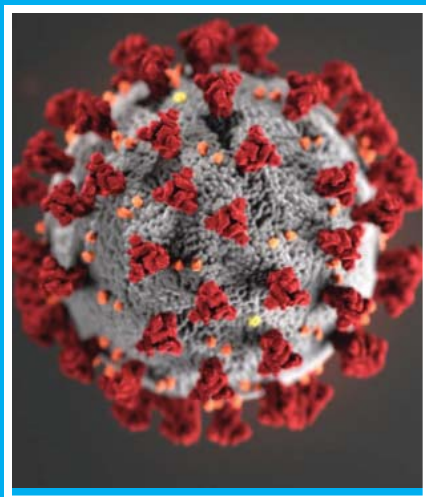


# Tigertalk

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**COVID-19:  
One Year  
Later**



**Tigers have historic  
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**Volume 46**

**Issue 3**

**March 2021**

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The Bass Fishing Team continued its season in the first tournament of the spring semester at the Texas High School Bass Association (THSBA) tournament on Lake Bob Sandlin.

First for the Tigers, the team of Mya Clark and Makayla Houchin placed 9th out of 91 teams with 2 fish weighing 5.98 lbs. The team of Cody Slone and Clayton Miller finished just behind in 10th place with 3 fish weighing 5.84 lbs. Ethan Cota, Bryce Bartlett, Zane Phillips and Tyler Welborn also competed for the Tigers but were unable to pull anything in before time ran out.

The MPHS anglers will be on Lake Tawakoni on March 27. They will be fishing for a chance to make it to the state tournament in May.

## 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.

# CORONAVIRUS

## COVID-19: One Year Later Students, staff adjust to virus changes

By ALEX HARRAH  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

During this global pandemic which has lasted over a year and is still going strong, we are all aware of the obvious changes and alterations in school rules that affect both the student body and the staff.

From the questions I asked Principal Craig Bailey, I got some agreeable responses which we will explore throughout this article.

### How has school changed during the pandemic?

“Our school follows the COVID-19 protocol district policies regarding health and safety. These policies include: face coverings, encouraging social distancing, hand sanitizer stations throughout the campus, and consistent disinfection of restrooms, classrooms and other surfaces regularly used.” Bailey said.

“Our custodians work daily to meet our campus needs, and we appreciate their hard work. Especially during this time, we are so thankful for our school nurse, Ms. Pettite. Ms. Pettite works very hard and always does so with a smile on her face,” Bailey said.



Bailey

I, for one, am extremely grateful for the dedication to the students' health that they mentioned above. As a student at MPHS, I'm thankful that the custodians and other staff are working so hard to maintain social distancing rules, mask mandates, and cleanliness protocols.

### How do you feel about still having to wear masks?

I appreciate our students and staff supporting our COVID-19 protocol and working alongside us to keep our campus healthy and safe. I do not mind wearing masks because it keeps our campus safe and eligible to participate in all the academic, athletic, and social events we love

at MPHS,” Bailey said.

Recently, there was an update saying that the mask mandate was lifted in Texas. I don't think this is a good idea, I think the masks are helping to slow down the advancement of the coronavirus spread.

I believe that us wearing the masks in school, as they said above, helps keep the campus healthy and safe. I have a feeling that once the mandate is off and people cease to continue wearing masks, we are going to end up with a spike in cases again.

### How has the learning experience been during COVID?

“Dealing with COVID-19 during construction and alongside virtual learning has been a demanding experience. I am thankful that all of our staff have been supporting our safety protocols and the logistical changes required on campus. Our students adapted to these changes exceptionally well,” Bailey said.

It's amazing that everyone adjusted well, I know personally that many schools didn't transition very well to virtual school

See Coronavirus, Pg. 5





Front row from left are Ryan Sharp, Isabella Greco, Reid Pinckard, Madeline Tumey-Simmons and Merlin Cardona. Back row from left are Taylor Hubbs, Connelly Cowan, Taryn Thurman, coach Enrique Martinez and Anthony Orellana.

# Speech, Debate qualify for national tournament

After two weekends competing against nineteen other East Texas teams at the National Speech and Debate Association (NSDA) District Tournament, the Mount Pleasant High School Speech and Debate came away with overall Team Sweepstakes, Debate Team Sweepstakes, 2nd place Speech Team, and Student of the Year awards, with six team members qualifying for the National Tournament and one 1st alternate.

The National Qualifying tournaments were held virtually February 26-27 and March 5-6.

The National Speech and Debate Association is divided into 111 districts. Each NSDA District has the opportunity to name a District Student of the Year award, presented to a graduating senior who best represents the tenets of the Association's Code of Honor: humility, equity, integrity, respect, leadership, and service. Nominees must also demonstrate strong academic credentials and a commitment to the speech and debate community.

*Pg. 4 Tigertalk*

Senior Reid Pinckard was named the NSDA UIL District Student of the Year, the first such award for MP Speech and Debate. He is a four-year member of Mount Pleasant Speech and Debate and a three-time National Qualifier.

In Cross-Examination Debate, the team of senior Taryn Thurman and junior Connelly Cowan claimed one of only 4 qualifying spots out of 18 entries. It will be their third appearance at the national tournament. In 2019, they finished in the top 58 out of 180 teams at Nationals. And in 2020, they finished in the top 52 out of 192 teams.

In Lincoln Douglas debate, MPHS took two of the four qualifying spots. Pinckard will be making his 3rd appearance at the national tournament. In 2019 he competed in Extemporaneous Speaking, Extemp Debate and Impromptu Speaking, making it into the top 90 competitors in Impromptu. He also competed in Lincoln Douglas Debate in

See Nationals, Pg. 5

## **Coronavirus from Page 3**

and then back to in school learning. It's very fortunate that everyone adjusted to the changes so well.

### **How has the staff and student body adapted to wearing masks?**

"Our students and staff have been outstanding! They both recognize the importance of safety and support our efforts to continue to come to school and participate in all the ways we represent MPHS," Bailey said.

