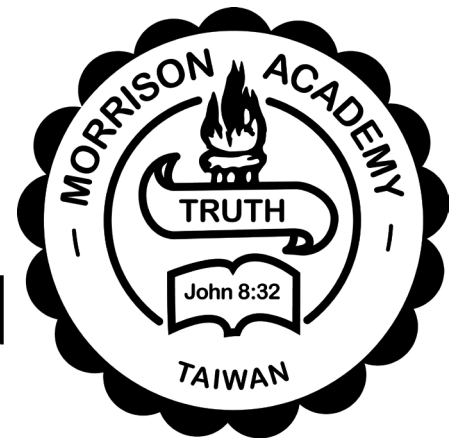




# THE MORRISON SHARK POST



kaohsiung.mca.org.tw

Volume III, Issue I: September 2015

## MAK bans boba, students outraged

By: Jasmine Teng



Ann King, the "tea lady," passes out tea from Georg Peck during lunch. / Photo by Jasmine Teng

"We should start a revolution called the Boba Revolution." Leo Hsieh, a junior, said, in response to MAK's boba ban. He is one of many who is frustrated at the new ban that MAK has imposed this school year.

This year, MAK imposed a ban on boba and anything "chewy, including coconut jellies, ... anything QQ." This ban incited widespread chagrin and discontent among the high school students of MAK. The consequence for violating this boba ban is no tea ordering for the class for the rest of the quarter.

The reasons for banning tea were due to both parents' increased encouragement for healthier eating and the blockage that the boba caused.

"Parents don't want you to drink anything that contains sugar." Mr Lin, the general manager, said. "So right now, we only have water, sports drinks, and tea without sugar [in the vending machines]. The second factor is that the students dumped the boba in our sinks and blocked the drain."

An increased health concern stemmed from last year, when parents noticed that their elementary students were buying junk food for lunch

instead of eating school lunch.

Furthermore, at a school assembly during the beginning of the school year, teachers informed high schoolers of how Mr. Lin and Mr. Mai had found a coagulated mass of soft boba pearls clogging up the drains towards the end of the school year, which ultimately resulted in the ban.

While MAK has been ordering tea for quite a while now, The long-standing tradition of ordering tea regularly in the current senior class originated from Mr. Newkirk's Bible class in 2013-2014, according to Ann King,

other tea stands, including 50 Lan, Cha Tang Hui, and Georg Peck. The juniors quickly picked it up as well, ordering their own tea every week. Teachers would place orders for tea through King as well. Soon enough, the junior and senior class's tea orders merged together, and tea orders became biweekly. King is now in charge of ordering tea for the juniors, seniors, and teachers.

"Last year, we ordered tea every week for the entire year." King said.

MAK's sudden decision to break the strong boba tea tradition resulted

away the boba into the sinks, so why should we suffer the consequences as well?"

Another student questioned the entirety of MAK's regulations altogether.

"What is the use of all these regulations?" Jessica Kong, a senior, said.

However, some students do not see it as severe of a consequence as others do.

"I think it's okay and bearable because we can still get it after school, and I don't think I'm a boba addict yet." Jeffrey Chen, a senior, said. "But I think it's somewhat unfair that we are also banned from it, when we know that it was some middle schoolers who stuffed the drain. But generally, I don't think it's that much of a problem for me."

Many underclassmen expressed no opinion, because they don't usually order tea, and when they do, they don't order boba with it, as Truman Chiang and Christine Lee, both sophomores, said.

Contrary to the sophomores, Nathan Lee, a junior, expressed his distress regarding the boba ban.

"Boba is the only reason I drink tea. Tea isn't tea without boba."

In response to the growing discontent, the student council is looking into putting in a petition to overturn the boba ban or find a compromise with Mr. Lin and the principal.



After retrieving the tea from the office, King carries it back to the high school wing, where students and teachers await their tea. / Photo by Jasmine Teng

a senior fondly referred to as "the tea lady." The class representative's job was to order the tea from Tea & Magic Hand every week for Bible class, but eventually, King took up the responsibility of sending out a Google form to juniors and seniors and phoning the tea stand, saying that she "doesn't mind doing it." The tradition carried on from the current seniors' sophomore year to the present day.

The tea ordering expanded from only a select few tea choices to ordering from the entire menu, and from Tea & Magic Hand to various

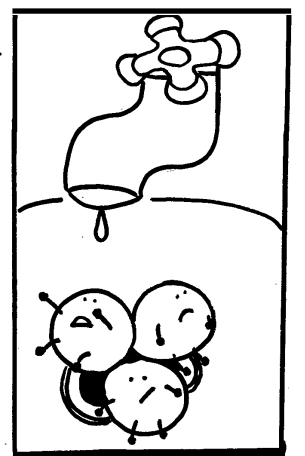
in increased frustration on the part of the students. There was no previous warning, and the moment came as a shock to many students on the first day back to school.

"They didn't even give us a second chance or warning." Alice Lin, a senior, said. "If they had given us a warning beforehand, we'd be more careful now."

Some students said that the drainage problem was not the high schoolers' fault.

