

Sir John A. Macdonald  
“We’ve Got You Covered.”

February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 Report Card distribution Grade 10 Course Selection Oodles of Noodles	4	5	6	7	8
9	10 Gr 9 Rock Climbing Unit Ontario Band Festival myBlueprint opens	11	12 CCC Literacy Conference	13 Parent/Teacher Interviews	14 PA DAY Valentine's Day	15
16	17 Family Day Holiday	18	19	20	21	22
23	24 Kiwatis Festival Week Ontario Vocal Festival	25 Pascal/Cayley/Fermat Math Contest Return myBlueprint forms to H.F.	26	27 Early Closing	28	29

Mac’s Future Musicians:  
The Feeder Concert

Farhan Zahid

What is music? It’s more than just noise. It’s art; it’s a form of expression; it’s an entirely different language. Moreover, it’s a language spoken and understood universally, felt and loved by all.

We at Mac are no exceptions to that. With a great variety of music courses for students to enroll in, students can express their love for music and grow as fellow musicians.

But what about encouraging the students of the future to partake in these courses? How do we go about showing the next generation of Mac students what the music program here is all about?

Well, that’s exactly what the Feeder Concert was for. The wonderful music students of Mac, guided by our wonderful music teachers, all came together in spirit to encourage the next generation of Mac students to join the music program and spread their love for music.

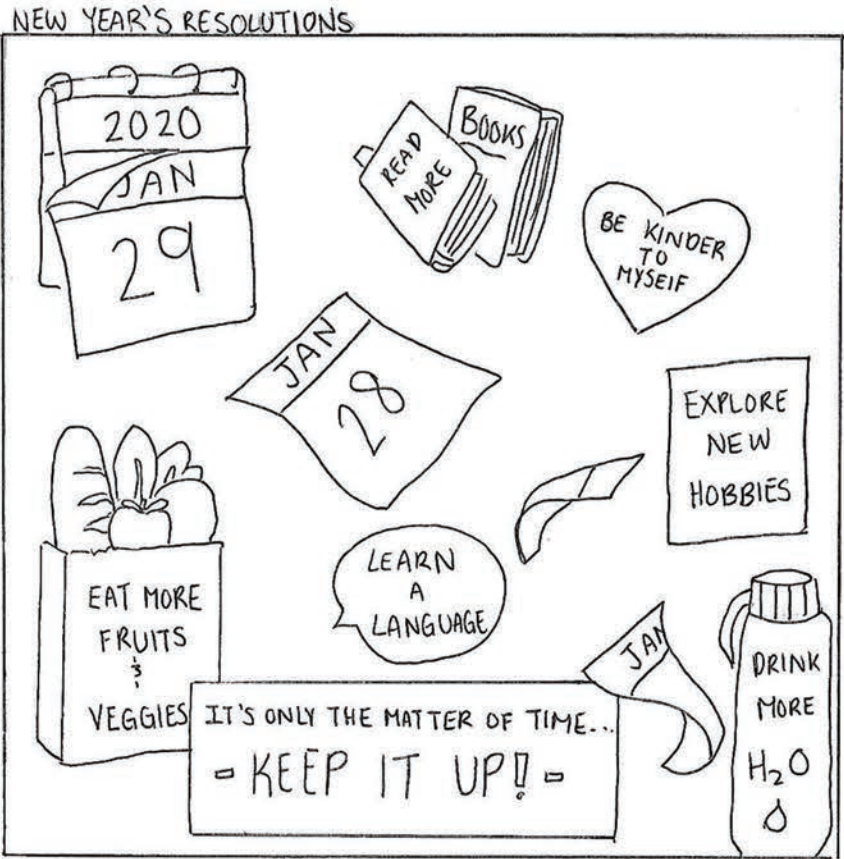
Highlights of the show included the Mac strings and band performing noteworthy pieces from The Greatest Showman, such as “A Million Dreams” and “This is Me” along with the choir performing lively African choruses such as “Dansi Na Kuimba” and “Bonse Aba”.

