

Tigertalk

Mr. and
Miss
MPHS
named

Christmas Queen Johana Perales
and King Daniel Adame

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MPHS Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) Advisors and Officers recently attended the FBLA National Fall Leadership Conference in Dallas.

Tigertalk

NEWS STAFF

Editor: Nathalie Rojas

Practicum 2: Idania Castanonm, Ana Ceballos, Ali Fair Cheek, Noemy Dorantes, Isaiah Rodarte, Jovani Garcia, Juan Sierra-Rosales and Zachary Smallwood.

Newspaper 1: Alfred Anderson, Ivan Banda, McKenzie Barnes, Jasmine Briones, Jennifer Castro, Jonathan Chamorro Bonilla, Aniya Crump, Daniele Culvinar, Isaac Flores, Yahir Gonzalez, Angel Hernandez, Jassiel Hernandez, AJ Jeff, Emily Ortiz, Anjelique Sanchez, Raymond Sanchez, Kristina Tidwell and Jorge Zuniga.

Advisor: John Whitten

Special Contributor: Kelly Cowan,
MPISD Director of Communications

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Adame, Perales named Christmas King, Queen

By IDANIA CASTANON

Tigertalk Staff Writer

This year's seniors elected Daniel Adame and Johana Perales as the 2023 Christmas King and Queen.

Perales is the daughter of Reyna Caamal and Jose Perales. Johana is a part of the Student Council, Cheer, and Practicum II medical assistant program. She won a national MVP award for cheer.

When asked how she felt about being picked by her classmates as Christmas queen, Perales said, "It makes me feel happy to know that my classmates acknowledge my kindness towards them and others around me."

Her main hobby is dance, and her favorite movie is *"The Polar Express."* After high school, she plans to attend college and get a bachelor's in science with hopes of becoming a dentist.

Her favorite Christmas memory is being able to celebrate Christmas with her entire family at her aunt's house and being able to open presents before going to bed.

"My favorite Christmas tradition is when my family and I wear matching pajamas and enjoy quality time as a family, it warms my heart!" Perales said.

Adame is the son of Maria and Sergio Adame. Daniel has been a part of the soccer team for all 4 years of high school, and this will be his 3rd year in the electrical program.

When he was asked how he felt about being selected as Christmas king this is what he said.

"It feels good to know that my classmates are allowing me to represent this," Adame said.



Adame and Perales ride in the annual Christmas Parade.

His hobby is soccer, and his favorite movie is also *"The Polar Express."*

Adame's future plans are to attend college for a power plant program in hopes of becoming an electrician.

His favorite Christmas memory is spending Christmas with my family.

"My favorite Christmas tradition is being with my family and opening gifts that we give to each other," Adame said.

CHRISTMAS PARADE





Cross, left, and Green were honored by their senior peers.

Seniors elect Green, Cross 2023-24 Mr. and Miss MPHS

By NOEMY DORANTES
Tigertalk Staff Writer

High school seniors recently chose Owen Green and Ella Cross as Mr. and Miss MPHS in a balloting done for senior superlatives.

Green is the son of Darby and Jacob Green. In school, he is a part of National Honor Society and FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes). He participates in football, track, and golf. He plans to attend college and play football while he gets a degree in finance.

He enjoys working out, hanging out with friends, and playing sports in his free time. His favorite show to binge watch is *The Office*. The teachers who have impacted his life the most are Ms. Priefert and Ms. Meriman.

"I can always go to them for help and advice," Green said.

What Green likes the most about MPHS is the teachers and the students. His favorite memory in school was winning the senior night football game because it gave MPHS its first winning record in over a decade.

When Green was asked how it felt to be recognized

by his classmates he said, "it's a great honor and I really appreciate being recognized by my peers."

Ella is the daughter of Sharla and Casey Cross. Throughout high school she has been a part of softball, the Medical Assistant Program, and has been an athletic trainer. She plans to attend Yale University and play softball in the future. She wants to major in biology and become an orthodontist.

She likes playing guitar and piano during her free time. Her favorite show is *Grey's Anatomy*. Her role models are her mom and her grandma.

Her favorite memory in MPHS is making it to the regional tournament with the basketball team. What she likes the most is being able to take medical classes that interest her. The teacher who has made an impact in her life is Ms. Priefert because she's always there when she needs someone to talk to.

Upon being named Miss MPHS, Cross said, "it felt really amazing to be recognized by my classmates and friends. It felt really good to know that I have positively impacted my school and I'm honored my classmates chose me to represent our school."



From left are Otero-Svirska, Hernandez, Amin and Rundles

Debaters advance to state

MPHS Speech and Debate competed in the Regional Congressional Debate tournament at the Region VIII Education Service Center on Thursday, Nov. 9.

For the second year in a row, Mount Pleasant was the only 5A school competing. So the competition was an intrasquad battle for who would earn the top three places and advance to state. MPHS has had a state competitor every year since 2017 and team members have earned UIL state bronze and state 4th place medals and have had the UIL State Top Presiding Officer in recent years.

Senior Angelina Hernandez was the Regional Champion with junior Gopi Amin placing 2nd and freshman Sabrina Otero-Svirska placing 3rd. Amin was also named the Top Presiding Officer. Senior Kiara Rundles placed 4th and is the first alternate to state. This will be the second trip to state for Hernandez and the first for Amin and Otero-Svirska.

UIL Congress is an individual contest in a large

group setting. It models the legislative process of democracy, specifically, the United States Congress. Within this mock legislative assembly competition, contestants draft legislation (proposed laws and position statements) submitted to the tournament, and they research the docket of bills and resolutions dealing with real-world social and political policies prior to the contest to prepare their speeches.

