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Editorial

Greetings to all Firefly readers! Happy Chinese New year. I hope you all enjoyed your holidays with your family and come back fully charged for the new semester. Have you set any goals to achieve in the year of monkey? If you haven't, you can refer to other people's New Year's resolution and maybe a brilliant idea would come up.

Last year Yanping students had outstanding performance in many English contests – Junior Diplomat contest, Cicero Debate Tournament, Taipei Citywide English Speech Contest, just to name a few. Therefore, we invited students who participated in those events to share their experience with us. Find out how they, despite the heavy load and pressure from school work and exams, strived to devote much time after school painstakingly preparing for the contest and share their joy when their effort finally paid off.

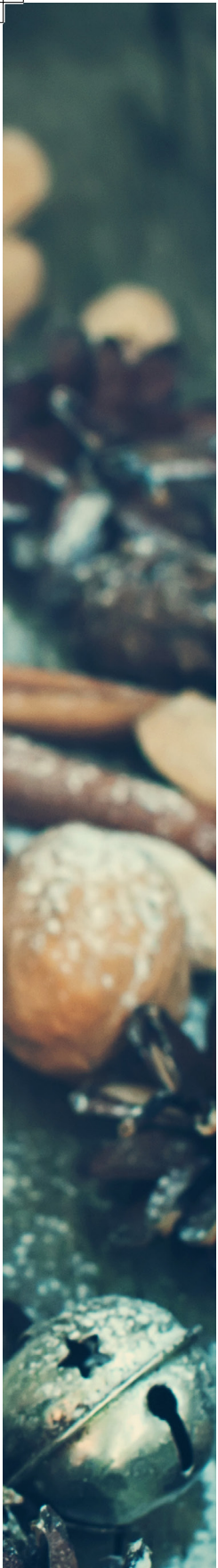
The reason why Yanping students are active in various kinds of activities can be partly attributed to the aptitude program offered to grade nine students who will be directly promoted to senior high in Yanping. The aptitude program includes a series of speeches, field trips, university visits which aim to broaden students' visions and help them explore different possibilities in their future career. Check out the articles on the aptitude program to learn more about it and what the participants – grade nine students – have to say.

In addition to the articles mentioned above, readers can also find in this issue many other topics to fill your leisure time. For example, one student reflected on the 69th school anniversary, another student shared his thoughts on the terrorist attack in Paris. Of course, there are more to read, but I don't want to ruin your joy of reading by saying too much about the content, so you will have to find out the rest of what this issue has to offer by yourselves. Please enjoy!



MY

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION



As New Year's rolls around the corner, people in the U.S. are getting ready for their long time tradition of wishful thinking. They call it the New Year's resolution. It's similar to Chinese New Year in that people wish for better times, health and happiness. However, in the U.S. people make individual resolutions based on what they want to change in their lives. So with this in mind, let's take a look at resolutions people ponder about every year.

My first New Year's resolution is to stay alive. It's a pessimistic thought, I know, but staying alive for another year is a necessity in life. I don't want to come across my own death anytime during the year. That would be the worst thing that can happen to me. Hopefully, I will stay alive for another year, so I can make more resolutions in 2017.

Next, I want to be healthier in 2016. I was often not feeling well last year. For example, I frequently caught a cold or had a runny nose. Therefore, I want to improve my health condition. Exercising on a regular basis may work, but most important of all, I should change my lifestyle. I think having a balanced diet and getting adequate sleep is what I should put on my priority list. By working on these aspects, I can attain good health.

As for my last New Year's resolution, I hope to remain happy. 2015 was a delightful year—I met all kinds of people, discovered the world, and experienced new things. I'm enjoying being an eleventh grader. It is exciting and I feel grateful to be here. As Sydney J. Harris said, "Happiness is a direction, not a place." As you can see, making New Year's resolutions can serve as a way to stay positive. We need to start the year with hope. So go ahead, make your resolutions and enjoy the rest of the year.

By 高二六班 林冠廷





2015 Teen Diplomatic Envoys Contest

The 2015 Teen Diplomatic Envoys preliminary contest was held on October 31st and November 1st at Wuling Senior High School. The contest was divided into two parts: Drama and English-language speeches. It was lucky for us to have the chance to participate in this contest on behalf of the school, so we regarded it as an important event in our life and put a lot of effort into it.

When the competition was around the corner, we got more and more nervous, and we spent a lot more time practicing our speaking and acting skills. Before we knew it, the important day had come. We arrived at the Wuling senior high school in the early morning, and we were looking forward to the contest. The first day was the Drama competition, so we got there in advance in order to prepare our props and put on the costumes. When the competition started, we waited for our turn with anxiety. When we were at the backstage area, we reviewed some important scenes in the play, and got ready for our performance. We stood on the stage, and tried our utmost to show what we had prepared. Luckily, everything went well, including our volume, the scene-changing process, and our facial expression. Before we put on our show, we were worried that some last minute problems may arise. It turned out that everything went alright.

