You Are Not Alone: #MeToo

By: Alyssa Richardson, Staff Writer

The Me Too Movement was founded a decade ago by Tarana Burke, an African American civil rights activist from the Bronx in New York. The goal of Burke’s movement was to help “particularly young women of color from low wealth communities,” who have been victimized through sexual harassment and assault.

On October 15th, 2017, Actress Alyssa Milano tweeted “If you’ve been sexually harassed or assaulted write ‘me too’ as a reply to this tweet.” Milano wanted to give voice to abuse victims in response to the allegations against Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein. Thus began the hashtag version of the Me Too movement.

The MeToo movement has passed its first anniversary through social media platforms and is still going strong. During the past year, the phrase ‘me too’ has become commonplace at the national level as the news has been filled with the voices of victims of not only Harvey Weinstein, but Bill Cosby and other men in positions of power, including a number of political candidates and office holders. But sexual harassment and assault are not just something that happens “out there.” It happens to students in our school as well.

In an effort to determine if MHS students knew the legal difference between sexual harassment and sexual abuse, 100 MHS students in grades 9-12 were asked to participate in a survey during their English class. These 100 students consisted of 60.2 percent female and 39.8 percent male. The data from this survey was charted to understand why those who have been victims of sexual violence took center stage in today’s society.

The results indicate that a number of students are not aware of the difference between sexual harassment and sexual assault, but should be. In addition to understanding the difference, it’s also important to understand why those who have been victims of sexual abuse fail or delay in reporting the crimes committed against them.

Discussions about failing or delaying in reporting sexual violence took center stage during the first semester as a result of the Congressional confirmation hearings for Brett Kavanaugh at a Supreme Court Justice. Many students (and a few teachers) voiced the opinion that Professor Ford had to be lying because she’d waited decades to report an incident she alleges took place during a college party. Not to take sides—but just to expand knowledge—there are legitimate reasons a person would delay in reporting such an incident. Before judging without evidence, we should be aware of these legitimate reasons. The Florida Coalition Against Sexual Violence (“FCADV”), declares on its website that “Rape is the most under reported crime in America, so it is difficult to know how many lives are affected by sexual violence.”

Although some females have falsely accused males of sexual offenses, the FCADV reports that only 2-8% of sexual assault reports can be considered false. Obviously, any number of falsely accused over zero is far too many, and those falsely accusing others of sexual assault should be punished to the full extent the laws allow.

According to Beverly Engel’s article, “Stop Shamming Victims of Sexual Assault for Not Reporting: Ten (understandable) reasons why victims of sexual assault do not report,” the most prevalent reasons sexual assaults go unreported are:

1. Victims are ashamed of the dehumanizing situation in which they are at the mercy of the offender. We want to have control over what happens to us and when someone else takes that control away, it’s degrading.

2. Victims are often socialized into blaming the victim. For example, when someone else waits out the last moment? Both men and women blame the victim for putting herself/himself in the situation.

3. Society usually blames the victim—especially victims of sexual assault. What was she doing? Was she wearing provocative clothing? Was she drinking or using drugs? Why was she alone with the person she’s accusing? Did she change her mind at the last moment? Both men and women blame the victim for putting herself/himself in the situation.

4. Victims are afraid they won’t be believed. Who hasn’t seen a program on TV or a movie where the history of the victim has been put on display and the least sign of impropriety is used as justification so the so-called victim has loose morals. Another reason victims are often not believed relates to the popularity of the perpetrator. People tend to believe the best looking people have the best behavior, i.e., that popular football player all the girls drool over. Finally, a history of mishandled cases of sexual violence has been prevalent on college campuses, resulting in an increase of underreporting.

5. Victims are afraid the perpetrator will victimize them again.

6. Victims are afraid their reputations will be ruined as a result of reporting the offense. Female victims are sometimes called whores by their peers and male victims are often accused of being homosexual.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>% of 100 Respondents</th>
<th>Assault</th>
<th>Legally Classified As:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical touching without permission</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>Harassment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal comments such as &quot;nice rack!&quot;</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>Harassment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grabbing without permission</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>Assault</td>
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<tr>
<td>Obscene or sexually explicit pictures</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>Harassment</td>
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<td>sent thru social media platforms</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>Harassment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-verbal actions</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>Assault</td>
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<tr>
<td>Touching an incapacitated person</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>Assault</td>
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<tr>
<td>Touching a person with an object without consent</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>Harassment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unwanted requests to perform sexual acts or sexual favors</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>Assault</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having sex with someone without consent</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>Assault</td>
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In a survey of 100 students (grades 9-12) students identified what they considered sexual harassment vs sexual assault. As the results indicate, a clear distinction between the two does not exist.
2019 Student Who’s Who

2019 Miss Mandarin Pageant

Traditionally, the Miss Mandarin pageant occurs in the spring of the previous year. As a result of the pageant, Abby Dionne was selected as the 2019 Miss Mandarin, First Runner Up was Leah Batchelor, 2nd Runner Up was Krystiana Rego, 3rd Runner Up was Laural Dunathan, and 4th Runner Up was Morgan Harper. In addition, Morgan Harper was named the Most Photogenic, Jenna Herrington was Miss Congeniality and Most Academic, and Krystiana Rego was the Director’s Choice.

Homecoming Court

Homecoming King Kasimir Absolu and Homecoming Queen Claire Harvey

Junior Prince Andrew Lodge and Princess Shaquirah Bass

Sophomore Duke Kevin Raspopi and Duchess Khalila Shoop

Freshman Lady Abril Gomez

Senior Class Officers

Senior Class Officers: Luke Butler (Treasurer), Jenna Sammons (Vice President), Parker Blessing (President), Abigail Daniels (Historian) and Marc Pappas (Secretary).

Student Council Officers

Krystiana Rego
President

Sara Takacs
Vice President

Eliana Jaffa
Secretary

Photo Credit: Cady Studios and Mrs. Jennifer Brown, Chorus Director
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**The Go-To Peeps on Campus**

By: Rowan Vanhoof, Editor-in-Chief
Photo Credit: Cady Studios and Aaliyah Rocourt, Staff Writer

Our Administrators
Mr. John Kniseley (Principal), Janetta Lucas (Principal’s Designee), Assistant Principals Brian Holloway, Mary Flynn, and Beth Pecarek. This is the team dedicated to ensuring our campus is filled with successful scholars.

Our Guidance Counselors: Mrs. Diane Dempsey (Department Chair), Mrs. Tanu Seymore, Mrs. Lori Boyd, Mrs. Amanda Chamberlin, and Ms. Erin Heinze.

For the first quarter, the guidance counselors focused on senior graduation checks, ninth grade promotions, and credit checks for all students. They were also involved in leveling classes to ensure that students were as evenly distributed as possible among the teachers in such a way to meet every student’s need to earn the credits necessary to make this a successful academic year for all. Each counselor has a specific group of students they are assigned to help out. Mrs. Seymore works with AVID and students with last names beginning with A-F. Mrs. Boyd works with AICE and students with last names beginning G-J. Mrs. Chamberlin works with Biotech, Vystar, and 9th-grade students A-Z. Mrs. Dempsey works with ESOL and students with last names beginning with O-Z. Mrs. Erin Heinze works with Medical Academy and students with last names beginning K-N.

Dean Joyce Jones, Athletic Director Brian Rado, Activities Director April Lane, Yearbook Advisor Michael Santana, Newspaper Adviser Doni Parkinson, Book Manager Paulette Mills. In addition to facilitating our athletic program, Coach Rado also sponsors the Senior Athletic Leadership Team (SALT), runs our senior aide program, and handles graduation. Ms. Lane not only teaches ACT Prep, but also sponsors the Leadership team and the senior class, to include the purchase of senior packages. As most of you have already found out, Ms. Mills works in the Media Center managing the distribution of textbooks and student IDs.

