

The Compass

A Pirate's Guide

A production of the Pirate Press: Student Journalists

The new school year is back in full swing and students and teachers are settling in to a routine. Check out what's happening around campus.

Issue 1 ~ September 30, 2015

Upcoming Events

- Oct. 1 Pasco Middle Night at Beef O' Brady's
- Oct. 5 Volleyball @ Stewart, 6pm
- Oct. 7 FFA Meeting
- Oct. 10 PMS Band Country Jam, Pasco County Fair Grounds
- Oct. 12 Healthy Schools Flu Mist Administration
- Volleyball @ Pasco, 6pm
- Oct. 13 Football @ Pasco, 7pm
- Oct. 20 Football @ Pasco, 7pm
- Oct. 23 End of First Quarter
- Oct. 26 No School for Students
- Oct. 27 Cambridge Parent Night, 6pm

2015 INAUGURAL Country Jam
Pasco County Fairgrounds, Dade City, Florida
Saturday, October 10, 2015

Performance Schedule:
 2:30 p.m. Courtney Graham (Opening Ceremony)
 2:45 p.m. Robin Stephens
 3:10 p.m. Billie Jo Smith
 3:55 p.m. Wilder Road Boys
 5:20 p.m. Stonegrey
 6:25 p.m. Johnny Shelton
 8:00 p.m. DC Country
 10:10 p.m. Jennifer Lee & Nevaeh Peek

Tickets are \$10.00
Children 8 & Under are Free!

Proceeds Benefit the Pasco Middle School Band

Country Jam Committee:
 Kenny Mathis, Michelle Capps, Heather Aday, Cory Darling and Sabrina Groves

Thank You To Our Sponsors:
 Terri Dusek (ReMax Premier Group)
 Eric Burkes (CustomDecal.US)
 Hersch & Associates, P.A.
 Waller & Scherber, P.A.
 Mike Thurston (TLC Roofing)
 Heather Kline (Heather Kline Photography)
 Nicole Deese Newlon (Johnson & Cassidy, P.A.)
 Bonnie Messick-Persing (Salpp's n Tips)
 Mary Castro (Magnolia Title Agency)
 Bobby Welbourn (Keller Williams Realty)
 Janet Schroeder (Sunshine Heritage Realty)
 Sherry & Lee Widner (Widner Roofing)
 Chad Wright (Gators "R" Us)
 Beef O' Brady's (Dade City)
 The Brass Tap (Dade City)

Visit our Facebook event page: [CountryJAM@Pasco County Fair Grounds](https://www.facebook.com/events/1478515479134989/)
 For Sponsor Information: email Kenny Mathis at kmathis@pasco.k12.fl.us

Inaugural Country Jam

In case you haven't heard, the inaugural Country Jam is taking place on Saturday October 10th at the Pasco County Fair Grounds. Mr. Mathis, the band director, has worked tirelessly to organize and promote this event that will benefit the band, in hopes of earning enough money to purchase new instruments.

The Country Jam offers a hot lineup of local musicians, including Mr. Mathis' band, DC Country, and lots of fun for all ages. Included in the \$10 ticket price is admission to all concerts, access to food vendors, activities and booths for children and families, and more!

This event has gotten some major press in our local news. The Pasco Middle Band of Pirates has been visited multiple times already this year by reporters from stations like Bay News 9, and has even been featured on the radio where it was promoted by The Bellamy Brothers! Like the event on Facebook to keep up with the latest happenings. Hope to see you at the fairgrounds!

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1478515479134989/>

Free Flu Mist Offered at Pasco Middle

Healthy Schools, in cooperation with the Pasco County School District and the Pasco County Department of Health, is excited to kick off the "Teach Flu a Lesson" program in 2015. Free flu mist administration will be offered here on October 12th. Please complete and return the permission slip that was sent home with your student.





New Year, New Strategies

The AVID binder sweeps the school

by Brendaly Gomez & Mackenzie Petty

As you may know, Pasco Middle School is transitioning more toward the AVID way. Within the last month, all students have received and are required to carry a 3” binder, which contains all the work from all six classes he/she is taking.

