

Macdonald C.I.
 “We’ve Got You Covered.”



SAC Valentine’s Day e-Cards

ZhenYan Lin



Course Selections

Afrah Atif

It’s that time of the year, Mac! By February 22nd, all students must have chosen and uploaded their courses on myBlueprint. Grade 10 and 11 students also had the opportunity to choose co-op. Although selecting courses for the following year can be stressful for students, they should remember that help is available. Students of all grades are encouraged to seek help from Guidance and teachers for questions regarding their future courses.

For this year’s graduates, a reminder that only 20 volunteer hours are needed to graduate! We also urge students in other grades to begin volunteering if they have not already done so. You can get a headstart within our very own school, as many of Mac’s clubs and councils offer volunteer hours for your involvement.

We hope everyone’s course selections went well!

Student Life at Mac

YiLin Luan



Valentine’s Day At Mac!

Vishva Sritharan

Every year during Valentine’s Day, we are encouraged to demonstrate our love towards the people we care about. Whether that includes family members, friends and peers, or even an appreciated stranger, Valentine’s Day is the perfect time to show your love! Despite the chilly winter weather, we reconnect with others one way or another and share our appreciation and love for them.

We’re no strangers to Valentine’s Day at Mac! Here, we’ve hosted some fun and inclusive events to help bring the most out of Valentine’s Day. One such event includes Blind Date with a Book, where students “go on a date” with a specially wrapped book and get an opportunity to win prizes! Read on to learn more in, “Blind Date with a Book: What is it?”

Moreover, students who wanted to share their appreciation for someone (but had no idea how) were able to purchase Candy Grams from the SAC! By sending someone a Candy Gram, students receive a treat with a note to make sure they know they’re loved during this holiday.

Lastly, don’t forget about the wonderful collaboration between the SAC and the Art Council in Valentine cards. This collaboration allowed students to send a virtual card to others, with a variety of beautiful templates. A Grade 11 student, Sachi Taploo, talks about her experience writing at least twenty cards! She says, “Although it was a bit tiresome, I enjoyed it because it made me realize that there are so many people that I appreciate.”

Whether it was Blind Date with a Book, the Candy Gram sales, or the virtual valentines, Mac had your back on this year’s Valentine’s Day! We hope you had a splendid Valentine’s Day and continue to show your appreciation for each other throughout the year.



Photo Credits : Saralyn Guo

Informative

African Heritage Month

Todd Ash-Duah

Hey Mac! As you all know, February is African Heritage Month — a time to celebrate the amazing accomplishments of both African Canadians and African Americans.

The origin of African Heritage Month can be traced back as early as 1920 when African American historian Carter G. Woodson urged Black civic organizations to promote the achievements of Black people. In February of 1926, Woodson sent out a press release announcing Negro History Week. Woodson chose this month with Frederick Douglas and Abraham Lincoln in mind, two Americans who played a vital role in shaping Black history.

Former slave, Frederick Douglas, was born on February 14th and later became a leader in the abolitionist movement which aimed to end the practice of slavery. Also born in February on the 12th, Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the USA, went on to issue the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1st, 1863. This declared that “all persons held as slaves within the rebellious states are and henceforward shall be free.”

In 1976, the USA officially recognized Black History Month. The Canadian government also recognized African Heritage Month in December of 1995. Today, at Mac, we celebrate Black history and Black excellence in a multitude of ways.

Near room 101, a poster is displayed that showcases famous Black people who have made a real difference in the world, including Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, Donovan Bailey, and Viola Desmond. On the daily announcements, the BSA (Black Students Association) and SAC came together to share quotes by influential Black athletes and leaders. Let’s continue to make a difference and lead with encouragement and inspiration, Mac!



Photo Credits : Karen Mitro

The Holiday of Love with a Not-So-Lovely History

Jatin Taploo

February 14th is a day we all recognize as Valentine’s or St. Valentine’s Day. On this holiday, lovers celebrate and express their affection for each other via greetings and gifts. Although Valentine’s Day is recognized as a day of love and joy, the story behind it is far less happy than you may expect.