I'm very glad that both the students and staff both realize the importance of wearing the masks, especially in between classes where everyone is crowded together and rushing to classes. I'm happy to see such a great transition into wearing masks in school.

### **What has been the biggest challenge dealing with COVID?**

The most challenging aspect of this year is not seeing the students and greeting them in the hallways as easily as a typical year. I enjoy speaking to our students and asking them about their events and activities, and it is sometimes difficult to recognize students when they're wearing masks. Overall, I still do my best to reach out to our phenomenal students and don't let the masks stop me from telling them how important they all are to me and to our school." Bailey said.

It seems that despite the challenges, everyone has done their best to overcome it and not let it stand in the way



Jesse Nell Parchman, below, and Gracie McClendon each show off their masks.



## **Nationals from Page 4**

2020.

Sophomore Anthony Orellana will be making his first appearance at Nationals in Lincoln Douglas Debate.

In Extemporaneous Speaking, senior Isabella Greco was one of the top four speakers in out of 51 entries in US Extemp and will make her 2nd appearance at the national level.

Junior Taylor Hubbs was one of the top 4 speakers in International Extemp and will also make her second appearance at the national tournament. Both Greco and Hubbs competed at nationals in World Schools De-

bate in 2020.

Senior Ryan Sharp qualified for Nationals in Humorous Interpretation and will make his 2nd appearance at the National tournament. Sharp competed in World Schools Debate with teammates Greco and Hubbs in 2020.

Sophomore Madeline Tumey-Simmons earned a first alternate spot in Dramatic Interpretation and may get to compete if a qualifier cannot attend.

The online NSDA National tournament will be held June 13-19, 2021. MPHS Speech and Debate is coached by Enrique Martinez.



# MPHS CTE teacher prepares to deploy for overseas tour

By ODALYS ADAME  
Tigertalk Editor

MPHS is full of a diverse body of employees who all have unique experiences and more than likely worked a different job before settling down in Mount Pleasant.

One in particular is CTE teacher Ms. Jessie McDowell who previously served 7 years of active duty and is excited to go back to serve again this year.

McDowell has been a part of the military for a total of 10 years with 3 being spent in the reserves. While being in the reserves, she decided to go into teaching and taught Animation and BIM at MPHS.

For one weekend a month, McDowell has to travel to the Tinker AFB in Oklahoma to keep up with both her civilian life and working life. McDowell's official job title is an Airborne Radar Technician Evaluator and holds the rank of Technical Sergeant.

She has been stationed at Tinker AFB her entire career but notes that she has been deployed 3 times to "undisclosed locations in the far east."

Her job in the Air Force is to fly as an Airborne Radar Technician on the E-3 AWACS or Airborne Warning and Control System. She deals with software, hardware, frequencies and surveillances. While flying, she "operates and optimizes" the radar and other aircraft systems.

The aircraft is responsible for keeping an eye on other nation's aircrafts from the air along with other types of missions. They perform surveillance missions and sup-

See McDowell, Pg. 7

Pg. 6 Tigertalk



McDowell is in the Air Force Reserves.



## **McDowell from Page 6**

port troops on the ground in several locations around the far east. While she does operate aircrafts, she is not a pilot and is referred to as a “flyer”. During missions, she can fly for 15-20 hours every couple of days. She has over 2,000 hours of experience flying in an aircraft.

Some people find it daunting to join the military but other find it rewarding and a challenge that could change their lives forever. McDowell was one of those who regarded it as a chance to make something out of themselves.

“As a high school student, I was always motivated and at the top of my class. I knew I wanted to make something of myself... but my family couldn’t help me pay for college. I wanted to push myself, learn unique skills and have this larger purpose to my work. The military was the answer to all of that. I love our country and the freedoms we take for granted. I do my small part to make sure it stays that way.” McDowell states.

While in service, McDowell learned military jobs and went on to earn 3 Associates Degrees, 1 Bachelor’s degree, 1 Master’s degree which were all paid by the military. She has earned 3 Air Medals, 2 Commendation Medals, and has received the John L. Levitow award.

One thing McDowell will miss while being away from home is different colors.

“While deployed, all the vehicles, equipment, uniforms and buildings are all meant to be discreet and blend in with the environment. So... the people are tan. Buildings are tan. Cars are tan. I miss all the colors of flowers, having trees and grass. I miss rainstorms, fresh air and TREES! I’m pretty sure I’ll



**McDowell is an Airborne Radar Technician.**



never actually be used to 130 degree weather!” McDowell comments.

When asked if there was any advice she would like to give to those who plan to serve as well, McDowell answers,

“I wish students knew the wide variety of jobs the military offered! Want to be a lawyer, dental hygienist, chef, police officer, investigator, Public Affairs journalist or doctor? You can do all these things in the military! It’s so much more than marching around, using weapons or deploying.

The military can propel you ahead of your peers that go to college! Student 1: goes to college for 4 years after high school, then starts job searching with 0 real work experience. Student 2: in those same 4 years, get trained in specific skills, get a degree or several for free, and when you get out of military, you have tons of work experience and people will want to hire you!”

MPHS is proud to have an employee as dedicated and experienced as Ms. McDowell.



# CTE classes provide wealth of real world opportunities

By ALEX HARRAH  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

February was CTE month, so I took the time to compile a list of questions to ask Mr. Karl Whitehurst, the head of the CTE department.