Senior choir member Christine Chen has fond memories of the event, looking forward to what the music students of the future will have in store for us. In her words, "It's great to be able to perform for such a young audience, knowing that they might be the ones performing on this very stage in the near future."

From harmonious instrumental band performances, and energetic choir vocals, to heart-stopping piano solos, the concert was a great spectacle for any music lover to indulge in.



Photo Credits: Madeline Moore



Comic created by Ivy Guo

January Sports Recap

Team	Results
Junior Girls Volleyball	Won 5 games against George S Henry Academy, Georges Vanier S.S., John Polanyi C.I., Earl Haig S.S., Lawrence Park C.I.; Lost 1 game against York Mills C.I..
Senior Girls Volleyball	Lost 8 games against William Lyon Mackenzie C.I., Lawrence Park C.I., John Polanyi C.I., and Earl Haig S.S..
Coed Curling	Lost 1 game against Victoria Park C.I., won 1 game against Marc Garneau C.I.
Junior Boys Basketball	Won 5 games against York Mills C.I., A.Y. Jackson S.S., Don Mills C.I., Georges Vanier S.S. and Earl Haig S.S.
Senior Boys Basketball	Won 3 games against York Mills C.I., A.Y. Jackson S.S., and Georges Vanier S.S. ; Lost 1 game against Victoria Park C.I.
Boys Hockey	Won 4 games against York Mills C.I., Don Mills C.I., and Victoria Park C.I..
Girls Varsity Indoor Soccer	Won 1 game against George S. Henry Academy; Tied one game with Westview Centennial S.S.; Lost 1 game against Earl Haig S.S.