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**Letter from the Editor**

There have been events in the past year that have caused many to assess and discuss the ethics of what is going on in the news. While the discussion of ethics with regards to the government, organizations, or companies is nothing new, the recent influx has caused us to focus on ethics for the first issue.

In this paper ethics is discussed on all levels, many articles explaining an issue at a ground level and how it is seen in school. All body copy was set at Calibri. Headlines at maximum font size 74, subheads at font size 28 (Agency FB), and body copy was produced using Microsolft Publisher. Professional photographs were provided by Cady Studios and contributors.

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**Contact Us**

Do you have a story and/or photo you want to share? Contact the Journalism Advisor at parkinson@duvalschools.org or stop by the Journalism room (J201a) during lunch, or before or after school. We want your contributions!

-Rowan Vanhoof
Editor in Chief

---

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The Newspaper and staff is committed to capturing the events and emotions of the ‘Stang Nation for you.

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Many thanks to our advertisers who have provided the newspaper staff with this opportunity of publishing student work.
Best All Around
Darian Oxendine

Friendliest
Lily Thomas

Most Likely to Succeed
Luke Butler

Most Artistic
Alexandra Molina

Most Athletic
Logan Chastain

Most Spiritual
Krystiana Rego

Most Musical Genius
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Most Artistic
Douglas Brazie-Brown

Most Spiritual
Krystiana Rego

Most Musical Genius
Nicole Anderson

Who’s Who: Senior Superlatives
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Who’s Who: Silly Superlatives

**Cutest Couple**
Matthew Shimko
Claire Harve

**Best Personality**
Terrell Jennings
Jaida Sanders

**Best Dressed**
Sean Kochanowsky
Jenna Sammons

**Best Eyes**
Kanon Garibaldi
Sara Takaos

**Best Hair**
Dane Larocque
Kaylee Beauford

**Biggest Flirt**
Tamara Barrs
Jasmin Absolu

**Best Smile**
John Rego
Abby Dionne

**Class Clown**
Eduardo Gomez
Daja Masline
Students are supposed to go to school to learn. However, let’s face it, one of the main reasons many of us go to school is to socialize with our friends. This conflicts with the goal of the teacher. Students come to school so they can be prepared for the world, which is contradicting upon how the students and teachers react to each other when the conflict occurs. This situation can oftentimes escalate to a battle that leaves both the students and the teacher feeling emotionally bruised. Both sides need to be aware of what the other side is trying to accomplish and commence that oftentimes each side feels stressed out—resulting in a lose-lose situation.

While teachers do put students to the test, they don’t elaborate on assignments, students do learn to think and to socialize. Teachers often say things or do things that fill the whole classroom. In a situation socialize to forget the student should know because the teacher thinks they need to be doing anyway. For example, “I don’t see eye to eye on your assignment for the 4th or 5th grade. Can you submit a referral. Perhaps the teacher will be angry, hurt student feelings to back down. Some of the ordeals to deal with their son. They don’t have to be specific, almost any adult can intimidate the teacher by being intimidating. Teachers often say things or do things that fill the whole classroom with the goal of the teacher.

No doubt that when a teacher calls a student out, it can be intimidating for the student in front of peers—even though they may not have been caught doing something they shouldn’t be doing anyway. We all know examples of these behaviors: using a cell phone, staring at a fellow student’s work, trying to catch a nap, chronic tardiness along with disruptive behavior before adopting a ‘tone’ and becoming less polite and more directive depends on the teacher. Senior Darius Roberts stated, “I don’t think that teachers normally try to hurt students feelings. They’re just trying to manage the classroom.” It also depends on how many off task students she needs to deal with while trying to educate 25 students. In addition, the number of times students chime in with laughter or disparaging remarks adds to the stress of managing a class. Students are aware of this and some have no problem turning a one on one between teacher and student to a five against one situation. No doubt the teacher would rather focus on the students who are actually working and may need help and certainly would appreciate positive reinforcement for their efforts, than to focus on the students who are off task and distracting others.

When students ignore the teacher’s instructions to follow a classroom rule, the teacher may use less polite language and more directive language. Students may feel the teacher is acting in an intimidating manner and respond in an equally intimidating manner. Somere of the ordeals inflicted on teachers when students refuse to follow classroom rules are harassment, verbal abuse, false accusations, etc. The situation escalates, and neither side wants to back down. Perhaps the teacher will eventually mention contacting the parent or submitting a referral, which the student interprets as a threat, but perhaps the teacher mentioned the contact or referral because he or she interprets that the student is trying to intimidate the teacher by defying the teacher’s authority.

Senior Karseim Henshaw said, “Teachers give students too many chances to misbehave before they send the student out. However, teachers are required to contact the parents for each case of disrespect and disruption to give the parents opportunities to deal with their son’s/daughter’s misbehavior. Eventually, the teacher can submit a referral. Adults often forget how scary they look when they’re upset. Or how intimidating adults be. Or how crushing it is to be called out in front of an audience. Or how fragile a teenager’s ego can be and how easily it is to embarass, humiliate, hurt, or anger a teenager. Following the teacher’s rules is acting in an intimidating manner and respond in an equally intimidating manner.

Teachers and students can be intimidated by one another when they don’t see eye-to-eye.

Also remember that teachers are human and may fail to use a light tone and a ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ when trying to get a student to focus on the assignment for the 4th or 8th or 12th time in one 90-minute period. Perhaps because the teacher thinks the student needs to be kept better by the time they’re in high school. How many times it takes for a teacher to address the same student for the same misbehavior before adopting a ‘tone’ and becoming less polite and more directive depends on the teacher. Senior Darius Roberts stated, “I don’t think that teachers normally try to hurt students’ feelings. They’re just trying to manage the classroom.” It also depends on how many off task students she needs to deal with while trying to educate 25 students. In addition, the number of times students chime in with laughter or disparaging remarks adds to the stress of managing a class. Students are aware of this and some have no problem turning a one on one between teacher and student to a five against one situation. No doubt the teacher would rather focus on the students who are actually working and may need help and certainly would appreciate positive reinforcement for their efforts, than to focus on the students who are

There’s a problem that’s difficult to deal with provides with a willful education to provide support rather than punish the classroom. From talking to teachers who wish to remain anonymous, all teachers don’t necessarily want to put students in groups because socializing is such a problem. However, teachers are required to put students in groups. In fact, teachers are evaluated at least twice a year and if the classroom desks are in rows, it actually lowers the teachers’ score on their evaluation. This is because working in groups actually helps students who are actually working when they’re in groups. By working together through sharing ideas and perspectives, students actually expand their thinking ability and ability to approach problems in more ways. However, when students waste the opportunity to work together, they sabotage their own learning in many ways. Teachers know and understand this, so they do try to make students work in groups. However, sometimes it just gets to be too much—especially when students push back. This must be frustrating for teachers—to know something will help students learn but have students themselves sabotage that learning.

Teachers need to focus on making sure that every student leaves the classroom feeling successful about the day’s academic lesson and that the teacher has a positive attitude toward each student. They should also leave the classroom feeling that they spent far more time dealing with student behavior than with student behavior. Students have a responsibility to make sure that they allow the teacher to stay on their track to educate them.
Learn to Earn or Cheat to Beat?

By: Summer Alexander, Staff Writer

Everyone knows that cheating and plagiarism are frowned upon. It has been a huge problem in schools, offices, and even in the music industry for decades. For example, ABC News stated, “Authoritative numbers are hard to come by, but according to a 2002 confidential survey of 12,000 high school students, 74 percent admit to cheating on an exam at least once.” Students today don’t realize that when they cheat now, they will have to cheat to pass their EOC’s as well. A lot of kids think that they are so clever for beating the system and not having to put any brain power into their school work. Technology these days is helping the cheaters immensely. Even the students at Mandarin are struggling to do their classwork themselves.