To some students, the binder may be considered a “death trap,” but if used correctly, it can lead to some good. The benefits of using the AVID binder are that students will have everything in one place and can locate anything in a matter of time. The main purpose of the binder is to

be used as an organizational tool that will help each student stay organized and help when studying. “From personal experience, I can tell you that the bulky binder has dramatically changed my studying techniques and has helped me stay organized, and has gotten me out of the ‘I can’t find it’ excuse,” says Brendaly Gomez, 8th grader.

Binders are checked and graded by multiple teachers each week. Students can be nominated for binder of the month. In order to be nominated, student binders must

always be organized and have all supplies and papers in places that are easy to get to. Papers and work must be organized with most recent work on top. Students must also keep all of their syllabi in their binder all year long.

TIPS FOR BINDER ORGANIZATION

- Hole punch all papers.
- Put everything away before class ends
- Once a week, have an organization session; flip through binder and fix anything that seems out of place.
- Divide each subject into sections. Each teacher has provided an example of how they want their section, so follow it!

“I can tell you that the bulky binder has dramatically changed my studying techniques...” -Brendaly Gomez, 8th grader

The month of September already saw some outstanding binders. The following students were nominated for Binder of the Month:

Brenna Gregory

Esmeralda Nunez-Hernandez

Zoe Howell

Kayla Martinez

Cynthia Diego

Jessica Lehman

Clarissa Hoffman

Krysten Manley

Ashley Valdez

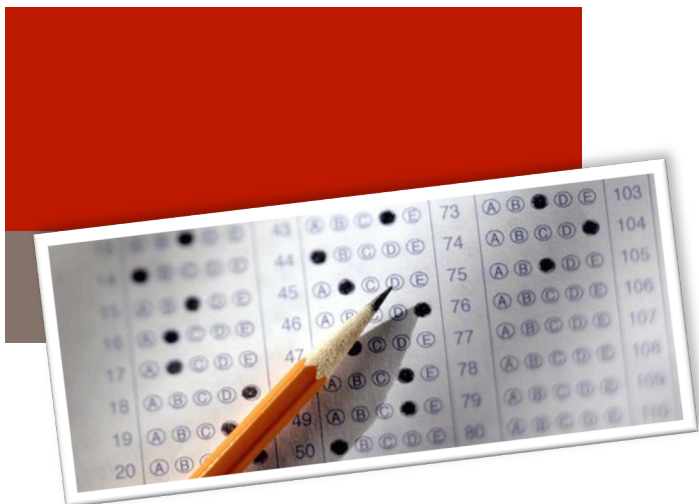
Way to go! Stay organized, Pirates!•



FSA Delay and Difficulties

by Atheena Kuriakose

At the end of the previous school year, all students in the third through eleventh grade, residing in the state of Florida, were required to take a new standardized test which was to take the place of the FCAT. This test is the Florida Standards Assessment, or FSA, designed to assess mastery of the new Florida Standards. While some are simply disappointed about the technical difficulties that occurred during testing sessions, others are downhearted about the delay of the scores, which are still not back to schools!



Once received, the test results will be used to calculate school grades, track student progress, and evaluate teachers. Some believe that the test was excessively troublesome. The amount of students affected by the technical difficulties encountered throughout the state was too strenuous to determine, but it was estimated that 1 to 5 percent of students had difficulties logging on, or staying logged on, to the test, which furthermore convinced many to deem the test invalid.

Even with the outcries, the test was still decided to be an accurate measurement of the standards.

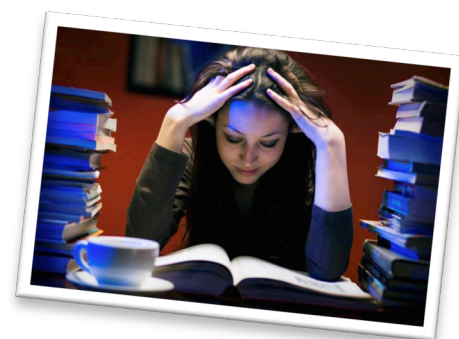
The test was accompanied by many technical difficulties that postponed testing for many. Testing was suspended in many counties, such as Broward and Palm Beach. After a statewide glitch, the education commissioner proclaimed that the situation was “absolutely unacceptable.”