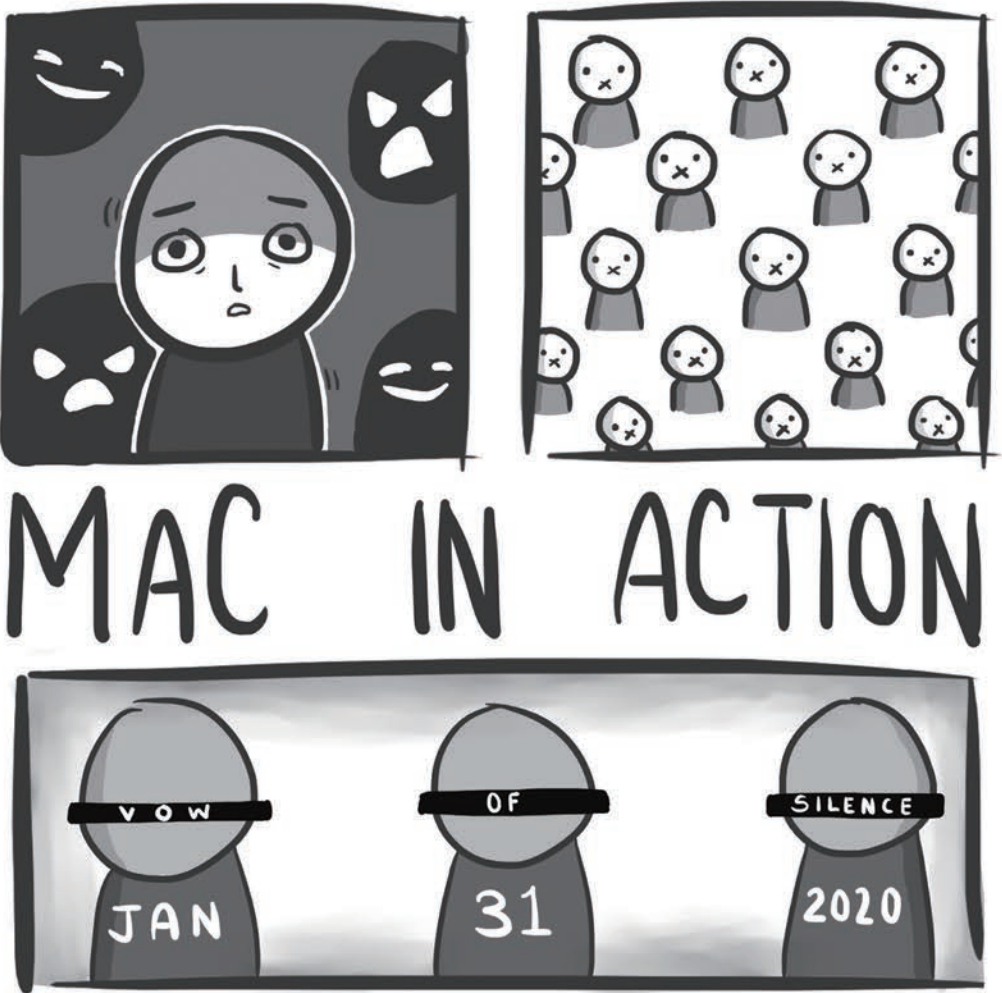


Photo Credits: Joy Li



## Vow of Silence

Jenny Yu



## MIA Vow of Silence

Marian Farra

On Friday, January 31st, the Mac in Action Council (MIA) will be hosting its annual Vow of Silence. Between 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM, multiple student volunteers will stay silent to raise awareness for those who cannot speak and express themselves.

The Vow of Silence is held every year to bring attention to those that have struggled with traumatic issues and are afraid to talk due to those events, and to those that had their freedom of expression taken away. Throughout the entire school day, participating Blackscots will remain silent during classes as well as at lunch. After school, MIA has organized activities so the students can enjoy themselves. Games such as Minute to Win it, Just Dance, Jeopardy, board games, and many more fun things will be enjoyed. The gym will be available until 5:00 PM to those that want to play sports such as basketball, volleyball, and more. Students also have the option to do homework or watch a movie. Dinner will be provided to students, who will also earn 13 hours of volunteer work.

Emily Wildish, a grade 11 student stated, “I’m actually really excited for the Vow of Silence. I’ve been wanting to do it for a while now and I’m so glad that this year I’m participating in this awesome event. I think it’s a great way to bring awareness to those who don’t have a voice, and I think this is a powerful message that there’s people out there willing to help those in need.”

If you wish to participate, but missed out, make sure to keep your ears open next year for the annual Vow of Silence. With that being said, we at Mac News ask that you be respectful towards any classmate that is participating, as taking on the vow of silence is no easy feat.

## Game Brain Gambling Awareness Assembly

Mariana Zapounidis

On Friday, January 10, I was quite surprised to hear that we were having an assembly. My peers and I had no clue as to what the topic of the assembly was about. However, I was confused but pleasantly surprised when I saw the bright yellow sign propped up on the stage with big blue letters that read, “Game Brain.”

It had turned out Jason Agnew and Matt Chin, hosts of Game Brain, were hosts from the children’s game show, “Splatalot!”. Once my friends and I heard this, we were all hit with intense nostalgia and became very excited. For some, these two men were their childhood heroes, and now they finally got to see them in the flesh, at their very school!

The assembly began, and the show jumped right into the topic of gambling and all the risks and poor outcomes associated with it.

The show opened with the two charismatic hosts explaining the different types of gambling. As it continued, the show became increasingly interactive; the two hosts would select students from the audience to participate in games about the effects of gambling and the reality of luck. The first activity involved two teams of five or six students. The two teams stood in front of boxes full of cards with emojis that resembled letters printed on them. The task was to unscramble the letters to make words about what one might lose when gambling, like money and trust. Nicole Bian had the pleasure of participating in the first activity. I asked her about the experience, and she explained, “It was a very fun experience, but yet a little stressful with the amount of people watching. Despite that, I really enjoyed it, gained some awareness about gambling, and was very glad that my team ended up winning!”

In a similar fashion, a different group of students were to unscramble boards to form sentences that state what happens when someone is addicted to gambling. For example, one may skip school to gamble. The show took an interesting turn when it began to expose the hoax of luck and chance. Luck, as the hosts explained, is really a tool used by companies to lure people into gambling.