Imagine, it is the last day of school and you are so happy to get straight to the beach at 2:00, your teacher hands you your final and you read the first question and you think, “Your super ego would feel a sense of guiltiness; you’d contemplate on snitching yourself out. But your devilish side would feel clever, and it would make you feel like you can pass every test by cheating. You’d be battling back and forth on what decision you should make. You’d really feel both guilty and clever.” Some students don’t even feel the slightest bit guilty about cheating. This just goes to show that they have no respect for their teacher who works all day to create elaborate lesson plans for their students, and also have no respect for themselves or their grade.

The capabilities of technology in 2018 is truly mindboggling. There are phones that can scan your face, and microchips that you can insert into your skin to buy your groceries. With technology advancing more and more every day, it is making it easier for students to cheat.

Junior Kylie Gray stated, “Your super ego would feel a sense of guiltiness; you’d contemplate on snitching yourself out. But your devilish side would feel clever, and it would make you feel like you can pass every test by cheating. You’d be battling back and forth on what decision you should make. You’d really feel both guilty and clever.” Some students don’t even feel the slightest bit guilty about cheating. This just goes to show that they have no respect for their teacher who works all day to create elaborate lesson plans for their students, and also have no respect for themselves or their grade.

The capabilities of technology in 2018 is truly mindboggling. There are phones that can scan your face, and microchips that you can insert into your skin to buy your groceries. With technology advancing more and more every day, it is making it easier for students to cheat.

Junior Jaron Firesheets said, “It’s not fair for students to use Quizlet or Photomath while there are other students who are actually putting in the work and trying to get good grades. There is no point in cheating because you aren’t gaining the knowledge that you need to graduate and succeed.” Jaron is right; lots of students will manipulate their friends into giving them answers to quizzes and tests. Students will even use their iPhone to instantly airdrop answer keys of the work that they have been assigned in class.

The problem with students using technology to cheat is that most teachers don’t even see students on their phones. Students can hide their phones in between their legs or even on the floor by their feet. Some people will go to extremes to cheat. Teachers are caught up in their own world during class trying to teach a long lesson in 90 minutes to a large group of kids.

However, it’s not really the educators fault. If a teacher tells their students to turn off and put away their phones, the students should listen. Teachers shouldn’t have to turn their backs every ten seconds to see if their students are following directions and behaviors.

According to a survey of 67 random Mandarin High School students, 45 percent say that they cheat in school more than any other course. So, this really makes you think: Why cheat in Math but not English or Science? Sophomore Sara Allen stated, “Students cheat in math more than any other subject because math can be hard for most students. There are lots of problem solving and multiple steps that you need to get correct so you can get the right answer. Plus, some teachers degrade you and put you down when you ask a simple question. It’s like they’re trying to make you feel stupid for trying to get an answer right. Personally I can say that I have felt like this once or twice.”

There is nothing wrong with trying to earn good grades. You may think you’re smart for tricking your teachers, but you and your friends know how you’re really getting good grades! Over time, cheating has become more and more of a problem in schools. Everyday there are new videos and articles talking about cheating and why it is a good idea and why it’s not helpful.

Cheating is anything but helpful! So next time you’re thinking of cheating, think to yourself and ask, “Is this a good idea?” or “Is this the right thing to do?” An education is one of the most important things that you will have in this generation. We have to decide how we want to use our knowledge. Either for better or worse, the choice is yours.

Many know your chapter
What’s your story?
Want to share it?
Contact the Newspaper Staff
Room J201a
3rd Period.
7) Victims don’t believe that reporting the offense will do any good. Think of children who are abused by parents whose duty it is to protect them. Think of students who don’t believe that school administra- tors will be able to resolve the situation successfully.

8) Victims want to put the situation behind them; they don’t want to keep moving past the traumatic event.

9) They don’t want to go through the hassle of reporting the offense. This is particularly the case when it is compared to the number of people who don’t hesitate to report a property theft—a crime that seldom results in getting the property returned.

10) The victim is too traumatized to bring the offense. Such intimate assaults often result in severe anxiety disorders that take years of therapy to address.

The survey conducted with MHS students supports Engel’s list of reasons for not reporting sexual assaults. Of the 100 students surveyed, 34 percent report being sexually harassed and 13 percent report being sexually assaulted. Of those assaulted, only 11 percent reported the assault. Reasons given for not reporting the assault include fear of being blamed, fear of retaliation by the perpetrator, feelings of helplessness and embarrassment, and ignorance that they were being abused (as children).

Once all of these hurdles are eventually overcome and the victim does report the offense, days, months, or even years after it occurred, the victim is faced with challenging tactics. Those who commit sexual offenses are the ones who are guilty and should feel the shame—not the victim. It’s past time to hold them accountable. Even when the victim has built up the courage to report the crime, even if that takes years. Everyone should support the victims of sexual harassment and abuse. We need to stop blaming the victim and start holding the perpetrator accountable. The worst result of not reporting an offense is that the victim doesn’t get the help she/he needs as soon as possible.

Services For Victims Of Sexual Assault

Women’s Center Of Jacksonville

- 24-hour Rape Crisis Hotline (904-721-7273)
- 24-hour on-call advocacy response
- Sexual assault forensic medical/forensic examinations are available for survivors of sexual assault ages 18 and older within 120 hours (5 days) of the assault
- Mental health counseling
- Information and referral
- Support groups
- Advocacy and accommodation for medical, criminal justice appointments and other needs
- Prevention, education and training programs

The Women’s Center of Jacksonville
5644 Colcord Ave.
Jacksonville, FL 32211
Helpline/Hotline: (904) 721-7273
Website: www.womenscenterofjax.org

Counts Served: Baker, Duval, Nassau
Services Provided:
- 24-hour hotline; - crisis intervention; - advocacy and support
- Sexual assault forensic medical exams for adults
- Information and referral; - peer-facilitated support groups
- Accompaniment for medical, legal and other interactions
- Mental health counseling for survivors and their loved ones

- Referrals for medical follow-up services
- Prevention education and community trainings

#MeToo: GET THE HELP YOU NEED!

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Support groups

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#MeToo: You Are Not Alone (cont.)
Leading by Example

By: Isabella Nicodeme, Staff Writer

There’s an old adage that says, “Do as I say—not as I do” that we’re all familiar with. This can be seen in parents, teachers, or even politicians. It seems we hear this refrain all too often (parents, teachers, etc.) or we say it to our younger sibling who then/shares it with someone else. It’s really nothing more than hypocrisy to look good. And while it sounds innocent enough, it actually has some profound implications for society because hypocrisy undermines authority.

Consider the aspects of society such as the church, the government, the news and religion, the court system, and education. These are the rodes we use to build the foundation of our society so we hope to teach the next generation the values and ethics of our society. Yet, many of these members of society respond hypocritically to their behavior. If we are constantly exposed to hypocrisy at a young age, personally and professionally, we lose respect for its practices. So we also begin to emulate that hypocrisy when it seems to suit our goals and exceed the consequences.

Hypocrisy at the international level relates to business. America and other countries in foreign companies. Remember one of candidate Trump’s campaign promises was to bring America jobs back to America. Our past president made changes in American companies to move their manufacturing businesses back to America to lower their cut costs. By moving these companies overseas where labor is cheaper, American workers had to agree to lower their salaries to lower their corporate taxes.