At the tournament, students caucus in committees, deliver formal discourse on the merits and disadvantages of each piece of legislation, and vote to pass or defeat the measures they have examined. Parliamentary procedure forms structure for the discourse, and students extemporaneously respond to others' arguments over the course of a session.

Hernandez, Amin, and Otero-Svirska will compete at the UIL State Congressional Debate tournament in Austin on Jan. 10-11, 2024. MP Speech and Debate is coached by Lara Martin.

Senior superlatives announced

By ALI FAIR CHEEK
Tigertalk Staff Writer

The following seniors were selected for senior superlatives by their classmates.

Mr. and Miss MPHS - Owen Green and Ella Cross

Most Athletic - Boys: Dylan Bennett, Antez Jeffery, and Mason McMinn; Girls: Ahli Hernandez, Briana Gonzalaz, and Ella Cross

Most Talented - Boys: Shpat Zeqaj, Joseph Tolentino, and Jose Fuentes; Girls: Genevieve Rubio, Stephanie Hernandez, and Abigail Renata

Most Likely to Succeed - Boys: Nathaniel Martinez, Clinton Debord, and Mason McMinn; Girls: Sophie Greco, Angelina Hernandez, and Kiara Rundles

Best Personality - Boys: Ventura Ramirez, Skyler Guereca, and Jason Barrientos; Girls: Angelina Hernandez, Johana Perales, and Auti Johnson

Most Fashionable - Boys: Emiliano Graniel, Richie Alicabar, and Chris Moreno; Girls: Mea Banda, Yvette Cruz,

and Caroline Curry

Best Smile - Boys: Edgar Flores, Kai Price, and Daniel Mejia; Girls: Ashley Rosales, Lori Pina, and Sophie Greco

Most School Spirit - Boys: Ventura Ramirez, Harrison Wall, and Drew Dyke; Girls: Morgan Hill, Casey Jones, and Hope Powell

Most Changed since Freshman Year - Boys: TJ Shine, Carlos Diaz, and Ricardo Barboza; Girls: Sonia Suistatia, Mea Banda, and Jordan West

Most Dramatic - Boys: TJ Shine, Antez Jeffery, and Joseph Tolentino; Girls: Kaylee Connally, Kaylee Silman, and Emilee Miles

Most likely to be late - Boys: Carlos Diaz, Luis Sandoval, and Gabriel Rodriguez; Girls: Lori Pina, Marlyn Estrada, and Emily Ortiz

Best Friends Forever - Boys: Daniel Adame-Edgar Flores, Drew Dyke-Harrison Wall, and Colton Jagers-Trevor Broach; Girls: Jocelyn Marroquin-McKinsee Oviedo, Allie SloaneHannah Anderson, and Conlee Zachry-Ella Cross.

Students pick class favorites



Seniors Ali Fair Cheek and Joseph Tolentino



Juniors Sanaey Eaves and Luke Thurman



Sophomores Samson Perez and Ashley Licona



Freshmen Donato Castro and Selena Cruz



New members of the MPHS NTHS chapter.

NTHS inducts new members

Fifty-seven Mount Pleasant High School students were inducted into the National Technical Honor Society (NTHS) at a candlelight ceremony on Thursday, November 16 in the MPHS auditorium.

To be a member of NTHS, a student must be enrolled in a Career and Technical Education (CTE) class, meet a set cumulative weighted GPA, be a member of a CTE organization (FBLA, HOSA, SkillsUSA, FFA, FCCLA, TPSA), complete service hours, and maintain a clean discipline record. The 57 new members join the 28 returning senior members bringing the total membership to 85 juniors and seniors.

NTHS officers for 2023-2024 are President Jose Fuentes, Vice President Genesis Aguilar, Secretary Cheyenne King, Treasurer Lakyn Fortenberry, Historian Andri Price, and Officer at Large Jason Barrientos, Reporter Cecilia Phan, Sergeant at Arms Hope Powell, Project Officer Jose-line Almazan, and Parliamentarian Estefani Garcia.

New members for 2023-2024 are Rachel Albin, Gema Amaro, Gopi Amin, Natalia Aspeitia, Melanie Barraza, Veronica Bernardino, Karson Brown, Elizabeth Buck, Ariana Cruz, Diya Desai, Maleah Duenez, Drew Dyke, Steffanie Espiritu, Ke'Aundra Evans, Briana Gonzales, Patricia Gonzalez, Jessica Hang, Madison Hargrove, Addison Heeren, Kelsey Howard, Eli Hernandez, Karen Hernandez, Jasmine Landaverde, Kaira Leija, Melanie Logue,



The 2023-2024 MPHS NTHS officers from left are Lakyn Fortenberry, Jason Barrientos, Genesis Aguilar, Cecilia Phan, Jose Fuentes, Estefani Garcia, Cheyenne King, Joseline Almazan, Andri Price and Hope Powell.

Andres Lopez, Jocelyn Marroquin, Gracie Martinez, Raquel Martinez, Kennady Mayben, Daimarie Memije, Kevin Mendoza, Braiden Merryman, Clayton Miller, Jesus Moreno, Allison Nieto, Jake Noble, Kimberly Victoria Pantoja, Ashley Pena, Daniela Pina, Mat Potter, Bianca Quistian, Cinthya Ramirez, Kimberly Ramirez, Manuel Ramirez, Kaylee Ramos, Abigail Retana, Francisco Rodriguez, Guadalupe Rubio, Xitlaly Sanchez, Michelle Sandoval, Amy Santillan, Araceli Solis, Christopher Sorto, Katherine Thompson, Harrison

Wall, and Daniela Zuniga.

