

Macdonald C.I.
"We've Got You Covered."

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16 Athletic Banquet	17	18
19 Father's Day	20	21	22 Late Start	23 Prom	24 Credit Rescue Day	25
26	27 Credit Rescue Day	28 Credit Rescue Day Commencement - 1pm	29 Late Start	30 PA Day		

A Busy Month for the SAC

Jatin Taploo

May was full of Student Activity Council (SAC) events! This month was dedicated to SAC elections and the Jewish and Asian heritages. Applications for the SAC were due online by May 22, while Jewish and Asian heritages were celebrated and advertised all over the school. The SAC posted information about Asian and Jewish traditions, as well as Prom and Athletic Banquet.

I spoke with Judy Zhang, President of SAC. She is very excited for next year's SAC members and hopes that the SAC will continue to thrive after she graduates this year. She shared, "We worked with the MACC to recognize Jewish and Asian Heritage. A bulletin board was designated for each heritage month in order to display information related to their history, culture, and other interesting facts! As we begin to wrap up the year, SAC elections are also underway."

Judy also discussed the SAC elections and their importance: "With only one month left of the school year, the SAC has begun elections for next year's team. Applications were due on May 13th for next year's President, Vice President, Grade Reps, and additional executives. Election speeches were released in all Guidance Google Classrooms on May 30th, giving the student body one day to vote. Results will be released on June 2nd, so look forward to that! To all the candidates, thank you for your engagement and dedication."

Thank you to Judy for speaking with us. We wish all applicants the best of luck in their SAC elections!

Interviewing Ms. Vokas on Her Year at Mac!

Selena Sarwari

Without a doubt, Macdonald is a great school filled with determined staff and amazing students. However, much of what goes on in the school happens with the hidden efforts of Mac's principal, Ms. Vokas!

Ms. Vokas has been an educator and administrator for the TDSB for over twenty-five years. She, a Mac alumna herself, has been our principal for about two years and has done much to push our school to success. Keeping Mac running during the pandemic was no easy task, but one that she has accomplished incredibly!

But, how did Ms. Vokas manage to direct our school throughout the COVID-19 pandemic while under the stress of the changes and challenges it caused? To answer that question, I interviewed Ms. Vokas herself. She observed that one of many, frequent difficulties caused by the pandemic was "following protocol" - for instance, wearing masks and consistent sanitization. However, she added that if we work together as a team and keep morale up, then we as a school will persevere through these and any challenges, and be better for it.



Ms. Vokas has made many efforts to help Mac transition back to pre-pandemic life. One thing that the school has done is to equip the school with necessary technological devices. She had projectors installed in classrooms to help teachers at Mac manage both in-person and online aspects of their classrooms. She also helped Grade 9 students with the TDSB's Chromebook program that assists them in their online learning (read more about it in Jatin's article on Page 4!). Ms. Vokas stated that these changes have "made a smoother transition of learning for those who have chosen remote learning." Some other accomplishments this year include updates made to the water fountains, new blinds in classrooms, and renovations to the cafeteria.

Now, as we enter the post-pandemic stage, a few goals that Ms. Vokas has planned for the upcoming 2022-2023 school year include installations of bike racks, upgrades to the auditorium, new lockers for students, and upgrades to science classrooms and Mac's fitness facilities during the summer! As more COVID-19 regulations are lifted, Mac is busier than ever with events such as the recent Spring Concert and upcoming Prom on June 23rd. Ms. Vokas hopes that these changes have helped to create positive environments in classrooms and increased student involvement in extracurriculars and school events.

To conclude, Ms. Vokas has shown her dedication and ambition as a principal at Mac. Not only did she help the school throughout the pandemic, she even improved it! She continues to help this great school become greater. Ms. Vokas shared that the students and faculty members are what makes Mac such a great place and are also her favourite part of being the principal at this school!

Student Victoria Day Weekend Plans

Selena Sarwari

Victoria Day is an opportunity to watch the sky explode with a thousand glittering lights! This holiday celebrates the birth of Queen Victoria. It is also a date which celebrates the official start of summer. Victoria Day is a holiday that originated in Canada, in the year 1845, and allows people to relax and spend time with family and friends.

