

TORO TIMES

| The Montera Middle School Newspaper; by the Students, for the Students! |

What is the IB Program?

By Hannah Penson

Has anyone else wondered what the International Baccalaureate program really is? Even though I, Hannah Penson, am somewhat informed, the purpose of the IB program isn't clear to all of the students, therefore I have made it my mission to get a clearer understanding of this new and interesting program. I started my quest by talking to Ms. Black, the IB coordinator, here at Montera.

Ms. Black told me certain things that really changed my view on the IB program. She explained that IB is not just for the academically advanced people, it is for everyone, no matter your academic skill set. "It's interesting because it is absolutely a rigorous program, but it is not just for the advanced kids or for kids that are on an advanced track. It is absolutely inclusive." She explained how everyone in this school is in the IB Program because we are all an International Baccalaureate. Seeing as we all participate in the program, she also explained the IB program is not just here to teach us what we need for now, it is here to teach us what we need for life as it will help us learn to work in groups instead of just as individuals. The IB program will also be able to relate what we are learning now in school to things going on in the real world.

Even with this influx of new information, I still wanted to learn more and get a clearer picture of this program. My next stop was Assistant Principal, Mr. Snow.

Mr. Snow explained how the International Baccalaureate is not a curriculum, it is a way of teaching. "The IB program is not a set way of teaching meaning, it doesn't decide what we teach, it just sort of helps us figure out how exactly we would want to teach". What this means is that teachers can teach what they want, they are just required to teach it in a certain style. The idea is that the IB program is that learning is a more hands-on approach to learning where the students are more involved in the lessons.

Lastly, to understand the benefits of the IB program even more, Principal Avent weighed in on our idea of the IB program. He explained that even though we might come from different backgrounds, we are all united. "It gives students a global view of the world. The idea is that you can take students from different areas and kind of give them a worldview that even though we may look different and speak different languages, it doesn't mean one person is right or wrong," Mr. Avent said. This is very important since Montera is such a diverse community. He also explained that they are trying to put in more arts like photography, drama, etc., but with the limited budget that we currently have, we are not sure when these will be added.

With everything we have just learned about the IB program, we think that we completed our quest of learning more about the IB program, but as they say: there is always more to learn...



What Is Net Neutrality?

What is net neutrality? Net neutrality prevents Internet Service Providers (ISPs) like Comcast, Verizon, AT&T, and other companies from blocking and slowing down websites. In the past, ISPs were required to treat the entire internet equally. Now with the FCC repealing of Net Neutrality, ISPs can now slow down websites they dislike. For example if Comcast thinks that Youtube is hurting profits from their Xfinity service then they could slow down Youtube to a crawl and promote Xfinity as a viable option to Youtube. Same goes for other ISPs, they could slow down cheaper options in favor of their own. It is recommended to call your local representative in Congress if you want Net Neutrality back.

Montera's First Lunchtime Sports Tournament

By Nathan Pompeani and Kylie Jackson

Recently Montera had its first basketball tournament of the year. All grades had a chance to enter the 2v2 tournament but in the end only one team from each grade was declared the victor. The tournament took place over the course of three days. On the Wednesday, the first day, the eight teams of each grade played and 4 teams of each grade remained. After the games of Thursday only 2 teams from each grade remained. On Friday the champions of Montera's first basketball tournament of the year were decided. The winners, Demarco, James, Josh, Mikey, Khalil, and Tristen, received free tickets to the winter dance and a free dance pack. Montera's Wellness group plans to have many more sports tournaments throughout the year and not just basketball tournaments will be held. They plan to expand to things such as volleyball, softball, and kickball. Good game everybody!

What's Happening in Jerusalem?

By Olivia Cowgill and Leah Tannenbaum

Jerusalem is a topic that is all over the front page of news, and is still a very hard subject to talk about. But why is it such an outrage?

Jerusalem (located in Israel) is a very religious city, with holy sites for Christians, Jews, and Muslims. It has a history of a being in a very intense state; after World War II, Britain "gave" the city to Israel (Jews being massively oppressed), but the current residents, Palestinians, did not accept this fully. The state of Jerusalem is constantly in conflict, with Israelis and Palestinians arguing that they should have East Jerusalem, and that Israel has to stop building settlements on what they claim is Palestine land.

So when our president recently declared Jerusalem Israel's capital, being the only world leader to do so (besides Israel of course), forsaking years of careful neutrality, and deciding that he is going to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, there was bound to be some uproar. Trump thinks this is important because he promised it in his campaign, but unlike many of the other things that he promised, this is one that he can carry out. If Trump does move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem there will be even more protesting; this time joined by the Arab States. No country keeps an embassy in Jerusalem, so if we do put the embassy there, the U. S. will be the first. Most believe that the U.S. is siding with Israel in their conflict with the Palestinians, so this might actually be what starts a war, if other countries start sharing their opinions or "choosing sides." Trump claims to be bringing "very fresh thinking" to the Middle East, saying that he has "judged this course of action to be the best course for peace between Israel and Palestinians," but this is just going to distance them further.

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The Winter Concert

By: Lucas Wohl Sanchez and Grace Gulli

On December 7th, the Music program had a winter concert. This included the Advanced Band, Advanced Orchestra, Jazz Band, and the 7/8th Choir. The Jazz Band and Choir only had two songs, the Orchestra had three, and the Band was given four.

The Orchestra and Choir started the first half of the concert. The Orchestra did some pretty cool songs. "Hornpipe" spoke through the heart. The orchestra showed everyone that not all classical are slow and boring, with confusing titles; some pieces can be fun and entertaining to watch. The choir was great, the round, "Jubilate", they did was well put together, and Siyahamba was exquisite. Hopefully next concert they will do more songs.

After the inter mission came the Jazz and Concert Band. The Jazz Band had a couple of soloists, Grace Gulli soloed on "A Night in Tunisia", Silvia Kabouridis soloed on "My Favorite Things", both on Alto Saxophone. Adriana Cluver and Aniyah McCullough were both vocalists on "My Favorite Things". Congrats to those people and to the entire Jazz Band. This group did a spectacular job getting these pieces together. Some of the more memorable songs that the Band played were "Winter on Emerald Bay", a grade level 3.5 piece, and the Game of Thrones theme. What the audience didn't notice was that the band got the piece "Winter on Emerald Bay" a little more than 3 school weeks before the concert. With challenging trumpet melodies, the trumpets really pulled it off along with the rest of the band.

Over all, everyone who performed at this event did an excellent and superior job. A special thanks to Mr. Cech and Mr. Swihart for putting this together, this could not have happened without them. *Good, better, best, never let it rest, until your good is better, and your better is best.*

Letter from the Editors

By Emily Birchmore, Noemi Grascouer, and Catherine O'Brien

Welcome back everyone! Are you all ready for winter break? All of us at the Toro Times sure are! No matter the holiday you celebrate, winter break is an important time of year for all! Go out and visit family and friends, or just take some time off for relaxation. See you all in two weeks and remember to be safe, kind, and responsible!