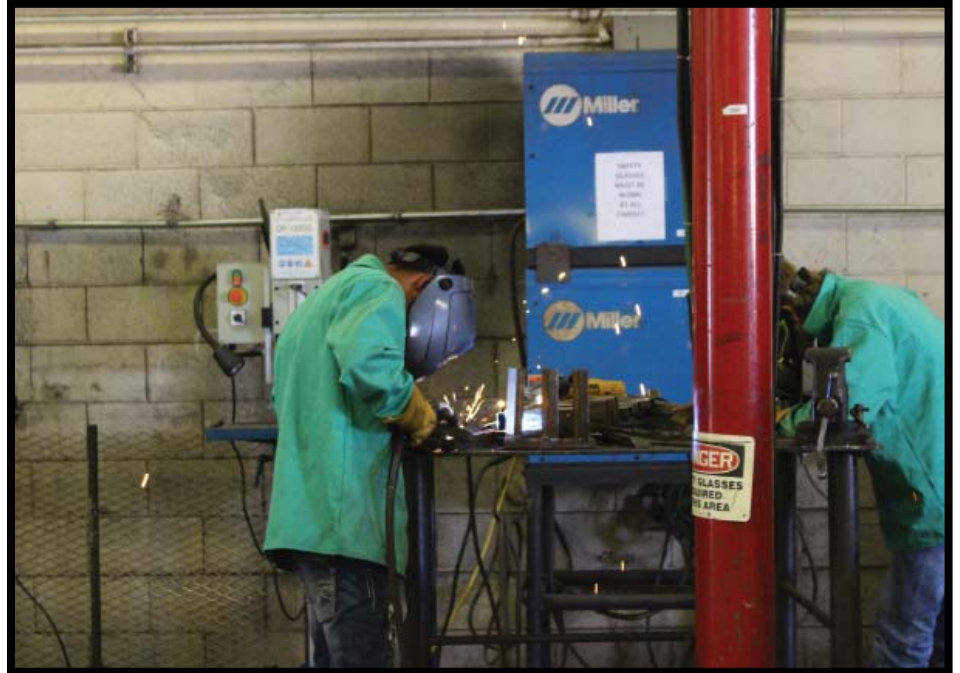
The answers should help have a broader grasp on the importance of CTE classes and why students need them to be more successful when trying to get a job either while being in college, or instead of going to college at all.

This article should answer questions you might have about the efficiency of CTE classes in helping to prepare students for the real world, rather than just preparing them for tests and quizzes.

“CTE classes prepare students by giving them real-world learning and experiences. We want to simulate what the student will experience in a real work environment as closely as we can,” Mr. Whitehurst said.

I agree completely that they help simulate work experiences while still having that safety net of it only being a class. I see it as a sort of trial run for realistic work situations, and help train students to be able to deal with these situations when they end up in actual jobs that could form into their lifelong careers.

“The biggest benefit is that CTE classes are specifically aligned to career pathways. Students are able to choose a pathway and learn specifics that deal with that pathway choice. This can include up to date technology, real-world experiences such as internships and job shadowing, and actual on-site



Welding is one of the many opportunities in the ag department.



Students learn cooking skills in culinary classes.

working,” Whitehurst said.

By doing this, I believe that the CTE classes really help students get a sort of a head start boost into their career choice by helping them form important connections in their path, take a step into

what it will be like working that job

Of course, it helps students get acquainted with what they will be doing in the future.

“CTE connects learning

See CTE, Pg. 9



## CTE from Page 8

to the real-world by staying up to date with industry practices. The real-world is constantly changing, so we have to change with it to get our students ready for the career that they choose. We also have to stay up to date with the real-world technology, which is hard because it changes even faster than other parts of the industry. We have to continue to strive to give our students the best technology that we can,” Whitehurst said.

This is a big part of getting the students acquainted with the real world. How is a student supposed to accurately learn to be a good journalist if they’re being taught with the exact same tools that’s been used since 2001; simple, they cant.

Students need to be kept up to date with the tools that are currently being used in their career choice. How something was previously taught in the past normally isn’t relevant to how it needs to be taught now to keep up with today’s society. Tradition isn’t always the best approach.

“The CTE program at MPHS connects students to jobs that are in high-demand. We want each of our students to leave here and be ready to go into the workforce or be ready to go into higher education. We work hard to give students valuable experiences that we believe will help them in their professional lives,” Whitehurst said.

Because the CTE program connects students to high-demand jobs, this gives them a bit of a “leg-up” by helping them form connections with people who are running certain high-demand jobs. That way student can utilize these bonds and connections to get a headstart on getting jobs or



**Students are able to take part in health science and photography classes as well to help learn useful job skills.**



recommendations.

CTE classes help students open their eyes to new career options they may not have previously considered by starting with freshman skills classes, which every freshman takes.

“This course gives them insight into different careers. We want students to see what is out there. A lot of students do not know what they want to do when they enter high school, so we want to show them a lot of different careers out there and help them when they choose a career pathway. We finish with a CAP

class for seniors. Although we do not require CAP, when a student chooses to take this course, they gain insight into careers, higher education, and military pathways. We don’t want to choose for our students, but when they do choose a pathway, we want to help them be successful,” Whitehurst said.

I think this is a great way to go about it, by nourishing their minds and starting the classes a bit young, it gives the students an early start on exploring their choices and experimenting with career options.



UIL students show off their trophies and medals they won earlier this semester.

# UIL students remain focused on district despite distractions

By ODALYS ADAME  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

This year Academic UIL has looked a bit different for all the competitors yet it has not deterred them in the slightest. Most competitions have been held virtually or postponed multiple times yet all the students managed to secure many wins for MPHS.

The Academic UIL teams have been busy preparing for the upcoming district meet this weekend.

One example would be junior Connelly Cowan who was named the 2021 UIL State Congress Bronze Medalist in 5A even after multiple change of dates.

Through these confusing times, the UIL teams have been able to keep themselves focused and contin-

*Pg. 10 Tigertalk*

ued to practice their event regardless of the situations involving meets.

Whether their competitions cancelled or not, the teams have been rigorous in their practice and have secured multiple wins in the meets they could attend.

The teams of Math, Spelling, Ready Writing, Lit Crit, Current Events Social Studies, and Journalism were all able to win first place team in the UIL Tiger Invitational. With many things up in the air, these wins were able to dissipate any doubts teams had.

With district meets approaching, many teams have begun to put their all into their event.

One team in particular would be the Social Studies team, which is coached

by Ms. Leann Blalock.

The event includes 45 objective questions and an essay. Students are required to read a book over the topic for the year as well as supporting documents while also learning the required 100 people and terms.

As district approaches, the team has begun to choose who will be attending by taking multiple practice test and writing essays.