"It is ridiculous." King said. "It wasn't the high schoolers who threw

An artist's rendition of the "boba babies" found in the sink and clogging up the drains. / Art by Alice Lin



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L to R: Brian Shih, Esther Yao, Katherine Ma, Rosalynn Huang, Tony Cheng, and Daniel Chiang show off their new P.E. uniforms. / Photo by Nini Lee

## New P.E. uniforms

By: Ray Kung

This year MAK did something it has never done before: it came out with P.E. uniforms. “Sure,” you might say, “a lot of schools have uniforms.” However, it is extremely unusual for a school with more than four decades of history without uniforms to suddenly come out with sports uniforms. Yet, some may say that this is not unusual for a school that’s had trouble dealing with shorts that are shorter than 5 inches above the knee and tank tops with straps that are narrower than 2 inches, which violate the school dress code.

The new uniforms caused a huge stir in the student body, as most students are unaccustomed to the idea of having to wear uniforms. The renowned MAK sports uniform consists of a dark gray material emboldened with “Sharks Phys Ed” in bright red letters. It is 100% polyester and is considerably comfortable despite the common stereotypes of school uniforms. The polyester fabric is lightweight and stretch resistant, which not only makes it perfect exercising attire but also lessens the burden for the parents who have to do laundry for their kids.

The other half of the uniform is the short sport shorts that seems to be causing the most commotion. Considering the stringent school dress code, the design of the shorts seems ironic to students who have had issues with the school’s dress policy. There have also been complains with the current short length.

High school team leader Mrs. Griffin revealed that “One of the reasons for starting this was that many of the female students were breaking dress code with their athletic shorts. It is hard to buy shorts that fit our dress code; the current styles are the very short running style of shorts.

So, instead of constantly dealing with dress code violations, making students change, discipline, etc, we decided that adopting a school

P.E. uniform would be much better. That way the length of the shorts becomes a non-issue, and students aren’t breaking school policies during P.E. and sports practices.”

The uniform is the school’s attempt to create a more impartial learning environment and to remove the complications of having to deal with apparel that violates the dress code.

Overall, the P.E. uniform helps reduce the amount of time students have to spend in front of their closets coordinating their outfits. However, there has been complaints about the horrible stench that wafts out of the boys’ locker room, which is said to be produced by the accumulation of dry sweat on unwashed uniforms buried deep in students’ lockers. All students are now required to wash their uniforms at least twice a week: once between classes and once over the weekend. Mr. Owen is also offering an in-house laundry service for 50 NT, but this offer is not for extracurricular athletics. All proceeds will go to general athletics needs.

The P.E. uniforms are currently retailed for 800 NT, which includes a 300 NT top and 500 NT shorts, and as the semester progresses, students are getting more accustomed to bringing or wearing their uniforms at school despite their dissatisfaction.

So far, the P.E. uniforms are ubiquitous on the school campus, especially on the soccer field as they flutter loosely in the humid autumn air of Kaohsiung.

In the future when students look back on this school year, what will probably be remembered about 2015-2016 at MAK is not how MAK had its first ever graduating senior class, but the arrival of the new sports uniform that seemingly contradicts the school policy. So are the uniforms here to stay? Or is it just a trend that will blow over by fall of 2016?

## Ripping off with a new run

By: Evan Hsu

In 2000, a new running track was installed for the then-new MAK campus. Fifteen years later, in the second semester of last year, it was looking old. The color had faded, and it was battered and ripped. It was still adequate for running, but it gave people sore feet. Fortunately, through its annual fund, MAK made the decision of buying a new track. This momentous news spread everywhere in just days.

Immediately, the staff rushed into action to fundraise for this idea. Those who contributed their generous share received handprints and honor trees. Mr. Choi hoped that the track would be ready in the first semester of 2015-2016. Spirits were high and many could not wait for the brilliant new track.

The P.E. and high school sports leaders wanted a full-sized high school soccer field. This was put into consideration, but the workers were concerned about tearing out some lanes of the track.

The moment the 2014-2015 school year ended, many students excitedly burst out of the school to enjoy their summer vacation. The track, however, was by no means left barren and unattended. Crews started working, sweating as they tore up the tattered track and replaced it with a brand-new spectacular looking red track.

Many students have already noticed that it is missing one inner lane, which was torn out to accommodate a high school-size soccer field.

Summer rushed by and the new school year began. On the first day, many students were surprised by the new track. Some were eager to be the first people in MAK history to run on it. Nevertheless, some still complained about the unevenness in the

track because of random lumps of sand in many areas.

“I don’t really like the track that much,” says a freshman. “It is really sandy and lumpy which is really hard to run on, and the sand we track into the school building is a big problem for the cleaning crew. It’s the same story with tracking sand into our homes. Also, I think that the track now is just like the one before.”

However, as intended by the school, the new track also has benefits. “This track’s sand will hopefully be cleaned off soon,” a sophomore says. “I like the track because the texture is more springy and there is still good friction.”

A fair amount of students did not have a strong opinion of the track. “It’s just a new track,” says eighth-grader Andrew Chen, “nothing special.”

Some students noticed a discrepancy about the mile run distance. Before, they thought the old track’s length was 300 meters per lap, making one mile 5 laps and 100 additional meters (1600 meters). But now, even though the track lost the inner lane, the mile length is now exactly the same. Mr. Own has measured out the track and confirms that one lap is exactly 300 meters.

We cheated. Sad but true. All the mile times students made were actually times for less than a mile. From now on, although middle school and high school students will have to drag their legs a little longer, their mile times will be more accurate. A new tradition indeed, and a beneficial one for their health.

Stay strong, Sharks! For those who have not yet gotten a glimpse of the new track, they should. It shines to the eye and is a welcome sight at MAK.