Candidate Trump indicated that bringing these jobs back to America is one of the main ways in which he would lead the country in a “make America great again”—a slogan which is embroidered on the American flag and is supported by many supporters. Ironically, these red MAGA hats (along with a weapon, union sign, or Third Reich) are actually manufactured in China because it is cheaper there to make them. So on one hand, Trump is trying to help American workers get jobs back to America, but on the other hand he uses the language of the country itself.

What’s the point of our communities? What can we do as individuals to help people sent the work out of the country? Hypocrisy at this level undermines his authority to set policies that are in the best interest of the world market.

Another example of how hypocrisy undermines authority is through the church. Religion is something that many people use to make their life more fulfilling. Religion enables people to gather together on a regular basis and take comfort in their religious beliefs and friendships. The companionship of others who worship in the same way. People around the world encourage their children to join and teach them who represent the church. To turn to priests as people they can be trusted to guide them on God’s path toward redemption. So, however much sexual abuse by priests occurs around the world, thousands upon thousands of children have been abused by those responsible for guiding them towards the church knew some of their priests were sexual predators rather than removing them from the church. They simply moved the hand and overall parish where the predator began to work to discover the next set of parishioners to victimize. That’s what I mean by hypocrisy and hypocrisy at its worst. If you can’t trust the person you pay to do a job you trust? So many were punished by their parents for sex abuse. Americans have a beloved priest of such desirable behavior—so much so that many parishes not only the authority of the church, but the local political people can gain from trusting church officials.

In some cases, the court system often victimizes people again. Apparently, the prosecution of many crimes is restricted by a statute of limitations. You must bring charges to the court within a certain number of years. Think about a child who was sexually abused at the age of 5-10. Someone in this age group may not have the capacity to question authority. Although the behavior of the abuser may have been considered ‘wrong’ or ‘inappropriate’, it may not be considered a sexual offense. This only minimum, the primary effect of such situations that like this make this think, why do they have to do it if you don’t do yourself? This is a problem when people see the hypocrisy of some teachers cause students to question authority.

We are surrounded by examples of hypocrisy and it causes us to question authority. We question the authority of the church, our religions, working in our system of law and order, our own government, and in our school? Why? Because we see the hypocrisy in every thing, but do another. We call the attention of someone, a speeding parent, sneak our phones while teachers are blatantly using them, then go home and experience the TV news about religious and governmental hypocrisy. Hypocrisy surrounds us.

We have to find it within ourselves to question the authority that although hypocrisy does not exist at times, it is most certainly, most people are not actually hypocritical. We need to look at how people define and focus on that behavior as guides through out our lives. We have to find it within ourselves to be able to not let other people define us. People will not be able to move up to the age of 5-10.

This brings up the question: Should GMOs be allowed in school lunches? Currently, around 31 million school lunches are served each day to children in America. With this information it’s altered to ask if some students for their opinion. “Personally, I don’t bother me and as long as kids are eating, why should it matter?” Agreed with this statement, sophomore Simone Haddad said, “GMOs are so common nowadays,” She thought of eating them at school doesn’t quite make sense the food system gets taste great.” However, sophomore Elle Haddad had an opposing view, “Knowing my food is, in a way, fake ruins me, I try to avoid eating the school lunches.”

Some schools have decided to try to take action. The New York State Parent Teacher Association (NYPSTA) proposed the idea to ban GMOs in school lunches. Due to many factors and flaws it is that passed and GMOs, for now, will remain in their lunches, but with some good reason. Due to the use of GMOs, children are able to enjoy some fruits and vegetables year-round. Some families also couldn’t afford a GMO-free change. GMOs allow the food to be cheaper, and although an organic lunch may not seem to have a huge difference in price, we can add up.

So why don’t people just buy organic food? Generally, organic food is much more expensive. GMOs allow genetically modified alternative foods. Therefore, people who can be trusted to talk. is a less likely to gravitate toward the organic choice. Another problem might just be that people don’t know they’re buying the GMOs. Sixty-four countries including Japan, the European Union, Russia, Australia, and China require GMOs to be labeled. In the United States, however, only a few states (Vermont, Maine, and Connecticut) have required GMO labeling. So maybe the problem is, in fact, the lack of awareness. The use of GMOs is becoming more and more popular. As it now makes up most of what we see in grocery stores, schools, and restaurants. People who are cheaper, and according to some sources, increase crop yields, but at what cost? Possibly endangering our body by filling them with unnecessary chemicals, or raising animals pumped with steroids to the point where they can barely move? Some say GMOs have also caused GMOs do not increase crop yields.

The important thing is to know what you’re feeding your body. Become an informed consumer, so you can become an informed voter.
Pulling Your Weight in Groups

By Bella Updegraff, Staff Writer

Having an older brother came in handy when it came to doing chores. As the little sister, I was more than happy to sit back and watch my brother do most of the work. He had to take out the trash, load and unload the dishwasher, and mow the lawn from time to time. I, on the other hand, only had to put in a trash bag after he took out the old one. He has now left for college, leaving me to pick up all the daily duties that he would usually do. Since his absence, I now realize how much work he pulled while I stood back and relaxed. He was the weightlifter, and I was the weight he had to carry. I never once contemplated how he must’ve felt when doing most of the chores. Now that he’s gone, and I’m expected to do the work, I appreciate him much more than when he was at home.

Teachers seem to understand the dynamics of students working in groups. Pulling your weight in groups is important equally, but it can sometimes lead to slacking. This very situation happens all around the world in different cultures, and it can even be found happening at the international level.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or NATO, is a military alliance between 29 North American and European countries, one being the United States. This defense alliance requires military forces to protect and defend. These forces cannot be created out of nothing; there is a kind of work to make these armies. These funds come from all the allies, not in the same but in a relative amount.

The definition of an ally is a person or group that helps and supports in an ongoing effort, activity, or struggle. However, there have been claims that some NATO allies have not been doing their fair share. The problem is, NATO has been dependent on the United States for military coverage. Is it fair that the U.S. puts in its contributions, yet others do not? Of course, some nations are not as big and strong as others, but they are still expected to contribute their fair share.

It has been determined that the U.S. pays 22.1%, Germany 14.7%, and 13 other allies pay less than 1% towards the NATO budget. In total, there are 29 members who participate in the treaty. The idea of being in a group usually comes with the expectation that the work will be spread evenly.

These expectations for our NATO allies have been addressed and should be followed as closely as they can. President Donald Trump has shown his concern on this matter. He claims that allies “must finally contribute their fair share and meet financial obligations”.

In times of need, these partners should be able to step up and defend. This is what is expected of them, but if they do not contribute, other NATO allies have to pick up the slack to help the country in need. It is a team effort, and all participants should step up to help.

Taxes are a great example of this. They are important for many reasons, to include funding the salaries of government workers and supporting common resources. What happens when not everyone pays their taxes? The government is then counting more heavily on the people who do to continue functioning. It is not fair to the people who are paying them.

It is now more and more common to see students at school working in groups for assignments. Teachers may assign students to work together on a presentation, creative project, or even something as simple as answering questions based on a text. A problem that is seemingly common in today’s age is the lack of equity in the contributions of each group member.

While most people see groups as a positive thing, allowing students to learn to work together, group organizations, and leadership skills, they put the outcome of the group in the student’s hands. This allows for some to slack off and expect others to pick up the weight in the group for them.

In groups you have to evenly distribute the workload. If you don’t do that, there’s no point in having the group in the first place,” said freshman Cassie Mateleski. The point of a group is to work on an assignment with multiple people, as a team. The saying, “more hands make the light work” is good in explaining the purpose for groups.

However, if your group-mates are not contributing, what is the point of having them? In the end, they are just dead weight and only put the group farther away from achieving its goal. For example, if a group decides to split a presentation into five parts, one for each of the members, and everyone does their part except for one of the students, that leaves the presentation unfinished. The laziness of one student makes the whole group suffer in the end. Another thing that could be a factor is who the group is made up of.

