

# Lion's Roar Newsletter



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## THE MATACHINES

BY JESUS DAVILA, STAFF WRITER



The Matachines (singular *matachín*) sword dancers dress in ritual attire called bouffon. It is an ancient tradition in the Mexican southwest that was influenced by European traditions from the Middle Ages. The Matachin dance emerged in Spain in the early 17th century, inspired by similar European traditions such as the *moresca*. According to Catholic teachings, the Virgin Mary appeared in Mexico to an Aztec Indian named Juan Diego, and she told him to call her Our Lady of Guadalupe. After that, the traditional Matachin dance grew in popularity to honor the Blessed Virgin's appearance to Juan Diego. The tradition spread and is now a part of our mass celebration to honor Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12 and on May 3 in Honor of the Holy Cross.

Miss Cassandra Garza, the coordinator of the JDA Matachines dance, said, "It took about two weeks of thirty-minute sessions three times a week for the students to learn the dances and the procession into the mass." The costumes vary from group to group but it usually represents a mixture of Mexican, Spanish and Indian dress with brilliant colors and might even have some elaborate masks. Our Matachines dancers had the colors of our school: green and white.

We celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at JDA on December 12, 2019, with Bishop Flores and Father Alex. It was an impressive display of respect for Our Lady of Guadalupe. We appreciate the assistance of the dancers and also Miss Garza, who has a background in dance, which made her want to help out with the JDA Matachines tradition.

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:



### KAITLYN ESPERICUETA

BY ZOEY ESPERICUETA, STAFF WRITER



Our student focus for January is our Student Council President, Kaitlyn Espericueta. She is someone whom we usually see at pep rallies or running around campus trying to get everything under the moon done. Kaitlyn is the girl we usually hear before we see her. Sports aficionados will see her at every event, whether it is on the volleyball court with her team or out on the track running. Kaitlyn is always on the move. This girl is so involved with our school that JDA is in her veins! Kaitlyn has some exciting information for us, and that is to announce our first Homecoming Dance! This took place January 18, 2020, from 8:00-11:00 pm in the JDA gym.

Kaitlyn works extremely hard not only inside the classroom but outside of school, too. She has been accepted at the University of Dallas and The University of Incarnate Word; she also submitted applications to four other colleges, as well, and is waiting to for a response.

Kaitlyn still manages to stay on top of it and juggle it all. "Never procrastinate on essays or applications!" exclaimed Kaitlyn. A big kudos to our student focus of the month, Kaitlyn Espericueta!

## TEACHER FOCUS: MR. MARIO DELGADO

BY ERIKA AGUIRRE, STAFF WRITER



Mr. Mario Delgado, history teacher and basketball coach extraordinaire, was born in Pharr, Texas, and raised in Edinburg. He attended Edinburg High School but graduated his senior year at Economedes High School. Mr. Delgado graduated from North West Vista College and UTPA with a Bachelors of Arts in social studies composite.

When asked why he likes to teach history, he answered, "I personally love how human beings have and grown and evolved from their nomadic lifestyles to our technologically-advanced society. I love learning about the journey humans have taken to get where we are now and excited to see where we will go next." Mr. Delgado gives credit to his mother's passion and love of teaching as his inspiration in choosing his career path.

Mr. Delgado loves teaching at JDA. "Compared to other schools I have taught at, I love JDA for their effort in building a tight-knit community for staff and students. A sense of community is what is missing from other educational institutions." He appreciates the fact that JDA focuses on the internal and not the external features of a person.

The students at JDA appreciate Mr. Delgado's hard work and contributions to our school.





# GOING TO DISNEY

BY ERIKA AGUIRRE,  
CONTEST WINNER



On November 1, 2019, my family, the Aguirre family, won the Disney Points of Life program for Emily's Meals, which is a charity dedicated to the homeless in the Rio Grande Valley. The Aguirre family won \$10,000 for Emily's Meals and another \$10,000 for Juan Diego Academy, along with a paid trip to Disney World in Orlando. Good Morning America sponsored the contest and advertised to viewers, asking them to vote for their favorite of four charity organization. Emily's Meals won hand down!

All the hard work in setting up Emily's Meals is worth it, not only because of winning a trip to Disney but also because my family and I get to help the homeless. It is rewarding and gratifying to help others.

We left for Disney World on Friday, November 22 and returned the day before Thanksgiving, on November 27, 2019. Disney World was amazing and I had such a fun time on the Space Mountain! The weather was a balmy 80 degrees during the day, which is not too hot, and it was cool at night. We ate delicious food and rode on exciting rides. We didn't have to stand in line because we had a "Fast Pass" which allows visitors to go to the front of the line.