The returning senior members are Shirlyn Cardona, Idania Castanon, Oscar Castellanos, Nathaniel Cates, Nicholas Cates, Perla Ferretiz Dominguez, Isabel Garza Aguirre, Rocio Herrera, Araceli Landaverde, Silvia Lopez, Harley Martin, Annie Munoz, Joel Palacios, Andrew Perez, Charis Ramirez, Nathali Rojas, Emilia Vega, and Shpat Zeqaj.

Advisors for the organization are CTE teachers Donna Davis and Jackie Scoggins with CTE Director Karl Whitehurst.

Journalism students get new opportunities with magazine

By IDANIA CASTANON

Tigertalk Staff Writer

The 2023-2024 school has many new things in store regarding the journalism department. For example, Mr. John Whitten has started teaching his new Practicum in Magazine class.

He has a total of six students writing for the magazine. Isaiah Rodarte, Noemy Dorantes, Ana Ceballos, and Ali Fair Cheek are all new students.

Nathali Rojas had written for the magazine the previous year and continues to do so along with previous magazine writer Idania Castanon. Getting closer to the end of the first semester, these students have already released their first fall issue of the year.

"It is awesome. The magazine class has been such a fun class. The students are hard workers and take pride in their work. I am looking forward to seeing the students' progress as they continue to grow in the class," Whitten said.

Magazine students have many concepts that they have to do in order to put a story together. They need to come up with questions to ask the person that fits their topic. Mr. Whitten picks different topics based on the many different schools in the district. All of them love writing for not only the school district but for the community as well.

"I feel beyond honored. I had no clue we were writing for the community; it truly feels amazing," Rodarte said.

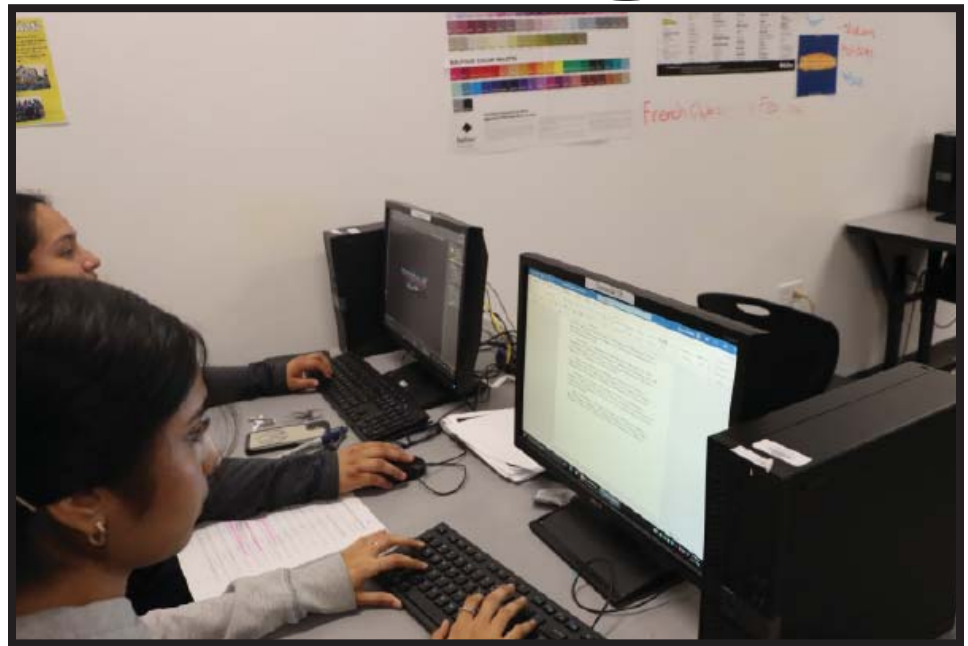
Each student has many different reasons why they love writing for the magazine.

"My favorite thing about writing for the magazine is writing about different schools and what they're doing at school," Rojas said.

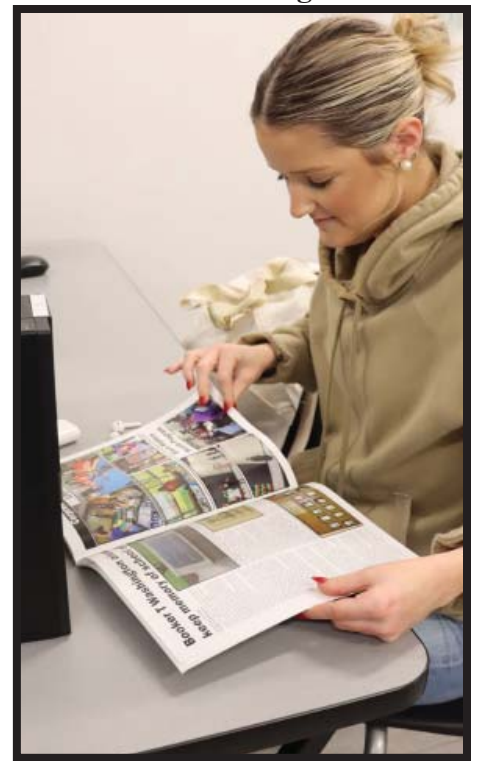
"I like getting to learn things about the people that I'm writing about in our communities," Dorantes said.

"I feel excited to take on an important responsibility," Cheek said.