The second day, we went to the same site for the English speech contest. We were all in formal clothing: white blouses, narrow skirts, and leather shoes. The speech contest was more challenging in comparison with the drama competition, because if one of your teammates forgets his or her lines, it would be difficult to continue the speech. Fortunately, the topic we got was our favorite and we had the most creative ideas about it. We delivered the speech smoothly, and we were satisfied with what we presented. This was a nice and special experience. We will keep these amazing memories in our minds forever.



As a Taiwanese proverb goes; “One minute on the stage, ten years of practice off the stage.” Using ten years to describe how long it took us to practice would be an exaggeration. However, it can’t be denied that it took us over ten weeks to prepare for this contest.

Upon hearing the bell ring, all of us carried our lunch, marching to the conference room. We had our lunch and seized every single minute to review and memorize our scripts over and over at the same time. I can still remember how awkward and embarrassing the first practice was. We kept making mistakes like bursting out laughing or failing to express the characters’ emotions. “A total mess” was probably the most suitable description for our situation then.

As we went through countless practices, our tones, gestures, and facial expressions became more and more natural. There’s no shortcut to perfection; the key is to find your weaknesses and correct them. For instance, we should stay focused even after we finished our lines. Dwelling in the scenario was a must-do. We had to remind ourselves that we were the characters that we were playing. If we became absent-minded, our instructor would call our name without hesitation. Another important thing was that we should keep calm as we forgot our lines. This was undoubtedly the toughest part.

Many classmates might consider the activity exhausting. No naptime at noon, and no “TGIF” since we had to stay at school practicing. However, they don’t know that it was funny and jolly when we practiced. Not to mention there were always desserts for us when we were worn out. Practicing can be somewhat annoying at times, but if we want to achieve our goals, we must keep practicing. In the end, we won the award for excellent teamwork. All efforts we put in and the contest paid off.

As for drama, it's our favorite part in the whole contest, but it wasn't always fun and easy for me. At first, we had difficulty coming up with a story that was both inspiring and appealing. Our drama was mainly about two Taiwanese girls who accidentally walked into a poor village.

In the village they discovered how badly the kids desired to read books but couldn't go to the library due to distance and inconvenient transportation. So the two girls decided to launch a book campaign. The idea was to get second-hand books and use bikes to move them around the village. Therefore, we named our drama "Book Ride". In the process of writing the script, we tried our best to utilize our imagination and creativity. We had to create original plots, organize the ideas, and finally transform it into a complete script with fluent lines.

The training process enabled us to practice how to pronounce each word clearly and speak at a moderate speed. When we were performing, the importance of pronouncing each word correctly can't be overemphasized. The goal is to express our message clearly to the audience.

In order to achieve the goal, we spent a lot of time trying to speak in a perfect manner: not too fast and not too slow! Although it took us a lot of time, we wanted to make sure that we could impress everyone when we performed on stage.

On the day of the contest, I felt as though I was a super star catching everyone's eye on stage. Instead of feeling nervous, I felt so excited that I couldn't wait to begin the show. With the great enthusiasm. We stole the show! The other part of the contest was speech. To prepare, we wrote 5 different articles for each possible topic, which means if we were lucky enough to pick the easiest one, we were likely to win.



The coolest part of the speech contest was our method. The article was separated into four parts, the beginning, two examples, and the conclusion. Each person was responsible for one part. Most of our articles discussed the diplomatic ties between Taiwan and other countries, or how to develop a well-rounded global perspective. Although we all had the greatest ideas, the hardest challenge for all of us was to write a flawless composition, with both complete structures and accurate sentences. It took most of our time to finish the articles. After that, we moved to the next stage, practice.

At first, I thought that all I had to do was just read through the lines with precise pronunciation and an exaggerated cadence, but I was wrong. There were still a lot of details I didn't know about speeches. For instance, I had to pay attention to the other speakers and observe their body language. When I stood listening to the speeches I had to control my posture so I won't distract the judges. I learned to control myself on stage.

To us, participating in the Contest is a new challenge. We spent all semester preparing for it. We came up with the drama ourselves, we wrote the articles ourselves. We confronted many difficulties. We shared our tears and laughter. It doesn't matter how good or how bad we acted in the contest. Many years from now, the only thing that will be remembered is that we've accomplished a great task. In conclusion, the most important thing in life is the process rather than results!

By 高一八班 吳宜庭 鄭惠文 楊舒涵 高一九班劉翊淳



As we are growing up, the time we spend getting along with our family is decreasing. We give all our attention to our peers.

Our lives revolve around friends and school. On weekends, we hang out with classmates and neglect our families. Even if we are at home, we focus on smartphones. Some people don't even give a glance toward their family members. How long has it been since you sat down and had a real family discussion?

Family, who pardon you all the time, should be the most important people for you. They stayed awake late at night to care for us, they taught us about life, they changed our diapers, and they did everything for us. Now, we repay them by ignoring them.

After we became teenagers, there is an empty valley developing between us and our parents. It is my belief that most families behave in such manner. However, it should not be excused.

So now, when you go home today, remember to greet your parents as you walk in the door. Acknowledge their existence. Whether you feel ill towards them, they brought you into this world. Hug them, say hi, and do something that will make them feel important in your life.

