

# Tigertalk

A photograph of the Homecoming Royalty, King Jonathan Rodriguez and Queen Alexia Gil, standing on a football field. Jonathan is wearing a black tuxedo with a light blue shirt and a black bow tie, and a black crown with a gold band. Alexia is wearing a red gown with a black sash that says "QUEEN", a silver tiara, and holding a large bouquet of flowers. They are both smiling. In the background, there are bleachers with people and a football field.

**Homecoming Royalty  
King Jonathan Rodriguez  
and Queen Alexia Gil**

Scoop  
on new  
teachers

**Volume 45**

**Issue 1**

**October 2019**

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**New MPHS Hall of Fame members were inducted this past Friday. From left are Ashley Walker, Robbie Hatfield, Eather Brown Dunn, Mike Fields and Raymond Johnson.**

## Tigertalk

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The Tigertalk is published five-six times a year by the newspaper and journalism classes of MPHS. Address is P.O. Box 1117, Mount Pleasant, Texas 75455. Letters to the editor are encouraged but must be signed and the staff reserved the right to edit because of space. Submit all letters to Mr. Whitten in Room 401 of the CATE Building.



# Seniors pick Gil, Rodriguez for homecoming queen, king

By MADISON ADAMS  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

Seniors selected Alexia Gil and John Rodriguez as this year's homecoming queen and king.

Alexia was escorted by her brother Gerardo. Alexia, 17, is the daughter of Araceli Gil.

She is involved in band, FBLA and Yearbook. Her hobbies include hanging out with her friends. Her plans after graduation include attending Texas State University and majoring in biology. She has plans to become a forensic pathologist.

She wishes to travel to Croatia, and her favorite food is seafood boil. Her favorite class is yearbook, because Mr. Whitten makes everything fun. Her favorite place to eat is Wingstop, and she would like to add that they should allow pets in school.

Other homecoming queen nominees include Alexia Gill, Jessly Martinez, Amy Soto, and Autumn Williams.

Martinez is 17 years old, and was escorted by Rafael Camarillo, who graduated in 1998. She participates in cosmetology, track and field, and student council. She enjoys spending valuable time with family and friends, and watching Netflix. Her future plans are to graduate as a licensed cosmetologist, and attend NTCC to start her Physical Therapy career.

Jessly said her role models are her mom and stepfather wishes to travel to Cancun, Mexico, and her favorite food is tacos and arroz con leche. Her favorite class is cosmetology because she

See Homecoming, Pg. 4



Gil receives her queen crown and sash as her brother looks on.



Rodriguez is pictured with his mother.



# Homecoming from Page 3

gets to practice what she loves. Her favorite places to eat are Mexican restaurants.

Soto is 17 years old and the daughter of Kenya Marmolejo, and was escorted by her brother Gerardo.

She is active in soccer and also earned a participation award in FFA. Her hobbies include doing makeup and playing soccer.

Her role model is her mother. She plans to attend NTCC and pursue a career in dental hygiene. Her favorite food is a bacon burger and favorite place to eat is Randy's. She likes English because "most English teachers are cool."

Williams is 17 years old and was escorted by her mom and stepfather, Lakeshia Williams and Loren Dudley. She participated in powerlifting and athletic training her sophomore year.

She also participates in fashion design, practicum, and CNA. Her hobbies include making crafts, singing, shopping, and spending time with friends and family. Her role model is her Nana (Greta B). She plans to attend college and pursue a degree in the medical field. She would like to travel to Dubai or Jamaica, and her favorite food is

See Homecoming, Pg. 5



Jessly Martinez



Amy Soto



Autumn Williams



# Homecoming from Page 4

shrimp and pasta. She enjoys English because it is something she understands, and she gets to express herself through essays. Her favorite place to eat is Red Lobster. Lastly she would like to thank everyone for giving her the opportunity to be on court.

Rodriguez was one of four king candidates along with Jamarion Brown, Tyke Fluellen and Peter Noah.

Rodriguez, 17, is the son of Juan and Lorjama Rodriguez. Among his any school activities and honors are being a band drum major, NHS Vice President, class favorite, Spanish I, II and III Academic Blanket recipient, and 2018-2019 class president.

His hobbies include spending quality time with friends, playing musical instrument and reading. He said his role models are his parents and he plans to attend TCU and major in engineering.

He said he wants to go visit his family in Mexico and his favorite food is seafood. His favorite classes are math and science because he likes definite answers.

Brown, 17, is the son of Monete Brown. He was named first team All-District his sophomore year and MVP at Texas Tech's All American football camp.

He enjoys riding horses and playing sports. His role model is Kevin Durant, and he plans to further his career in football and hopes to major in Culinary Arts. He wants to visit the Cayman Islands, and his favorite food is Daisy's shrimp. He enjoys math because he loves to count money.

Fluellen, 18, is the son of Sheka Runnells. He is involved in football, baseball and track. His hobbies include sports, riding horses, spending time with friends and family. His role model is his mother.

After high school, he plans to go to college but is undecided where. He would like to visit Miami.

His favorite subject is English because "I like my teacher and it's pretty chill." His favorite food is tacos.

Noah, 17, is the son of Sharon Noah, who is also his role model. He plays catcher for the baseball team and was named District 15-5A Co-Offensive MVP.

Among his hobbies are playing sports and hanging out with his friends and family.

After high school, he plans to go to college to continue his baseball career and education and to major in psychology.

He wants to visit the Caribbean and his favorite food is Italian. His favorite class is English because it is easy and fun.