"My favorite thing is that I get to see my work recognized and posted on the



Noemi Dorantes and Ana Ceballos work on the magazine.



Nathali Rojas, left, and Ali Fair Cheek look over previous magazine issues for story ideas.

magazine," Ceballos said.

"One of the things that I love about writing for the magazine is being able to see what all that goes on in different schools and then writing stories so that others in the community can see it too,"

Castanon said.

"I expect my students to work hard, meet their deadlines and represent the magazine and journalism department to the best of their ability. They have done a great job!" Whitten said.



Members of the UIL Academic Team

UIL team adding new members, gets second place in first meet

By ANA CEBALLOS
Tigertalk Staff Writer

After a successful UIL season last year, there have been many new additions to the UIL team. The journalism team is a primary example of this after going from a team of six members to a staggering team of 12. For the past three years they have doubled in size every year.

The journalism team captain senior Idania Castanon competes in News Writing, Editorial Writing, and Feature Writing. She said that some things she wants to improve in is prevent herself from going all out on her stories she has learned “the simpler the better.”

In order to prepare herself for the competition, Castanon likes to ensure her teammates are all well prepared and confident. For Castanon the thing she likes the most about UIL competitions are the “fun times that we have on our way to competition and our way back.”

Although others live to compete,



Noemy Dorantes shows off four medals she won.

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UIL from Page 10

sometimes the journey is better than the destination.

Some returning members to the journalism team include senior, Noemy Dorantes who competes in News Writing, Editorial Writing, Copy Editing, and Feature Writing. Dorantes expressed she wants to improve on “pretty much everything. This is my 2nd year in the UIL Journalism,” Dorantes said.

To prepare herself for the events, she tries to study their structure and review examples before competition. When asked about what she likes the most about UIL, Dorantes said “I like getting to compete with all my friends, we all have so much fun together.”

The MPHS UIL Academic team started its season at the Fall Tiger Invitational on the MPHS campus.

Overall, MPHS took 2nd place just two points away from winning it all.

Spelling (1st place team): Spelling (1st place team): Sophie Greco 2nd, Brissia Alvarez 3rd, Angelina Hernandez 5th, Karen Hernandez 6th

Current Events (1st place team): Angelina Hernandez 1st, Natalia Aspeitia 2nd, Kiara Rundles 5th, Jenny Luna 6th

Literary Criticism (1st place team): Abi Pathak 1st, Natalia Aspeitia 2nd, Jenny Luna 5th

Journalism (1st place team)

Copy Editing: Noemy Dorantes 1st, Katherine Adame 2nd, Idania Castanon 4th

News Writing: Noemy Dorantes 2nd, Stephanie Hernandez 3rd, Ana Ceballos 4th

Feature Writing: Noemy Dorantes 2nd, Idania Castanon 3rd, Jazlynn Juarez 4th

Editorial Writing: Noemy Dorantes 2nd, Ana Ceballos 3rd, Jazlynn Juarez 4th

Headline Writing: Brissia Alvarez 1st, Katherine Adame 6th

Calculator Applications

(1st place team):

9th grade: Carson Bell 5th, Jayden Loewen 6th

10th grade: Alessandro Greco 3rd, Jamie Garrett 6th

11th grade: Yahaira Piña 1st, Amir Martinez 2nd

12th grade: Nathaniel Martinez 1st, Clinton DeBord 3rd

Overall: Nathaniel Martinez 1st, Clinton DeBord 4th, Yahaira Pina 5th

Mathematics (2nd place team)

9th grade: Karen Sandate 4th

11th grade: Yahaira Piña 2nd

12th grade: Nathaniel Martinez 2nd, Clinton DeBord 4th

Overall: Nathaniel Martinez 3rd

Science (2nd place team)

10th grade: Vanessa Sampson 4th

11th grade: Kevin Mendoza 4th

12th grade: Clinton DeBord 2nd, Estven Perez 3rd, Nathaniel Martinez 4th



Ms. Robbins with Angelina Hernandez.



From left are Luis Alvarado, Karen Hernandez and Christopher Garcia.

Number Sense

9th grade: Carson Bell 5th, Jayden Loewen 6th

11th grade: Jesus Moreno 2nd, Evan Cota 4th, Kimberly Victoria 5th

12th grade: Nathaniel Martinez 3rd, Andrew Guerette 6th

Accounting: Luis Alvarado 4th

Social Studies: Jeisy Munoz 1st, Estven Perez 3rd, Chris Garcia 5th, Yahir Garcia 6th

Ready Writing: Sophie Greco 1st, Brissia Alvarez 2nd, Makayla Spigner 3rd, Evelyn Hernandez 5th

FBLA students say joining group has provided variety of life skills

By ALI FAIR CHEEK

Tigertalk Staff Writer

Some of Mount Pleasant High School's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) members were asked to answer some questions about the organization. When asked these questions, the students really showed their love and appreciation for FBLA.

Why did you join FBLA?

Idania Castanon: "I decided to join FBLA as a way to grow out of my shell and meet new people. Mr. Whitten was also there to convince me to stay in FBLA for the remainder of high school."

Luke Thurman: "I originally joined when I was in the 6th grade because it was a new organization and I knew the coordinator, Mrs. Armstrong, very well. I continued the program into high school."

Joseline Almazan: "I joined FBLA because I wanted to try something new and help me with my career."

Who inside FBLA inspires you and why?

Luke Thurman: "Mr. Whitten because despite all of his duties as both a teacher and coordinator, as well as a photographer, he still manages to keep a level head and puts both time and effort into the MPHS FBLA organization."