By 高二七班 劉思琦

A FIELD TRIP TO THE TAIPEI ASTRONOMICAL MUSEUM

On a bright and beautiful sunny day, we took a field trip to the Taipei Astronomical Museum. Everyone chatted excitedly as we waited to enter. We were all looking forward to explore the wonders of astronomy. As we entered the museum we were greeted by our tour guide.

Mr. Zhou, an erudite and friendly person, guided us during the tour. He showed us around the exhibition hall, and taught us about astronomy in a humorous way. First, he talked about stories of the great scientists, astronauts, and the contributions their experiments brought to the human kind. Next, he took us to see the models of the eight planets. We learned about their characters and the efforts the scientists have made for years to get to know more about these fascinating planets.

Waving goodbye to Mr. Zhou, we headed to the highlight of this field trip, the IMAX Theater. The theater had a vaulted ceiling and the seats were very high. It made me feel like floating in the universe and overlooking everything from a high spot while watching the film. It was such an indescribable and amazing experience! The film we watched was about the experiments an astronomer made to observe the stars in the vast universe. Even though people have spent years doing research, the things we see and the knowledge we have, are still just a piece of puzzle to the mystery of the whole universe.

Thanks to the film, I suddenly realized how small we humans are, and how little we know about this world we are living in. There are still more wonders waiting in the outside world for us to discover.

We should never be full of ourselves. I am grateful to those who have contributed themselves to mankind, especially the animals that sacrificed themselves during the experiments. Without them, we would never have made a big progress. So, we should be in awe of the greatness of the universe, and most important of all, to keep a grateful and modest heart wherever we go.

By 國二九班 吳芊穎



Recently, our second grade classes went on a field trip to Taipei's Astronomical Museum. It was the first trip I had taken in Yang Ping. Everyone was excited and we all looked forward to it.

As the day arrived, everything was normal. Our classmates were busy playing with their phones, some were teasing each other. Everyone seemed relaxed and joy filled the class.

On the way to the museum, I enjoyed the view as I listened to music. To most people it was just a normal bus ride, but to me, every place seemed magical. The excitement of missing a day in school was overwhelming.

In a flash, we arrived at the museum. Everyone got off the bus and went inside. As a natural teenager, I got my phone out and took selfies with the aliens and hot air balloon. Everyone was having a great time. After a while, a guide took us to the exhibition hall. He explained about the constellations and how there is a connection between stars, planets and mythology. Even though, we have read about astronomy, it was refreshing to understand it from another person's perspective. It was awesome!


Next, we went to the planetarium to learn about the solar system and galaxies. I'm not a big fan of documentaries and since the room became dark, I decided to take a nap. So I went to the highest place possible and asked my friend to join me. She didn't like high places, therefore, I went alone. After a few moments, a loud voice woke me up and asked me to pay attention. I complied.

After the planetarium, we headed to the park. It was such a relief from sitting that we went wild. We acted like children playing in the playground. The younger kids thought that we were insane. It was exhilarating to run on grass and to play silly catching games.

Going back to school I realized how important it is to have fun learning and to enjoy a trip with your classmates. Learning becomes different when we don't have pressure and we can relax. I learned a lot about the world.

A silhouette of a telescope on a tripod is positioned in the lower-left quadrant of the frame, pointing towards the upper right. The background is a deep blue night sky filled with numerous stars and the prominent, glowing band of the Milky Way galaxy. The text is centered in the upper half of the image.

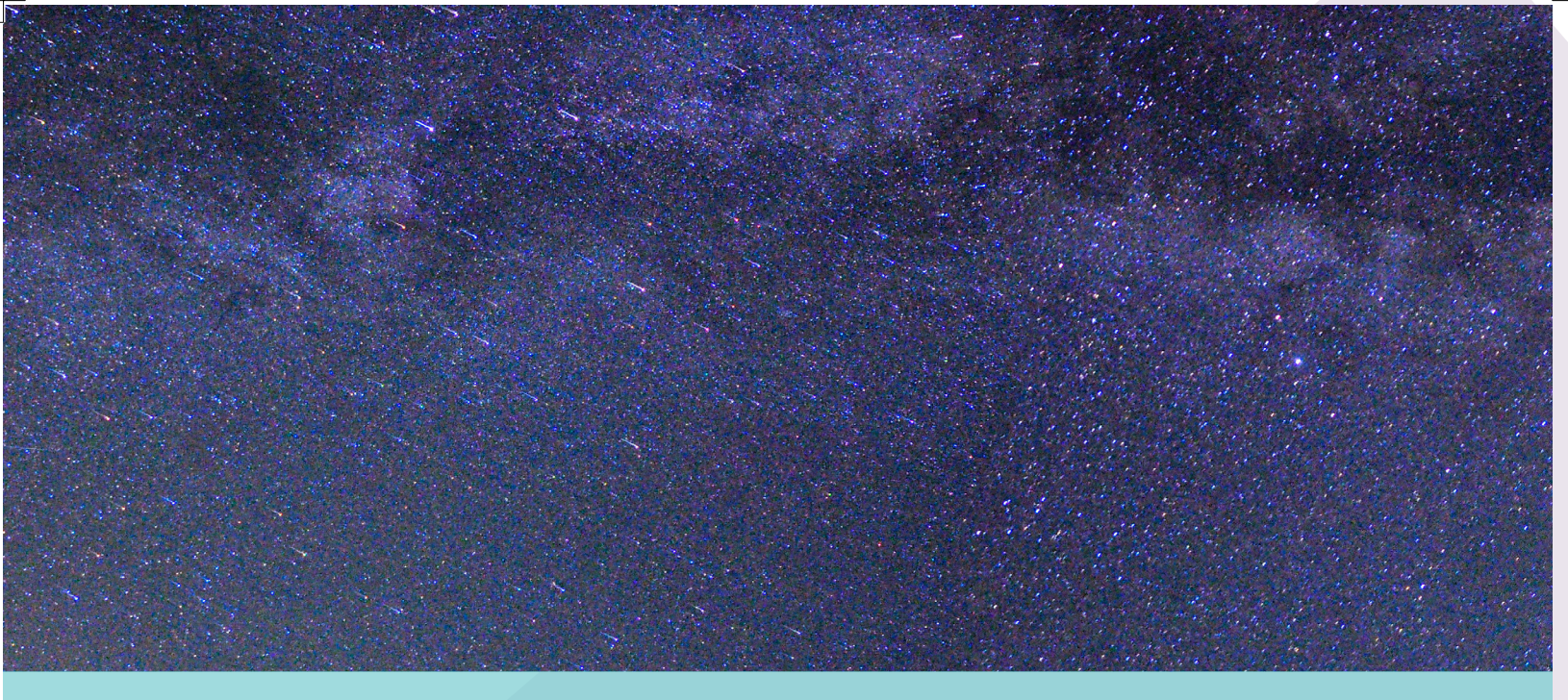
A TRIP TO
THE TAIPEI
ASTRONOMICAL MUSEUM