Jamarion Brown



Peter Noah



# Football teams pick sweethearts

By **KIMBERLEY GALVAN**  
**Tigertalk Staff Writer**

The 2019-2020 sweethearts chosen by the football players include: Danielle Merriman for varsity, Makenzie Pina for junior varsity and Reese Ball for freshman football.

Merriman a senior, is the daughter of Joseph and Lindy Merriman. She plans on attending college, play basketball and receive a major in Marine Biology. Her favorite class is Yearbook because she gets to capture some of the greatest memories of high school. Her role model is her mother, Lindy Merriman.

Merriman's favorite food is Chinese food from her favorite place to eat Lee's China. Her hobbies include drawing, playing video games and playing sports.

Pina, a sophomore, is the daughter of Lori Moreno Alvarado and Roberto Pina. She plans to graduate high school, then attend college in San Antonio, Texas and receive a bachelor's degree in Dental Hygienist. Her favorite class is English because her teacher is very nice. Teaches the subject good and is very helpful.

Pina's favorite food is Chinese food from Panda Express her favorite place to eat. Her hobbies include dancing and being with the people she loves.

Ball is the daughter of Tim and Rebecca Ball. Her role model is her mother, Rebecca Hall. Ball's favorite food is pasta and her



**Danielle Merrimann**

favorite place to eat is Chick-fil-A.

Her hobbies include public speaking, writing, shopping and watching TV and she is also a part of the golf and swimming teams.



**Makenzie Pina**

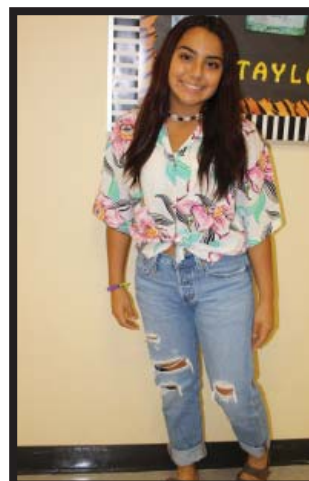


**Reese Ball**





## Homecoming Week





# High school welcomes new staff

More than 20 new people have joined the high school staff this year. The new staff includes, teachers, a counselor, an assistant principal, librarian and members in the Special Education department.

**Azeneth Aguilar** is a new teacher in the foreign language department and is teaching Spanish 2. A graduate of Texas A&M University-Texarkana, she is married to Juan Aguilar and has three children, a 12-year-old daughter, 10-year-old daughter and 5-year-old boy.

A new teacher, Aguilar previously worked at American National Bank while pursuing her college degree. She was born in Puebla, Mexico and moved to Pittsburg at the age of nine and has five siblings along with 17 nieces and nephews.

A unique instance happened to Azeneth while returning from lunch one day.

"Three years ago, I was struck by lightning outside in the parking lot returning from lunch," she said. "Funny catch to this is that I never use umbrellas, I didn't mind getting rained on. That day I happened to have an umbrella in my vehicle and decided to use it. Luckily, I didn't suffer any severe burns at all, but I did suffer internal damage that resulted in a three-day hospital stay, numerous tests and morphine to soothe the headache pain."

She said what she likes best about MPHS is "everyone has been really helpful and everyone has made me feel very welcomed here. I love it!"

**Stephanie Bumpus** is one of the new health science teachers. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree



**Aguilar**

from Northwestern State University and is currently working on her Masters of Science in Nursing Education from Sacred Heart University.

Stephanie and her husband Neal have three grown children. One daughter is an OB/GYN, another one is an elementary teacher and a third one is still in college.

Prior to MPHS, Bumpus taught as a nursing professor for four years at NW Louisiana Technical College, two years in Allied Health and Bossier Parish Community College and two years' dual enrollment pharmacy tech at Fair Park High School in Shreveport.

Bumpus, who also has two grandsons, had previously lived in England, Las Vegas and Nashville. "I love teaching kids," Bumpus said.

**Jamie Doan** is the new 10th grade counselor. A graduate of LeTourneau University, Doan has a master's degree in both school counseling and professional counseling. She along with husband David have two children – Kori, a fifth grader, and Kooper, a first grader.

She is in her 16th year of education. She taught 12



**Bumpus**



**Doan**

years in Trenton and has four years' experience as a counselor.

"The students, teachers, staff and administrators have been so helpful and friendly," Doan said.

Doan said her children are active in sports with her daughter playing softball and basketball and her son playing football, baseball and basketball. The family has a cat named Major and a Great Pyranese dog named Biscuit, who weighs in over a 100 pounds. In her spare time, Doan likes to play pia-

See New Staff, Pg. 9



## New Staff from Page 8

no and guitar.

**Mart Graham** is no stranger to MPHS, having previously served here as a football coach and chemistry teacher. Graham is the new assistant principal this year. A graduate of SFA, Coach Graham and his wife Debbie have been married 39 years. They have three children, Mart Jr. (33), Stephen (30) and Katelyn (24).

Graham has 36 years' involvement in education with teaching or coaching stints at Brazoswood, Splendora, Magnolia, Lovelady, Alto, Garrison, Cleveland and MPHS, where he has been 12 years.

Graham said, "I survived three kids and got them graduated from college." He likes the people and students the best at MPHS.

**Karrie Hargrave** is a new coach and Social Studies teacher. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Health and Human Performance/All Levels Biomechanics from Texas A&M University-Commerce.

Hargrave is beginning her fourth year of teaching with previous jobs in Center and Marshall.

"The staff is very welcoming and everyone greets you in the mornings," she said.

**Magen Harvey** is the high school librarian this year. She earned a bachelor's degree from SFA and a master's degree from Texas A&M-Commerce.