The new track, albeit quite sandy, has been a welcomed addition at MAK. / Photo by Evan Hsu

# Less sugar?

By: Niki Huang



Where used to be a bustling student store now lies a barren, albeit cleaner, wasteland. / Photo by Niki Huang

The bell rings for lunch, and students, especially the elementary students, head outside to buy sweets and soda. There's no high schooler opening the student store. They turn to the vending machine, but find that the only options left are water, sport drinks, tea, pea crackers, and koala-shaped snacks. What brought about this change?

Mr. Choi, the principal of MAK, gave a number of reasons why the student store closed. For one, in the past, the elementary kids would not eat their lunch, instead going to the student store to buy unhealthy snacks. Furthermore, a number of times, the high schoolers also weren't present in the student store. A greater problem, however, was that the student store became a major source of conflict for elementary kids.

"Some examples include kids taking other kids' snacks, crowding around someone who just bought something and persistently asking them to share, asking parents for more and more money to spend at the store, and complaining and banging on the door and windows if the store was late opening," said Mr. Choi.

These incidents increased,

and so last year, around the beginning of the second semester. Mr. Choi and the leadership team, which includes Mrs. Stowers, Mr. Muir, Mrs. Griffin, and Mr. Torgerson, met to think of different solutions to this problem.

"We discussed having healthy options in the student store, like fruits or baked goods," said Mr. Choi. "The concern, though, is things go bad quickly, and kids might not be as interested in buying them. This would lead to high costs, which would create a cycle of even less kids buying the

**“The purpose of the vending machine is to help quench thirst - not just to get a ‘sugary treat.’”**

healthy options. Also, there is still the issue of high school students not having the time to run the store.”

At the end of the school year, Mr. Choi and the leadership team decided to close down the student store.

For the vending machines, parents and teachers alike brought up the

problem of the high sugar content of the options present.

After conducting research, Mr. Choi and Mrs. Laytham brought up the idea and their research to the PAC in April. Mr. Choi and the PAC decided that all of the sugary drinks in the vending machine would be replaced with healthier options, such as water, sports drinks, and tea.

Some students are still upset over this decision since if they get hungry, they can't just go to the student store and buy snacks. Many students also have complained that the snacks in the vending machine taste disgusting.

However, Mr. Choi says, "The good news is there are still a couple of food options in the vending machine, even though they aren't the healthiest of options. The real target though was

getting rid of sugary drinks.

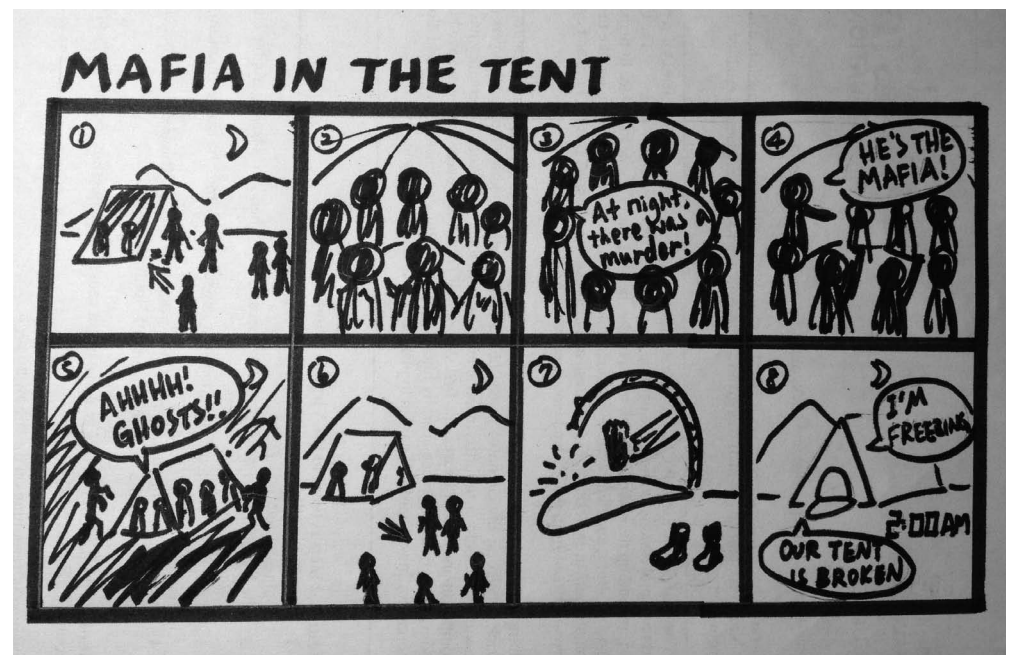
"We don't realize it, but there is actually a lot of sugar in just one can of soda. The purpose of the vending machine is to help quench thirst - not just to get a 'sugary treat.' If that's the purpose, then water and sports drinks would meet the purpose. Research has shown that soda pop doesn't quench our thirst, but it actually makes our bodies crave more water nourishment.

To help with understanding this, we have also lined up for a guest speaker to come speak to all the grades about why soda drinks are so unhealthy, and why it's important to make healthy choices."

So despite the fact that there is no student store, students can still purchase healthier options in the vending machine or opt to bring snacks from home.

# Pioneers of a new frontier

By: Samuel Tsai



A junior recounts her unique experience of playing the card game, Mafia, with her classmates in a crowded tent atop Hehuan Shan, which, unfortunately, resulted in a broken tent. / Art by Nini Lee

Last year and the year before, bringing back the glory of climbing the titanic Hehuan Shan, the current junior and senior classes braved the elements and conquered the inhospitable landscape of Nantou. This year however, the sophomores will not be getting a stroll in the park as their predecessors did. This year, the mountain to be attacked is the great Nanhu Shan.

