbrother-Smith is looking forward to the 2007-2008 school year.

## Robert Lalena

By: Josh Frank

Robert Lalena is one of the only teachers that your parents don't want you to get to know. Not because he's a bad guy, but if you're in his room, chances are you're in trouble. Lalena is Marathon's new ACS (alternative classroom setting) teacher.

Originally from New Jersey, Lalena has been teaching in the Keys for three of his six years of teaching. Lalena has worked with Principal Harry Russell for three years at Stanley Switlick Elementary, Horace O'Brian Elementary, and now at Marathon. "I guess he was happy with my work," said Lalena.

Lalena will have some pretty big shoes to fill as the new head varsity girls basketball coach. He is taking the place of Teresa Konrath, as she replaced Bill Sympson as Marathon's new athletic director.

Lalena played shooting guard for St Leo University where he earned his bachelors degree. He followed that with a masters degree in education at Temple University.

Lalena has much to offer Marathon with his six years of experience. Everyone is eager to see what he can accomplish.