

MGA News

September

Volume 3, Issue 1

Special points of interest:

- Elementary Open House is on Sep. 9
- Middle School Open House is on Sep. 10
- Deadline to turn in lunch applications is Sep. 18
- Teacher Planning day on Sep. 28

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GET TO KNOW MGA'S NEW AP

BY VANESSA ACEBAL

The new school year at Mater Gardens Academy brought in many new faces, but they aren't only new students; MGA has a new assistant principal.

This is Olga Camarena's first year as an assistant principal, but she was previously a principal at Gibson Charter School for the 2008-2009 school year. From 2004-2008, she was a Special Programs Administrator, and from 2000-2005, she worked as a Kindergarten teacher at Mater Academy East.



Ms. Olga Camarena, the new Mater Gardens Academy assistant principal.

"Teaching is my life and my career. I have a passion for the education field and I believe that we have a great impact on the future generation by leading students through good example, education, values, principles, and lots of love," said Ms. Camarena.

Since she has worked at several schools, Ms. Camarena says that the differences between MGA, Mater Academy East, and Gibson Charter School are that MGA has a more beautiful

cafeteria, a P.E court, a library, and many activities. The other schools don't have a P.E court or a library.

"We are blessed to have so many things here at MGA. Everyone is so nice and the administration team is very supportive, organized, and cooperative," said Ms. Camarena.

Ms. Camarena's best experience as an educator has been seeing her ESOL kindergarteners come to class, knowing nothing at all, and leaving with a head full of knowledge.

"Watching them improve daily was very rewarding for me and I am very proud of them," says Ms.

Camarena.

Here's a fun fact: Before teaching, Ms. Camarena worked at Ann Taylor Retail Store.

Think that you've gotten to know Ms. Camarena? Say hi to her whenever you see her. We all look forward to a great school year with Mrs. Marrero and Ms. Camarena leading the way to success.

MGA HOSTS ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE

BY ASHLEY ARGUELLES

Parents are invited to attend Open House this week at Mater Gardens Academy.

The purpose of Open House is for teachers to introduce themselves to parents and give them valuable information that will make it easier for parents and teachers to work

together to make this a successful year for each child. Parents will know how the teachers manage their classrooms, the best way to contact the teachers, what the child will be tested on in the FCAT this year, and much more.

"Parental involvement is key to student success. Open House is the gateway to opening the communica-

tion between parent, teacher and student; hence involving parents in their child's education," said Mrs. Lourdes Marrero, the school's principal.

Open House will be held on September 9th for the elementary (grades K-5) and September 10th for the middle school (grades 6-9). Both events will be from 5:30pm to 7:30pm.

"Being an 'A' school shows that we are a great school and we make sure that students are learning the materials necessary to be successful in life."

- Mrs. Marrero

MGA ACHIEVES DOUBLE "A" STATUS

BY SUSAN PEREZ

Mater Gardens Academy students, teachers, and staff should all be very proud. Their hard work and success paid off and made MGA a "Double A" school.

"Being an 'A' school shows that we are a great school and we make sure that students are learning the materials necessary to

be successful in life," said Mater Gardens Academy Principal, Mrs. Marrero.

To make Mater Gardens Academy Elementary and Middle "A" schools, a lot of resources were made available to the teachers and students such as tutoring, Carnegie, and Gizmo. The classes are rich in technology.

To celebrate the great

achievement of attaining "AA" status, an FCAT ceremony will be held. Students who met the criteria will receive a reward, all MGA teachers will receive a bonus, and we will have a pep rally for the upcoming FCAT.

Remaining a "AA" school will require a lot of dedication and hard work. Let's keep it up!

LIBRARY RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY

BY STEPHANIE SIMOSA

Students at Mater Gardens Academy have something new to celebrate. For the first time since the school opened four years ago, a library will be open to students with more than 8,000 books to choose from.

"The colors, the layout, all the books, and the peace: it's all wonderful," said Mrs. Gomez-Herrera, the school's librarian.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony will take place in honor of the new library on

September 29, at 10:00 a.m. Parents can be an immense help by donating more books to add to the shelves.

"I'm very excited about the new library because it's a great place for reading and learning," said Ms. Perez, the reading coach.

There are also several computers available for student use in the library. Students can test their knowledge of the books they've read by using Accelerated Reader (AR), an internet website

with reading comprehension and vocabulary quizzes on thousands of books.

So students, if you love to read and learn, consider checking out the MGA library and let your imagination soar!



Mrs. Gomez-Herrera, the librarian, organizes books on the shelves of the new library.

NEW BILINGUAL PROGRAM FOR PRE-K AND K

BY KATIE CAMERO

For the 2009-2010 new school year, a new program has been implemented in order to improve the English and Spanish language skills of the students attending Mater Gardens Academy.

“The goal of two-way bilingual programs is to develop language and academic abilities in both dialects for both groups of children, [non-English and English speaking]. This curriculum is going to have a positive effect on the kids because an effort is being made to hold on to the native language alongside the dominant one in-

stead of completely replacing it,” said Mrs. Marrero, the principle of Mater Gardens Academy.

Currently, the bilingual program is for children in Pre-K and Kindergarten. Mrs. De-Francisco and Mrs. Vasquez are responsible for this curriculum. Mrs. De-Francisco is teaching the students Language Arts, Math, and a portion of science in Spanish, while Mrs. Vasquez is teaching Language Arts, Social Studies, and the other half of science in English.

“The purpose of this program is to help the kids retain Spanish, but still continue to learn and im-

prove English,” Mrs. De-Francisco said.