Over 400 metres taller in elevation than Hehuan Shan, Nanhu Shan is Taiwan's fifth highest peak, only 210 metres shorter than the number one, Jade mountain. Simply speaking, this is no longer just a trip to the top of the mountain - the sophomores will now have to battle tooth and nail to reach the summit of Nanhu Shan.

Curiously, this opportunity came only into being from the clo-

sure of one of the main campsites on Hehuan Shan. That campsite, a major checkpoint for the Outward Bound's Hehuan Shan expedition has forced Morrison to reconsider their decision on climbing Hehuan Shan. With few options left, and most of the spots for an expedition reserved, a decision was quickly made: The current sophomore class will have to climb Nanhu Shan instead, and the date for the trip, formerly around November, would be bumped forward to September.

Member of the sophomore class Evan Hsu commented, "[Nanhu Shan] is more challenging because we are the first class to climb it."

Indeed, the fact that the sophomores are to break tradition and be the first class, possibly the only class to climb Nanhu, is an impressive feat in itself.



The vending machines now have options that contain fewer amounts of sugar. / Photo by Niki Huang



# Mr. Owen brings a vivacious varsity program to MAK

By: Vivian Lu and Katherine Ma

This year Mr. Owen, the new PE teacher and high school athletic director, is bringing changes to the high school sports program, hoping to improve and provide various new opportunities for MAK athletes.

In previous years, MAK has only had JVB and JV sports teams. Starting from the last two years, the school took a step forward in its athletic program by sending the JV basketball teams to Malaysia, winning many games. This year, however, for the first time in MAK history, there is a full high school and the school decided to take a step even further by organizing varsity sports teams. The person in charge of all of this change is none other than Mr. Owen, a MAK alumnus.

Before moving to Taiwan, Mr. Owen taught at a school in Chiang Mai, Thailand. There, he served as an elementary PE teacher, a coach for girls' and boys' soccer teams ranging

from middle school to high school, a JV boys basketball coach, as well as an assistant coach for Varsity boys volleyball.

"Their sports program when I started was similar in the sense that they didn't have a real varsity program." Mr. Owen said. "They kind of just had a recreational team that would come together after school. When I was there, I tried to improve the quality of everybody's playing level, with the hope that, if they wanted to, after high school they could play in college, while at the same time allowing other athletes, who just wanted their high school experience to be successful, to play."

Five years ago Mr. Owen established a very successful varsity sports program in Chiang Mai. Now, he is hoping that he will be able to do it again at MAK with equal or even greater success.

Naturally, varsity sports are

more competitive and serious than any other levels of high school sports. However, Mr. Owen embraces another side of the varsity level as well.

"The varsity sports program is a big deal. It is exciting, but we don't need to make it more than it is," Mr. Owens says.

This new sports program for high school is not meant to train professional sports players. Students who are planning on pursuing a sports career in the future as well as those who simply want a successful and fun high school sports experience are all welcome to participate in the new sports program.

Mr. Owen's goals for this new sports program are to increase the level of quality play in sports, create more opportunities for leadership, create more opportunities to be challenged by opponents higher levels, help students

deal with pressure, and teach students to keep a balance between sports and academic commitments.

Furthermore, the varsity sports program can impact and benefit high school students by opening up more opportunities after high school. As Mr. Owen says, "Having a varsity letter on your transcript can be a helpful tool in college application. For students who are hoping to pursue a sports-related career, not necessarily professional athletes, but also sports medicine, physiotherapy, business opportunities in sports like marketing and advertising, it helps to have a background in sports at a relatively high level."

Finally, Mr. Owen has a message to all MAK athletes: "Just give it a hundred percent, do your best, and try to have fun. Don't worry about the winning and the losing. Just worry about improving and getting better."

**“Don't worry about the winning and the losing. Just worry about improving and getting better.”**

## Varsity Volleyball

By: Jennie Tung

In the 2015 fall volleyball season, the Varsity girls' volleyball team consists of 12 players, including 7 seniors and 6 juniors.

The team has players ranging in experience, some of them working together as a team for the first time. There are two upcoming exhibitions with Kaohsiung American School: September 23rd and October 12th. The final tournament will be held at American School in Taichung on the 16th of October. This season will be the final volleyball tournament for the seniors, and their final chance to represent the MAK Sharks in volleyball.

The seniors players include Alice Lin, Ann King, Catherine Chen, Jasmine Teng, Jennie Tung, Jessica Kong, and Niki Huang.

One teammate praised the cohesiveness of the team this year.

"We definitely have much better teamwork compared to last year," senior Alice Lin said. "Volleyball is a good way to release stress."

Furthermore, another senior added that the benefits of joining volleyball not only included releasing stress, but also developing leadership.

"You can practice your leadership skills as a senior on the team," Jessica Kong said.

The juniors are working just as hard as the seniors to make this sea-

son a memorable, rewarding one.

The junior players include Elisa Cheng, Kelly Lin, Nini Lee, Rosa Lin, and Sabrina Tsai.

"The team has a really good mix of players of different areas of strength this year," said Nini Lee.

"I love them all as a family, but we have lots to work on," said Sabrina Tsai.

The varsity team lost to KAS in a scrimmage on September 2nd; faults included lack of communication, missed serves, and less-than-ideal passing.

Coach Tam has since then spent extra time in practice on defensive drills, focusing on serve receive for a good pass to the setter.