When asked if sitting in groups encourages learning or socializing more, Senior Asia Jones said, “If the kids intend to play instead of work, the kids will be more likely to socialize.” Having slackers in the group makes all the difference to the work effort. Is it fair to the others that put in the effort? “If a group doesn’t work together, there will be a feeling of pressure on one or few people in a group,” said freshman Taylor Jerris. Peers who have more weight to pull in a group may feel a sense of urgency or pressure on their part, making the job harder to get done. Some may argue that the other members should check in with the slacker to make sure he/ she is doing the work, but sometimes students cannot fully control the actions of their group members.

The worst part of having a student in the group who doesn’t pull his or her weight is that it usually results in the other members of the group turning on that student. Why should students who do the work be put in a position to be aggressive just to get the work done?

So many positive outcomes can be achieved by working with others, as long as group members actually do work together. Unfortunately, the learning outcomes are usually negative because of the slackers. So many graphics have been created about the negative outcomes of working with others in group projects, that it seems collaborating with others is more of an ideal than a predictable result.

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Spending as percentage of GDP:

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<th>Country</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
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<td>U.K.</td>
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Source: Access online 10/1/2018 from CNN Money article entitled, “Which NATO members are falling short on military spending?” by Ivana Kottasova, posted April 16, 2016.
Religion and culture are topics often a person can be closed-minded about. I was once bullied for my lack of religion and asked what my religion is. I was uncomfortable, and I didn’t want to tell her the truth because I feared her reaction. But after she hounded me about it, I told her; I’m an atheist. An atheist is someone who lacks belief in gods or supreme beings. She insulted me and said things I’ll never forget. She told me I am going to Hell; I’m a horrible person and a monster. I found myself feeling guilty for not believing in God. But I knew my beliefs don’t define who I am. I realized she was objectifying me. There is more to me than my death of religion.

Why should I change who I am and feel bad for my beliefs? Why am I afraid to reveal my beliefs to my own family? The answer is closed-mindedness. It keeps us from being able to express ourselves as we truly are because we’re afraid of our peers will focus on one trait, such as religion or sexuality, and objectify based on that one characteristic. Twenty percent of the Mandarin High Students surveyed reported being bullied for their religion. Whether it be for atheism, Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Islamic, or whatever one is, they are bullied because someone for their religion is unjust.

Stereotyping over one’s religion is also prevalent today. Big Boo from Orange is the new Black is a prime example of closed-mindedness. It implies that in order to be a popular person you have to be someone from the LGBTQ community in a box. It implies that in order to be a lesbian you have to look like Big Boo from Orange is the new Black. This is the wrong path of the gay community. Sen. Parker Blessing shares his opinion on the closed-minded people of today’s society. He said, “The queer community is often looked at as a subset of the world that aren’t really people, just a perception of what straight people believe we are.”

Many people see lesbians in this same manner. They are more; we are not just a subset of people, we are a beautiful and thriving community. But this is apparently hard for those straight-laced and closed-minded people to see.

The LGBTQ go through so much when closed-minded people cannot come to terms the community is not going away. Being bullied.

The path of the gay community is already difficult. It’s protection to make sure that not everyone sees the queer community as what the media portrays. “You don’t look like a lesbian” is a common phrase lesbians are told when they do not look like Ellen DeGeneres. Words like these think people of this community in a box. It implies that in order to be a lesbian you have to look like Big Boo from Orange is the new Black. Words like these take away the validity out of someone’s identity.

Objectifying fellow human beings is obviously a problem in society. First, we need to realize that it’s a problem requiring a solution. We need to show the world to listen to each other’s opinions. Not being respectful towards them, even if we completely disagree with them. We also need to find neutral readings in order to understand how sides of an issue. Today’s generations need to know how to keep their ears and eyes open when discussing colorful andrar connotations without forcing their opinion onto each other and accepting that not everyone will have the same views as them. It’s okay if we don’t agree on everything. We don’t have to agree to become a peaceful and progressive society. Accepting differences between ourselves rather than being disrespectful or blind can help make our society great.
Private Companies in Control of Students’ Future

By: Rowan Vanhooft, Chief Editor

In order to be accepted into most colleges, students must take college entrance exams like the ACT and the SAT. However, some students stress over improving their scores or worry about whether they did enough to get accepted into the good colleges. While many may worry about this, students can usually find a good college that will accept their score. The issue arises with the fact that private companies like College Board and ACT profit more when students must take more exams. Anyone skeptical of large companies will likely see an issue with the fact that College Board benefits when students receive lower scores. As with many standardized tests, College Board and ACT curve their exams so that students receive more accurate scores depending on the difficulty of the test. An example would be if they have a particular test with more students than each question right will help the student more, meaning that they could miss more questions than on an easier, different test and receive the same score. There is nothing wrong with weighting standardized exams if the difficulty of the tests are mostly consistent so that the weighting is more predictable. The SAT administered on June 2 of 2018 was deemed to be much easier than most SATs, so the curve was extremely harsh. On that SAT I missed 5 questions on math which would usually end up anywhere from 740 on easier exams to 770 on more difficult exams. The score that was received was a 670 in math. Many students were outraged by the extreme curve, so some contacted news organizations to try and pressure College Board accountable for the exam.

Rebecca Campbell, Guidance Counselor

Fellow Mustangs:

I am the Best Buddies Faculty Advisor this year. Our amazing chapter members are planning a lot of fun awareness activities for MHS, as well as the community. Additionally, they have already participated in the Tim Tebow Foundation’s A Night to Shine and done campus cleanup for MHS. What an AWESOME group of kids working for INCLUSION!

The have made a goal to invite each of YOU to participate in the Best Buddies Friendship Walk on May 4 at The Seawalk Pavilion. Even if you are unable to attend, simply signing up and helping to raise pledges will help tremendously.

Sign up at https://www.bestbuddiesfriendshipwalk.org/jacksonville/event-details and JOIN our team MUSTANGBUDDIES!

We hope to see you there!

Rebecca Campbell, Guidance Counselor

Who The Money Goes...
Distracted Driving

By: Laney Haggard, Staff Writer

For most adults, driving is second nature—like taking a breath—because they’ve been doing it for years. Through their experiences, they have learned how quickly a distraction can result in an accident—caused either by themselves or other drivers on the road. Our parents learned to drive before cellphones, so they acquired their driving experience without the technological distractions that our generation faces.

As we reach the age that allows us to drive, we have more distractions to deal with. There are probably more drivers on the road; the highways may be more complicated; drivers have more distractions. All of this is added to a problem that many of our generation may have—an attention span greatly reduced by our use of technology.

A far lower percentage of our generation reads as the previous generation because we have so much that affects our ability to maintain concentration. We can access whatever we want whenever we want on cable TV. We can surf on the Internet for hours and click our way through sites is not so easy for us to do so. As a result, many of us have become addicted to the pull of social media. So many of us have trouble keeping our phones off even during instructional time in our classes. Pile the problems of short attention spans and an addiction to the pull of social media on top of the act of beginning our driving experience.

To those issues, add the fact that in this time of our lives we are establishing our personal identity—who we are to ourselves and how we want to be perceived by others, especially our peers. In that effort to establish our identity, some students will fall under the pressure of peers and begin to experiment with substance and substance abuse. Alcohol and drugs have a negative effect on the thinking processes: judgment, reaction time, memory, and motor skills. Ironically, lack of experience affects a new driver in the same way: judgment, reaction time, memory, and motor skills. Senior Rhonda Hunt stated that “everyone knows that it is bad.” However, knowing something is unsafe for you and refraining from participating in unsafe behavior are two entirely different things. Sophomore Madison Lewis feels that people who drive under the influence “are extremely selfish people who don’t consider others before getting behind the wheel of a vehicle.” Pile these issues on top of learning to drive.