Prior to coming to the high school, Harvey taught for six years at Frisco, one year at the MPISD Child Development Center and was librarian for four years at Chapel Hill.

"Everyone I've met have been so welcoming," Harvey said. "I have loved ev-



Graham



Harvey



Hargrave



Herron

ery minute of being back in MPISD!"

**Melody Herron** has taken over as the new head volleyball coach and assistant track coach. Her and her husband Greg have four children --- Ashley (33), Kolby (21), Hannah (17) and Riley (14) along with one grandson Braxton, 5.

This is her 30th year or teaching with previous stops at Arkadelphia, Ark., New Boston, Jefferson, Paul Pe-witt and Pittsburg.

During a dive one time, Herron said she had an interesting experience. "I have

been blessed with lots of great experiences," Herron said. "Probably the scariest one was seeing a barracuda on my first dive trip and panic took over! I thought a shark was coming after me.

Herron has nothing but praise for her volleyball team.

"I am very excited to be at MPHS," she said. "I would like to thank the volleyball girls for all their hard work and making my first season here enjoyable!"

See New Staff, Pg. 10

*Pg. 9 Tigertalk*



# New Staff from Page 9

**Crystal Jentsch** is a new Biology teacher helping with special education students. She earned a bachelor of arts in Justice Studies and a masters of arts in Special Education from Grand Canyon University.

She and her husband have two children, a 9-year-old son going to Corprew Elementary and a 4-year-old daughter at CDC. The family also has a “crazy, funny dog” named Marley.

As for previous experience, she taught one year at Combs, Ariz.; was a paraprofessional for two years in an ED classroom and also teaching Resource Social Studies, US History, Economics, US Government, Work History and Life Skills and Humanities.

She has gone to supercross every year since she was 16 and said what she likes best here is “how nice and welcoming everyone has been.”

**Jason Keeney** is a new coach and freshman skills teacher. He is single and has two nephews and two nieces. He has 16 years coaching experience with jobs previously at Hamshire-Fannett, Nederland, Cumby and Cad-do Mills.

Keeney, who has walked the Freedom Trail in Boston, said what he likes best about MPHS is “the welcoming atmosphere of everyone has made the transition great. The students at MPHS have been awesome.”

**Dr. Edward Lee** is the new theatre director. Lee earned his bachelor of fine arts degree at Eastern New Mexico University, his Masters of Arts at the University of Arkansas, his Masters of Divinity and SMU and his PhD from the University of North Texas.

*Pg. 10 Tigertalk*



Jentsch



Keeney



Lee

He and his wife Jennifer have one son, Dylan. He has previously taught at Daingerfield, University of North Texas, Greenville, Carson Newman College and Lewisville.

An interesting event as a high school student, led Lee to get involved in children's theatre while in college.

“In high school, I was in a children's play that we toured to the local elementary schools. After one performance, the kids were so pleased with my character that about twenty of them jumped on me to try to keep



Martinez

me from leaving (because of course I am so lovable),” Lee said. “I had to be rescued by my fellow cast members. (Thank you Andrea Pinzo!) Perhaps that is why a friend and I started a touring children's theatre when we were in college.”

Lee said he is impressed by his students.

“We have some great talent in our Theatre Department,” Lee said. “Their excitement is infectious, and so I am excited about what we can accomplish.”

**Liz Martinez** is the new  
See New Staff, Pg. 11



# New Staff from Page 10

CTE secretary. Martinez, who attended NTCC, has been happily married to her husband for seven years and has four children.

Prior to joining the CTE Department, Martinez worked the past 12 years for JBS as an accounting specialist and sales coordinator.

"I love the work environment, and the people I work with are awesome," Martinez said.

Martinez, who overcame her fear of heights this summer, said she "loves experiencing new things and challenges."

**David McCarley** is teaching Principles of Audio/Visual, Principles of Engineering and Audio/Video Production 1 and 2.

He graduated from Texas A&M-Commerce with a degree in business and previously taught nine years at Cooper.

**Whitney McCall** is the new Health Science Practicum 1 teacher and also teaches Anatomy and Physiology. She and her husband Mitch have a 5-year-old son Walker and a 3-year-old daughter Madi.

McCall, who graduated from Stephen F. Austin State University with a bachelor's of science degree in nursing has nine years' experience as a registered nurse.

"I am looking forward to teaching and molding our future health professionals, and making a difference in their life," McCall said.

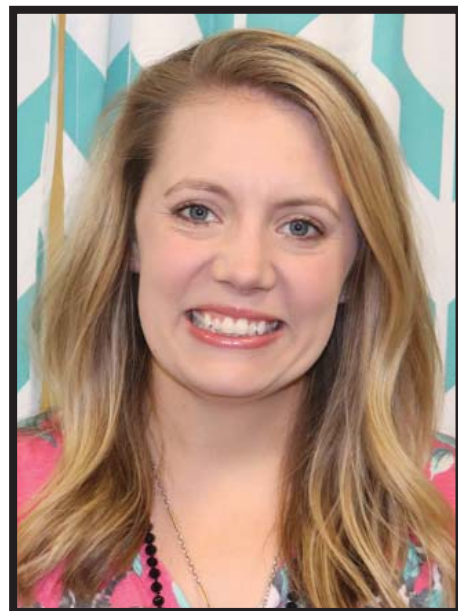
McCall, who recently moved here, said she enjoys spending time each weekend at the lake.

McCall was once a contestant on "The Price is Right" and won a dishwasher.