Alessandro Greco: "My sister, Sophie, she persuaded me into joining and she is the Area 6 VP and State Officer. We live in the same house so naturally I have always looked up to her."

Idania Castanon: "Mr. Whitten inspires me because he cares a lot about those in FBLA. He inspires me to be the best and to do my best."

What life skills has FBLA taught you?

Alessandro Greco: "FBLA has taught me to make connections as in the real world, it doesn't matter on what you know, but who you know."

Idania Castanon: "It has taught me good communication skills, leadership skills, as well as helping me grow out of my shell and making me more interactive."

Luke Thurman: "FBLA has taught me to schedule my work and free time better along with teaching me how to dress and look the part for professional events."

What is your favorite part of FBLA?

Joseline Almazan: "My favorite part of FBLA is meeting new people and trying



From left are Drew Dyke, Kennady Mayben, Harrison Wall and Ali Fair Cheek. They listen on as another student speaks during the Fall Leadership Conference.



Alessandro Greco, right, participates in an icebreaker activity.



Joseline Almazan poses with fellow MPHS FBLA officer Gopi Amin.



MPHS FBLA lead advisors John Whitten and Shanta Lockett

and trying new things."

Alessandro Greco: "My favorite part of FBLA is traveling with the group as in Galveston last year. I made memories with my friends I had not met before."

Idania Castanon: "My favorite part would be getting to travel to different plac-

es while we compete. I get to experience many different places and see so many cool things."

FBLA students will be competing in the Area 6 Fall Leadership Conference on Jan. 22 at Region 8. The top 4 in each event will advance to state at Galveston in April.

Senior Spotlight-Drew Dyke

By KRISTINA TIDWELL

Tigertalk Staff Writer

Each issue of Tigertalk spotlights a senior who is involved in a variety of organizations.

This issue features Drew Dyke, who is a member of the Tiger baseball team, FBLA, National Honor Society, National Technical Honor Society and also with the flag corps team. What is the most challenging task as a senior?

The most challenging task would be managing my time with the rest of my life and homework.

What are your plans for the future?

I plan to go to a four-year university to study biochemistry. After that, I plan to enroll into dental school.

What is your dream collage and why?

I don't necessarily have a dream collage. I think everyone should explore all their options so they experience each collage and make a decision.

What parts of high school has helped prepare you for collage?

Doing online courses while also having something due every Sunday at 11:59 has prepared me for the work load I will experience in collage.

Of which of your accomplishments are you most proud of and why?

My biggest accomplishment would be that I was voted into the 1st team All-District honors

Which teacher/staff member has inspired you the most?

Coach Stewart has taught me the most. He showed me how to work hard, and give my all on the field.

Why are you so passionate about sports?

I've always played sports, and it



Dyke said that Baseball Coach Tommy Stewart has been a big inspiration in his life.

has always been a huge part of my life. I have always wanted to play baseball in collage.

What have you learned about teamwork from your past experiences on your teams?

Teamwork is extremely important in numerous environment I've been on teams where some kids did not give as much effort as others. Those were the teams that performed the worst.

What events or experiences have shaped your growth and ways of

thinking the most?

I have had three surgeries over my high school career, and I have had to take a lot of time away from sports for recovery.

Because of this, I have developed a lot of patience since I had to wait to play.

What will you miss most about your time at MPHS?

All of the friends I have made here. It's scary to think how I might not ever see some of the people I graduated with again.

Twenty Questions with Mr. Clark

By NATHALI ROJAS

Tigertalk Editor

In every issue, Tigertalk features a story on a staff member here at MPISD as they too have something interesting to offer about themselves outside of school. This issue highlights Mr. Clark, an English IV teacher.

1. Why did you decide to become a teacher?

"When I graduated high school, I thought I was going to be a youth minister. Now I'm doing what I should have been doing all along; working with young people."

2. What is the most challenging aspect of teaching?

"Getting everything in that I want to teach and deciding what to leave out is the most challenging part of my job."

3. What do you like about teaching the most?

"The relationships I get to build is the most rewarding thing, being the National Honor Society Adviser is an honor and a privilege."

4. What do you wish your students would do more of in class?

"To me, student participation is vitally important to learning. Students need to be more involved with their learning."

5. What are some achievements you have achieved?

"Completing my college education later in life is something I will always be proud of. Becoming a teacher and getting to work with young people is an awesome achievement."

6. How did you feel teaching for the first time?

"Nerrrrrvooooouuuuuuuuu! It's a big responsibility being a teacher. Those who teach are held to a very high level of accountability."

7. How many years have you been teaching?

"This is my 11th year in education, I taught two years in Cumby and started teaching in Mt. Pleasant nine years ago."

8. What education did you have to do to become a teacher?

"Most teachers specialize in their teaching area, even though I teach English, my degree is in mathematic. I received a Bachelor of Science degree from Texas A&M at Texarkana."

9. What is your favorite piece of literature?

"I like a lot of the classics, but my favorite would have to be To Kill a Mockingbird because it is chalked full of life lessons even for today."

10. What is your favorite thing to teach your students?

"I was in the business world for 30 years before getting into teaching, my teaching philosophy includes blending in real-world experience/application with whatever it is we are learning, there are life-lessons to be learned in every aspect of English."

11. Do you think that your teaching style is effective, why or why not?

"I believe my style prepares students for the 'real world' out there when they leave high school. Applying my teaching style is effective."

12. How has your experience as a teacher been?

"They do call it work for a reason, but honestly, I should have been doing this all my life. I wouldn't want to be anything else but a teacher."