A month into training, the girls have developed a closer team bond, supporting each other during times of hardship and praising teammates for their hard work. This close-knit bond has continued to develop as the season progresses, as the team prepares for the final tournament.



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## Mr. Miller Uncovered

By: Ray Kung

At the start of school this fall you probably sensed the undeniable presence of a new high school English teacher here at MAK. His charming personality and approachable character makes him hard to ignore in the halls of the high school wing. You probably know him from English or have seen him napping in HS1 during lunch. Yes, you've guessed it! Mr. Miller is one of the new high school faculty who just started teaching at MAK in 2015. Although relatively new on the campus, Mr. Miller is already amongst one of the students' favorite teachers because of his fun, interactive classes and his extraordinary ability to conjure up delicious pastries.

Through my brief sit-down with Mr. Miller, he shared a great deal about his upbringing and his journey here. He is from, and has lived most of his life in, a small town called Gold Beach on the southern Oregon coast. As he got older, he moved around quite a bit but lived in California primarily after high school. When he started teaching, he moved to rural Alaska for his first year and then back to Oregon for the next five years. Mr. Miller then went through a major life transition when he moved to Chengdu, China,

and romantic comedies to watch with his wife. In terms of TV shows, he prefers watching *The Voice*, *The Amazing Race*, and *Masterchef* with his family. He was ashamed, however, to admit that he is totally addicted to *The Walking Dead*, claiming to have watched "all five seasons two and a half times now". He also revealed that his favorite avocation is actually cooking, saying that he's had working experience at a wilderness lodge in Oregon. He loves collecting kitchen gadgets, finding good things to cook, and creating his own dishes.

So far, Mr. Miller has been enjoying Taiwan, owing it partly to his smooth transition from Chengdu. His house up on the hill is his sanctuary away from the city, and he is "looking forward to a fresh start" in this grace-filled school, in which he feels "trust and kindness, and enjoys how academically driven it is." He candidly admitted that he still has a little rediscovering and readjusting to do from his transition as an athletic director in Chengdu to a full-time English teacher here at Morrison. To the fellow Sharks, he wishes that you all can "smile at your teachers, because it can be really hard, especially for a teacher, because they have to be like these per-



As the senior homeroom teacher, Mr. Miller instructs the seniors in proper conduct. / Photo by Ray Kung

and taught at the international school there for five years. This past year he felt the Lord moving him and his family to make a change. Through a Morrison alum, he received news about an opening here at MAK. Everything fell into place, and here he is today.

Outside of work, Mr. Miller enjoys occasionally watching movies and TV shows, reading good books, and spending time with his family. When I asked about his favorite movie, he had a hard time pinpointing a specific one, but he appreciates good cheesy movies, tear-jerker movies, sports movies, dramas, powerful doc-

umentaries, and romantic comedies to watch with his wife. In terms of TV shows, he prefers watching *The Voice*, *The Amazing Race*, and *Masterchef* with his family. He was ashamed, however, to admit that he is totally addicted to *The Walking Dead*, claiming to have watched "all five seasons two and a half times now". He also revealed that his favorite avocation is actually cooking, saying that he's had working experience at a wilderness lodge in Oregon. He loves collecting kitchen gadgets, finding good things to cook, and creating his own dishes.

Mr. Miller teaches in HS1, so if you're looking for advice on creating delicious pastries or missed an episode of *The Walking Dead*, that might be a good place to start.



Mr. Wyss listens as his students ask questions. / Photo by Joseph Luther

## Expanding the Mind with Mr. Wyss

By: Joseph Luther

If you have ever wanted to brag to your friends that your math teacher is a descendent of Johann Kepler, look no further than Mr. Steve Wyss, the new high school math teacher. His family tree, which carries Swiss and German heritage, has privileged him with ancestors like the aforementioned scientist, and Francis Scott Key, writer of "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Mr. Wyss grew up in the Midwest, though he moved several times due to his father's business, and attended three different high schools in three different states. He loved to play sports like basketball and baseball, still does, and will be coaching boys' varsity basketball later this year.

"You wouldn't think that a math guy with glasses was good at sports, but I was," he says.

Mr. Wyss attended Kansas University, married Mrs. Wyss, and after graduating in 1999, moved to Denver, Colorado, where they started their family and lived for the next nine years.

Mr. Wyss is familiar with missionary service, having done so in several countries. Soon after college, he and his wife went to Spain in collaboration with Campus Crusade for Christ to build friendships and practice English with university students there. When they lived in Denver, they worked with inner-city kids, mentoring to them and leading Bible camps. They have also gone on a mission trip to Mexico to build greenhouses.

"Every time we went out of our comfort zone, to places where we don't speak the language, we've loved it," he says. "We've always felt close to God during those times, like He was using us."

Two years ago, they believed God was calling them to leave the States again, this time for a longer period.

"We were talking in our church about being willing to take a risk--not to do something rash, but something you've prayed about and talked about," says Mr. Wyss. "Don't just play life safe." They began searching for international schools in Asia.

"A lot of those schools ended up saying no because our family is big,

and they would have to allow them to come to the school," he says. The Wysses have three children, all of whom are enrolled at MAK.

Mrs. Wyss then discovered the Morrison website, and they began communicating with Mr. McGill, Morrison's superintendent, over email.

"The other schools fell to the perimeter; the other doors closed," says Mr. Wyss. "The next year, we applied for the school, there was an opening, and here we are."

Since he has come to MAK, Mr. Wyss appreciates the hard working students and the united staff.