**Dinah Murphy**, who works in the Life Skills department,



McCarley



McCall



Murphy



Orona

earned a Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies from Texas A&M. She and her husband of 20 years have two sons and a grandchild.

"Everyone I have come in contact with has been friendly and willing to help out," Murphy said.

**Rosa Orona** is a new Algebra 1 teacher. She is a graduate of Texas A&M-Texarkana with a major in

mathematics and minor in education.

She had been married 20 years to Frankie and has a son Marco and daughter Adriana. They moved here in 2008 from Lake Arrowhead, Calif.

She taught math for six years at the junior high.

"I love seeing all my former students, and of course

See New Staff, Pg. 12

Pg. 11 Tigertalk



# New Staff from Page 11



Robbins

working with a great Algebra 1 team,” Orona said.

**Gabrielle Robbins** is a new ninth grade English 1 teacher.

A graduate of the University of North Texas, Robbins’ mother is a Life Skills teacher at the junior high.

“I love how the staff works so well together, how great my students are and how funny the English department is,” Robbins said.



Torres

In college, Robbins wrote a screenplay for a Spanish telenovela and it appeared on a local TV station in Denton.

**Ricky Torres** is a new coach and also watches over study hall classes. He has a degree in Sports Management from Mary Hardin Baylor.

He had nine years’ previous experience with teaching stops in Temple, Connally and Waco.



Vargas

“I have had the privilege to travel in my life and have lived in Washington state. I have also traveled out of the United States,” Torres said.

**Ilse Vargas** is the new migrant aide. This is her first year here.

“Getting this job was so unexpected, but I am so grateful for this opportunity,” she said. “The people are great here and really make it feel like home.”

## ‘Vampyre’ is band’s halftime theme

By ODALYS ADAME  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

The Mount Pleasant Goin’ Gold Band is back with their new halftime show, “Vampyre”, which is based on the popular movie series, Underworld.

The band began working on their show this past summer and continue to work hard on it every day.

This year’s drum majors are Nia Jackson, John Rodriguez, and Nicholas Segovia. The show this year portrays the color guard as vampires and the band as werewolves in a good versus evil dichotomy.

The audience should expect an intense show that is

See Halftime, Pg. 13



Jamye Don Juan plays clarinet during halftime.



# Portillo, Deciga chosen Band Beau, Sweetheart

By ODALYS ADAME  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

Pedro Portillo and Jenifer Deciga were recently crowned Band Beau and Band Sweetheart at this year's homecoming game.

Portillo is the son of Jose Manuel and Erminia Portillo. He serves as the section leader for the trumpets. His hobbies consist of dancing and playing multiple instruments. His biggest role model is his dad. Portillo plans to attend Independent Electrical trade school in Irving.

He would like to visit Hawaii and his favorite food is tacos al pastor. His favorite subject is history because it teaches him not to make the same mistakes based on the past. Portillo thanks his parents for their unconditional support.

Deciga is the daughter of Marisela Sanchez and Roberto Deciga. She currently serves as the color guard captain and is a part of HOSA, student council, and FBLA. She enjoys dancing and spending time with family and friends. Her role model is her sister, Ana Deciga.

Deciga plans to attend NTCC and then transfer to UT Tyler to become a neonatal nurse. She would like to travel to Paris, France and her favorite food is buffalo wings. Deciga's favorite subject is math because there's always a solution to a problem.

She thanks God for the gift of life and life and her family who is always there for her.



Deciga and Portillo

## Band from Page 12

different from the previous year.

This year marks the band's biennial state year, which is the year the band can compete for a chance to advance to state.

The band will be going against other 5A bands who are all equally competitive. With this in mind, band director, Dr. Theodus Luckett III, pushes the band to take it to another level.

"It really takes all of us to

move the band to the next level and the kids have worked hard thus far," Dr. Luckett said.

Tough competition means having to work harder to reach the level of artistry the band is going for.

"This year's show has a fast pace, without any rest. We are going from set to set marching and moving which makes it hard on us to catch our breaths," Jenifer Deciga, color guard captain, said.

Another difficulty the band has faced is trying to move fast while keeping everyone on the same page.

"The hardest part so far has been co-operating and moving as a team, but as we practice our movements have become more fluid," Jesus Vazquez, a senior baritone player, said.

The band expects to receive a 1st division rating and to bring back a few trophies.





Bailey took over for principal for Dustin Cook.

## Bailey named new MPHS principal

By GRACE WHITTEN  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

Former High School Associate Principal Craig Bailey took over as new principal for this school year.

Bailey, who graduated from MPHS in 2007, considers it “an honor to work at MPHS” and expresses his gratefulness “to serve our community and work together with our teachers and staff as we prepare students for the next phase of their lives.

“The only odd thing is sometimes students find my picture in the yearbook and see me when I had hair,” Bailey said.

In 2016, Bailey joined the high school administrative team as an assistant principal.

After his third year as an AP, Bailey received the honor of being named Associate Principal to former MPHS Principal, Dustin Cook.

As an AP, Bailey said his “job dealt with working with the math department and

supporting the campus in the AP office.”

Bailey believes the biggest challenge when becoming principal is that he is now “responsible for balancing all campus academics, regardless of the subject, with a detailed knowledge of campus procedures, communication, important dates, and organizations. We are all thankful to have exceptional students, teachers and staff at MPHS.”

The high school has approximately 1,500 students enrolled for the 2019-2020 school year. Due to the large amount of students, there is no possible way Principal Bailey could provide a reasonable level of support to each student and staff member.

Because of that, he must rely on other administrators to help him.