Some problems that occurred were difficulties for administrators to start testing sessions, complication when it came to students signing in, the assessment allowing students to see questions a day before they should, and answers not being saved even after students repeatedly entered them. The technical difficulties

produced by the assessment not only extended the time expected for testing, taking away valuable learning time for the students, but also irritated students, parents, and administrators.

The scores were supposed to be sent to students over the summer break, but students are already several weeks into the new school year and the scores are yet to be sent. They are expected to be sent around November or December. The delay has frustrated many teachers and administrators, considering the results were supposed to help them see the capabilities of the students and help with placement in classes. Parents and students have also been affected as anxiety grows.

When districts receive test scores, parents will be some of the first to know, but, until then, schools continue to wait it out, wondering if the next testing season will bring similar problems. •



Ways to Relieve School-Related Stress

By Rachel Petit

As the school year progresses, students tend to feel that the stress from having six teachers is piling on. Multiple deadlines may be on the same day, or a teacher may decide to assign an impossibly large project. Whatever the cause, stress is hard to manage. To battle the stress, here are some tips on how to relieve it:

- * Have a varied and healthy diet. Eat fresh! It helps your immune system so it can beat that stress!
- *Exercise. Sports and yoga help produce endorphins, which make you feel good.
- *Meditation. Use breathing techniques to help oxygen through your blood stream.
- *Take breaks regularly, listen to music, and laugh a little!
- *Get a pet. They will love you unconditionally.
- *Sleep! Even if you aren't stressed, sleep is good for your body. Make sure you get enough!
- *See the positive side. If you missed a deadline, you know to plan ahead next time. •

Teachers Relying Too Much on Technology?

By Emma Edwards

On Wednesday, September 16th, the district's Network Connection went down, thus bringing internet connection and e-mail correspondence to a halt. This made me wonder how it affects teachers and staff when things like this happen.

Teachers, nowadays, use more technology than textbooks. With how much technology is progressing, I predict schools won't have a need for anything other than technology to teach students in the future. Wi-fi connection is a big part of technology use in schools. Teachers and staff use it to communicate with each other; they use it in lesson plans, and they even use it to post announcements and grades for their students.

Mrs. McHugh, 7th and 8th grade Civics teacher, stated, "I improvised on the spot. I orally shared 60 Second Civics with my students," when she realized she could not access the internet that day.

Mrs. Waldron, the nurse, explained that communication was hard without the use of e-mail.

I found that the network being down was worse of a problem than I had originally thought and it had a much bigger effect on staff and teachers. Mrs. Kassabaum said, "The outage was during journalism and we were not able to upload pictures or take attendance and it pretty much stopped our productivity." Mr. Thomas was not able to share math videos with his students and he said, "When you work hard to make a plan, it gets annoying when it doesn't go the way you intended."

All in all, I was amazed at how well all of our Pasco Middle teachers and staff were able to improvise and continue to teach us, even when the unexpected happens. •



How Much Time Teachers Spend Grading

By Quentin Carrero

Teachers are known for many things, but one thing that is commonly overlooked is the time they spend grading student assignments and homework. While many of us believe we are overworked without our load of homework that is assigned nightly, the teachers that grade it are spending far more time on the work. They assess every individual student's work and are expected to have it back in a timely fashion. That means reading, grading, and evaluating over a hundred of every assignment that is given.

When some Pasco Middle School teachers were interviewed, they told about the amounts of time that are spent weekly, in hours, grading homework/class work. Mrs. Kassabaum, 7th grade English teacher responds that with all her periods combined, she spends 5-6 hours weekly grading assignments. That's over 150 hours per school year of just grading time! Mr. Thomas averages 6 hours per week, and Mr. Lorensten, 2 ½. •

iSpike, iTackle! By Tieley Vaughn

The best part of the school year, for some students and their families, is when football and volleyball seasons begin. Every year, students anxiously wait for the Fall sports to begin. Pasco Middle School students must have a 3.0 G.P.A in order to participate. Playing sports is another way to motivate students and make them work hard in the classroom.

Congratulations to all of the student athletes that made the football team. On Tuesday September 8th, they

kicked off their season playing against Pine View Middle School and even though the game ended in a tie, it was an intense and awesome game! The fans were cheering while munching on delicious treats. Please make sure you go out and support your Pirates on Tuesday nights.

Now, let's talk about the volleyball teams, and congratulate everyone that made either the 7th or 8th grade teams.