13. Why did you decide to teach this grade?

"I think I have a lot to offer to those who are about to go out into the world."

14. If you could pick a historical figure to be a guest speaker



Clark has taught nine years at MPHS.

in your class, who would it be and why?

"James Madison is considered the 'Father of the Constitution'. It would be interesting to hear how the rules and laws were established in forming our country. He could provide invaluable insight into how decisions were made. It would help us understand more why we do things the way we do."

15. What do you like about MPHS?

"I am a TIGER!!! I graduated from here in 1981, 43 years ago. This is home. You will not find more supportive administrators and teachers anywhere. We have the best student body."

16. If you could pick any place to go on Christmas Break, where would it be and why?

"I'm not much of a traveler anymore. Wherever family is, that's where I want to be."

17. If you could have superpowers, what would you choose and why?

"I think it would be cool to be able to move really fast like the Flash. Just to be anywhere you want and to be at any moment."

18. If you could go back in time to meet one person, who would you choose and why?

"I want to sit down and talk to Peter from New Testament time. I want first-hand information about the life and time of Jesus Christ. I want to see and feel the excitement in him as he relates what he saw and did."

19. What is one thing you have never done, but want to do?

"It would be so awesome to drive a race car in a NASCAR race."

20. What hobbies do you have?

"I have been a high school softball umpire for 30 years. I also like to cook..... and eat."

Greco named Heisman HS winner

Senior Sophie Greco, has been chosen as the MPHS school winner for the 2023 Heisman High School Scholarship program. Greco is Captain of the Lady Tiger Golf and MPHS Swim teams. She was named to the Academic All State Swim team as a junior. She is currently the Area 6 State Vice President and the Co-President of the MPHS chapter of FBLA, Vice President of the National Honor Society, and a member of Student Council.

She is also the Captain of the UIL Spelling team and Co-Captain of the Ready Writing team. She received a National Rural and Small Town and National Hispanic Scholar award from the College Board and was named All School Girl by the MPHS faculty this year. She is the daughter of Dr. Anthony and Ana Greco.

The Heisman High School Scholarship extends the Heisman prestige to our nation's most esteemed high school seniors by recognizing and rewarding outstanding scholar-athletes who understand that the most important victories not only happen on the field, but in their schools and communities. These remarkable young leaders set the example and make a game-changing difference every day, paving the way to greatness for everyone around them.

To apply, students must be graduating with the class of 2024, have a cumulative weighted high school grade point average of a B (3.0) or better, participate in at least one of the sports recognized by the International Olympic Commit-



Greco was selected school winner for Heisman High School Scholarship.

tee, the Paralympic Games and/or the National Federation of State High School Association and be a leader in his/her school and community.

Seventeen named to All-Region Band

Seventeen members of the Goin' Gold Band were named to the High School All-Region Band after auditions on Dec. 8 at North Lamar High School in Paris. Six of the 17 have qualified for Area auditions.

Advancing to Area auditions are Nephtali Gonzalez (1st chair Contra-Bass Clarinet), Andrew Perez (1st chair Bb Clarinet), Shpat Zeqaj (3rd chair Oboe), Jose Fuentes (3rd chair Bb Clarinet), Adriel Bagsic (4th chair Trumpet), and Luke Thurman (3rd chair Percussion).

Also selected for the High School All-Region Band were Bryan Garcia (4th chair Piccolo), Araceli Solis (9th chair Bb Clarinet), Zoe Newman (4th chair Alto Saxophone), Julian Chancellor (6th chair Alto Saxophone), Christopher Sorto (9th chair Bb Clarinet), Eli Hernandez (4th chair Tenor Saxophone), and Orion Senence (6th chair Trumpet), Oscar Castellanos (5th chair Trombone), Angel Farias (3rd chair Euphonium), Bruno Deleon (4th chair Euphonium), and Andy Carrillo (9th chair Percussion).

The selected members will participate in the All-Region clinic and concert on Jan. 19-20 in the MPHS Performing Arts Complex. Area auditions will take place on Jan. 6 at Plano Senior High School.



Front row from left are Bryan Garcia, Jose Fuentes, Christopher Sorto, Araceli Solis and Shpat Zeqaj. Second row from left are Julian Chancellor, Zoe Newman, Eli Hernandez, Andrew Perez and Nephtali Gonzalez. Third row from left are Adriel Bagsic, Orion Senence, Bruno Deleon, Angel Farias and Oscar Castellanos. Back row from left are Andy Carrillo and Luke Thurman.

Theatre presents 'The Wizard of Oz'

The MPHS and the MPJHS theatre programs recently presented "*The Wizard of Oz, Youth Edition*," by L. Frank Baum with music and lyrics by Harold Arlen and E. Y. Harburg.

Synopsis of the play had Dorothy and her loyal companion Toto as they "Follow the Yellow Brick Road" through the Land of Oz, determined to reach the Emerald City, where the great and powerful Wizard of Oz will help them get home. Of course, along the way, Dorothy encounters witches (both good and bad), Munchkins, talking trees and winged monkeys.

But most importantly, she befriends three unique characters: a Scarecrow with no brain, a Tin Man with no heart, and a Lion with no "nerve." Their journey to happiness – and self-awareness – is a glowing testament to friendship, understanding and hope in a world filled with both beauty and ugliness.