Although Bailey agrees it can be overwhelming at times, he states that the “campus staff and teachers

all work in unison to support and assist administration by sharing the responsibility of educating our students. Our teachers, staff and students all make MPHS a special place!”

Throughout his four months of being principal, Bailey has already made many changes in rules and organizations in an attempt to make MPHS the best it can be.

The importance of communication between students, teachers and administrators has shown through this process and Bailey has stated communication is his leadership style.

After going through all four years of the Class of 2020’s high school experience, Bailey is excited to watch the current seniors walk the stage and continue their life in a different environment.

He is hoping that he has made an impact in the lives of the students and will be wishing them the best in the next phase of their lives.



# Cheerleaders under new coaches

By MEGAN ADAMS  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

The varsity cheerleaders have started their cheer season off strong this season under the leadership of their two new coaches Tammy Thomas and Shanta Lockett.

They also started the year with three new managers, Grace Whitten, Mina Kollen Larsen and Nathalie Burge-meister. Kollen and Burge-meister are exchange students.

Thomas said the most rewarding part of being a cheer coach is when the girls do a great job on a routine.

"When the cheerleaders perform and 'kill it', I feel good knowing they are my girls, that I helped them get to that point," Thomas said.

The most difficult part is trying to balance it all.

"Trying to juggle home, teaching, and cheer and doing a good job at all," Thomas said.

Thomas said she has always enjoyed cheerleading.

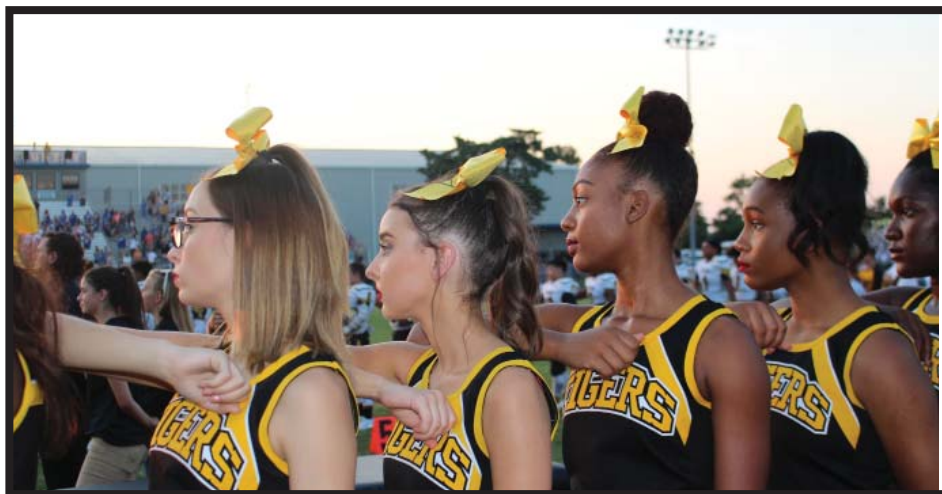
"I love cheer; it has always amazed me. I loved being a cheerleader in high school and college both. And now I get to coach what I enjoy," Thomas said.

The varsity cheerleaders this year are Head Cheerleader Emily Walden, Captain Erika Galindo, Co-captain Samantha Phillips, Felicity Miller, Clara Alvarado, Treshure Hines, Jakayla Sanders, Aunesti Brannon, Leslie Espinoza, Megan Adams, Chazlea Morris, Makayla Kirkwood, Karigan Fox, Ladi Guereca, Anna Claire Wall, Beth Lockett, Trinitee Brannon, Jordan Neal, and Katie Ochoa.

JV cheerleaders are Jillian Adair, Jahir Alonso, Malazia Batiste, Char'Kenan Ellis, Makenna Moffett and Olivia Worthey.



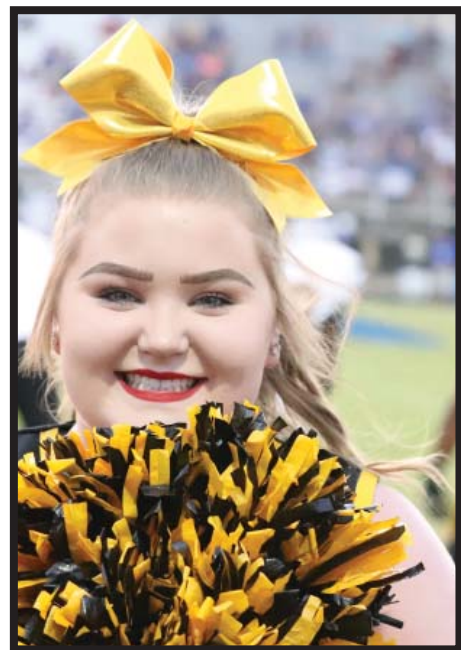
Thomas and Lockett are the new cheer coaches.



Cheerleaders stand in line for the Pledge of Allegiance.



Cheerleaders perform stunt.



Head Cheerleader Emily Walden



# Senior Spotlight: *O'Neal stays busy involved with Tigers Dolls, yearbook*

By JOSE REYES  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

Senior Baley O'Neal has little free time as she has a busy life as a high school student.

O'Neal serves as Tiger Doll Senior Lieutenant, is one of the editors for the yearbook and also is a member of FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America).

**What are three characteristics do you feel are most important when being a Tiger Doll?**

When being a Tiger Doll, a few characteristics to have is honesty, kindness, and a drive for excellence. It takes hard work and responsibility to be a Tiger Doll.

**What are you most excited for this season?**

I am most excited for Spring Show. It's a long time away' but I love it. Spring Show allows all of the girls and dance classes to display all of their hard work.