The coaches for the volleyball program are Mrs. Herndon and Mrs. Mickler. They expect their athletes to hustle and give 100% both on and off the court. Mrs.

Herndon always says, "Now that you have made the team, you now have to earn your starting position on the court!"

The volleyball team's first game of the season was at Centennial Middle on September 14th. Check the school's website for the sport schedules and come out and support the athletes! •



What's Trending This School Year?

By Nickole Hicks

Here at Pasco Middle School, the teens set unique trends all the time. These changes make answering the question, 'What's trending?' a little difficult to answer. So, we went out looking for the new trends with the back to school look. I'm positive you'll love these new looks.



Backpacks & Clothing

Let's talk clothes. The new look for ladies shows Aeropostale shirts, floral crop tops, and skinny jeans. For our gentlemen, we also have polo shirts and simple, plain t-shirts with a pair of khakis or blue jeans. For both genders, we have the super popular graphic t-shirts. Lastly, in the shoe section, we have Vans, sandals, and tennis shoes.

For backpacks, we have the always popular Jansport bookbags, and this year we have brought in a new style of bags with tribal or floral patterns. For boys, we also have Jansport and the new Air Jordans.

Entertainment for Pirates

Harry Potter: He Who Must Not Be Named

by Stephanie Cauthen

Voldemort. The famous Harry Potter antagonist. How would you pronounce his name? I bet you would do it wrong. J.K. Rowling clarifies on Twitter that the 't' in Voldemort is silent. It is the French pronunciation. That is how it was always said until the movies came about, pronouncing it with the 't' at the end. Michael Lucero, originally tweeted, "@Universe_Box One piece of Harry Potter trivia I always forget to mention: the 't' is silent in Voldemort, according to @jkrowling," to which Rowling replied, "but I'm pretty sure I'm the only one who pronounces it that way."

This got Twitter on a rampage, suggesting that it was a French word adopted by the English language. So, is it Voldemort or Voldemore? The world may never know. •



Apple's iOS 9 Update

by Sarah Welbourn, Logan Striepling, & Ciara Cross

Apple is, once again, upgrading and adding more to its line of smart phones. The new iOS 9 update includes different changes like the font and layout. Apple is also coming out with a new iPhone 6s and 6s Plus. According to Apple, the new 6s contains lots of improvements including a better camera, the most advanced chip in a smartphone, ever, advanced security, faster LTE, faster Wi-Fi, different phone colors like Rose Gold, and is supposed to be unlike any other smartphone experience. Apple always seems to impress users with its improvements.

But, are all the improvements all they are cracked up to be? This week on social media, a trending topic was the iOS 9 update and how it reportedly crashes the iPhone, but, is it true? Some Apple users spent three hours trying to fix their phone after they had downloaded the iOS 9 update. It turns out that Apple was aware of the problems and were working on the solution 24/7. •



Kanye for President?

By Logan Striepling

Forget the 2016 presidential candidates, just wait until 2020 because that's when Kanye West is supposedly running for president. West announced this at the VMAs, which aired August 30th at 9pm.

Cera Goble, 8th grader at Pasco Middle, said that she would vote for him. Fellow 8th graders, Marycarmen Andruskiewicz and Chloe Palmer both agreed that they would move across the world if he were elected. Well, I guess we'll find out if he really is running in 2019! •