For students and teachers at Mac, Victoria Day is a day off from school, and an excuse to sleep in for a day before school starts again. But, what do our Blackscots do on this historic holiday?

To answer this question, I interviewed four Mac students, each with their own opinion on what Victoria Day is to them, and what they have planned for this annual Canadian holiday.

The first person I interviewed was Angelina Liang. Angelina is a hardworking Grade 12 student at Mac. During Victoria Day, her family normally does many things such as camping in Bon Echo, having family picnics by the lake, or just staying at home and watching movies related to Queen Victoria. Overall, Angelina says that she appreciates the extra day so she can catch up on her studies, do some gardening in her backyard, and play rigorous sports such as tennis.

Grade 9 student Keria Johnson says, "I enjoy Victoria day immensely, as it is a day off, and a great way to bring friends and family together!" She says Victoria Day is a great day to recognize and make use of the free time it provides. Keria usually goes out with her family to watch fireworks and spend time together at their cottage, although they have not done much together since the pandemic began. As some pandemic restrictions lift, she hopes she can have normal family gatherings again and spend some time outdoors as the weather gets nicer.

Lina Baranian, another Grade 9 student, says that to her, Victoria Day is a holiday that she uses to spend time with her family and relax. Her family normally goes to a restaurant and spends time with friends. Overall, Lina states, "it's nice having a long weekend to spend time with people." She appreciates the holiday as it is a great day off for relaxing and having fun.

We hope that everyone appreciated Victoria Day as an opportunity to enjoy themselves, as these Blackscots most definitely did. We also hope that you caught a glimpse of the amazing fireworks that lit up the sky!

PAGE 2

Extracurriculars

Spring Concert

Jatin Taploo

In May, the April showers finally wear off and the May flowers begin to grow. With this in mind, it is only natural that our next thought would be Mac's annual Spring Concert! After two years of COVID-19 restrictions, the Music Program was finally able to bring back the Spring Concert. The concert took place on May 26th. I conversed with many members of the concert, from the leaders to the performers.

Before the day of the concert, I talked to Tejesh Arujuna, President of the Music Council who runs the event. He said he was super happy about seeing the concert making a full return this year: "It's been a long two years but we're finally able to get back on stage and put on an amazing show for everyone. For me, performing as well as helping backstage during the previous concerts were certainly some of the most memorable moments for me at Mac. I'm grateful that I'm able to participate one more time before I graduate this year."

He was also thrilled for the performers and their performances and shared, "Our Music Council, backed up by Art Council, Mac Reps, and Stage Crew, is working hard to make all the necessary preparations and help ensure everything goes smoothly. I also know everyone in the music program has worked really hard to practice and perfect their pieces, so expect to witness some amazing talent!" We also discussed admissions and performances: "You'll hear Strings groups, Concert Band, Piano Solos, Trios and Quartets, and even choir! Aside from the music, we'll also be doing a book and gift card raffle and will be showcasing videos made by Mac music students. Concert tickets are \$5 per person and will be sold at the door. There's a lot to see, so come out May 26th at 7:00 pm and help support music at Mac!"

Next, I conversed with Jessica Mu, Vice-President of the Music Council, who shared, "After two years, and a total lack of performances and music, I am very excited for this concert coming back." Jessica is a wonderful violinist, violist and pianist. She played nearly ten pieces during the concert! She performed her pieces from her Grade 9-12 Music Repertoire Course, from her Instrumental Strings Music Course and from Chamber Strings. She also told us, "Of them all, I deeply enjoyed Secret World."

To conclude, the Spring Concert was a great success! So many people joined the concert for a plethora of incredible performances that showcased so many musical talents. Stay tuned for what Macdonald's Music Program has to offer next spring!



Photo Credits : Saralyn Guo

Sr Boys' Indoor Soccer

Todd Ash-Duah

Starting on March 11th, tryouts were held for the Senior Boys' Indoor Soccer team. During the tryouts, Mac Blackscots displayed amazing talent, determination, and heart. They competed against each other and made each other better. Soon after, the final team was selected. It was time for kick-off.

The boys had an excellent season, as they made a deep run all the way to the City Finals. Mac was absolutely on fire during the season, as they played each game with extreme poise, precision, and focus. But, most importantly, they played together as a team.