Every day, the students use flashcards to memorize the terms and people as well as reviewing the book to be prepared for their competitions.

Regardless of the situations and restrictions placed on UIL, the students have stayed resilient and showed their perseverance with all the medals they have won.





From left are state qualifiers Jordi Bello, Jillian Adair, Brianne Davis, Abril Ramirez, Migel Guerrero, Jacori Turner, Hope Powell, Jashari Inostros and Emyly Lopez. Not pictured is Dulce Rivera.

## Choir students advance to state

Eighteen choir members competed at the Regional UIL Solo and Ensemble Contest at Trinity Baptist Church, singing a variety of art and folk songs.

Of those, 10 MPHS soloists have advanced to the State contest.

To qualify for the state solo and ensemble contest, a student must score a "1" on a

Class 1 solo, the most difficult to memorize and perform.

MPHS state solo qualifiers include Jillian Adair, Jordi Bello, Brianne Davis, Migel Guerrero, Jashari Inostros, Emyly Lopez, Hope Powell, Abril Ramirez, Dulce Rivera, and Jacori Turner.

Eight members received 2nd division ratings includ-

ing Kevin Garcia Ortiz, Emily Pearson, Adrian Perez, Jose Escobar, Litzy Gonzalez, Anthony Ramirez, Sha'Alice Ty'Son and James Yepez.

The state contest will be held virtually on May 29-31. The choir is directed by Nancy Vines with accompaniment provided by Deanna Warren.



Front row from left are medalists Jillian Adair, Brianne Davis, Abril Ramirez, Jordi Bello, Migel Guerrero, Jashari Inostros, Emyly Lopez, Jacori Turner and Hope Powell. Back row from left are Litzy Gonzalez, Jose Escobar, James Yepez, Anthony Ramirez, Adrian Perez, Sha'Alice Tyson and Emily Pearson. Not pictured are Dulce Rivera, Kevin Garcia Ortiz, and James Yepez.



Taryn Thurman and Nicholas Segovia prepare for their state competition.

## FBLA students advance to state

The Mount Pleasant High School Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) students competed virtually in the Area VI FBLA Leadership Conference and had a very successful showing. Twenty-three students placed first and a total of thirty-eight team members qualified for state.

They competed in the virtual FBLA State Leadership Conference earlier in month. They will receive final state results later this month.

The top four in each event at area advance to state. Advancing to state for MPHS are:

- Accounting1—Rylan Hubbs (2nd place)
- Advertising—Emma Baggett (2nd place), Tairielle Chong (4th place)
- Broadcast Journalism—Megan Adams, Leslie Espinoza, and Elizabeth Lockett (1st place)
- Business Calculations—Miguel Segura (1st), Patricia Roque (2nd), Peyton Hein (3rd)
- Business Ethics—Nevaeh Bardwell and Mary Kait Heeren (1st place)
- Computer Problem Solving—Abby Phelan (2nd place)
- Digital Video—Pablo Mata, Elijah Rider, and Gavin Rider (1st place)
- E-Business—Rossy Banegas (1st place)
- Healthcare Admin—Faith Logan (3rd place), Jessie Nell Parchman (4th place)

Intro to Business Communications—Rese Ball (2nd place), Abigail Retana (3rd place)

Intro to Business Procedures—Sophie Greco (1st place)

Intro to Event Planning—Desirea Easley and Hope Powell (1st place)

Intro to Public Speaking—Angelina Hernandez (2nd place)

Job Interview—Anthony Orellana (1st place)

Marketing—Nicholas Segovia and Taryn Thurman (1st place)

Political Science—Kylie Hedge (2nd place), Michelle Calderon (3rd place)

PSA—Isabella Greco, Taylor Hubbs, and Ryan Sharp (1st place)

Publication Design—Gaven Fife and Joshlyn Paloblanco (1st place)

Sales Presentation—Tyler Welborn (2nd place)

Website Design—Alejandra Ramirez, Victor Diaz, and Sashi Poudel (1st place)

Also placing in their events were Luz Gonzalez, 5th place in Healthcare Administration, and Madison Adams, 5th place in Journalism.

At the Area VI Leadership Conference, Taylor Hubbs was selected Who's Who

See FBLA, Pg. 13



# Three theatre members earn recognition for All-Star Cast

The Mount Pleasant High School Theatre department competed in the UIL One Act Play competition held earlier this month. Three members of the production earned individual awards for their performances.

Sophomore Pearl Murrillo was named to the All-Star Cast for her portrayal of Woman in Queenly Spanish Garb. Senior Lexie Humber earned Honorable Mention All-Star Cast for her portrayal of Woman Who Plays Records.

And sophomore Garrett Evans was named to the All-Star Technical Crew for his work as the Light Operator.

This year's production, *Chamber Music*, is a 1962 one-act play by absurdist playwright Arthur Kopit.

The story is set in 1938 and concerns eight famous women from different historical periods who all are interned in the same insane asylum. The women have assembled to discuss grievances and other important issues concerning the inmates of the women's ward.

The most pressing subject they have is planning for an attack they believe is soon to come from the men's ward. The women are — or at least believe they are — author Gertrude Stein, martyr Joan of Arc, activist Susan B. Anthony, politician Queen Isabella I of Spain, Constanze Mozart (wife of the famed composer), pilot Amelia Earhart, silent-film actress Pearl White, and explorer Osa Johnson.

The cast featured Lexie Humber as Woman Who Plays Records, Silvia Sustaita as Woman in Safari Outfit, Summer Murrillo as Woman with Notebook, Saray DeLaRosa as Girl in Gossamer Dress, Reese Loving



From left are Evans, Murrillo and Humber.

as Woman in Aviatrix Outfit, Pearl Murrillo as Woman in Queenly Spanish Garb, Percy Buendia as Woman in Armor, Rosario Bello as Woman with Gavel, Madison McNeil as Attendant in White, and Isai Ramirez as Assistant.

The Crew included Stage Manager Rian Richie, Light Operator Garrett Evans, Sound Operator Sha'Alice Tyson, and Backstage Crew members Ashanti Presley, Daniel Polomo, Nayeli Rivera, and Saray DeLaRosa.