Community Happenings by Codi Pangallo

New Adventure Attraction, Tree Hoppers, comes to Dade City

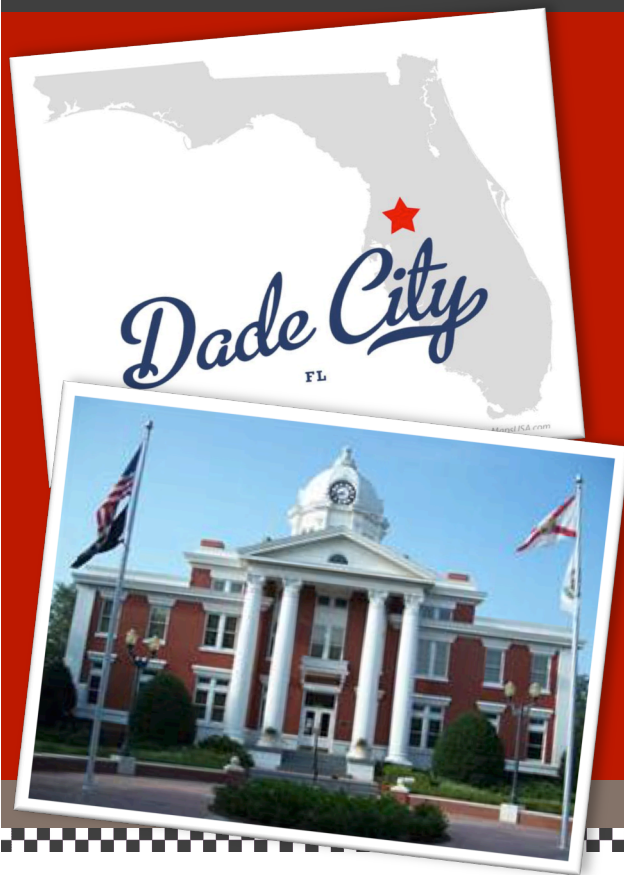
Starting this weekend, the new aerial adventure attraction, Tree Hoppers, will be opening in Dade City for anyone who likes to be outdoors, and will allow customers to experience anything from climbing to zip-lining.

According to Benjamin Nagengast, owner of Tree Hoppers, "Climbers can choose their difficulty level and can climb on those courses while family members can climb on other courses, so it's really a great family experience and it's also perfect for groups."

The Market Place at Hibiscus Park

We are happy to announce that citizens will now have an opportunity to shop at The Market Place in Hibiscus Park located at 7th Street and Bougainville Ave. This event will be held the first Saturday of every month from 9am-1pm. The Market Place may include locally grown produce, plants, garden accessories, home décor, furniture, arts and crafts, jewelry, soaps, jams, and much more.

Anyone wanting to be a vendor to sell items, call Lucy Avila at 352-521-5858 or lucyavila707@gmail.com. The vendor fee is \$20 for a 12' x 12' space.



FYI:

NOTIFICATION OF INSPECTION FOR ASBESTOS CONTAINING MATERIALS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued a final rule, 40 CFR Part 763, Asbestos Containing Material in schools, commonly referred to as AHERA. This rule requires all Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to identify asbestos containing materials (ACM) in their school buildings and to take appropriate actions to control the release of asbestos fibers.

All inspections for Pasco Middle School have been completed and a Management Plan describing the results of the inspection and the action plan to control any asbestos found during the inspection, where applicable, has been submitted to the governor for approval. A copy of this plan is located in the administrative office of this school and at the Pasco County Schools Maintenance & Facility Services Department and is available for review upon request.

OUT-OF-FIELD TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS

Individuals who are teaching out-of-field are certified in at least one area and are qualified to teach but are required to take additional course work or testing to add a coverage/endorsement to their certificate. The state also requires a teacher to take coursework/in-service towards an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) endorsement, when the teacher is the primary language arts provider and/or reading teacher for an ESOL student.

The following teachers have agreed to teach out-of-field while completing course work/testing toward ESOL Endorsement: Christy Nelson, Mercedes Formby, Darinda Dimick, Stacy Risinger, Treena Attebery. Michelle Twitmyer is Out-of-Field for English Language Arts.

TITLE I FAMILY INVOLVEMENT PLAN 2015-16

Our mission is to provide our students with a quality education by meeting their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical needs within a positive, supportive, and encouraging environment. A copy of our Title I Family Involvement Plan was sent home with students in the early weeks of the school year. If you would like another copy, please contact the front office at 352-524-8400.

Other Upcoming Community Events

Dade City Cruise In: The first Saturday of every month is the monthly cruise in. Car collectors from around the area, cruise in and show off their favorite hobby. It begins at 9am.

Scarecrow Festival: Saturday October 10th from 9am-4pm at the Pioneer Florida Museum and Village. Admission is only \$5 and children under 5 are free.

Rattlesnake Festival: Takes place at San Antonio City Park on October 17th from 9am-5pm.

Halloween Trick-or-Treating: Saturday October 31st, typically beginning around 6pm. Be sure to turn off your porch light if you do not intend on handing out candy to young visitors dressed in costumes!

Look out for our next newsletter at the end of October.

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