**Why do you think Tiger Dolls set a good role model for their peers?**

We set a good role model for our peers to show that there is more to life than making regretful choices. I believe that if we use our best manner, then it will inspire others to want to always do their best.

**What motivated you to become a Tiger Doll?**



O'Neal says it takes hard work to be a Tiger Doll.

My motivation was my friends. I didn't do any extracurricular activities my freshman year which meant that I never really got to see my friends because they were all in Tiger Dolls. Another factor was just my love for dance.

**Name a goal you set for yourself this year.**

My goals for this year is to be better than last year. I wish to be better physically and mentally and to become a responsible

young adult.

**How does performing make you feel?**

Performing at first is nerve-racking, but when you get into the groove of the routine, the feeling becomes electric. it's like no one else is there but you and your team

**Is there anything else you would like to share with us**

I just want to thank everyone who supports the Tiger Dolls and enjoys our routines



# Tiger Dolls halftime highlights







The Lady Tigers took first place in the Mount Vernon Tournament.

# Lady Tigers are working hard to improve under new coach

By GRACE WHITTEN  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

The Lady Tigers volleyball team has showed out this season, bringing home 14 wins which is under new coaching, Head Coach Melody Herron and Assistant Coach Karrie Hargrave, has been working very hard in an attempt to secure a spot in the playoffs.

The varsity team currently consists of five seniors, which are all four year members of the volleyball team.

Senior Allyson Swafford, a right-side hitter, says that she believes “this season has been the hardest we’ve worked.”

That hard work has evidently paid off as they continue to seek improvement. Swafford, who has been playing the sport since the seventh grade, has been working very hard since the season started and has “high hopes for the turnout of the season.”

With playoffs being the teams primary goal for the season, the players have begun to fight their biggest competitor. Senior Brooke Vaughn, an outside hitter and a left back, has expressed the team’s biggest competitor is themselves.

“We have the talent to beat anyone, but we have to get over our mindsets,” Vaughn said.



Ashlyn Brooks serves for the Lady Tigers.

See Volleyball, Pg. 19





Front row from left: Lesley Ortiz, Joseph Gongora, Martin Ponce, Jonathan Zuniga, Anthony Cortez and Angel Perez. Second row from left: Antonio Landeverde, Yazmin Pineda, Kacee Vazquez, Chris Zavala, Matthew Sampson, Jordan Kunkle, Haidie Fielder, Kimberly Gill, Chloe Garrett, Niurka Valente, Liliana Torreblanca and McKayla Grant. Third row from left: Jackie Scoggins, Abel Lozano, Wayne Smith, Antarius Howard, Elizabeth Bailey, Ricky Chamness, Zay Okoh and Karl Whitehurst.

## High school classes take tour of Dallas Cowboys AT&T Stadium

The Sports & Entertainment Marketing and Law Enforcement II classes toured the AT&T Stadium on Oct. 2.

The purpose of the trip was to learn about the marketing and security aspect of AT&T Stadium.

AT&T Stadium, home of the Dallas Cow-

boys, is the largest, most technologically advanced entertainment venue in the world.

The students along with their teachers and sponsors, Jackie Scoggins, Elizabeth Bailey, Karl Whitehurst, and Ricky Chamness all believed the educational tour was very beneficial.

## Volleyball from Page 18

After having to adjust to new people being added to the team and others graduating, they also have to adjust to their new head coach.

Coach Herron, who played college basketball and softball, has been coaching volleyball as well as other sports her entire career. After over a decade of coaching the sport, she has perfected her coaching philosophy; to “outwork our opponent.”

She believes that to make an amazing player, a student must have a “great work ethic, great attitude, and coachability.” The

new coach is “loving being [at MPHS]” and that the “young ladies make coaching fun.”

Recently, the varsity team competed in a tournament in Mount Vernon. The girls won the championship by winning all five of the games they played. The tournament consisted of high schools from across Northeast Texas, with Pewitt, Pittsburg, Rivercrest, and Queen City being some of the schools in attendance.

The team played all five games with confidence and persistence, which paid off in the end.



# Tigers look to get back on winning track

By MIGUEL ARELLANO  
TigerTalk Staff Writer

After starting out the season with two wins, the Tigers football team has come up short in their last three.

It seems like the Tigers football team is going to have a challenge ahead as they go through the rest of the season.

As for the football team, leader and quarterback Kaleb Thompson has faced challenges along the way.

"I've had to put the past football season behind me and start over this year as the leader for my team," Thompson said.

Where does Kaleb's passion and motivation come from for football come from?

"I've watched college football all my life and have loved it from the beginning," Thompson said.

Growing up in Texas and coming from a long line of high school football players has also played a big part.

As for his future after high school, Thompson would like to continue his athletic career. Along with playing football, Thompson is also a member of the baseball team.

"I would love to go to a big college athlete while studying to become a pediatric dentist," Kaleb said.

Pediatric dentist are dedicated to the oral health of kids from birth.

Our schools football team will need the support from all of us --- students, friends, and staff.

Show up to the game and cheer as hard as you can for the Tigers. As for the Tigers, make us proud!

This season let us show our school spirit to the football players to let them know that we are rooting for them.







## Cross country girls, boys win district

Both the boys and girls cross country teams took first place in the District 15-5A Meet held Wednesday.

Led by Estela Dorantes first place overall finish, the Lady Tigers cross country team came in first over Sulphur Springs.

The Lady Tigers finished with 27 points and had four of the top six finishers..