Sitting on the bus, I was looking out of the window, seeking inspiration to write about for my “daily reflections” for a school assignment. Instead of getting “inspired”, however, I thought of this fabulous and interesting trip to the Taipei Astronomical Museum.

Arriving at the museum, I stepped off the bus and the first thing that caught me was the fresh air. I stretched out my arms and legs that were sore due to the 30-minute drive and then cued into the long line to get into the museum. When I went in, the first thing I saw was a hot air balloon that carried a cartoon alien slowly rising to the ceiling. It was pretty amusing how they used large pieces of shredded paper to decorate the red light, as fire used under hot air balloons. It was an interesting idea to do so. Waiting in the line to get in, I looked to see some adventures. The guide was late, but that didn’t affect my mood. After the guide apologized, we started to check on the exhibitions following his instructions.

The first model we saw was about the rotation and revolution of the earth. The guide explained that rotation was the movement of the Earth spinning by itself while revolution was the Earth circulating around the Sun. And the orbit is the path of the Earth circulating the Sun. Some of my classmates asked why the Earth stayed in the orbit without changing its path. The guide answered that it’s because inertia keeps the Earth following the same path. The model simulates how the Earth circulates the Sun and spins by itself at the same time!



The next model we saw was about the solar and lunar eclipse. The model simply showed us the process of how the two eclipses would happen. But since it looked so real, it vividly showed the movement of astronomical bodies, and it was easy for us to learn about the solar and lunar eclipse.

The third activity was my favorite. We went to a big room with a lot of weight measurements that could show us the weight of our own body on different planets. It was like a new world to me, because I was pretty overweight on Earth. I was astonished by all of the different numbers. So, if someone asks how much I weigh, I'll tell them nine kilograms on the Moon. The best part of the activity was that we got to know other people's weight who would usually never tell us.

After a short break, we headed to the theater inside the museum. This museum's theater is pretty famous for its steepness, which would be very dangerous if we fooled around there. As a result, the class that day was exceptionally quiet, a sharp contrast to our everyday lives at school, where we are constantly screaming and yelling at each other.

When the light of the audience hall went dim, the film started with a magnificent image of the galaxy. The theater was a dome shape, and the screen was gigantic compared with other things in the cinema. The scene was majestic, especially when the stunning aerolites crashed from the back of me with considerable force. The image they made was “mesmerizing and hypnotizing.”

Lastly, we went to a park nearby and ran freely on the grass. I felt the gentle breeze, as well as the sunshine. Lying on the lawn, I pondered about everything I could think of, and was deeply relaxed. By going on an excursion like this, we were able to release all our stress and pressure from our daily lives.

Once I got back on the bus, I couldn't help but fall asleep after such an exhausting but fulfilling visit to the Taipei Astronomical Museum. It indeed made my day.



By 國二八班 陳大麒

THE APTITUDE PROGRAMS
FOR OUR LAST YEAR IN JUNIOR HIGH
TO LOOK FORWARD TO THE FUTURE



What are we looking for? I bet many of us have been thinking of this problem for a couple years. Although we are still children, there is a process happening to us as we mature into young adults. Some of us have lost our dreams in the studying process. While others try to work hard and never give up.

To help us regain our nerve, our school started an activity called, “The Aptitude Programs.” The purpose of the program is for professionals to share their experiences with us. They also teach us about values and self worth, as well as, how to love who you are and enjoy your life. Some of the experts even graduated from Yang Ping. It made me feel proud of our school. During the first two weeks of the program, we went swimming so that we can learn to relax and take care of ourselves. Then we visited Cathay General Hospital.