On April 4th, Mac played at their highest level, defeating Winston Churchill Collegiate Institute by an eye-popping score of 9-1. From start to finish, Mac was locked in and focused on getting the win. Offensively, Mac couldn't be stopped.

The East Region semifinals took place on April 20th, where Mac defeated Woburn Collegiate Institute by a score of 2-0. Woburn C.I. was no slouch and they played a great game, but they just couldn't get past Mac's lockdown defence during the match. Mac moved on to the East Region final.

On April 23rd, Mac came out on top again, knocking off Birchmount Park Collegiate Institute with a score of 4-0. This win advanced Mac to the City Finals!

On April 27th, Mac played in the City Finals against East York Collegiate. East York managed to pull it out late, emerging with a 2-1 victory. Although Mac came up just short, it wasn't for a lack of effort. The team members played their hearts out every game and played for one another.

For more information and to stay updated on all of the sports action going on at Macdonald CI, make sure to follow @macdonaldathletics on Instagram. Let's keep inspiring and winning, Mac!



Photo Credits : Todd Ash-Duah

Health Council's "Walk-It-Off" Competition

Vishva Sritharan

Hey Mac! The weather has been pleasant and the school year is almost over, but May can be filled with stress and pressure for students. So, to promote our community's well-being, Mac's Health Council hosted the "Walk-It-Off" Competition!

Now, you may ask, "what is the Walk-It-Off competition, and what benefit does it serve?" To explain, the competition is an initiative created by the Mac Health Council to de-stress students by getting them to simply walk. This event took place on the track during lunch throughout the month: students collected a popsicle stick for each lap they completed, and the student with the most popsicle sticks at the end of the month won a prize.

What about the benefits? Well, walking can help boost the blood circulation between the brain and body, positively influencing the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA for short), which is essentially your body's stress response. By walking, we help regulate the HPA, which can help you de-stress. In fact, it also reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression. Most importantly, you have time to reflect on your day and on yourself. In the end, you're building yourself up to become a stronger, healthier person, both physically and mentally.

We hope you participated in the event, and we congratulate the winners of the event. Even if you didn't win, you won in the sense that you made a difference to yourself and your own life. Keep active, Mac!



Photo Credits : Karen Mitro

Sources:

<https://www.webmd.com/fitness-exercise/mental-benefits-of-walking>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1470658>

Interviewing Mac Athletes - Samantha Abellera

Megan Eng



Photo Credits : Jana Khatab

The spring season has arrived and with it has arrived a great variety of sports. Teams competing for Mac this season include soccer, baseball, softball, ultimate frisbee, rugby, and many more.

Samantha Abellera, a Grade 12 student-athlete, represents Mac in softball and track and field. Her history with both sports began even before high school; she started participating in track and field in 8th grade and in softball in 6th grade. In this interview, Sam discussed both sports and the obstacles that she faced. In addition, she had some words of advice to those who may be interested in becoming involved in sports.

What position do you play in softball? What would you say to someone new to the sport?

I am pitching at the moment but started out in centre field. For new players, I would say warm-up and cool down well! This is super important, especially when you're new and find that you're not used to the movements specific to softball. Warming up and cooling down will help prevent injury and also improve your performance.

What track and field events do you compete in? Were there any struggles you had?

I throw things! My main event is javelin, but this year I also tried shot-put and discus. There were definitely some struggles I faced. First of all, throwing sports aren't as popular as the other events in track and field. This means that it's a little tricky to get advice on my technique and training methods (but thanks to the internet, not impossible!). They are also harder to practice since I don't have any spare javelins lying around — and even if I did, where would I be able to throw safely? Luckily, we have training javelins I can use!

Was there anyone that influenced you to play softball and compete in track?

My older sisters definitely played a big role in getting me into softball and track and field. Both of them played on our church's team and helped me get involved with them. Only one of my sisters threw javelin, but watching her practice was enough to get me into the sport.

Are there any transferable skills that you find helpful in softball and track?

Definitely! Communication is huge in softball. Strong communication on the field leads to better performance as it can help you discuss the in-game situations while also building each other up! Once you're comfortable enough with shouting from the field and chatting in the dugout, it becomes easier to communicate in the classroom or at work.