The MPHS Theatre department is directed by Dr. Edward Lee.

## **FBLA from Page 12**

award recipient for Mount Pleasant and is a finalist for Area VI Vice President.

"This year was one of the more challenging ones for our FBLA members.," said Advisor, John Whitten. "Due to COVID, students were unable to compete face-to-face as they as they normally would. Instead, all of their competition was held virtually, making it even more of a challenge for our students with presentation events.

"With no judges present, students had to

record their presentations and simulate them as if judges were present. Despite all of the challenges, our students rose to the occasion and represented MPHS very well. I am extremely proud of our students and look forward to them competing and doing their best on the state level."

The Advisors for MPHS FBLA are Whitten, Shanta Lockett and Jessie McDowell.

# Tigers have historic season

The Tigers basketball team had a season to remember as they went 27-1 this season and were ranked as high as third in the state.

Mount Pleasant went undefeated during the regular season and then opened the playoffs with wins over Lufkin, Waco University and Huntsville.

Unfortunately, the Tigers season came to a tough end with a two-point loss to Lancaster in the regional semi-finals. Lancaster was ranked number one in the state at the time. The Tigers gave Lancaster all they could handle but ended up losing a close game by just two points.

Head coach Joey Chism was named Coach of the Year for the fourth time. Other honors included Zaveion Chism-Okoh and Payton Chism being named District Co-MVPs and Will Hills as Defensive MVP.

Jakybrein Hines and Kelcey Morris were named to the First Team All District. Earning second team honors were Miller McCrumby and Xzavier Brown. Ed Wilder was Honorable Mention All District.



**Zaveion Okoh-Chism**



**Payton Chism**



**Coach Joey Chism**



**Kebo Hines**



**Xzavier Brown**



# Sharp swims his way to state

Senior Ryan Sharp wrapped up his high school swimming career at MPHS with another trip to the state meet.

Sharp qualified for state all four year of high school. This year he qualified in two different events, the backstroke and the butterfly.

“It felt nice knowing that I was getting to represent the school at the highest level of competition,” Sharp said on qualifying for state.

Despite not having a swimming competition pool to practice regularly in has not slowed Sharp down but it has been an obstacle to overcome.

“Two of the hardest challenges I have faced is getting to a pool to practice and getting over the death of my swim coach in 2018,” Sharp said.

Sharp said his interest into swimming was through friendships.

“Lots of my friends were swimming, and it seemed like an easy way to stay active during the summer,” Sharp said.

He said that he has breathing techniques that is used to calm his nerves before a race.

“Most of the time, I am more excited than nervous,” Sharp said.



Sharp is pictured with his regional medals.

## Four Tiger lifters advance to region

By DONALD WOODS  
Tigertalk Contributor

The Mount Pleasant Tiger Powerlifters finished their season on Thursday March 4 at the Regional meet in Whitehouse. The Tiger lifters qualified 4 members of their team for the 2021 season.

Starting off in the 165 class, Senior Zane Phillips (2020 Regional qualifier – BO) had trouble with his opening Squat weight.

After missing on his 1st two attempts, Phillips finally was able to get some momentum, and a favorable call, and get a good lift, which allowed him to move on to the Bench part of the meet.

Phillips had quite a better bit of favor in the bench, finally making it past the 200lb mark for a new personal record of 220 pounds. In the Dead lift portion of the competition, Phillips tied his best attempt for the year of 430 pounds, which put him tied for 5th place.

With the tie, the tie breaker is determined by the weight of the two opponents; Phillips body weight was less than his opponent, so he received the 5th place ranking and medal.

Moving on to the 181 class, Junior Elias Elizondo (2020 Regional qualifier) finished the night ranked 11th. Having a subpar night by his standards, Elizondo did manage to tie a personal best in the Bench, but failed to reach his numbers in the squat and dead lift.

In the 2020 class, Junior Astin Ledbetter (3rd year) made his first appearance in the Regional competition. Although Ledbetter struggled with his Squat, he tied a PR of 270 on the Bench and he still managed to set a Personal record for Total Weight by lifting a combined total of 1170 pounds.

Finally in the SHW class, Senior Tyler Welborn (4th year) made his first appearance in the Regional competition as well.

Welborn came out of the gate

“running” as he quickly bested his previous Squat record by posting a final squat of 500 pounds.

Next, he bested his Bench record by recording a final bench of 250 pounds. Finally, Welborn finished his night besting his previous record in Dead lift by lifting 465 pounds.

His attempt at 485pounds and a 5th place finish and medal came to naught when he pulled the weight, but stepped out of his stance causing a scratch and a 6th place finish.

All in all, our Tiger lifters had a respectable showing at the Regional meet. Some PR's were made, some new Totals were gained, but the goal of State qualifying was not to be had on this night.

For some, there will be next year, but for others, their Powerlifting days are over.

No matter what, our Tigers will take with them two things:

#Character Counts and #Every Rep Matters



JD Mendoza



Alex Diaz

# Boys soccer makes playoffs

By MIGUEL ARRELLANO  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

The boys soccer season is looking to have a long playoff run as they get ready to take on Nacogdoches Friday night.

The playoff game starts at 7 p.m. at Sam Parker Field.

Earlier in the year, junior JD Mendoza said "this season will be different because last here we got hit with COVID which really affected us but this year hopefully we'll be different and hopefully have a chance at the regional tournament and hopefully bring home the state which is difficult but can be done."

COVID last year affected soccer by ending it before they could finish the season. It truly was a shame but this season will be different.

As the season went along, the team was facing with some injuries.

JD replied with "every team has their ups and downs which can be injuries, which is definitely hard losing a team-

mate."

This can tell us that they truly care for one another, as a true team should.

As for what it takes to become a great soccer player, Mendoza said "mentally and great work effort especially having great coaches that teach that little details when big ball games."

Motivation can be a helping hand in winning the games. Therefore, what motivates the team to reach the top?