"They're all encouraging," he says. "They pray for each other and help one another."

When asked about any nuggets of wisdom for his students, he suggests that they learn to communicate math skills in addition to mastering them.

"When I started my engineering classes, everyone there was really good at math and science. I wasn't better than anyone else," he recalls. "What would make me stand apart? Not just doing the problems on paper, but also being able to communicate the concepts, write a paragraph about it, talk about it upfront."

He disapproves of eating in class, although drinks are fine, and talking while someone else is talking.

"If a student is talking, I'm going to listen. And if I'm talking, students, be quiet so that everyone can hear," he says.

Outside of the classroom, Mr. Wyss plays games like *Skyrim* and *Clash of Clans*, and has already found his place near the top of MAK's clan.

Other talents he has are in riding motorcycles and playing board games. He's also "all right at country swing dancing," he added.

Mr. Wyss does not know how long his family will stay at MAK, though they will stay for at least two years.

"It's open-ended," he says. "If God wants us to stay ten years, we'll stay ten years. If He wants us to stay two years, we'll just stay for two. We'll pray about it and see."

## Keeping Up With Ms. Kwok

By: Grace Shieh and Sunny Wang

A group of kids sit on the carpet and read news together; this is how the fifth graders start their day. For their last year of elementary, they have a new teacher, Ms. Elaine Kwok.

Ms. Kwok had some teaching experiences as a student-teacher back in her hometown Ontario, where she went to Queen's University, and is spending her first year of teaching at MAK after graduating with Bachelor of Education and Bachelor of Arts in Global Development and Political Studies. She loves her students' personalities, and says that it's "definitely the reason why [she] came here to teach."

She likes to start the fifth grad-

ers' day with relaxation, hence why they begin their day by reading the news comfortably. Through this method, the students can also learn things when they are relaxing.

But in a class with mostly boys, the energy and happiness the students create can sometimes be overwhelming.

"These fifth graders are fraught with energy, but sometimes they can be really out of control too," Ms. Kwok says, laughing. "The process of calming them down is tiring."

From the glow on her face when she talks about the kids and school life, one can easily see her passion towards teaching. Ms. Kwok believes that all the kids are unique with their own different personalities, so she hopes, and wants to encourage these enthusiastic kids to use their energy and potential to honor our Lord.

And just as Ms. Kwok loves her students, her students love her too.

"I think Ms. Kwok is really friendly and nice," says Jonathan Lu, who is in his second year at MAK. "She cares about the kids like [they

are] her own children. She also really knows how to teach. She can always [turn] the hard and complicated things into words that we can understand easily."

Jerome Wu, another fifth grader who has attended MAK for five or six years, loves Ms. Kwok. Even though he was busy eating his lunch, he put in a lot of effort trying to put his thoughts about her into words.

"I think Ms. Kwok is special because she is very just," he says. "Sometimes my classmates get naughty, but she only punishes the naughty kids and not the others. Ms. Kwok takes care of the students that listen and follow the rules, but at the same time, she also tries to help other students do a better job. Ms. Kwok's class is always full of excitement."

It seems like the fifth graders are having a lot of fun with Ms. Kwok. Jerome and Jonathan both can feel her



Ms. Kwok is ready to embrace her first year of teaching at MAK.

passion and care for her students, and they respect her for being nice while just. Between Ms. Kwok's passion and her students' energy, the fifth graders are sure to learn a lot and have a great finale to their elementary years!

## Musical Ms. Mai

By: Nathan Lee

The start of a new school year brings many new faces to MAK this year, including Ms. Mai, the new music teacher.

Born in Taiwan, Ms. Mai has lived an eventful life despite her young age. She started learning the piano and violin in first grade, and added the viola, guitar, and ukulele to her repertoire as she grew up.

"Piano was my main instrument and violin was for orchestra," she says. "I started to play viola a lot in college because we were short on violas, and my teacher asked me if I would switch [instruments]," which she gladly did.

She moved to Saipan, a US territorial island in the Pacific Ocean, by herself for high school. Attending a Christian high school there, she remarks that "it was there I first heard about the gospel."

She describes the faculty at her high school as "always encouraging me...to work hard, but at the same time they reminded me that God has a plan for you. It was very eye opening."

Ms. Mai graduated from Bob Jones University, where she majored in music education and received her

Master's in music performance.

It was there that Ms. Mai met Ms. Lin, our previous music teacher. After college, she went on to teach at a Christian school in California for a year.

"I taught at preschool, did music camps, private lessons, and music lessons," she says. "I gained a lot of experience working with different age groups in the States."

However, because she didn't have a visa, she couldn't stay in the States. Ms. Lin told her about Morrison, so she applied, and now she's back in Taiwan with us.

Having been away from Taiwan since her middle school years, she's excited to be back.

"I really like how people here are very open to different things," she says. "For example, if you bring something to people to eat in the States that isn't macaroni, people will be hesitant to try it and ask about the ingredients, but when you're around Taiwanese people they won't hesitate to try it."

She is particularly grateful for Taiwan's "friendly and nice" culture, attributing her open and multicultural worldview to her Taiwanese upbringing.

Some of Ms. Mai's favorite music performers to listen to include pianist Stephen Hough, violinist Ray Chen, and flutist Jasmine Choi. In her spare time, she likes to cook and bake, and she loves animals and has a penchant for decorating.

Ms. Mai looks forward to expanding MAK's music program, already starting private lessons for beginners and teaching high schoolers how to play various instruments.