High school cast included Madison Zepeda as Dorothy, Summer Murillo as Aunt Em, Jose Jimenez as Uncle Henry/Doorman, Dawson Hernandez as Hunk/Scarecrow, Joey Dunn as Zeke/Lion, Sunni Anderson as Hickory/Tinman, Sadara Lampard as Miss Gulch/Wicked Witch, Kevin Mendoza as Professor Marvel/Wizard, Gracie Martinez as Glinda, Addy McQueen as Nikko, Emma Sanders as Leader of the Winkie Guards, Noah Campbell and Silas Futrell as Featured Monkeys, Ensemble/Chorus members Peyton Robinson, Danika Beckham, Makayla Mather, Allison Mendoza, Roger McKay, Hannah Carr, Calvin Lee, and Jayanna Townlin-Crow, and Dancers Stella Arzate, Marley Broach, Maria Castillo De La Torre, Evie Dominguez, Blakely Garrett, Lynndsie Phan, Angela Ramirez Moreno, Valerie Rodarte, Gracie Rodriguez, and Aileen Sorto. The Crew included Stage Managers Sara Guerrero, Evie Dominguez, and Evelyn Whisenhunt, Enrique Hernandez on lights, set managers Raul Torres and Tristan Trejo, with costumes and make-up by Yorely Rodriguez, Charisma Dickerson, and Colt Covey.

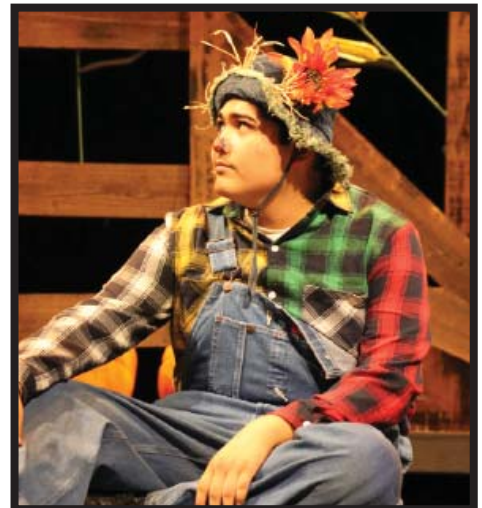
MPHS Theatre is under the direction of Jordan Chambers and MPJH theatre is directed by Crystal Francis.



Dorothy (Madison Zepeda, left) tells Aunt Em (Summer Murillo, center) and Uncle Henry (Jose Jimenez, right) about meeting Miss Gulch on her walk home.



Zeke a.k.a. The Cowardly Lion (Joey Dunn, left) tells Dorothy (Madison Zepeda) to have courage when she talks to Miss Gulch.



Dawson Hernandez played the role of Hunk and The Scarecrow in the school's recent performance of "The Wizard of Oz."



Dorothy (Madison Zepeda) is welcomed to Munchkin Land by Ensemble member (Danika Beckham), Leader of the Winkie Guards (Emma Sanders) and Glinda the Good Witch (Gracie Martinez).



MPHS Future Educator competitors. Bottom row from left are Araceli Landaverde, Jasmine Landaverde, Sidney Beles, April Ruiz, Cinthya Ramirez, Michelle Sandoval, Grace Zittel and Gabriella Garza. Second row from left are Angie Castro, Haylee Zaldivar. Third row from left are Lesly Flores and Celeste Portillo. Back row from left are Diana Gutierrez and Marlyn Estrada.

TAFE students advance to state

The MPHS chapter of the Texas Association of Future Educators (TAFE) attended their annual Area competition at Texas A&M Texarkana on Friday, Dec. 8.

Thirteen members competed and seven qualified for the State competition in March.

Sophomores Lesly Flores and Celeste Portillo advanced to state in the Junior Varsity Children's Pre-K Literature event with Ted's Terrible Tummy Ache, their original children's rhyming book about a dog who eats way too much that encourages prediction skills and anticipated results.

Juniors Gabriella Garza

and April Ruiz advanced to state in the Varsity Teacher Created Materials event with a 4th grade game, Needle in a Haystack, incorporating vocabulary and matching skills.

Seniors Araceli Landaverde and Sidney Beles advanced to state in Varsity Children's K-3 Literature with their original children's book, Dear Mom and Dad, about the sacrifices parents make for their kids and the realization of those sacrifices from a child's point of view.

Senior Jasmin Landaverde advanced to state in Varsity Job Interview. In this event, Landaverde

submitted a cover letter, a resume, and participated in an on-site live interview.

Also competing were the team of sophomores Haylee Zaldivar and Diana Gonzalez, the team of sophomores Angie Castro and Grace Zittel, and the team of juniors Cinthya Ramirez and Michelle Sandoval who all created interactive bulletin boards.

Those who advanced will compete in the Teach for Tomorrow Summit state competition on Feb. 28-March 1, 2024 at the Kalahari Resort in Round Rock. The MPHS TAFE Advisor is Aimee Sweeden.

Boys basketball vs. Australia



Girls basketball vs. Australia



Choir students advance to area

Twelve All-Region Choir students from MPHS participated in Pre-Area auditions on Tuesday, Nov. 14 at the MPHS Performing Arts Complex, performing 4 selections for the audition.

Eight have advanced to Area auditions in January including senior Hope Powell (3rd chair 2nd Alto), junior Kristina Tidwell (2nd chair 2nd Soprano), junior Alivia Newman (2nd chair 2nd Alto), sophomore Mattie Merriman (4th chair 2nd Soprano), sophomore Aaliyah Gholston (5th chair 2nd Alto), freshman Sara Vanhooose (4th chair 2nd Alto), freshman Hector Sierra-Rosales (3rd chair 2nd Bass), and freshman Daniel Kimbrough (4th chair 2nd Bass).