At the hospital we got to visit different departments and learned about their specialties. The doctors emphasized how important it was to find the right techniques to deal with illnesses and disease. The goal should be to serve the patient’s needs. Doctors gave presentations about their fields and I was inspired by their commitment.

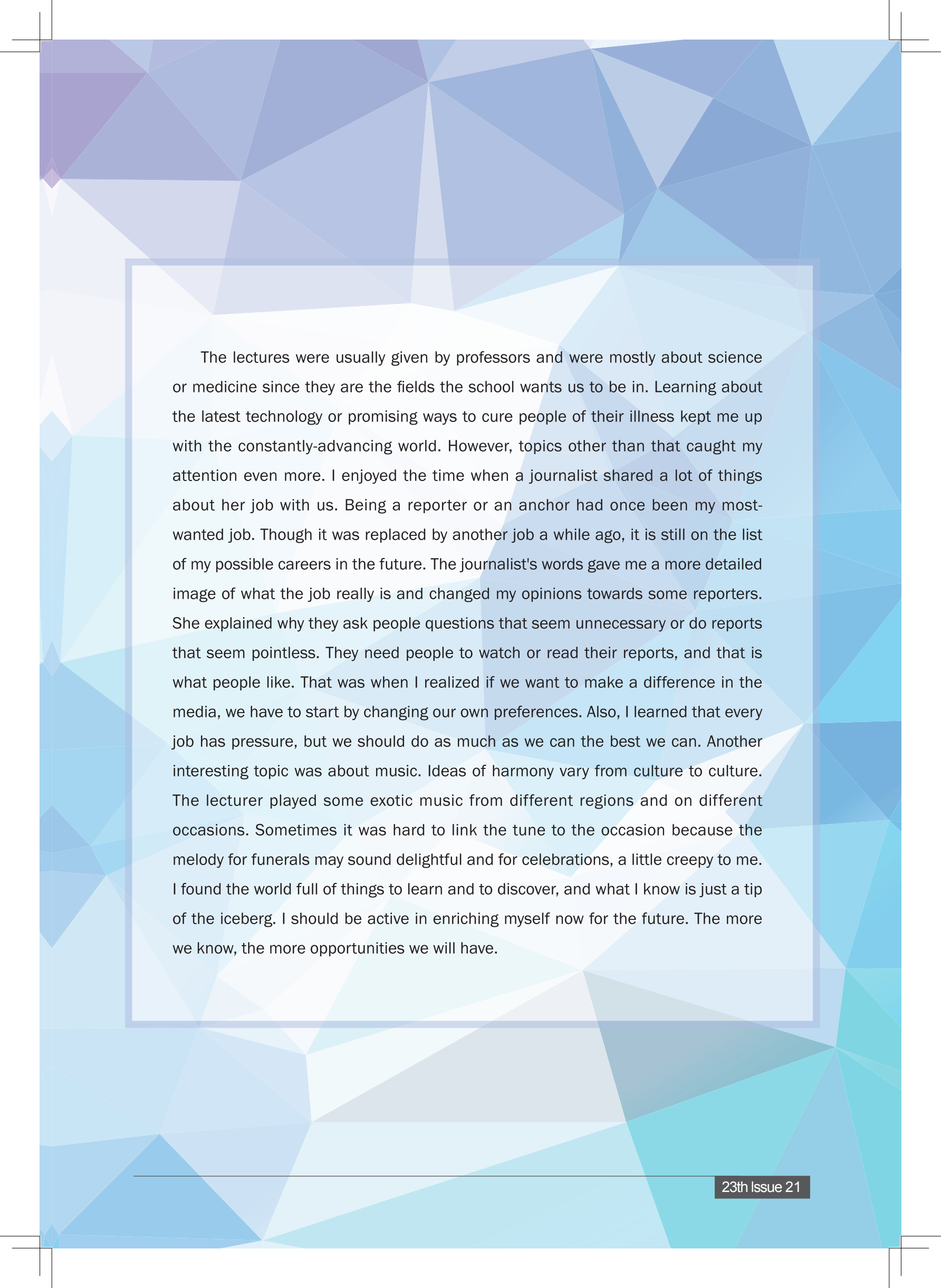
After the hospital visit, we had several other professionals give talks about art, journalism, law, and music. It was an eye opener to hear them express their opinions about their careers. I hope that Yang Ping can continue promoting the program to everyone in school. It is important for students to know that their studies will lead them to better roads in the future. The program is a positive way to inspire students to never give up.

The most inspiring story I remember was told by a musician. Though he was a professor in college, his studying was not perfect. He did what his father said when he choose which college he should go, but he felt unhappy, so he didn’t finish his studies in Taiwan. He decided to go abroad and earn his tuition by himself. I have great esteem for him after he told us the story. “Although your life isn’t going like what you think before, you can still find your way to live.” That’s what I learned. At the end of all this, the experience I got from the Aptitude program will help me in my dreams to become a professional.