Ms. Mai can't wait to teach music!

## Mr. D'Brass Gets Down to Business

By: Joseph Luther

With the advent of another school year, MAK welcomes another new teacher this year: Mr. Peter D'Brass, who hails from Visakhapatnam, India. He moved to the United States in 1988, and has traveled to over 70 countries since.

As the teacher for Global Business, Marketing, PE, Health, and Learning Needs, D'Brass demonstrates his expertise in various fields; he has worked in the field of special education for nine years, been a psychologist for five years, and taught ancient history for six years. D'Brass enjoys teaching at MAK, but explains that the cultural differences make class discussion more difficult. Whereas kids in the U.S. like to work in groups, D'Brass says, students in Taiwan like to work alone and are more shy to reply to his questions.

Most would anticipate a culture shock upon moving to a new country, but D'Brass adapted to the culture of the United States fairly soon after moving. Language, an issue many would struggle with in an unfamiliar environment, was not a problem for him. D'Brass says he actually likes many aspects of the States, including people's tendency to be informal.

D'Brass's travels are not over, as he tries to visit at least three countries every year. He has been to every continent except Antarctica, which is not exempt from his plans.

In his spare time, D'Brass enjoys hunting. He owns a semi-automatic rifle and a high-powered rifle for big game. D'Brass was also a pole-vaulting enthusiast until he had an accident in eighth grade. When he was practic-



Mr. D'Brass brings a wide variety of subjects to MAK. / Photo by Niki Huang

ing alone one day, the pole snapped in mid-air. The pole entered from his mouth to under his right eye, impaling him through his face. The injury was not life-threatening, though he had a long period of recovery. He continued to pole-vault for some time after the accident. Eventually, though, he quit, as he became more nervous around sharp objects. He still has flashbacks of the incident.

D'Brass has also struggled with depression in his past. By the time he was 21, he had been depressed for about six months and was almost at the point of suicide. D'Brass used prayer to get out of the depression and did not need to take medication, he says. Following this period, his faith in Jesus was reformed.

This year sees the addition of many new faces to the workforce. Everyone is certainly thankful to have Mr. D'Brass and his eclectic abilities among them. When you have time, be sure to talk to Mr. D'Brass, because he has the best stories.





The gym shorts seem to contradict the dress code. / Photo by Nini Lee



Nini Lee and Christine Wu lament the lack of boba in their tea. / Photo by Ann King

## The Contradiction of the P.E. Uniforms

By: Nini Lee

I'm sure many of you are already tired of hearing "Dress code! 5 inches above the knee!" echoing around the MAK hallways everyday. Most students are familiar with the enforced dress code, but many female students still violate them due to the difficulty of finding school appropriate shorts.

However, with the new introduction of MAK's gym uniform, which students are expected to wear during P.E. class, many students are appalled to find that the new P.E. shorts don't even meet the MAK dress code.

The gym shorts are not solving [the] problem," a student complained. "They are just as short, if not shorter, than what was previously worn by [students]. All [they're] doing is making everyone (guys included) wear short shorts together.

Wasn't the dress code established to create a learning environment free of distraction in MAK? If that's the case, why does the school violate its own rules with such short shorts? And if the school approves of these shorts, can we start wearing shorts that are just as long as they are? Is the new dress code based on the school gym shorts now?

I am not here to argue for a change in the dress code or a redesign of the gym shorts. I am here to question the inconsistency of the school as they contradict the exact rules they try to enforce. It is amusing to think that by complying with the new P. E. dress code, we are simultaneously breaking the general MAK dress code.

One time, a student had to pull up her shirt to see the elastic band of her shorts for a teacher to check that she didn't fold the waistband because her gym shorts looked too short.

"The gym shorts tend to naturally slide higher on your waist espe-

cially when running or during movement," Gabriella Liu said. "I saw a girl wearing gym shorts so short the dress code was broken by at least 2 inches."

"From what I can see, the shorts are breaking the dress code on some people and not on others, which is one of the reasons why the 5 inch isn't necessarily a good way to determine whether shorts are modest or not," a teacher commented.

Could a larger size mitigate the problem? The complaints of male students who purchased the largest size says no.

"I ordered an XL, and they [only] cover half of my lap," Daniel Chiang said. "These demonic shorts that the school gives us are deceiving the student body."

The implementation of the new MAK gym shorts aroused many voices with different opinions. Some students think that short shorts allow them to exercise more easily; some are still not used to the unbelievable shortness and others choose to wear their own shorts during P.E. class.

Regardless of these opinions, there is no doubt that the new gym shorts not only fail to solve the dress code problem, but they instead trigger more questions on its validity.

Furthermore, the P. E. gym shorts provide tangible evidence that the model of shorts produced by many companies violates the MAK dress code, proving that it is very difficult to find shorts that meet the required dress code length.

The gym shorts are comfortable indeed, but its length is simply just too short for some.

"Some of our boxers are longer than these loyal-to-their-name shorts, making us a reverse Superman." Chiang adds. "The school should give us capes too; that would complete the costume."

## Boba Ban: Has MAK Gone Too Far?

By: Ann King, Jasmine Teng, and Sabrina Tsai

Ever since becoming the tea lady three years ago, I've come to realize how essential tea, especially boba tea, is for the school. Unfortunately, starting from this year, the school has banned boba and anything chewy. I think I speak for the entire high school body when I say the ban is ridiculous. Why must you take away the simple pleasures in life? Boba tea is an integral part of Taiwanese culture.