"I am proud of the tenacity these young musicians



Front row from left are Aaliyah Gholston, Kristina Tidwell, Sara Vanhooose and Mattie Merriman. Back row from left are Hope Powell, Daniel Kimbrough, Hector Sierra-Rosales and Alivia Newman.

have exhibited as they have worked diligently in preparation for the first 2 rounds of auditions and continue to prepare for the upcoming

audition," said MPHS Choir Director Nancy Vines.

Area auditions will be held Jan. 6, 2024, at Texas A&M University—Commerce.

FFA students place at LDE contest

The MPHS chapter of FFA competed at the Paris District Leadership Development Event (LDE) held at Texas A&M—Commerce on Monday, Nov. 6. MPHS advanced to the Area contest in two events.

The team of seniors Lakyn Fortenberry, Reese Hill, Cheyenne King, and junior Jay'cee Alvarez advanced to Area in Agriculture Advocacy. In the Ag Advocacy event, teams of 3-5 create and deliver a presentation to promote the agriculture industry, educate the consumer and general public about the importance and value of the agriculture industry, and promote the principles of agriculture such as biotechnology, soil stewardship, resource management, economic and environmental benefits as well as the humane principles of sound livestock production and management.

Teams are evaluated on their presentation skills, creativity, organization, and their overall knowledge and skills.

Freshman Rebecca Dunn ad-



MPHS FFA District Competitors

vanced to Area in Greenhand Creed. The Greenhand Creed event is limited to FFA members in 7th, 8th, or 9th grade. It is a speaking event in which the competitor recites the FFA Creed and are evaluated on their overall speaking skills as well as their ability to answer ques-

tions about the Creed.

The Area competition was held in Tyler on Wednesday, Nov. 15. Dunn placed 5th in Greenhand Creed and the Ag Advocacy team placed 11th. MPHS FFA Advisors are Blake Denson, Susie Hearn, Mike Huff, and Rance White.

Davis receives Honorable Mention at Congressional Art competition

MPHS senior, Brianne Davis, was awarded Honorable Mention accolades at the TX01 District Congressional Art Contest on Sunday, Dec. 10 at The Michelson Museum in Marshall. Of the 36 pieces entered, only 6 received recognition. Davis's piece, Happy, is a drawing of Davis and her mother, Rachel Barkley.

The Congressional Art Contest, now in its 41st year, is a nationwide art competition for high school students. To enter, students submit entries to their representative's office, and panels of district artists select the winning entries.

Mount Pleasant is located in the 1st Congressional District of Texas, represented by Congressman Nathaniel Moran. Congressman Moran's district encompasses 17 counties in the northeast corner of the state running along the border between Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana. The 1st place pieces from each district are displayed for one year at the U.S. Capitol in the Cannon Tunnel.

The tunnel is the most highly traveled access point between the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Capitol. Every day, Members of Congress, distinguished visitors, and tens of thousands of tourists – from the United States and abroad – walk through the tunnel and admire the artwork.

"I would like to congratulate Brianne Davis for receiving an Honorable Mention in the 2024 Congressional Art Competition hosted by Congressman Nathaniel Moran," said MPHS



Brianne Davis with her Honorable Mention award and Congressman Nathaniel Moran.

art teacher, Laura Kirkland.

"This year out of several students across East Texas, there were 3 Honorable Mentions, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st place winners. I would like to thank Congressman Nathaniel Moran for hosting this event. Also, Chelsea

Payne and all her helpers for organizing, and finally, thank you to the contributors for the prizes."

Davis is the daughter of Drew and Rachel Barkley and has been a student in the MPHS art program for two years.

CTC, MPHS students ring the bell



From left are Joshua Gonzales, Jenna Mars , Ernest Delarosa, Lexi Agnew, Christian Delarosa, Heisel James, Ghyles Lias and Eunice Mendoza.



From left are Cole Ashley, Ruben Saavedra, Mario Moreno, Andrea Bernabe, Sarah Baxter, Alex Sandate and Jesus Mora,

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Tiger Roar

What is your favorite Christmas memory?

Page by Tigertalk Editor Nathali Rojas and contributor Caparis Smith



"Waking up and seeing my elf right next to me."
-- Ca'Paris Smith, 12



"My brother coming back from the Navy."
-- Mason Parks, 12



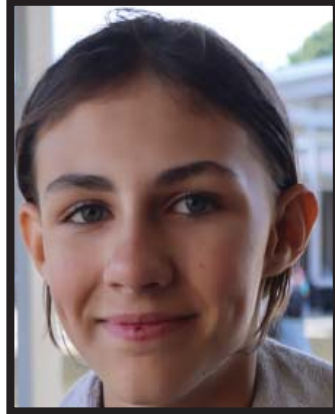
"Spending time with my family"
-- Elizabeth Saucedo, 12



"Moving my elf around for my sisters."
--- Nathali Rojas, 12



"Watching movies with my family"
-- Anrianna Price, 12



"My dog eating the Christmas ornaments."
-- Makayla Mather 9



"My cat climbing the Christmas tree and getting stuck at the top."
-- Christian Rojas, 9



"Spending time with my entire family and watching movies."
-- Hope Powell, 12



"Having a Christmas party with my family and playing games."
--- Jazmin Abrego, 12



"Spending time with my family and decorating for Christmas dinner."
--- Ms. Criss



"Getting up at 4 A.M. to see if I got anything."
--- Mrs. Young



"Getting to keep a big bear from school for being good."
--- Ms. Nance