"The expectations of the program would definitely be the reason why," Mendoza said.

The school expects that the team will do their very best at each game.

"I feel like we have accomplished a lot this season whether it was winning games but mostly building a brotherhood. That no one can take from us," Mendoza said.

With all of this said and done, I would strongly recommend supporting the Tigers in their game Friday night.





The Lady Tigers soccer team gets ready for an upcoming game.

# Lady Tigers reach postseason

By MIGUEL ARRELLANO  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

This season for the girls' soccer team has been a very good one as they finished third in district.

The Lady Tigers are scheduled to travel to Lufkin Thursday night to begin the play-offs. The question is how this season differs compared towards last year.

Faith Logan said with "this season was very different due to COVID, whereas we weren't be able to do as much team bonding which was very missed."

While Jaycee Woods said "we lost a few players, so adjusting to that and COVID-19 has affected things too."

These could also be continued as difficulties, so that begs the question what kind of difficulties has the team encountered?

"The team has experienced losing multiple starters, which has pushed our younger players to step up," Logan said.

Meanwhile Woods said, "we are short on extra players, so our starters have to push through the entire game, even when tired."

As for what makes a great player, both Woods and Logan have similar answers.

Woods said "someone who is dedicated and willing to work hard. Also someone who puts their team above themselves."

Logan said that "a great soccer player is someone who pushes themselves for the betterment of the team."

Motivation is also important to the team as



Isabel Gonzalez dribbles the ball.

it helps them win.

"We are motivated to follow our past years along the academic and athletic success, and to pass torch," Logan said.

Woods agrees, saying that past success motivates the team along with belief in their coaches.

# Three Lady Tigers lifters reach state

By DONALD WOODS  
Tigertalk Contributor

On Tuesday March 2nd, the Lady Tigers travelled to Whitehouse to weigh in for their Regional Powerlifting meet, but all did not go as smoothly as planned as one Lady Tiger had to work a little to make her weight.

Junior Marianna Gonzalez (1st year) came into weigh-ins 1.3 pounds over her weight class max. Unknowing to her, the bottle of water she drank on the way to weigh-ins probably caused the problem. With a determined spirit, and with an encouraging team, Marianna went to work running and doing cardio for the next hour. With 5 minutes left before weigh-ins was over, Marianna stepped on the scale and just came in under the 132.5 max at 132.4 pounds. (This story will come into play a little later.)

On Wednesday March 3rd, the Lady Tigers made the trip to Whitehouse again, but this time to compete in the Regional Meet. The Lady Tigers team is comprised of 14 total members, of which 10 qualified for Regionals.

First up for the Lady Tigers was the 114 class, consisting of Senior Joshlyn Paloblanco (2020 Regional qualifier) and Junior Arlette DeJesus (1st year). Paloblanco, who has struggled with a knee injury would persevere and finish the night, and her career, with a career high 470 pounds and a 7 finish.

DeJesus, who also has been struggling with a muscle injury of late, fought valiantly and moved herself into the 5 spot, finishing the night with a total of 545 pounds and claiming the first medal and points of the night.

Next up was the 132 class which saw two more Lady Tigers take the platform. Sophomore Alexandra Martinez (2020 Regional qualifier) and Junior Marianna Gonzalez (1st year) fought neck and neck the entire meet, going back and forth.

When the weights were racked, both Martinez and Gonzalez claimed points for their team. Martinez finished the night with a total of 645 pounds and the 5



Jalissa Alvarez



Ashlynn Brooks

spot, medaling for the first time in her Regional career, while Gonzalez's huge deadlift of 285 pounds on her last lift, increased her total to 660 pounds, nabbing her the 3rd place medal, and only 15 pounds away from a State birth.

The Lady Tigers had two lifters competing in the 148 weight class, which was probably the most close-knit race of the night, seeing competitors from 3 different schools vie for two State births. Senior Ashlyn Brooks (2020 State qualifier) was looking to go back to back with another State birth this year, but two girls stood in her way.

The Squat was a battle from the start and left Brooks in 2nd

place, behind by 5 pounds. The Bench would see Brooks drop in the standings from 2nd to 3rd and leave her looking at 2nd place 20 pounds ahead and 1st place 40 pounds ahead. Quit, however, is not even a word in Brooks' vocabulary.

Steadfast and stone-faced, Brooks set out to not only catch her two competitors in front, but beat them both resoundingly in the Deadlift. Having to gain a personal record on her final attempt of 320 pounds is what Brooks needed in order to tie for 1st place and knock out the 2nd place competitor.

Quiet, reserved and confident,

See Powerlifting, Pg. 19



# Powerlifting from Page 18

Brooks stepped onto the platform, set herself, and pulled her 320 lb PR, solidifying her 1st place finish (2nd because of her 8 lb weight differential) and her 2nd State birth in two years. Also in the 148 class, Junior Elizabeth Lockett (1st year) had huge increases on the year of 50 pounds on the squat and 55 pounds on the deadlift, giving her a Regional total of 610 pounds placing her in 8th place, and giving her a personal record in all three events.

In the 165 class, the Lady Tigers lone competitor was Senior Jalissa Alvarez (2020 Regional qualifier). From the start it was a fight. After the Squat was completed, Alvarez stood alone in 1st place by 20 pounds. The Bench saw Alvarez gain another new PR, but it wasn't enough to hold her 1st place ranking as she fell to being tied for 2nd by a 25 lb margin (a 45 lb swing.)

However, Alvarez new her best event was yet to come. Confident in her ability to overcome her previous deadlift failures, Alvarez bounced around with her toothy smile, excited about the challenge she faced. Quickly closing the 45 lb gap on her first Deadlift attempt, Alvarez took a narrow lead on her 2nd attempt, presenting her third attempt as her showcase moment. Her final attempt would put the icing on the cake, as she dispensed of her 320 lb PR, crushing her competition and taking 1st place, and the State birth, by a 40 lb margin.