Dorantes was first with a time of 19 minutes, 3.26 seconds. She was followed by teammate Christina Gordon in second at 19:40.75. Buendy Frairie was fifth at 20:45 and Leilani Jimenez sixth at 20:47.

Jennifer Soto came in 15th at 21:48, while Katie Ochoa was 21st at 22:52 and Heshlie Castanon 22nd at 22:54.

The boys took first with 28 points easily winning first place. Four of the top seven runners were Tigers.

Brian Ramirez came in second overall with a time of 15:40 seconds. Geovanni Calderon was third in 16:08 and Gill Landaverde fourth at 16:19.

Pedro Robles was seventh at 16:27, Gilberth Landaverde 12th at 17:09, Antonio Landaverde 13th at 17:17 and Juan Gonzalez 17th at 17:46.

The JV girls came in second with 48 points. Katia



Lopez was top runner for the Lady Tigers as she was fourth in 14:48. Maritza Gonzalez was seventh at 25:03 and Arlette Dejesus at 15:08.

Virginia Landaverde came in 12th at 15:24, Jordan Neal 16th at 15:43, Yessenia Serna 17th at 15:53 and Jordyn Warren 18th at 16:06.

Other runners for the Lady Tigers were Jaquelin Lomeli, Hailey Dixon, Noemi Rios, Jessica Meija, Audrie Mendoza, Jocelin Rodriguez, Giselle Arellano, Giselle Delgado and Cynthia



Ramirez.

The JV boys were second also in team competition. Leading the team was Christopher Escobar who was first in 17:57.

Aundre Alaniz was fourth at 18:38, Jonathan Sandate 12th at 19:31, Tommy Arredondo 13th at 19:35, Didier Serrano 17th at 19:57, Sahir Ramirez 18th at 20:00 and Michael Palmores 20th at 20:08.

The boys and girls varsity teams will next compete at the regional meet on Oct. 28 in Dallas.



# Debate team qualifies for state

By **KELLY COWAN**  
**MPISD DIRECTOR**  
**OF COMMUNICATIONS**

The high school Cross-Examination team of sophomore Connelly Cowan and junior Taryn Thurman has earned enough points to compete in the Texas Forensics Association (TFA) State Tournament in El Paso in March of 2020.

They are among the first five teams in the state to qualify. Cowan and Thurman competed at Lindale on Sept. 21 and took the CX championship, with Cowan being named Top Speaker and Thurman earning third place speaker honors.

This latest win earned them the remaining points needed to qualify for the TFA state tournament.

Also at Lindale, in Lincoln-Douglas debate, senior Caroline Rose and junior Reid Pinckard both made it to the quarterfinals. Pinckard also advanced to the semifinal rounds of Domestic Extemporaneous Speaking.

Both Rose and Pinckard are close to earning enough points to qualify for state as well.

In Prose, freshman Madeline Tumey-Simmons placed 6th. And in Novice Oral Interpretation, Tumey-Simmons placed 2nd and freshman Silvia Sustaita placed 4th.

"The team has been on a roll so far this year," said MPHS Speech and Debate coach, Cody Morris. "They put in a ton of



From left are Reid Pinckard, Silvia Sustaita, Caroline Rose, Connelly Cowan, Madeline Tumey-Simmons and Taryn Thurman.

work this summer and it is showing. Connelly and Taryn winning two tournaments has already surpassed their total of 1st place finishes from last year. Caroline and Reid both have a good jump on earning enough points to

become the first LD Debaters to qualify for state in school history. I am so excited to see what the rest of this year has in store for us."

The team is coached by Morris and assisted by Lea-Holli Hensley.

# Senior Sam Pearson named National Merit Semifinalist

By KELLY COWAN  
MPISD DIRECTOR

**OF COMMUNICATIONS**  
Senior Sam Pearson, has been named a National Merit Semifinalist. Pearson took the Preliminary SAT (PSAT) as a junior in October of 2018 and scored in the top 1% of all test takers in the state of Texas, thereby earning the recognition as a Semifinalist, one of approximately 16,000 from across the nation.

These academically talented high school seniors have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 7,600 National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$31 million that will be offered next spring.

Over 1.5 million juniors in about 21,000 high schools entered the 2020 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2018 PSAT, which served as an initial screen of program entrants. The nationwide pool of Semifinalists, representing less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors, includes the highest-scoring entrants in each state.

The number of Semifinalists in a state is proportional to the state's percentage of the national total of graduating seniors.

To become a Finalist, the Semifinalist must have an outstanding academic



**Class of 2020 Counselor Jerilyn Goolsby, Sam Pearson and Principal Craig Bailey**

record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay, and earn SAT® or ACT® scores that confirm the student's earlier performance on the qualifying test.

From the approximately 16,000 Semifinalists, about 15,000 are expected to advance to the Finalist level, and in February they will be notified of this designation.

National Merit Schol-

arship winners of 2020 will be announced in four nationwide news releases beginning in April and concluding in July.

These scholarship recipients will join more than 345,000 other distinguished young people who have earned the Merit Scholar title.

Sam is planning to major in Electrical Engineering and is applying to Texas A&M at Commerce. He is the son of David and Kim Pearson.



# 20 Questions with Mrs. Parker

By DEBORA TREJO  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

In each issue of Tigertalk a different teacher is featured.

This year's issue features Mrs. Sadonna Parker who teaches Forensic Science.

## 1. What do you like best about being a Teacher?

I have had many unique experiences in my life and enjoy incorporating them into my lessons. I also like teaching new skills to students.

## 2. What would your ideal vacation look like?

A friend of mine just returned from Israel. I was humbled as she posted pictures of the places where Jesus stood. I dream of taking a trip just like that.