By 國三五班 李冠毅

APTITUDE PROGRAMS


In order to give us a better understanding about what different careers are like and enable us to find a suitable occupation in the future, the school arranged a series of lectures as well as a few visits to Yang-Ming University for us. Although I have already had a pretty clear picture of what I would like to do after finishing college, these curriculums, called aptitude programs, still provided me with useful information about all walks of life and let me know the right attitude to have when pursuing my dreams.



The lectures were usually given by professors and were mostly about science or medicine since they are the fields the school wants us to be in. Learning about the latest technology or promising ways to cure people of their illness kept me up with the constantly-advancing world. However, topics other than that caught my attention even more. I enjoyed the time when a journalist shared a lot of things about her job with us. Being a reporter or an anchor had once been my most-wanted job. Though it was replaced by another job a while ago, it is still on the list of my possible careers in the future. The journalist's words gave me a more detailed image of what the job really is and changed my opinions towards some reporters. She explained why they ask people questions that seem unnecessary or do reports that seem pointless. They need people to watch or read their reports, and that is what people like. That was when I realized if we want to make a difference in the media, we have to start by changing our own preferences. Also, I learned that every job has pressure, but we should do as much as we can the best we can. Another interesting topic was about music. Ideas of harmony vary from culture to culture. The lecturer played some exotic music from different regions and on different occasions. Sometimes it was hard to link the tune to the occasion because the melody for funerals may sound delightful and for celebrations, a little creepy to me. I found the world full of things to learn and to discover, and what I know is just a tip of the iceberg. I should be active in enriching myself now for the future. The more we know, the more opportunities we will have.



Trips to Yang-Ming University were short getaways from the stress at school. We visited four departments, all related to medicine. I liked the visit to the Physical Therapy and Assistive technology Department most. We had the chance to try TRX, training equipment that is used by the US Navy SEALs and is a craze all over the world. I was amazed to find that it can be used not only for fitness but also for rehabilitation. I did not volunteer to do the movements, but I was sure that they can strengthen our muscles in a period of time. I think that is why they adopted TRX for physical therapy. I also enjoyed learning about athletic taping, the process of applying tapes to the skin so as to maintain the position of bones and muscles. I have seen a lot of athletes do this, but not until I took the lesson did I really know what it is for. The tape cannot be applied anywhere you like; where and even how you do that all affect the function. I also learned that taping only provides temporary injury prevention and management, but it is still very helpful to those who exercise on regular basis. During the visits, we did not learn from textbooks but from seeing and doing. It was a great experience.



After all the lectures, we had to finish some written reports at school. It was a good way to review what we had learned and to really think about how the lecturers' words could serve as our lessons for life and help us reach our goals. Furthermore, at the end of the semester, we were divided into groups to give a presentation about anything we had learned in the programs. Our group decided to talk about the knowledge we acquired from the four departments we visited at Yang-Ming University. There was a group focusing on physical therapy as well as one talking about music. Everyone seemed to enjoy the other groups' presentations. By sharing what we found, through further research, students speaking and listening alike all benefited from it.

The programs were a new way of learning for me. Every Friday afternoon, I could see things more than just studies. I am sure the wisdom I have gained from the lecturers will be of great use as I follow my dreams.


By 國三七班 張詠媗



Yan Ping's 69th School Anniversary

In November, there was a special event, divided into two days at Yan-Ping High School. Athletes took part in various competitions, hoping to win glory for themselves and for their homeroom classes. Students worked together presenting numerous performances, ranging from singing, dancing, band-acting and so on. Furthermore, classes set up booths in order to sell food, drinks, and games. The atmosphere of happiness and joy saturated the campus. Guess what it was? It was our school's 69th anniversary! All the members of the school enjoyed this annual event and had a lot of fun, excitement, and relaxation from it.


As the school anniversary was drawing closer, everyone was in higher and higher spirits. At the beginning of day one, the whole school carried a pleasant vibe. On the day, the sun shone with soft golden hues, reflecting the students' joyful mood. All the students found a way to temporarily relieve their stress from studies and welcomed the coming of the school anniversary with open arms. The ceremony began in style, with a series of performances, such as rope jumping, and creative shows by the 11th graders and gymnastic displays by the 7th graders. Each of the shows brought happiness and laughter. After the shows came the sports activities. Students from each class put forth their strongest efforts to win the championships. The Fun Competition was the most hilarious. Every time the competitor from each class dashed



to the finish line, the whole audience roared, screamed with laughter, and went into ecstasy. All of the competitions were so marvelous that it drew the attention of almost all of the students and teachers.

The next day was the school fair. All of the students were enthusiastic and busy. They had been racking their brains to decorate the outward appearance of the booths in order to attract the largest numbers of buyers. You could see students suddenly becoming consummate chefs, shop managers, and salesmen, promoting their goods in order to make their profits as great as possible. Roaming through the booths, you could see a variety of foods. You name it, you found it. The foods were so delicious and dainty that they stimulated everyone's appetite. Some people were sampling the noodles; some were devouring the barbecues; some were eating ice cream; while others, were simply enjoying the drinks. All of the students were satisfied with the school fair. At the same time, there were also many club performances on stage. Talented students sang, danced, or performed with musical instruments to exert themselves to the utmost and made the whole audience surprised and satisfied. Everyone felt exhilarated in such a joyful and pleasant mood.