It can be a little scary to meet new people or to strike up a conversation with them, but being on the track and field team is a great place to start! Making new friends during practice and at meets requires the willingness to step outside of your comfort zone, the ability to read social cues, and communication skills — which are all transferable skills.

How do you manage extracurriculars and school? Is it difficult to do both?

It can be very difficult! I'm often tired when I get home from school after a long day of school or sporting events and it can be daunting to see a pile of

homework waiting for me. An obstacle to my rest! My strategy to manage both is by staying on top of my school work! If I don't, it piles up, and then it can be even harder to get work done. I bite the bullet and do as much work in the evening as possible. If I can't stay awake long enough to do it, I'll wake up early in the morning (take a morning shower — it'll keep you up!) and do the rest of the work then. I also use an agenda on my phone to keep track of what I need to do and turn off my phone once I actually get to work. I use the chrome extension Distraction Free for YouTube which prevents me from entering the rabbit hole of streaming. I'll also set up a Pomodoro timer to keep me focused on work.

What would you recommend to those who may be deciding whether they should join the track or softball team?

I would recommend just jumping in. Track and field is such a blast; you meet so many people and get to try all sorts of sports you may not get to normally. Softball is also fun because it's a team sport that can bring everyone together. If you're hesitant because you're new to the sport or don't feel like you're the best, don't sweat it! That's why practices exist! Often, a coach may let you come out to practice even if you don't want to compete — so it's best just to ask. You will have so much fun on whichever team you play, as long as you make it what you want it to be. So get out there with a good attitude, meet your teammates and opponents, stay hydrated, and have a blast!

Thank you for speaking with us, Sam! Best of luck in your upcoming games!

Spirit Month: Era Day and Cultural Day

Jatin Taploo

Era Day and Cultural Day are two Mac spirit days celebrated during the month of May. On Era Day, students and staff wear clothes from a specific era, whether it be the 1600s, 1800s, 1900s, or even the Modern Era! This year, Era Day was celebrated on May 13th. Two weeks later, we dressed up for Cultural Day, when students and staff wear clothing representing their cultures, beliefs, or religions.

I interviewed two fellow Blackscots on Era Day. Judy Zhang, President of the SAC, dressed up in a business-casual dress from her mother. She described, "It was a blue top and blue skirt with a business-casual feel to it. You could say I dressed up as my mom when she was my age!"

She added, "The SAC has hosted Era Day 3 years in a row and it's always an exciting day. You see everyone adding unique additions to their outfits to reflect the 1900s — the creativity really shines through. [...] I highly encourage students to participate in Era Day. Enjoy the thrill of putting together outfits and wearing clothing dating a century back!"

Anthony Truong, SAC's Grade 10 Rep, also participated in Era Day. He dressed up as his favourite artist, Justin Bieber from the 2010s. He stated, "I enjoyed dressing up and representing my favourite era and artist! I am very excited for next year's Era Day. It was a thrill since I finally got to wear something other than my regular day clothes. It was also nice to see some school spirit at Mac and the involvement of students. Next year, I plan on dressing up as my favourite actor, Adam Sandler."

As you can see, Era Day was quite a success, with so many enthusiastic students joining in the fun. SAC did a great job of promoting and bringing out school spirit in everyone!



Photo Credits : Karen Mitro

Mac's White Pine Book Club

Selena Sarwari



Photo Credits : Nancy Zou

Are you an avid reader, or someone who wants to enter the wondrous world of literature? Are you drawn to reading various gripping genres and award-winning novels of all kinds? Do you want to socialize with other students who enjoy the same books as you do? If so, mark your calendar for next year because Mac's White Pine Book Club is where you belong!

White Pine is a book club run by the Ontario Library Association (OLA) as part of the "Forest of Reading" program. At Mac, it has been run by Mrs. Katrivanos, Mac's librarian, since 2017.

The club is open to all students. It typically starts in November, while the nominated titles for the books are released sometime in October. The club wraps up towards the end of April on "Voting Day" when participants vote for the favourite nominated title from that year's list of books.

In the club, there are about ten nominated novels. To vote for their favourite, each student must read at least five White Pine novels during the duration of this club. This year's White Pine readers have spoken up about their experience with this book club over the past few months.