## 3. How would you describe your classroom environment?

Once the basics are down, my class is mostly hands on. (My students would describe it as cold, lol)

## 4. If you weren't a teacher what other career would you have chosen?

This isn't my only 'career.' I've worked in retail, laboratories, pharmacies, trained exotic animals and worked security for the music industry. I chose to be a teacher once I started a family.

## 5. What's a family tradition you're very fond of?

I enjoy getting together for Christmas. It is difficult since everyone is spread out over different states but it is a very special time.

## 6. What are your everyday essentials?

Coffee!

## 7. If you were given one million dollars what would you do with it?

Tithe, pay off my bills, buy, buy a small ranch, and increase my Dad's scholarship.

## 8. What is your most prized

*Pg. 24 Tigertalk*



Parker would love to travel to Israel one day.

## possession?

My bible and a letter that my dad wrote when he was in the Army.

## 9. Who was your role model growing up?

My dad was my role model and I strive to be like him. He loved God, was a hard worker, a good provider for our family, and treated all children like they were his own. I started a scholarship in his honor.

## 10. What is the first thing you thought of this morning?

"Good morning Lord, and thank you for today!"

## 11. What gets you out of bed every morning?

My dog...at 4:00 am every morning

## 12. If you had a full day off what would you do with it?

Anytime I have a full day off I work in the pasture with the horses.

## 13. What's the great-

## est purchase you've ever made?

I don't know if it's the greatest purchase, but I purchased my first NEW car for ME (and not for someone else) last year. I was excited.

## 14. Do you have any pets?

I have seven horses, two cats, a dog and a wolf hybrid...and any stray that passes by.

## 15. If you had any superpower what would it be?

If I could have a superpower I would want control of nature. I'm tired of buying hay and I hate weeds in my pasture. (I really like a good thunderstorm occasionally, too) Mind control was tempting.

## 16. What's the best thing about MPHS?

The best thing about MPHS is the student body. I had heard so many negative things about this school be-

See Parker, Pg. 25

## **Parker from Page 24**

fore coming here and none were true. It is unusual for students at a school this size to be so polite and compassionate. I love MPHS.

### **17. What is something you can't live without?**

Jesus, family and college football.

### **18. If you could only eat at one restaurant for the rest of your life where would it be?**

I don't really eat out but if I had to choose I suppose it would be Chick-fil-A.

### **19. What is your favorite TV show?**

Any forensic TV shows, Forensic Files.

### **20. What is your favorite high school memory?**

An upper classman was in a car accident involving a drunk driver. (She is still in a wheelchair) She missed a lot of school and was ultimately placed in my graduating class the following year. We were not very close prior to the accident but became best friends afterward and did ev-

everything together.

Our school had two floors but unfortunately didn't have an elevator, only grand spiraling (concrete) staircases. We had to carry her piggy back up and down the stairs to get her to class. As she regained some of her balance, I would put her on the banister and let her scoot down to get to the first floor. (Don't freak out it was a wide banister and I held on to her!) I can still hear her laugh echoing in the hallway in my mind.



From left are Rider, Shavers, Young, Carpenter, Bagsic, Segovia and Sterrett.

## **Students earn All-Region Jazz honors**

Six members of the high school Jazz Band were named to the All-Region Jazz Band after auditions at Texas High School on Sept. 17. In order to audition, students had to prepare three short technical pieces in the Jazz style, and improvise with a rhythm section.

Having only a few short weeks to prepare, each piece required a high level of skill, as well as a mastery of the

Jazz style. MPHS was well represented at the audition, making up 32 percent of the All Region Jazz Band.

Those named to the All-Region Jazz Band include Donovan Young (Jazz Piano), Gavin Rider (Jazz Guitar), Manoa Bagsic (2nd chair Alto Saxophone), Brock Shavers (Baritone Saxophone), Nicholas Segovia (1st chair Tenor Trombone), and Madison Carpenter (5th

chair Trumpet). This is Rider's 2nd year to make the All-Region Jazz Band.

"I'm extremely proud of each student that auditioned," said MPHS Jazz Band Director, Jamey Sterrett.

"Their hard work, and dedication to excellence continues to set them apart from all others. I'm truly honored to assist them on their musical journey."





# FFA EDUCATION DAY





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# Tiger Roar

What is your favorite Halloween costume?

Tiger Roar page by Tigertalk Staff Writer Gavin Rider



"Spiderman (Miles Morales)"  
-- Tyler Welborn, 11



"Rapunzel"  
-- Mya Clark, 11



"Iron Man"  
-- Rianna Jeffery, 12



"Micheal Scott"  
--- Connelly Cowan, 10



"Brown Cow"  
-- Grace Whitten, 12



"Ghost Face"  
-- Jose Trejo, 9



"Clown."  
-- Connor Brisson, 12



"Pirates"  
-- Sam Pearson, 12



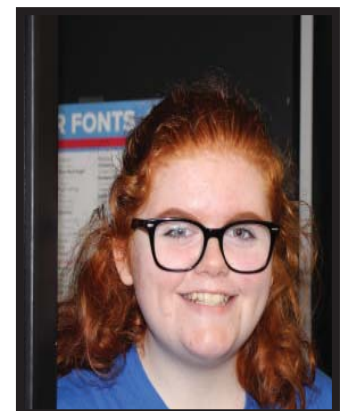
"Toph Beifong"  
--- Ms. Merrimann



"Spiderman"  
--- Param Poudel, 9



"Fat Ninja"  
--- Noah Dumlao, 11



"Post Malone"  
--- Skylee Ford, 12