The assembly concluded with one final activity; two stands had boards with images mounted on them, and the audience had to make a word out of the pictures. These words were all about people to go to if you or a friend have a gambling problem. The first form of support was done together as an example. The board on the right had a picture of a t-shirt and the second a picture of a chair. These two words combined made “t-chair”, which sounds like the word “teacher,” who is someone you could go to for support and help for a gambling problem.

After the assembly, the atmosphere of the day was no longer one of dullness and dreariness, but one of excitement and happiness. Personally, this assembly really opened my eyes. I never really thought about how gambling affects teenagers like me, as I always viewed it as something criminals did in the movies. Now I better understand the negative effects, and how addictive gambling can be. So, students, make sure to utilize the knowledge we gained during this exciting day; stay away from gambling and lend a helping hand to those who may be struggling!



Photo Credits: Sharika Khan



## University Application Tips

Kathy Zhou

Have you thought about what your future would look like a few years from now? Ever considered career paths or dreamt of post-secondary campus life? With February report cards creeping around the corner, there’s a hustle and bustle as students of all grades cram for tests and assignments to get that last-minute mark boost. As for our grade 12 population, what weighs most on their minds are university placement offers.

The familiar pressure, heaps of homework, and the uncertainty of the future are the burdens that the graduating students bear. It isn’t an easy hurdle to overcome; however, one can prepare and find suitable strategies to deal with the stress of university applications.

Choosing a university:

First and foremost, you want to go to a university that has a program you’re interested in. As an Ontario student, you’re in luck! There are 21 universities offering a wide variety of courses in the province. If none of them are your cup of tea, there are many more institutions worldwide at your fingertips if you apply as an international student.

Needless to say, it’s advised that you do your research beforehand, for all aspects of your application. If you’re still unsure, universities also hold annual conventions such as the Ontario University Fair, where you have the opportunity to speak with alumni and administration staff for an insider’s look. Location is also a key point of consideration as it could impact your lifestyle and financial situation drastically. University may be the first time you live away from home. Depending on which university you choose, you may have to move away from close family and friends to a completely foreign environment. It’s important to remember that independence is a double-edged sword; it can be very relieving but also a very challenging predicament to handle—especially when it’s coupled with intensive studying. Ask yourself what type of experience you hope for at a university: are you comfortable living in a busy metropolitan area or do you prefer something smaller and more relaxed? How far from home do you want to be? Be sure to consider rent, transit costs, food, and tuition. Does the financial bottom line figure work for you?

Applications:

Finally, you have chosen your universities and they have received your admission requests. You have probably activated your university IDs and found that some of your courses require a supplementary application or admissions information form (if you applied to Waterloo). These documents help universities understand you as a person. It is a modern way for universities to get a sense of your personality and work habits, on top of your academic marks. You typically have a month to complete your applications and it’s advised that you start as early as possible. Keep your answers concise and to the point, and make sure to highlight your brightest characteristics and achievements. To help you meticulously craft your ideal answer, it’s best to create a separate document using Google Docs or Microsoft Word. With your document, you can carefully analyse your questions, edit your responses, and have your content peer-edited. On the other hand, school will continue to stride on at its own pace and suddenly you may realize that, on top of your supplementaries, you are stuck with a heap of homework and tests. This is what augments the stress levels of many grade 12 students. There are many ways to handle stress that are unique to each person. However, one must know that procrastination is your worst enemy. The earlier you start your supplementaries, the less pressure you will feel. Never try to finish your form in one go; instead, spread out your tasks so that you have time to think and organize your thoughts.

Academic achievement

For university applicants, one’s top six average is the hottest topic for discussion. It’s no secret that acceptance averages are spiking every year and the anxiety and uncertainty of getting an offer eats away at one's mentality. The best you can do is to keep it real. When considering a university, look at their cut off mark from previous years and compare it to your high school averages. For the best chance of success, aim for an average slightly higher than the previous cutoff mark and work towards it at your own pace. Remember that many universities consider you for three rounds of acceptances and they will not reject you until the final round. If you are still unsure, it’s wise to apply for a backup course.