According to the teachers, ordering boba was banned after a writhing, semi-alive mass of boba was found haunting the pipes. Allegedly, students had dumped boba down the sinks, which resulted in the birth of these terrifying boba babies. In order to prevent any of these monstrosities from ever being born again, we are no longer allowed to order tea with boba.

The important question is: why are we all being punished? Does anyone even know who dumped the boba in the sink? (If you did, confess and repent!) None of the high schoolers have the patience nor the time to tear off the plastic cover of the cup, dump the boba in the sink, wait for it to ooze down the drain, and then throw away the cup. The majority of students simply chuck the whole cup, boba and all, into the respective recycling bin. Moreover, I think high school students are smart enough to know that boba would clog the pipes if dumped in the sink.

Furthermore, if the administration cannot prove to us the identity of the wrongdoers, how do we know the teachers weren't also part of the blockage problem? The burden of proof should fall on the accuser, not the accused. In addition, high school students have recently witnessed a teacher drinking boba during class. While this drink was a gift from a

friend outside the school, the situation caused many students to begin discussing the double standards in MAK.

Boba has become a fundamental part of the MAK culture.

"I can't order my QQ!" One high schooler said. "They took my only energy source."

"If you teach the students to be more responsible, then you wouldn't have to have the boba ban," another student said.

Our school should take this opportunity to teach students about the proper disposal of food. The lack of a prior warning or explanation means that students, and younger students in particular, do not learn the environmental consequences of dumping trash down the drain.

Ultimately, when I take a step back to look at this whole issue, it sounds absolutely ludicrous. What kind of a school bans boba? Alongside the undue fuss over the dress code, the emergence of the boba ban implies that the administration spends more time regulating trivial matters instead of more significant matters. I say this with the utmost respect for the MAK administration - I just think that this is too much.

Fundamentally, I think what students are truly protesting are the excessive regulations that hound the student body. A simple warning would've done the job. There's no need to go to such lengths to set up a regulation just to ban boba. There are much easier solutions to avoid all this hassle and the chaos that follows. Besides giving out a warning to students, it is also easy to set up a separate container just for boba. I truly do not want MAK to be known as the school that, of all things, banned boba.



A mysterious ladder in the teacher's workroom. / Photo by Sabrina Tsai



A rooftop view for lunch? Sounds fantastic. / Photo by Mr. Torgerson



Secret entrance to the exclusive lounge. / Photo by Sabrina Tsai

## New Exclusive Rooftop Lounge\*

By: Sabrina Tsai

\*SharkPost is not responsible for any damages caused by protests if the school fails to do as falsely reported.

When the bell rings for lunch, hurried footsteps rush out the door, drowning out the voices of any teacher's last homework reminders. The line for the microwave grows; seats in the student lounge are filled mostly by seniors while the juniors head off to their own private junior lounge. What about the sophomores? The freshmen? Where do they go?

Student handbook high school rule 24 states that only seniors and juniors, due to their inherent superiority, are allowed in the student lounge for lunch. It doesn't matter if a freshman was there first, nor does it matter if that student had been there since second period. They must walk back to the middle school wing for lunch to dine with the rest of the inferior minions.

"It's so unfair," Truman complained, "why do the older students get everything?" When asked about eating in other classrooms, he sighed and shook his head. Many teachers don't allow food in

their classrooms, and some don't want student disturbances during their free time. The hallways are too cramped, the elevator too slow, and the staircases too dirty.

There is nowhere else to go except for the middle school wing; there is nothing to do other than to accept their fate.

I asked another sophomore, Emirlyn, to throw out any ideas she had. Maybe there was someplace that could work as a new lounge, or maybe there was a way to create a new one. After a few minutes of thinking, she brought up the ladder.

Perhaps you know what I'm talking about. Perhaps some of you have even seen this mysterious ladder. Yes, I'm talking about the very ladder in the teacher workroom that leads to a cleverly camouflaged door in the ceiling. That door leads to an open space on the rooftop, with an extremely gorgeous view of the campus. You can see not only the track and fields, but you can also see past the cam-

pus walls into the neighboring forest. It is the perfect place for just about anything, so why has this place remained empty?

"We thought about building a swimming pool up here," Mr. Choi explained, "but we never started because the Taichung board didn't approve. Now, many students are requesting a new hangout area, and that is something we can definitely do."

The new lounge will contain picnic tables, a vending machine, a mini freezer, and most importantly, a transparent cover to allow students to be enriched by the rays of sunshine full of Vitamin C but also provide cover for rain at the same time. The drinks are coming back; soda, tea, and juice will all make their appearances in the new vending machine again.

Here's the best part: boba tea will be allowed, but only on the rooftop lounge and nowhere else. Don't try to sneak your drinks into class, because the teachers will take your privilege away. And after this

long period of a boba-less life, the last thing we need is for it to be taken away from us, again. This lounge is already the place I want to go to for lunchtime!

But don't get too excited, construction hasn't started yet. Teachers predict that construction will probably start sometime around next week, so be ready to endure a few months of endless hammering and construction. If needed, the junior class will be selling earplugs for 15NT a pair in HS2 during homeroom. Profits will go towards the junior service trip to Telunas.

Some teachers have voiced their concerns over the invasion of the teacher's lounge. No attention has been paid to these complaints so far. All is well.

Hopefully, the rooftop lounge will be ready for use when students come back from Christmas break. Since there will be no need for any government approval, the school has confidently stated that any delays for the opening of the lounge are improbable.

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