Grade 11 student, Erin Nwaebi, said she joined White Pine to share her love of reading with others. Erin said she thoroughly enjoyed this club, sharing that "everyone was so nice and there were so many spectacular discussions and books." She stated that this club helped her regain her love of reading and encouraged her to read more. She said that, if given the opportunity, she would join this club again. It was an amazing and intriguing experience for her!

Another White Pine reader, Vishva Sritharan, in Grade 9, said he joined White Pine after a friend's recommendation. He stated that reading some of the books recommended by other peers in the club as well as chatting about their experiences led him to slowly but surely build his interest and enjoyment of reading. Vishva explained that the club gave him the ability to open up about his newfound interest in books. If given the chance, he said he would join this club again next year since he met a lot of "welcoming, respectful members" who shared similar reading interests.

Overall, many members of the White Pine Book Club stated that they enjoyed the books. They thought that the discussions and snack-filled lunch meetings were the best part of the club and that it was a great way to ignite a love and interest for reading.

If you're an avid reader or just want to ignite or reignite your love of literature, join Mac's White Pine Book Club next year — ten award-winning, intriguing fictional novels await you!



Comic Credits : Yushan Huang

Student Device Program - Chromebooks

Jatin Taploo

At the beginning of the school year, the Toronto District School Board decided to begin a device program, specifically for students in Grades 4 through 9. Students within this grade range were provided new Chromebooks to aid their daily learning.

I first talked with Ms. Katrivanos, our Head Librarian who, along with Ms. Mouratidis, helped distribute the Chromebooks. The two agree that the device program is a wonderful way for students to study and explore technology.

I then spoke with Ms. Reeder, a music and geography teacher, to hear her perspective on the implementation of Chromebooks in the classroom. She explained, "Having the Chromebooks has allowed me to go paper-free as a teacher, which is something I adore. Being kinder to the environment and making choices that will help sustainability are things that I am proud we could accomplish with the Grade 9s having Chromebooks. In my music classes, I've been able to introduce movie-composition assignments using software that is now accessible with each student having their own computer to use. I am extremely grateful for them."

I also discussed the program with our fellow students. Ethan Tinge, in Grade 9, felt extremely excited about the program. He said, "Chromebooks are helpful for those who don't have their own personal laptops. I am content with the fact that it is also portable, easier to move around, and it allows me to learn in a more efficient fashion."

Vishva Sritharan, another Grade 9 student, exclaimed that the Chromebook itself is wonderful! He said, "I believe the program is a necessity for all students right now, as some students may not be able to afford a device. The program provides a laptop, which holds a multitude of useful resources: your documents, assignments, and can even do video calls. This also keeps our school eco-friendly, with less use of materials, and can help students be more organized with their work!"

The Student Device Program is a fantastic program. As a Grade 9 student myself, I can say that it is much more efficient and beneficial to learn using a Chromebook, as it allows you to practise a different way of learning and comprehension.

Mother's Day

Brandon Feng

Mother's Day is a worldwide event intended to celebrate maternal figures everywhere. This year, it occurred on May 8th, the second Sunday of May as per tradition.

Recognized by more than forty countries, this celebration originated in the United States over a century ago. It originally honoured the mother of a West Virginia family who had been an active member in her local community before her passing. She promoted social events for women and contributed to her community in this way. Since then, the honouring of mothers on this day has spread around the globe. On this day, we make an effort to recognize the tremendous efforts made by mothers around the world. It is a day to express our gratitude, love, and respect for our mothers

Mothers are celebrated with a very diverse set of activities. In Canada, many families are familiar with breakfast in bed, baking fruitcakes, and picking flowers (notably daffodils).

I asked some Blackscots what their families did to celebrate Mother's Day, and the answers were varied. Ricky Chen, another Grade 10 student, told me that he made breakfast in bed for his mother, before spending the day at the park with his family and having a meal at McDonald's.

Corina Neculau, a Grade 10 student at Mac, shared how her family spent the day: "On Mother's Day, [my family] started the day off with giving our mom gifts we each got her. Together with some family friends, we went to Unionville where we went for a walk. Then, we celebrated by going to a nice restaurant along with dessert at Dairy Queen."

It sounds like Ricky and Corina had a wonderful day — we hope all Mac students and staff celebrated a lovely Mother's Day!