This program is held every day, and will continue throughout the rest of the school year. The directors of this course have come to the conclusion that each year the bilingual program will increase to a higher grade level, so in a few years the whole school will implement this program. However, when this course eventually reaches the middle school, the amount of Spanish time will decrease. Research has shown that as children get older, they will not gain anything from a school day with 50 percent of the material in Spanish and 50 percent in English.

MEET THE NEWEST STINGRAY FACULTY

BY KAMILA FERNANDEZ, MANUELA GALLEGO, EMILY LOPEZ, AND KATELY RIVERO

Mrs. Aguila is a 5th grade Language Arts, Reading, and Social Studies teacher. She taught 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade at Silver Palms Elementary before taking some time off to raise her two kids. Her favorite saying is, “Don’t worry, be happy.”

Mr. De Fransisco is a Physical Education teacher and has been teaching for seven years. The last school he taught at was Oak Grove Elementary. He said he enjoys teaching students the importance of exercise.

Ms. Etter is a 6th grade Language Arts, Reading, and

Geography teacher. This is her second year teaching. Last year she taught third grade at Ludlum Elementary. Her motto: “Whatever the weather, always bring your own sunshine.”

Last year, **Ms. Jewell** was a teacher’s assistant at MGA. She now teaches Reading, Language Arts, and Social Studies to 2nd and 3rd grade students. Ms. Jewell graduated from Florida International University and is doing her masters at Nova.

Last year, **Ms. Leoncio** was a Teacher’s Assistant at MGA. She graduated from Saint Thomas University with her Bachelor’s in Education and is now a first year teacher teaching Math and

Science to 2nd and 3rd graders.

Ms. Lesczczyznsky moved here from Boston, Mass. where she taught 5th and 6th grade. She is now teaching 6th grade Reading, Language Arts, and Geography.

Mr. Lima is a 7th and 8th grade teacher. He teaches Space Science and Biology. His favorite saying is, “Never do anything that would not make your mother proud.”

Ms. Morales is a 6th grade Math and Science teacher. She was a teacher’s assistant before coming to our school. She is bi-lingual; she speaks English and Spanish.

Mrs. Ortiz teaches all the
(Continued on page 4)

“Saying that educating children in their primary language will help them learn English seems to defy common sense for many people. But providing education in the first language can greatly help second language development.”

-Stephen Krashen

Bilingual Education Works

Read the full article on

www.rethinkingschools.org



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HOME OF THE
STINGRAYS!

MGA News is a school publication for the purpose of improving home-to-school communication. All the interviews are conducted by students, and the articles are written by students with guidance and editing by Mrs. Forte, the Journalism Club Advisor.

Members: Vanessa Acebal, Fara Alvarado, Ashley Arguelles, Katie Camero, Kamila Fernandez, Manuela Gallego, Emily Lopez, Aislynn Pedrianes, Susan Perez, Kately Rivero, Stephanie Simosa

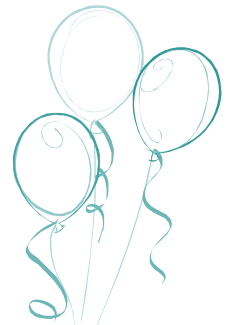
MEET THE NEWEST STINGRAY FACULTY

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subjects to a class of 2nd and 3rd graders. She used to teach in Georgia at a school called Golden Isles. Although she once had dreams of becoming a lawyer, she says enjoys her job

very much and loves to watch struggling students succeed.

Mr. Serrano teaches Spanish to the 7th graders. Although he has been teaching for 14 years, this is his first year teaching in Florida. He moved here from Spain over the summer.



Happy Birthday ...

Akouri	Genesis	9/11/1997	Ladson	Catarina	9/7/2003
Almendro	Magui	9/29/1999	Londono	Gisselle	9/4/1997
Alonso	Yesenia	9/20/2000	Manso	Stephanie	9/14/2000
Alvarez	David	9/3/1998	Marcelo	Chyna	9/1/2001
Arritola	Alfredo	9/19/2001	Martinez	Sebastian	9/25/2000
Batista	Jasmine	9/10/1995	Martinez	Eduardo	9/1/1998
Benitez	Cristian	9/1/2004	Molina	Angelo	9/12/1998
Carnet	Melani	9/8/1998	Noriega	Steve	9/20/1996
Castillo	Alejandro	9/26/1996	Nuevo	Christian	9/23/1997
Chao	Andres	9/23/1998	Nuevo	Elise	9/23/1997
Chao	Adriana	9/25/1996	Perez	Stephanie	9/26/1996
Cicirello	Gabriella	9/17/1995	Prieto	Daniela	9/9/2002
Contreras	Raymond	9/26/1996	Prieto	Davel	9/9/2002
Cordoba	Roger	9/1/2000	Rivera	Alessandro	9/9/2003
Diaz	Branden	9/1/2004	Roberts	James	9/20/1995
Dominguez	Alejandra	9/15/2001	Rodriguez	Arianna	9/3/1998
Flores	Janeen	9/18/2002	Rodriguez	Adrian	9/25/2002
Garcia	Julien	9/11/2003	Ruiz	Gabriel	9/9/2003
Garcia	Elizabeth	9/15/2002	Sanchez	Samuel	9/24/2002
Garcia	Giovanny	9/5/1996	Santamarina	Sergio	9/23/2003
Henriquez	Adrian	9/15/2001	Silva	Karina	9/23/1997
Henriquez	Arianny	9/23/2000	Tejeda	Catalina	9/30/2001
Hernandez	Alejandro	9/26/2000	Torres	Samantha	9/18/2000
Hernandez	Christophe	9/13/1995	Valdivia	Christian	9/18/2002