Finally, in the 181 class, the Lady Tigers had three lifters competing, the most in any weight class for the Lady Tigers. Sophomore Jenna Cook (2nd year) and Freshmen McKinsee Oviedo (1st year) battled all night to see who would close the gap on their Tiger teammate, Sophomore Nayeli Jaimes (2020 State qualifier). When you hear of two competitors being equal, these two young ladies will come to mind.

Oviedo took the early lead over Cook after the Squat by posting a PR of 280 pounds, while Cook posted a 275 lb PR. The Bench would show the same kind of back and forth as the squat, but with Cook getting the edge, grabbing a new PR of 115 pounds, and Oviedo posting a PR of



**Nayeli Jaimes**

110 pounds. The final event, the Deadlift, would prove to be the deciding factor between the two teammates.

With her final attempt, Oviedo would push her limits and lock onto a new PR of 280 pounds, giving her a total for the day of 670 pounds, and a 6th place finish, 5 pounds away from a medal. Cook would finish the night with a total of 635 pounds and a 7 finish.

Neither Cook, Oviedo nor any of the other 10 lifters in the 181 class would prove to be any match for Jaimes on this day, as she led from start to finish. Starting with the Squat, Jaimes jumped out to an early lead, and by the time the squat was complete, Jaimes had a 70 lb lead, as she gained a new PR of 370 pounds.

The Bench saw two competitors draw as close as 25 pounds away, but that would be as close as anyone would get for the night as Jaimes would put up a respectable bench, but dominate in the Deadlift. Pulling 275 pounds on her first attempt, 300 pounds on her 2nd attempt, and completing her night with a PR of 330 pounds, Jaimes finished her night with a new PR total of 840 pounds, solidifying her 1 ranking and 2nd straight State birth.

On the night, the Lady Tigers finished with 6 medals:

1st place (tie) 148 class – Ashlyn Brooks – State Qualifier (5 pts)

1st place 165 class – Jalissa Al-

varez – State Qualifier (7 pts)

1st place 181 class – Nayeli Jaimes – State Qualifier (7 pts)

3rd place 132 class – Mariana Gonzalez (3 pts)

5th place 114 class – Arlette DeJesus (1 pt)

5th place 132 class – Alexandra Martinez (1 pt)

2 Top Lifters:

Jalissa Alvarez – Light platform Best Deadlift

Nayeli Jaimes – Heavy Platform Best Squat

And a total of 24 points and a tie for 2nd place (3rd place because of less 1st place finishers than the tying team).

There are no words to express the hard work, effort and dedication these young ladies have put in since the first day of practice. To see the changes in their weight totals, their physical attributes and just their demeanor in the weight room is incredible.

I am proud of the entire Lady Tiger Team, not just the ones who qualified for Regionals, but for each of those who came to work every day striving to become better, and be better teammates. The character these young ladies show on a day to day basis makes me very proud to be associated with each and every one of them.

The THSWPA State Meet will be held in Corpus Christi Texas on March 20th at 8 a.m.

GO TIGERS!

#charactercounts

#everyrepmatters

# Senior Spotlight:

## Segovia serves in many leadership positions at MPHS

By ODALYS ADAME  
Tigertalk Editor

Many students in MPHS are known for their relenting dedication to education and one of those happens to be senior, Nicholas Segovia.

Segovia currently serves as Assistant Drum Major for the Goin' Gold Band and has for the past 2 years. His sophomore year of high school he secured the role of Section Leader for the trombones with only one year of experience.

An impressive feat in itself, Segovia has also been commended for his leadership skills in other organizations.

In National Honor Society, Segovia serves as the parlia-



Segovia

mentarian and conducts himself in proper behavior to set the example for his peers. He is also member of FBLA and has placed multiple times in his event. He is also a member of Student Council and

Jazz Band.

Segovia notes that two teachers who have positively influenced him are Dr. Luckett and Mr. Russell.

"Dr. Luckett has always pushed me to pursue what I am passionate about and Mr. Russell expanded my knowledge on engineering," Segovia states.

As a result, Segovia plans to attend Texas A&M College of Engineering with an intent on majoring in either Nuclear or Electrical Engineering with a minor in Computer Science.

Segovia's favorite part of his senior year thus far has been growing up and being able to open up a new chapter as an adult. The thought of graduating from college and being a part of the first generation in his family to do so has kept him diligent in school and continues to be a pushing factor for his excellence.



## Tiger Dolls win awards at competition

After missing out on their second competition and a week of practice due to the weather, the Tiger Dolls attended their second and final competition of the season last month with Showtime International at Lake Ridge High School in Mansfield.

Pg. 20 Tigertalk

The Tiger Doll team earned 9 awards in total: Sweepstakes (85 and above all on routines), Judges Award (90 and above on all routines), Best in XL Category: Runner Up Military, First place Pom, and First place Hip Hop, Supreme Pom (highest scoring

pom routine), Supreme Hip Hop (highest scoring hip hop routine), Team Champion Circle, and 3rd Place Best of the Best (3rd place out of all teams entering the competition).

See Tiger Dolls. Pg. 22



# Twenty Questions with Ms. Lunsford

By ANGEL ACUNA  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

In each issue of the Tigertalk, the newspaper staff highlights a teacher or staff member.

This issue spotlights English teacher Britney Lunsford.

**1. What is something you learned in college other than major?**

One of the most interesting (and surprisingly difficult) classes that I took in college was Geology. The different types of magma will have you rethinking any desire you've ever had about living in Hawaii.

**2. What did you most enjoy about college?**

My friends! I joined a sorority my sophomore year and it was the best thing I could have done. (Not all sororities are Panhellenic, just throwing that out there!)

**3. What talents do you have?**

I don't know that this would be a talent, but I can read a 500 page book in a single day (typically during summer, not so much during the school year).

**4. What would you want your last meal to be?**

It's a toss-up between my mom's spaghetti or steak and potatoes. (Spaghetti would probably win though.)

**5. What event would you like to know the whole and complete truth about?**

I've always been curious about what happened to Amelia Earhart.

**6. What is the fast way you have lost money?**

Without a doubt, eating out and Starbucks!