I would like to encourage all JDA students to contribute to others through kindness, charity and acts of Christian compassion. My reward was a fun trip to Disney, but the personal satisfaction was priceless.

# TEXAS STATE AQUARIUM

BY NATALIA ABOYTES, STAFF WRITER



Estefania Quintana is a sophomore who attended the aquatic science field trip to the Texas State Aquarium on December 6, 2019. The main purpose of this field trip was to learn and observe the natural environment in which these animals live.

Estefania commented on her experience at the aquarium. "I saw all kinds of species and the process in which the water from the sea is being purified so the aquatic animals can have a safe and healthy environment. I also learned the daily process of feeding the animals; every species has a different way to feed. The caregivers have to clean and cut the food in a certain way." Estefania said that her favorite part of the trip was when she got the opportunity to feed stingrays.

Ms. Garza is the aquatic science teacher. Her lesson plan objectives were addressed at the visit to the aquarium and mainly focused on aquatic ecosystems and animal life. Ms. Garza hoped for her students to explore the exhibits and see the animal life in their natural habitat as had been researched. When asked what she liked best about the field trip, Miss Garza answered, "I enjoyed the lemon shark and stingray petting pool where we all got to touch the sharks and rays." The Texas State Aquarium was an exciting learning experience for everyone involved.





## ANDREW CROW: JUAN DIEGO ACADEMY'S PRIDE AND JOY

BY DAVID PINALES, STAFF WRITER

Andrew Houston Crow was born in Edinburg, Texas, on May 7, 2002. Andrew has excelled in his academic endeavors, as well as in sports, since his freshman year in 2016. Mr. Crow excels in golf and basketball, and has time and again put the team on his back. Andrew Crow is a prime example of what a true intellectual student should achieve. He has outstanding ACT and SAT scores, and shows no signs of slowing down his progress. Andrew Houston Crow recently received a scholarship in the amount of \$104,000 to Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas. Although Mr. Crow has not made a commitment to attend Southwestern University, he is still keeping it as an option for the future. Andrew stated, "I will assess all my options prior to making an official decision as to where I will embark on the journey of my college education."

For these reasons and many more, Andrew Crow is considered one of Juan Diego Academy's most successful young men. Congratulations, Mr. Crow, on your bright future!



## JUNIOR NEWS

BY ANGELA MICKUNAS, STAFF WRITER



The juniors recently hosted a Spirit Week in which they sold lunches and snacks for the whole school during the week of October 22-25, 2019. We interviewed Andrea Torres, the Junior Class Treasurer, about the success of their Spirit Week and how much of an impact it made on the junior's treasury as a whole. Not only did the juniors sell lunch and snacks but also jean passes for Red Ribbon Week. The Lions' Roar interviewed Andrea regarding the total amount of money the juniors had earned during the week, and she replied, "We made \$2,167. With the money that we earned, we will plan the prom, lock-in and our gift towards the seniors." According to Andrea, the juniors are planning to have another Spirit Week sometime during January or possibly later. Everyone is excited to see what the juniors have planned in the future and hope the school continues to support them as they proceed to fundraise throughout the year with various fun activities.

## TAPPS BY ANDREA TORRES, STAFF WRITER



Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools, best known as TAPPS, is a competition that governs athletic, fine arts, and academic contests for the majority of non-public high schools in Texas. At JDA, TAPPS has recently been initiated by Dr. K. Carroll, the Dean of Instruction, who sponsors the program. The areas that the students are going to compete in are Ready Writing, Literary Criticism, Number Sense, Advanced Math, Prose, Poetry, Spanish, One Act Play, Solo/Duo Act. Practice will start in January 2020 and competition for Ready Writing is on February 11, 2020, and the rest of the areas will compete in March and April 2020. Any students wishing to participate should see Dr. Carroll in Room 111 as soon as possible.

# MECHANICAL LIONS ROBOTICS TEAM

BY MARCIA TORRES, STAFF WRITER



The world is becoming more innovative each day, and so is the Mechanical Lions Robotics Team. The JDA Robotics Team just opened its doors, and the Lions' Roar staff interviewed one of its members, Dario Jimenez, who provided team news. Dario said, "The robotics team is planning to go to the competition in March to Del Rio and New Braunfels." According to Dario, students on the robotics team are learning, "How to design, build, and program a robot but also how to work as a team. Being in the robotics club has taught me that you can't do everything by yourself and that you need to trust your teammates."