University applications certainly don’t help with the stress of moving on to a new chapter of one’s life, but hopefully these tips do!

## Course Selection Tips

Darmiga Loganathan

February is fast approaching which means course selection is right around the corner. This can be a stressful time, as it can be rather difficult to decide which courses to take the following year. Whether you are going into Grade 10 or Grade 12, everyone can experience struggles while making such important decisions. To make your experience a little easier, I have some helpful tips for you to consider as you make the choices that will pave the path to your future.

I would suggest not taking a course solely because you have friends taking it. Even though sharing a class with a friend may seem like fun, you run the risk of ending up in a class that you seriously dislike and that adds no benefits to your future goals. Besides, there is no guarantee that you will even end up in the same class as that friend. Finally, remember that the teachers and guidance counsellors are always willing to help if you have any questions or concerns about course selection. Do not be afraid to make an appointment with your guidance counselor and discuss course selection or your future career path. Talking to someone can provide a great comfort and quell your worries.

These are some of the tips that I think can help you get through course selection with minimal stress. It’s important to feel good about your choices, and these tips can help boost your confidence and reassure you that your choices are the best ones for you. However, as important as it is to be careful in your selections, know that making a wrong choice isn’t the end of the world. If you find yourself regretting a choice come next fall, there are potential options you can take to make revisions to your timetable, so don’t overwhelm yourself with worry. Remember that course selections are due February 25th, so take some time to think about your future, and gather as much information as possible about the courses available before making your decision. Embrace this time, as you are taking your first step into your future.

## Course Selection Comic

Nikki Guo





Environmental Issues

Valerie Yao

On a gloomy afternoon, a cohort of Blackscots gathered together in room 130 to discuss hosting possible upcoming events to promote the awareness of environmental issues at Mac. Since the recent Australian wildfires, environmental issues have become an increasingly discussed topic around the world. However, this article will not be centred around the discussion of environmental issues, as we cannot hope to create change through mere conversation alone. Rather, it is our actions that hold power; every single Blackscot needs to recognize that we as individuals are capable of making changes to the environment by adopting certain habits and actions.

Esther Owusu Banahene, a Grade 12 student and the president of the MEAC, has always been involved in environmental issues. She attended the environmental strike last September in downtown Toronto. She shares her views on the issue saying, “Personally, I’ve always felt some sort of natural connection to the environment and doing things that are so obviously harmful feels morally incorrect. I was a member of my previous schools’ eco-clubs and decided to get involved with MEAC in grade 10.” She continues, commenting, “Besides, by taking part in school-led activities and community cleanups, I’ve always done the simple stuff that students at MAC can easily do.”

Although donating money or spreading awareness is certainly helpful, the idea of environmentalism goes beyond that and lies in everyday tasks that would make our planet a better and greener place. Simple acts like walking, biking, or taking public transportation to school, correctly separating the waste into compost, recycling, or garbage, turning the tap off when not in use and saving energy by turning off devices and relying more on sunlight all add up when it comes to this fight against climate change. There are some habits that you can adopt immediately to work towards a greener Earth:

- Turn off the lights when you are not using them. Use daylight when available, and reduce lighting to a minimum.
- Turn off or use the low power mode for your devices. Close the apps that you do not use on your phone. By doing this, you have not only saved the battery of your phone but also saved electricity in general, since you reduced the number of times that you need to charge your phone.
- When writing, use both sides on a sheet of paper.
- Bring your reusable mug when getting drinks from outside your house.
- Use metal (reusable) straws. Sarah Gibbens, a National Geographic writer informs the public in an article that, “In the U.S. alone, one estimate suggests 500 million straws are used every single day,” which is a waste of natural resources.
- Bring your reusable utensils when getting outside food to reduce the reliance on single-use plastics.