**7. What is something you regret eating?**

I tried liver and onions when I was about 13 and then vowed to never even be in the same room with it again.

**8. What's something that you would be willing to stay up all night to do?**

Stargazing! If you've never looked at the moon or Sirius through a telescope, you need to try it at least once in your life.



**Ms. Lunsford's dream vacation is to go to Scotland and Ireland.**

**9. What do you hope to be an expert about at some point in your life?**

Cooking and/or baking! I'm fairly talented when it comes to cooking, but there's a lot that I'd like to know.

**10. What's the way you find yourself procrastinating most?**

Ironically, planning is how I lose a lot of time. I spend a lot of time making plans and end up losing that time for getting things done.

**11. What's your dream vacation?**

I would like to visit Ireland and Scotland.

**12. What accomplishment are you most proud of?**

I'm proud of being one of the handful of people in my family to graduate college. (Although there's nothing wrong with not going to college!)

**13. Do you like any sports, if so college or professional?**

I like watching a lot of different sports, but I really love watching SFA's basketball and football games! If there's an SFA game, you can almost guarantee that I'm tracking the score. If we're talking strictly about professional sports, I really only enjoy watching the MLB.

**14. What is the best dish you ever cook?**

I make a really tasty tomato

and zucchini risotto.

**15. What conspiracy you wish was true and why?**

I wish Area 51 had as much weird stuff as people think it does. I think we could learn a lot from any of the stuff that they supposedly have.

**16. What was your best and worst subject in school?**

My best subject was English (no surprises there, I'm sure), but my worst was undoubtedly anything math related.

I tell my students all of the time that I was a mercy pass in high school for Geometry!

**17. If you could have any superpower, what would it be?**

I would love to be able to fly!

**18. What is your favorite book?**

I have several for different reasons, so that's a tough question!

**19. What is your biggest pet peeve?**

People who drive with their headlights off when it's misting or raining!

Yes, it may be during the day, but that doesn't mean people can see you through the gloom and rain!

**20. What is your favorite TV show?**

I really don't watch tv, but I thought the concept of Grimm was really interesting. It had such a great take on the Grimm fairytales!



# Art students advance to state

Fifteen Mount Pleasant High School Art students entered 18 pieces at the virtual Visual Arts Scholastic Event (VASE) held last month.

Two MPHS students will move on to the state competition which will also be virtual in April. Art pieces were scored as a 4 (Excellent), a 3 (Strong), a 2 (Developing), or a 1 (Emerging).

All 18 of the MPHS entries earned the max score of 4. In order to advance to state, the piece must first earn a rating of a 4.

All of the 4's in a particular division are then judged a second time and state advancements are awarded based on an allotment, roughly 10% in each division.

Earning scores of 4 (Excellent) and

moving on to state are senior Mya Clark and junior Rosario Bello.

Also earning scores of 4 (Excellent) are Christopher Bello, Parker Colley, Rafael Garcia, Mariana Gonzalez, ZZ Lee, Jose Lopez, Alison Majors, Anaeli Navarro, Luiz Olvera, Daniela Robles, Silvia Sustaita, Kurion Walker, and De'Asia Woodson.

"I would like to congratulate the MPHS Art students for their efforts and rewards in receiving 20 medals at the Regional VASE competition," said MPHS Art teacher, Laura Kirkland.

"I am happy to say MP will be taking 2 of these hard-working students to state! I am very proud of how our students did and how well they represented MPHS."

## Tiger Dolls from Page 20

The officer squad brought home 10 awards: Sweepstakes (85 and above on all routines), Judges Award (92 and above on all routines), Best in XL Category: Runner Up Jazz, First place Lyrical, and First place Hip Hop, Applause Award for Entertainment and Crowd Appeal in Officer Hip Hop, Supreme Lyrical (highest scoring lyrical routine), Supreme Hip Hop (highest scoring hip hop routine),

Officer Champion Circle, and 2nd Place Best of the Best (2nd place out of all officer teams entering the competition).

First Lieutenant Madyson Arzate, was named solo finalist and runner up Solo Champion with Junior Lieutenant Nevaeh Bardwell being named a solo runner up.

The Tiger Dolls will now prepare for their annual Spring Show set for April 16-17.



# WHAT WILL YOU BE AT NTCC?



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# Tiger Roar

What is your favorite cereal?

Tiger Roar page by Tigertalk Staff Writers Angel Acuna and Miguel Arrellano



"Fruit Loops"  
-- Samuel Dorantes



"Lucky Charms"  
-- Oscar Tellez



"Apple Jacks"  
-- Emma Baggett



"Honey Nut Cheerios"  
--- Mauricio Sandoval



"Trix"  
-- Jennifer Martinez



"Frosted Flakes"  
-- Gavin Rider



"Honey Bunches of Oats"  
-- Elias Mendoza



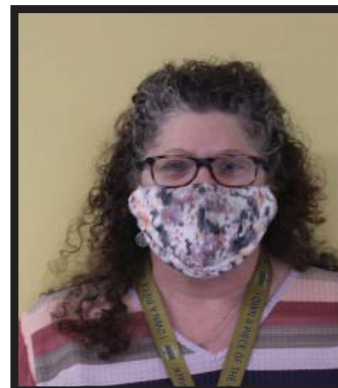
"Milk, no cereal"  
-- Ruben Carreon



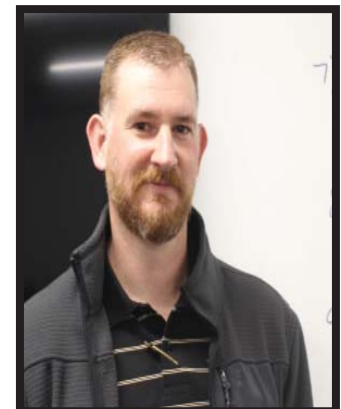
"Circus Balls"  
--- Tairielle Chong



"Honey Combs"  
--- Omarian Alcibar



"Frosted Flakes and  
Fruit Loops"  
--- Mrs. Nickerson



"Raisin Bran"  
--- Mr. Blackstone