Rome was involved in many bloody campaigns under Emperor Claudius the Cruel, so military soldiers were needed. However, due to the separation between soldiers and their wives and families, many didn’t join the military. This caused the Emperor to discontinue the festival and ban all marriages and engagements in Rome. However, a man named Saint Valentine didn’t agree with this. He realized the injustice of the decree and began marrying young lovers in secret.

Unfortunately, he was discovered by Claudius, who then hatched a plan to capture and drag Valentine before the Prefect of Rome, who ordered his beheading. The sentence was carried in 270 CE on a day we all know: February 14th.

Many found out about Valentine’s acts of kindness and his great service to his people, and eventually named him a Saint after his death. Since then, we call February 14th “Saint (St.) Valentine’s Day”.

I asked our Macdonald peers about their thoughts about Valentine’s Day. Mario Yeh in Grade 9 exclaimed, “I enjoy Valentine’s Day! I feel that it has a great importance on us, as we begin to form bonds with another, and begin to

form empathy, kindness and love.” Grade 11 student Sachi Taploo explained, “Valentine’s Day is for us to recognize family, love and bonding, as that is what we need in our lives. Caring and loving one another is what we all need and enjoy.”

This is one of three legends connected to the birth of Valentine’s Day, as there are Saint Valentines from Africa, Italy and Rome. Nonetheless, all three share one common idea of love, kindness, devotion, and selflessness. I hope you all had a lovely Valentine’s Day and a great February!

Sources: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Valentines-Day>

<https://www.npr.org/2011/02/14/133693152/the-dark-origins-of-valentines-day>

<https://www.history.com/topics/valentines-day/history-of-valentines-day-2>

Candy Grams

Jalan Bayram



Lunar New Year

Brandon Feng

For thousands of years, countries around the world have preserved the use of the lunar calendar. The lunar calendar, which possibly dates back to the Paleolithic Age, holds a rich history and comes in many variations. This year, Lunar New Year is officially celebrated by several countries on February 1st. It marks the beginning of the moon cycle calendar year.

Lunar New Year has no fixed date but is celebrated on the first new moon at the beginning of the year. This means Lunar New Year can take place anytime from the 21st of January to the 21st of February. For example, next year, Lunar New Year will be held on January 22nd.

Although it is most commonly associated with Chinese New Year, Lunar New Year is celebrated by many other countries, including Mongolia, South Korea, Singapore, Vietnam, Taiwan and Malaysia. The celebrations in each country vary but hold general similarities.

In China, it is tradition to celebrate Lunar New Year with decorations, special meals, giving money to children in red envelopes, and putting on different forms of traditional entertainment over a course of fifteen days. These celebrations share similarities to those in Vietnam as well. In South Korea, the festival lasts for a period of three days. During this time, people visit family members, play traditional games and wear long, colourful, and patterned ceremonial dresses called Hanboks. Other countries such as Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia usually centre their celebrations around religious ceremonies and are typically not as energetic. Mongolia normally celebrates Lunar New Year by doing a morning ritual that they believe helps them with their good fortune.

In short, Lunar New Year is a joyful time where people are able to get together with their family and loved ones. Many Blackscots celebrated this holiday on February 1st, enjoying red envelopes and delicious meals with the entire family, as pictured. We hope you had a delightful Lunar New Year filled with warmth. We wish everyone happiness and good fortune in the new year!



Photo Credits : ZhenYan Lin

Events at Mac

Blind Date with a Book: What is it?

Selena Sarwari



Photo Credits : Rachel Tang

When most people think of February, Valentine's Day is the first thing that comes to mind. To celebrate this day of love, Mac's library is hosting their annual Blind Date with a Book event, which ends on March 8th. Managed by Mac's hardworking librarians, Mrs. Katrivanos and Mrs. Mouratidis, this enticing and enjoyable event has returned after being cancelled due to COVID-19 last year.