As if that isn’t enough, put a few friends in the car with you. Do all of these friends understand what the driver is going through? All the distractions? All of the decisions required by drivers? All of the ‘thinking through’ that inexperienced drivers have to go through to make decisions? Because if they don’t, they may expect the same level of communication from you as when you’re not driving. In this situation, how many inexperienced drivers would actually say, “Hey, I need to pay attention to driving, okay? I’ll catch up on the conversation after we get to where we’re going.” Probably not many. In fact, most new drivers are feeling pretty good about being behind the wheel. They may want to give the impression that they are completely comfortable with the act of driving. Pile these issues on top of learning to drive.

How many new drivers focus on making sure the music is just right and become preoccupied with dealing with the radio or CD player. Or worse—wear earbuds hooked up to smartphones and are preoccupied with pulling up their favorite tunes on their phone?

And while that phone is out, why not check for messages? And it would be rude not to respond to any messages received, wouldn’t it? The latest model of iPhone automatically blocks all incoming communications with a “Do Not Disturb” function when it perceives that the phone is in a moving vehicle. Unfortunately, you have the option of clicking on “I’m not driving,” in case you are riding as a passenger. Once you find out you can cancel that mode, would you do it while driving? Hopefully not. If your phone doesn’t have this app, this function is available with an app called Driving Detective. It works as long as you don’t disable it while driving.

Don’t disable your concentration in any way while you’re driving, and don’t disable the driver’s concentration while you’re a passenger. Having the ability to drive is probably the first biggest and best reward we can earn during high school. Let’s make sure that we don’t let it cut short the rest of our lives. Stay focused for your sake and everyone else’s.
Social Issues

The Mandarin Times, 12/21/2018, Page 14

A Call for Action: The Wage Gap

By: Jackeline Calderon and Aaliyah Rocourt, Staff Writers

Within the next several years, students will be hitting the job market to search for a wage—the first true step towards independence. Before that, we need to learn information about our income. First, we need to learn the effect of taxes on take-home pay because it allows us to be informed about our paychecks. In addition, we need to know that all pay isn’t equal. Naturally, we’re not going to get the same amount of money as the person who hired us, or the person who supervises us, or the person who has more experience than us. But we should get the same pay as the person hired the same day for the same position and the same amount of experience. If our pay isn’t the same, we need to make sure we aren’t victims of discrimination, which results in an wage gap. The wage gap is the difference between wages as a result of our gender or ethnicity.

According to her article, "For the first time in history, women are educated better than their husbands—but men still earn more," (published online at cnbc.com on 11/31/17) Abigail Hess quotes research conducted by the Institute of Family Studies. According to that study, a record 25 percent of husbands are now married to wives who have more education than they do. However, "Of couples, who married in 2016, just 20 percent of husbands had more education than their wives, yet 67 percent earned more.

Statistics discussed in Hess’ article are supposed by in Janet Napolitano’s article in Forbes (9/4/18) entitled, "Women earn more college degrees and men still earn more money." Napolitano points out that "women earned 50 percent of bachelor’s degrees, and the legislative push, the gender pay gap has narrowed by less than half a cent per year, to about 80 cents on the dollar today." Part of the wage gap’s solution is that women tend to be drawn to positions in industry that have been typically filled predominantly by women.

Napolitano lays out an action that may speed up the process of closing the wage gap. She says that first, we need to be aware of the gap and be determined to close it. Second, she said "women should choose their field of study keeping in mind what effect that might have on their future earning power.” She also points out that companies should not ask prospective employees for their salary history, because that tends to lock women into lower paying starting salaries.

Senior Destiny Williams explained, “The wage gap definitely exists and should not be ignored, no matter how small. We can’t preach equality but ignore the simple things like this.”

What Destiny means is that the wage gap can be easily fixed but the problem is not receiving its needed attention.

On the other hand, Sophomore Jason Guerra stated, "Considering that the wage gap isn’t very big and that our country is basically blessed with this in our hands, I don’t think that as of right now it matters too much.” The wage gap is important. It is the people who think like Jason who are not in power and have control over how women are paid.

The wage gap doesn’t simply exist hidden behind corporate walls. Some of it happens right in front of us on the big Hollywood screen. For example, the paycheck Notice World generated negative comments because actress Chris Pratt (that hit male lead of the movie) was paid more than the female lead Bryce Dallas Howard. Let’s face it, Howard probably had just as much to do as Pratt, but she had to perform uncomfortably in high stilettos, short tight pencil skirt, and a low-neck top.

This is not the only time where actors have been paid more than actresses. The movie Silver Linings starring Jennifer Lawrence and Bradley Cooper, who both played the main roles had also enraged people because Bradley Cooper was paid more than Jennifer Lawrence. Jennifer Lawrence is a highly recognizable actress for her success in the Hunger Games trilogy and X-Men First Class. Lawrence is just as important and popular as Bradley Cooper in the film industry. She was awarded the academy award for the best leading actress for her amazing performance in the film Silver Linings, and is currently one of the highest paid actresses in the U.S. So why is she getting paid less than Bradley Cooper? Ms. Lawrence is now an advocate for equal pay rights and is voicing her opinion on the matter. It’s a problem that should not be pushed aside.

However, while the wage gap between men and women is very slowly decreasing, the wage gap between African Americans is actually increasing, according to an article in The Economist (author not given) posted online on 7/7/18. The article, "Why did the study conducted by Patrick Bayer and Kervin Charles include the quote, “While highly educated African Americans are now more successful than ever, the bottom appears to have fallen out for poor blacks.” Although the earnings gap between the typical white and black man began narrowing from 1940, the trend stopped in the mid-1970s. Many assume that the earnings gap then stayed constant, but it has in fact widened. Today the difference is as large as it was in the 1950s.

These findings support other studies which support the adage that “the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer.” The problem is that poor African American men are hit harder than their poor white counterparts.

According to the article Equal pay is not equal at all for women of color. by Sophia A. Nelson, white and Asian females have narrowed the gap between male and females the most. Latina and black women making only slight improvements. With the growing number of Latino migrants coming to the United States, more Latinos are getting taken advantage of even though they’re citizens. African American feel as though they don’t have a voice to speak up, simply because they weren’t born in the United States. Latinos are currently facing challenges such as dealing with animosity, with some Americans being incredibly racist toward anyone coming from south of the border.

Millenials are at or getting close to voting age. As we prepare to meet this obligation, we need to be aware of the issues that will face us as adults, and use our voting power to improve the society we inherit. This includes eliminating gender and racial wage gaps that have plagued our society since it was formed. Pay attention to what politicians are promising and then how they follow up on their promises. Let’s be the generation that truly creates equality in our country.

$1.00

$0.94

$0.82

$0.68

$0.61


This photo shows the differences in the amount of money earned between the different races of women in comparison of their wage with a white man. Accessed online 10/3/2018 at https://spencerhuchulak.files.wordpress.com/2016/10/wagegap_infographic_v1a_600.jpg.
A Call for Action: Humane Animal Control

By: Clarissa Pimentel, Staff Writer

Picture this: you look into your backyard and you see an alligator or a snake. What do you do? Call animal control so they can put the reptile to sleep, right? Now what do you do when it’s a puppy instead? “The two scenarios seem so different from each other but when you think about it, they really are the same,” said sophomore Dionis Xhaf-er. Animal Control is an office or department responsible for enforcing ordi- nances relating to the con- trol, impoundment, and disposition of animals. When dealing with animal control you also deal with animal euthanasia. Animal euthanasia, also referred to as the “Good Death” is the act of putting an animal to death due to certain rea- sons. These reasons may vary but have the same re- sult. The act itself is very contro- versial which would lead to the question, “Is it Ethical?”