Australian Bushfires

Jenny Phung and Leilani Xue

Australia Bushfires and What You Can Do To Help		
<b>CLIMATE CHANGE IS REAL!</b>	 1 billion animals from Australia's wildlife have been affected	 1/3 of New South Wales's koalas population have died
 25.5 million acres of land have been burned.  But you can help!	<b>Meac is hosting cup-pong</b> 	<b>and Spin The Wheel to raise funds.</b>   Hope to see you support this cause!

MEAC Helps Save Australia

Marian Farra

Since late July 2019, Australia has been burning. Over the course of half a year, more than half a billion animals have been burned, over 250 million tonnes of carbon dioxide have been released, 15 million acres of land have been destroyed, 28 people have lost their lives, and over 3000 people have lost their homes. All this has been aggravated by continuous heat and drought, and many point towards climate change as a factor for making such natural disasters go from bad to worse.

Following the news of these events, our wonderful Mac Environmental Action Council (MEAC) decided to take matters into their own hands. Throughout the week of January 19th, MEAC held a fundraiser to help raise awareness and money for the Australian people in need. Two games were held, alternating every other day. The first game was Spin the Wheel, where everyone would pay a fee of \$2 and try to land on a “grand prize”. The other game was cup pong, where once again, students paid a fee of \$2 and would try to land ping pong balls in cups that also said “grand prize”. Those prizes were gift cards ranging from a Tim Hortons, McDonalds, and Starbucks. A grade 11 student, Chloe Limbag, who participated in both events, said, “I wanted to help donate to Australia, but I didn’t know how, so I’m very thankful that MEAC gave students an opportunity to help donate for this cause.” All donations went to the Australian Red Cross Disaster Relief and Recovery Fund.

To assist the impact of the wildfires and endangered animals, MEAC also hosted another fundraiser on Tuesday, January 28th. Games of Jeopardy were played, and the winners won various prizes. As mentioned earlier, over half a billion animals have died due to the Australian fires, and over one billion have died due to other wildfires. Animals such as the Kangaroo Island dunnart, the glossy black cockatoo, the Hastings River mouse, the eastern bristlebird, and the greater glider are all at risk of extinction.

While MEAC continues to help save the environment, it can’t stand alone. Each one of us can help the environment for the better, whether that’s cutting your usage of plastic, or donating however much you can to organizations such as WIRES Wildlife Rescue, WWF-Australia, and NSW Rural Fire Service.

Staying Healthy During the Wuhan Coronavirus Outbreak

Cindy Liu

Due to the recent news regarding the coronavirus outbreak, which originated in Wuhan, China, Macdonald students and their families have become increasingly concerned for their personal health and safety. Around the school, many students have been seen wearing surgical masks over their faces in an effort to decrease their chances of contracting the possible illness, which has currently affected over 1975 individuals in China. However, as a result of the first reported case of the coronavirus in Canada on January 25th, 2020, access to surgical masks and hand sanitizer has been difficult for many individuals to find since the outbreak has caused these products to become sold out in stores. The lack of these products, however, should not prevent us from pursuing efforts to maintain good health.

As students of Macdonald, we need to ensure that we all stay healthy during this outbreak period. Due to the airborne nature of the coronavirus and constant interactions between staff members and other students, it is vital for our collective well-being to take efforts in maintaining our overall health. Here are a few steps you can take in order to ensure that you stay healthy during this period:

1. Get your flu shot! Regardless of new viruses, it is important to stay on top of common ones.
2. Constantly practice proper handwashing techniques or use hand sanitizers to further prevent the spread of germs.
3. Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze.
4. Avoid close interaction with anyone who may be sick, or possess flu-like symptoms.

If you have any suspicion that you, a close friend or a family member has been exposed to the virus, be sure to contact a healthcare professional immediately and have the individual avoid close contact with anyone else. For more tips on how to stay healthy during the coronavirus outbreak, please visit <https://www.who.int>.