Blind Date with a Book encourages students to explore the world of literature by borrowing books that they normally wouldn't pick up. Students will be able to pick up unknown, wrapped books and experience the age-old notion of "don't judge a book by its cover" quite literally. It's an exciting surprise, as the only information available about the book is its genre.

If this isn't enough to hook students in, they also receive chocolates and even free books when they participate. Furthermore, each book comes with a pink ballot where students may write a brief review of their book once they finish reading. Once the event ends and all the ballots are collected, one lucky student is chosen to receive a prize!

Since the library had been closed for the past two years due to COVID-19, it was very refreshing to see this lovely event back in action. When asked about her feelings about Blind Date with a Book's return, Mrs. Katrivanos shared that she enjoyed seeing the excitement and encouragement it raises in the students. "It is a fun event to conduct," she stated, "[It is also] a fun and enjoyable way for students to raise their interest in reading and their spirits — especially in times like these where we could all use a little spirit-raising."

A few students spoke about their overall experiences of this event. Jewel Dolland, a Grade 9 student, stated, "I really like to read but most of the time, I don't really know what book I want to read. Blind Date with a Book gave me an opportunity to read books that I probably wouldn't normally choose."

Sanja Sasikaran, in Grade 10, also said that when she had taken a book with a suspense/thriller tag on it, she surprisingly received a book that she'd read before! Nevertheless, Sanja said that she was still very happy and loved the book so much that she reread it in one sitting.

Grade 9 student Sharon Kuye first said that she wasn't going to participate in the event. However, she decided to take a chance and ended up really liking the book and the overall experience, stating that it was very exciting for her to participate in this event for the first time. When asked whether or not they would participate again next year, all three students shared that they look forward to participating in this exciting event again.

Feeling lonely during Valentine's Day and need a date of your own? Would you like to take out a mysterious book, receive free chocolate and a chance to win prizes based on a random draw? If so, then go to the library today and possibly find the book of your life before March 8th.

Junior Girls' Volleyball

Lia Sayegh

Though Mac's Junior Girls' Volleyball team learned many things in their game against Lawrence Park Collegiate Institute, optimism was their major takeaway. In preparation for the match, the team had constant practices where they learned new drills, techniques, and relearned positional formation. Playing against a real opponent would be their opportunity to put what they learned to the test — and a test it definitely would be.

Their very first game back from break would be a home game up against one of the strongest schools: Lawrence Park Collegiate Institute. Anticipation buzzed throughout the players for what would be an outstanding match. Unlike the rest, Lawrence Park was packed with top rep volleyball players whose sole passion was to play and win. But Mac knew better than to shy away, so the team prepared to tackle the challenge. After a riveting warm-up and inspirational talk from Mrs. Hunnisett, Mac was fired up.

Despite their initial game jitters, Mac wasted no time getting a feel of the game. The other team was equally—almost intimidatingly—quick to adjust their technique. Mac had to be on their toes at every moment. Playing at Mac, the team felt the pressure to prove themselves. But, as the game went on, Mac realized they should only be playing for themselves. Nobody expected Mac to easily defeat Lawrence Park, but everyone was astonished at how much the girls learned.

Lawrence Park, a very skilled team, played an excellent game and won both sets 25-16 and 25-6. At first glance, this may seem as though it was an awful outcome for Mac, but one must see beyond the score. This game gave Mac valuable information that they would never have learned elsewhere. From perfecting formation and transitions to verbal communication and receiving and passing tips, the team learned and improved on many skills during this game.

Of course, Mac was disappointed at how the game concluded, but a team needs to lose and play better teams to learn how to better themselves. We can all take away from this game that to be unsuccessful once does not mean you have failed. Mac's Junior Girls' Volleyball team is thankful for this opportunity and certain that they will put what they learned to use. Next game, Mac will be prepared.

Health Council's Friendship Bracelet Seminar

Jalan Bayram