For those of you who are new to the topic, animal euthanasia is allowing the death of animal due to spe- cific and or certain circum- stances. The reasons why people go to animal eutha- nasia can vary from shelters not having enough space, so they result in them killing off the overcrowded ani- mals. Approximately 6 to 8 million animals are handled by animal shelters in the U.S. each year. Even though some are reclaimed or adopted, nearly 4 million unwanted dogs and cats are left with nowhere to go. “I wish you could just give all the animals a world a home but it’s just not that simple,” said sopho- more Alexis Fraiz-er. Animal shelters cannot humanely house and sup- port all these animals until their natural deaths. They would be forced to live in cramped cages or kennels for years, lonely and stressed, and other animals would have to be turned away because there would be no room for them. Try- ing to build enough animal shelters to keep up with the endless stream of homeless animals is like putting a bandage on a gunshot wound.

Turning unwanted animals loose to roam the streets is not a humane option, either. Animal shel- ters believe that stray ani- mals will usually starve to death or get hit by a car, both of which seem ex- tremely inhumane. “It is so sad to think that these ani- mals have nowhere to go and have no choice where their lives will end up. It is all based on luck, whether you end up with a loving family or end up being put to sleep,” said Dionis Xhaeri. Dogs and cats are not particularly well-equipped to fend for themselves in the wild. While dogs are descended from wolves, the process of domestication over hun- dreds of years has bred out a lot of their hunting drive and aggression. This will make it difficult for them to hunt for food. They will usually have to rely on roadkill and other carrion, as well as discarded human food, in order to sur- vive. This could lead to stomach upsets or even poi- soning and if they cannot find the food they need, star- vation. This is a reason many animals are being put to sleep, so they do not have to suffer the painfulness of star- vation.

The other reason people result to animal euthanasia is to end the pain and suffering of their beloved pets. Sopho- more Kevin Raspocpi said, “I resulted to animal control animal euthanasia to offer my pet a better option. I had a dog who was very sick, it hurt me seeing him in pain, so my family and I made a call.” The big reason howev- er is the growing population of animals, mostly cats and dogs. These fast-growing populations are hard to sus- tain. Therefore, shelters result to animal euthanasia and sterilization. These two acts go hand and hand. Sterilization is surgery to make a person or animal unable to produce off- spring. Preforming this on dogs and cats will limit the population growth. Many animal control centers find these stray dogs and cats then sterilize them either themselves or send them to an animal hospital to get the procedure done there. Sterilization prevents these cats and dogs from creating more offspring which will help control their growing populations a bunch. By controlling their populations, we lessen the number of animals we have to put to sleep due to lack of space in animal shelters. Adopting pets is also a good way to control the number of stray ani- mals.

Each year, 2.7 million adoptable dogs and cats are euthanized in the Unit- ed States, simply because too many pets come into shelters and too few people consider adoption when looking for a pet. The number of euthanized animals could be reduced dramatically if more people are open up to adopting pets. When you adopt, you save a loving animal by making them part of your family and open up shelter space for another animal who might desperately need it.

So if you are wonder- ing how to help this grow- ing issue this is what you can do! Adopt a pet! Ani- mal shelters and rescue groups are brimming with happy, healthy pets just waiting for someone to take them home. Most shelter pets wound up there because of a human problem like a move or a divorce, not because the animals did anything wrong. Many are already house-trained and ready to live with families. Usually when you adopt a pet, the cost of spay/neuter, first vaccinations (and some- times even micro- chipping!) is included in the adoption price, which can save you some of the upfront costs of adding a new member to your family. Depending on the animal, you may also save on housing, feeding, and training expenses. These are all so many reasons why you should result to adopting a pet instead of buying one.

Growing animal popu- lations is a problem, and there are multiple ways to solve this issue, some ways being more ethical than others. It all depends on how you see the issue and making adjustments in your own hands in ways that you see fit.
Red Dead Redemption 2 stands out because the open world is both full of interactions and enhanced with multiple side-issues. Similar games with massive open worlds are seemingly empty. The only interesting or worthwhile interactions in games like Skyrim quickly begin to seem like copy and pasted assets throughout the world. There are countless open world games like this, and they are not all inherently bad. Usually these games have other aspects that players enjoy and they simply see the potential for a better open world. In Red Dead Redemption 2 the open world is full of seemingly random events and interesting structures that make it feel alive. There are random interactions with strangers and side missions that only appear when the player stumbles upon them.

The story in Red Dead Redemption 2 is quite long, at around 60 hours. While many players have been asking for longer single player campaigns some are complaining that the Red Dead Redemption 2 campaign is too long, going on to say that some missions feel padded to- ward the end of the cam- paign. At some point the gameplay became less enjoyable and while the story was still intriguing. The first few chapters are packed with unique story missions. In most of these story mis- sions the player doesn’t have to abandon their mor- als, but the option still ex- ists if the player wants to follow an easier route. While most early mis- sions can end in a shoot out, there is a way to avoid this. From the very beginning it is clear that the only force keeping the gang from turn- ing on each other is the hope of getting back into Van der Linde. In the early chapters Arthur Morgan and the gang faced with adversity while chasing a fading light at the end of the tunnel. In these later chapters Rockstar started to fade away from the game- play elements that make Red Dead Redemption 2 such a unique and entertaining game. At this point in time many players will likely have spent a significant amount of time exploring the open world and therefore the cam- paign leads the player into the open world where they are faced with more and more shootouts and escape sequ- ences. As proper Rockst- ar Games struggles to create interesting filler gameplay while rounding out the superrob sto- ry writing. While the writing is given a shot, the gameplay after this point seems to be more linear and bland. Rockstar Games man- aged to write a fantastic sto- ry and then spend the end and an interesting two-part mission like many popular titles in recent years, Red Dead Redemption 2 feels like a very polished game. Every- thing of gameplay feels as if it was meticulously ad- justed until it could not be considered a true player. For instance, an old complaint about story bases games is that NPCs (non-player characters) walk at a pace that the player cannot match. In most games the player has two options for the play- er to walk and too slow for the player to sprint. Instead of giving the player options like this, Rockstar Games simply made it so that the player can hold onto a certain button and their char- acter will walk, if it is needed. This allows the player to relax and focus on the story instead of trying to keep up with the NPC. Another aspect of Red Dead Redemption 2 that is done perfectly is the horse- back riding. There is no need that I have played with horseback riding (The Leg- end of Zelda games, Assas- sin’s Creed series, Skyrim it has an aw- ful. Red Dead Redemption 2 addresses most of these problems with horseback riding in other games. The horse is a simple and more importantly the horse AI doesn’t have issues with the game envi- ronment. This allows the player to easily travel long distances without sacrific- ing the random events that can occur on the way. It seems that the developers realized that if the player is going to travel by horse- back this often it needs to be a smooth and intui- tive experience.