During this year's two-day school anniversary celebration, students at Yan-Ping, not only got pleasure from it, but also learned the importance of team work. There is a proverb that goes, "Unity is strength". I think we all had a wonderful time, learned a lot, and have an unforgettable memory from this annual activity!



By 高二六班 溫品蓁

ISIS STRIKES PARIS

On November 13th, several gunshots and explosions were heard simultaneously across the French Capital of Paris. These sounds were quickly followed by sirens, screams, and cries for help from the wounded. The City of Lights was plunged into complete darkness and chaos, as this terrorist attack struck. Just as everyone was wondering who was behind this bloody massacre, it gradually became clear that it was none other than the notorious Islamic extremist group, known as ISIS.

Of all the sites that were attacked, the mass shooting at the Bataclan Theatre was the most brutal. A crowd of around 1000 innocent people gathered to watch the American rock band, Eagles of Death Metal, perform onstage. Suddenly the door flew open and 3 armed gunmen, wearing suicide belts, crashed into the concert and started shooting randomly at the crowd and taking many of the frantically fleeing people hostage. Everyone scrambled to escape or to hide in the restrooms, but still, 90 people ultimately died at the hands of the merciless jihadis. Survivors described the scene as “Hell” from Dante’s Divina Commedia. Police that stormed in after the attacks recalled stepping in “water” that was centimeters high, only to find that it was blood.

After the attacks, the entire country of France was plunged into a state of emergency. Curfews were set up, for the first time since WWII, and tourism revenues dropped by 60%. However, while the Eiffle Tower was dimmed, landmarks around the world lit up in the tricolors of France for them. People all over the world were changing their profile pictures or leaving “Pray4Paris” as their signatures; everyone was showing their remorse and empathy in their own way through social media.

Although some people blame Muslims, as a whole, for the attack, it is worthy to know that extremist Muslims only account for a slim percentage of them, and we should not wrongfully accuse the majority. ISIS feeds on our hatred towards Islam, because it’s our hostility that drives many kind-hearted Muslims to turn to the so-called “protection” of ISIS. It is essential to learn the fact that Muslims should not be judged simply by their religion or ethnics. These stereotypes, which many bear, are ISIS’s greatest weapon.

By 高二六班 陳柏任



My Precious One



Every single person will make a variety of friends in their adolescent years. Thankfully, so have I. I've got to know many friends during my time at school. Some of them are good at sports, some of them are good at studies, and the others are well worth chatting with. However, the most precious friend I got to know was —Tippi ; the girl who is always willing to play sports with you, study with you, and talk to you anytime you want.

The first time I met her, I regarded her as a 'Wallflower'. She was not overly pretty, and neither did she have an overly enchanting figure. Also, she wasn't a genius, nor was she extremely quick-witted. She was just a classmate of mine. It had never crossed my mind that we would become such close friends in the coming future. It was not until grade ten, when we had a chance to really get to know each other.

Something bad happened during my grade ten year. I had few friends and I was being mocked by others frequently. I thought that Tippi would deny my friendship too, but the reality was the complete opposite. She embraced me with friendliness. Every time I cried, she passed me tissues and told me everything would be fine. When I was in a bad mood, she reminded me not to lose my temper. With her company, I felt so peaceful.

Gradually, I got to know her better. Not only was she a pure girl, but her optimistic attitude had a positive influence on me. In time, I learned to let go of all the bad memories and just enjoy being friends with her. Her radiant smile has healing powers, which can blossom the flowers in one's deep heart. HAPPY is the only feeling you get when you are alone with her.

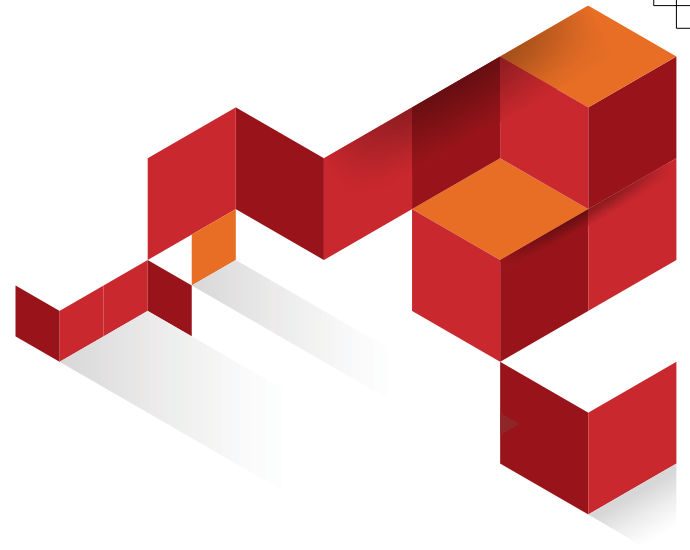
Sometimes, however, she puts herself in complicated situations or in danger. What's worse, she doesn't even notice that she's in trouble. So, I think the best way to repay her is to protect her. I make it my own responsibility to keep her safe because she's my precious one.