The team sold taquitos over the quarter exams week to raise money for their upcoming competitions. We pray that they reach their goal, as they work on building a robot for all their competitions.

## SCHEDULE CHANGE

BY NEYLA CHAPA, STAFF WRITER



Hey Lions! Guess what? Starting in January 2020, we will be having a new schedule! We will have morning prayer every day from 8:50-9:04 in the chapel, Monday through Thursday and in the grotto on Fridays. Everyone is welcome to participate in this new daily prayer activity. Parents will be notified through Gradelink.

Our Lion's Roar staff recently interviewed Mr. Lugaresi, our principle, about this change. "It's a win-win situation," he said and added, "I think students will welcome the new schedule."

Mr. Lugaresi also provided his rationale for the schedule change. "Daily morning prayer will be resuming on Tuesday, January 7, 2020. In the past years, daily morning prayer had been scheduled prior to first period, but was subject to disruptions created by students coming in late or unable to attend at all." This school year, daily morning prayer had been scheduled ten minutes prior to lunchtime and only on Mondays. The entire rationale for prayer every morning is that it sets the tone for the entire day, centering our focus on Christ and our attention on why we are doing what we do at Juan Diego Academy. Our daily morning prayer has now been scheduled at the conclusion of first period, which shall create more opportunities for all students to be in attendance. Being on campus will no longer be just a geographic location, but a spiritual one as well.

We are looking forward to the new schedule, and we know the students and parents will surely embrace this positive and meaningful change.

## CLOTHING DONATIONS AT JDA

BY ERIK RODRIGUEZ, STAFF WRITER



Kindness is present every day at JDA. A clothing donation was organized in Miss Cassandra Garza's HOSA class. Students were encouraged to bring all child and youth sizes of new or gently-used clothing to Miss Garza during the month of December. The clothing donations were collected for Children's Haven International in Pharr, Texas, which is an organization that promotes assistance to disadvantaged children. In this way, children get some clothes and are protected from the cold days.

Donations were available until Wednesday, December 11, 2019. All the clothes were delivered on Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, and the HOSA officers organized the delivery. Thank you to the HOSA Club for your act of charity and kindness!

# GIVING TO THOSE IN NEED

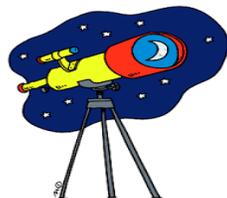
BY MARCELA CERDA, STAFF WRITER



The National Honors Society is an organization that aims to highlight the best of the best in our student body. Only people with excellent grades and exceptional community service are invited to join.

NHS members collected non-perishable food items for the shelter in Father Alex's parish. Each class was given a particular food to donate, which helps to feed many needy families. Freshmen donated canned corn; sophomores, rice; juniors, canned fruit, mac and cheese; Sseniors – crackers and canned soup.

Thank you to all those of who donated.



# REACH FOR THE STARS

BY ANGEL GOMEZ, STAFF WRITER



It feels as though we have explored everything there is on our home planet - Earth. However, beyond our infinitesimal solar system, there are still trillions and trillions of unexplored stars, planets, and many other wonders in the ever-expanding universe. This is where astronomy comes in handy.

Astronomy is the branch of science that deals with the vast and infinite vacuum of space. A career in astronomy provides a student with knowledge the necessary knowledge of physics and mathematics to understand the tiny parts of the universe that we are able to observe. Astronomy is incredibly interesting because it provides a glimpse into unexplored territory that can lead to wonderful discoveries. Astronomy majors can expect to have incredibly exciting career opportunities, such as conducting research in facilities in private or public sectors. An astronomy major could even work as an engineer for aeronautics and spaceflight companies, which essentially means building spaceships.

This begs the question, where can one go to begin on the path towards a career in astronomy? Both Princeton University and the California Institute of Technology offer outstanding astronomy and astrophysics programs. All one needs for a successful career in astronomy is determination and passion.

Astronomy is an exciting career path for anyone who has a thirst for discovery and advancement for the human race.

# QUICK NEWS

BY ANDRE HERNANDEZ, STAFF WRITER



- January 24 - Spirit Awards @ OLS, 6:00 PM
- January 25 – Texas Rally for Life @ State Capitol
- January 27-31 – Catholic Schools Week
- January 28 – Hamburgers on the Hill
- January 29 – Sophomore retreat @ La Lomita Park
- January 31 – Walkathon – La Lomita Park
- March 7 – Fashion Show, JDA gym, 11:30 AM-1:30 pm  
Save the date!