Many players were ex- cited for the Red Dead Online beta that Rockstar Games released on November 27th. It was expected that Rockstar Games would cripple the in-game econo- my in an attempt to force players to spend money on payy on gold bars, which can be used to purchase items in the shop. As ex- pected, the in-game econo- my doesn’t start to open up until the end of the beta; all items cost sig- nificantly more and mis- sions reward significantly less. After a wave of nega- tive feedback Rockstar quickly adjusted prices and rewards to make the Red Dead Online beta more appealing. To accompany the changes they have offered 250 dollars and 15 gold bars in game for any players that had missions when the announcements were made. While this may seem like it is not enough to buy a weapon that it does improve some gameplay, like the Lancas- ter repeater. It is nice to see Rockstar respond to player complaints, and the future of the Red Dead Online is looking up. In the 2018 Game Awards Red Dead Redemption 2 received 8 nominations, including game of the year. With titles like God of War, which won game of the year, and his appearance in Spiderman as competitors, it is truly impressive that Red Dead Redemption 2 performed so well. Winning half of the awards is a major accomplishment and I expect Red Dead Redemption 2 won best narrative, best score/ music, and best game of the year. In most of these categories Rockstar Games was a frontrunner, especially with the main character, Arthur Morgan. The 2018 Game Awards showed an impressive year 2018 has been for gaming and pro- vided recognition for the very talented developers involved in this year’s lineup.

Red Dead Redemption 2 is an emotionally taxing and engaging narrative gameplay, Red Dead Re- demption 2 is arguably worth 60 dollars especially if you count the years of quality gaming. As one of the few games that I have played with horseback riding it is still done well, the game- play of Red Dead Redemption 2 is definitely something that I would replay with the endlessly online play coming with Red Dead Online.

Rowan Vanhoof, Chief Editor and Review Columnist

Movie Review

The storyline of Creed 2 was done perfectly; the di- rector managed to con- stantly build pressure lead- ing up to the final fight even when the general idea that Creed will be ready in time. There are multiple side sto- ries that all contribute to Creed’s difficult decision about what path he will take. It is clear that Rockstar had its own identity while still maintaining connections to the Rocky films. The action was exciting, mainly because it was completely unpre- dictable. In most movies the problems do nothing but ex-acerbate the issue. Some of these side stories include Creed’s trainer, Rocky Balboa, who is still alive and his dis- connection from his son, who now has a child. As the final fight comes closer and closer, Rocky and Creed make a final push to ensure that Creed will live through the match, as he says that a brand new responsibility at home. From the beginning to the end of the movie it is engaging as Creed faces decisions that many people can relate to. The soundtrack had a perfect balance between new music and callbacks to the Rocky films. Most of the new music consisted of Rap and Hip Hop artists like Vince Staples and Lil Uzi Vert coming on in various training sequences. Creed turned the final fight around the iconic song from Rocky “Gonna Fly Now” but creating a moment similar to the origi- nal Rocky. Creed found the soundtrack because it didn’t seem to rely on nostalgia from Rocky films. The soundtrack had its own identity while still maintaining connections to the Rocky films.

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I stand by Yafal Grill having the best falafel as it says on their signs. My friend is looking to eat authentic Middle Eastern foods this is the place to go. I came with my family on a Sunday just as lunch was coming in and we were seated immediately. Not many people were on staff but still home the service was friendly and welcoming.

There is a variety of shawarma salads, entrees, salads, and a buffet ranging from seven to thirteen dollars per person. With our order, we paid around 50 dollars. My dad and I got foods from the buffet with our brother and sister ordered chicken shawarmas that came with a side of fries. The fries weren't your basic striped and cut fries. We each got an American restauran, they were little red golden fries. The uniqueness of the fries was refreshing. We didn't have to wait very long to get the food to street sign. If you're looking to eat authentic Middle Eastern foods this is the place to go. I came with my family on a Sunday just as lunch was coming in and we were seated immediately. Not many people were on staff but still home the service was friendly and welcoming.

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Varsity Team Wins State Championship!

By: Anahi Galvan, Staff Writer

After winning only two games in the 2017 season, the varsity football team enjoyed an astonishingly successful season this year. "I knew we would be better this year with what we had coming back, and the way the guys went about their training in the offseason," head coach Brian Ramsey shared. "I knew we were going to be a better football team. I think when it really flipped was the Apopka game, when we went down there on the road and everybody was sort of feeling sorry for us that we had to play, and we went down there and won convincingly. From that point on, we've been in a lot of close games and guys are going out there looking to make the final play to win the game."

Wide Receiver Kris Mitchell (#3) agreed saying, "Honestly, I always knew that we could make it to states, but beating Apopka like that really sparked a vibe in us."

Junior quarterback Carson Beck (#18) summed up the season by saying the team approached each game by "making sure that we just focus on a one-week season every single time, because if we lose, the season is over just like that." Leading up to the final game on December 8th in Orlando against Miami Columbus (14-4), MHS (12-4) played a rigorous schedule that included seven teams in the playoffs, beating Deland, Winter Park, and the top-seeded Wekiva. Wide Receiver Darian Oxendine (#2) said, "Wekiva was the hardest team I ever played in my high school years. I knew that if we beat them, we had the potential to beat anyone."

Mandarin won its first State Championship over Columbus of Miami, 37-35. During the game, quarterback Beck threw for five touchdowns, four of those to Wide Receiver Dario Douglas (#1). Douglas is the first player in State Championship game history to catch four touchdowns.

Fullback Matthew Shimko (#44) shared, "Wanting to win for my teammates, school, and coaches motivated me. We all practiced and trained super hard during the week to get a win on Friday. Shimko added, "We really are a big family, playing for that bond really motivates me."

Many ask what changed to give the team the potential to go to states. Defensive End Christian Warren (#55) said, "Nothing; it was just the way we practice and train." not only did they put their all every game but also during practice they showed what it took to become a state champ.

Mandarin’s win of the Class 8A State Championship comes on the heels of Raines High School’s victory in the Class 4A Championship. This is the first time Duval County has two public school champions in the same season.

1010XL Scholar/Athlete of the Week Scholarship Program

By: Summer Alexander, Staff Writer

DeMario Douglas is participates on the varsity football, varsity basketball, and the track and field teams. He was awarded the 1010XL Scholar/Athlete of the Week during the week of October 22 (eleventh week of the year). Douglas maintains a 3.6 GPA, is on the AB Honor Roll (All District 15/16) and participates in community service as a volunteer with the PAL Football Team. Douglas applied for and has been accepted to Liberty, FAU and UAB and is looking to play football at the college level.

Kaylee Beauford is a member of the varsity swimming & diving team, weightlifting team, and softball team. She was awarded the 1010XL Scholar/Athlete of the Week during the week of November 13th (fourteenth week of the year). Beauford is a member of both the National Honor Society and the Student Athlete Leadership Team. She maintains a 3.9 GPA and has received awards for earning straight A’s. Beauford has applied to Baylor University for as a Pre-Med major.

Striking into States

By: Aaliyah Rocourt, Staff Writer

The 2018 Lady Mustangs Bowling season was full of outstanding achievements and excitement for future seasons. Hustling through a tough schedule, these mighty Mustangs were able to win an astonishing 82 out of 84 points available. Through their extensive practices, their performance quality during their games allowed them to have a record of 889 as their highest test game.

As their regular season came to a close, the ladies were able to defeat their opponents for the number two spot in their conference championships. The team said, "let’s get this bread,” is what motivated them. The motto was made while they were at a conference and ever since then they’ve been using it. Additionally, the ladies also achieved the second spot for district championships. Their continuous success led to their opportunity to face off with other state qualified teams. The ladies’ cooperation and motivation to achieve greatness allowed them to place 21st in the state championships.

When the team reflects on their season, they always remember that having a team atmosphere was the key to their success. "We’re like a big family. We all motivate one another and have a great time," said junior Peyton Wolf.
A Picture’s Worth a Thousand Words

Varsity Football Team celebrates on the field after securing the 8A State Championship.

Head Coach Brian Ramsey becomes the object of his winning team’s enthusiasm.

Weightlifting team wins District Championship.

Boys Swimming & Diving wins 4A-1 first place at the District Championship and the Girls won First Runner Up.

The Track & Field team split up into two teams: Green and Orange and competed against each other as part of their training. Good times were had by all.

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