By 高二七班 吳英瑄



Cicero
Debate
Tournament





On 12/19 2015, the air was filled with anxiety and excitement. Approximately a hundred talented elite students from around Taiwan met at a famous private bilingual school near the mountains—Wego (薇 閣) high school. The only reason for this gathering was for the Cicero Debate Tournament.

Debate is a long-existing art with the purpose of discussing a policy or differentiating certain ideas. In the past, people considered debating a way to try to get a glimpse of the real truth. But in modern times, debating is more commonly used as competition in or among schools to help students foster the skills of researching, public speaking, critical thinking, and so on. This year, the resolution is “Resolved: That the Taiwanese government should abolish the death penalty.” Whether or not to abolish the death penalty is a commonly debated topic, but apparently no consensus could ever be reached on this topic.

How does the policy debate work? First, when debaters give constructive speeches, it is the best time to present a team’s strongest arguments. A debater can speak for 4 minutes straight during this section. Next, the cross-examination section is for the other side to ask short but direct questions, trying to make the debater trip himself or say things that contradict their original thoughts. It is advisable that the questioner be as fierce as possible, while the debater from the side which is being examined should do their utmost to stay calm and confident. The total time of this section is 2 minutes each. Last, the debaters have the final chance to reinforce their arguments and make an impression on the judges by giving the rebuttal speech. The goal is to leave the audience, and most importantly, the judges with the belief that your resolution is not only the best answer, but the only answer.

It was a great pleasure for me to represent Yan Ping and go to the 2015 Cicero debate tournament. Along with Vivian, Tony, Aiden, and my dearest teacher Natalie, we as a team prepared for this event for more than 2 months. In the first few weeks, we learned the science of persuasion and basic public speaking skills through online materials. We also practiced conveying our personal thoughts through delivering speeches on a topic we were passionate about. Later, after we all agreed on our main arguments, we selected our positions and separated into the affirmative and the negative side. I was the Second Negative, who was mainly responsible for making our points solid as well as pointing out the hidden problems in the affirmative team's speech. I found it rather difficult at first because I wasn't really good at listening to people speak, all while coming up with words to refute them at the same time. However, after numerous discussions with my teammates and my other friends from the debate club, I gradually understood what a person is trying to target when he says certain words or phrases. As a result, the reaction time for certain sentences or quotes became shorter for me, consequently providing me more time to focus on other more puzzling questions that our team had not predicted beforehand. Later on, we started working on our first constructive speeches





and the outlines of our second constructive speeches. With those in hand, we were able to feel more confident when we were on the podium because we had everything laid out in our minds. In the last few weeks before the tournament, we held a mock debate with our Yan Ping team. This especially helped us practice thinking on the spot and respond properly. We also found out some short comings and some improper habits in ourselves, so we were able to fix them before the tournament. For example, Teacher Natalie pointed out that my cross-examination questions were too long and were not to the point, and that I used too many hand gestures during my speech. Finally, on the big day, everything went so quickly. Our team won the first round, but to our disappointment, we lost the second one to Taipei First Girls High School. Although I got awarded the Honorable Mention, I still realized that “there will always be someone who can run faster and jump higher than you do.” Moreover, I got the idea that no matter what you do, you can never be fully prepared because unexpected things always happen. However, this doesn't mean that we should be discouraged. Instead, what we are ought to do is read and research as much as possible beforehand and then try our best when difficulty is in our way!

By 高二八班 杜晴雯

THE SECOND NIGHT



Guitars and drumbeats sounded and vibrated; excited yells and waving glow sticks appeared here and there. The crowded theater was filled with a crazy atmosphere, which may have been a somewhat fresh scene for Yan Ping students. It was a concert, called The Second Night, held by the Yan Ping Student Association on Friday, December 18, at Y17.

As many Yan Ping students and teachers know, the Firefly Concert, held every year in the spring semester is performed by the Yan Ping Orchestra and the Yan Ping Chorus. The Second Night, however, provided some music clubs and bands with a stage to realize their dreams of playing and singing their favorite songs or dancing their favorite steps and moves in front of an audience. Clubs such as the Yan Ping Pop Music Club, The Yan Ping Hot Music Club, the Yan Ping Guitar Club and so forth used all their skills to impress the audience. A band called “The Attic”, whose members consisted of past Yan Ping graduates, brought us a really mature, skilled performance; some clubs from other schools like the Fuxing Acapella Club and the Jingmei Sign Language Club also knocked our socks off.

Another thing quite worth mentioning is that the Student Association invited an entertainer, McFly, to be our host of the party. During the whole concert, he used his personal charm and skills of making fun and mimicking to attract the audience’s attention. By continuously interacting with the audience and performers, he successfully made the atmosphere very lively throughout the night.

There’s no doubt that the concert was a great success. Partly because of the well-chosen date and partly because of the hard work and advertising made by the Student Association. There were many students participating in the concert and enjoying it a lot. What’s more, every club that was in charge of a performance practiced very diligently. All these factors contributed to a great night. Thanks to the Student Association and all their planning and preparing, we had such a great and unforgettable experience!

By 高二六班 馬揚異