

The Informant

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Letter from the President

By: Aubrey Hudson, President

I hope everyone enjoyed their well earned summer. Nationals was a huge success and I hope Manatee County does just as well in Nashville, Tennessee! As we start up the new TSA season, we are all feeling the pressure due to the date change of both district and state. Although this may seem like an impossible time frame in which to get your projects done, I want to encourage you to think of this as a new way to make your projects that much better. Always remember that some of the toughest competitors you will ever face at the state and national level will be in the same room when you sit in the auditorium awaiting the beginning of the opening ceremony at the district competition. If you are at the top in Manatee County, you are on the road to succeed at every other level of TSA conferences.

As we all know, so many of us finish our competitions at the very last minute, but try and push yourself to get them done early. Past experience says you will have better results than others who put a project together at the very last minute. We never want to forget that our main goal at the district competition is obviously to compete without losing sight of what is truly important: a growing experience. At the district level, getting in the top ten can be just as valuable as placing. It simply makes you want you to strive even more for the gold at the next level. Silly as it may sound; TSA is only a small part of our larger life equations, yet it has made many of us who we are today. Ten years from now your employers will not be scrutinizing what TSA wins you received, but the lessons learned will stay with you forever. We all must remember not to let our competitive spirit burn bridges to our friendships and allies, for you may need them later in life. I wish you all the best of luck at the district competition, and as always, GO MANATEE COUNTY!



I am so proud to be serving as your 2011 Manatee County District President. TSA has been a life-changing organization for me. Through my involvement, I have learned leadership skills, how to have a competitive edge, sportsmanship, and made lasting friendships. In my spare time, (yeah, right!) I enjoy shooting video, going to the movies and am always up for good adventure. In addition to TSA, I am involved in National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, and I teach video production to kids. My favorite color is red, and I am a huge animal lover. I look forward to seeing everyone at the District Competition!



I am an IB student at Southeast High School, there I participate in the baseball, TSA, and the SETV programs. I take pride in being a member of each of these activities and believe that joining extra-curricular programs is the first step to becoming an "all around student," especially one who can take on any situation and come out on top. One aspect of myself which I regard as a gift and a curse is my competitive nature, which comes out in virtually everything I set out to accomplish. However, I also believe that through my experiences in TSA, I have become a successful teammate and leader, which are skills that I use daily in school and in extracurriculars.

Chapter Team Tips

By: Sean Martin, Vice President

TSA offers a wide variety of technically challenging events which invoke a good work ethic and enhanced sense of time management. None of the TSA events, however, combine preparation, resourcefulness, or problem solving skills the way Chapter Team is able to do so. No matter how your school's team runs, I will give you some suggestions which will vault your team to the top of the National rankings. If you, as a team (and that is most important), are willing to put in the necessary amount of work to be champions, these are tips which you will find acutely valuable.

Memory Techniques:

One challenging aspect of the Chapter Team, aside from affecting many teams' scores, also affects many schools' overall point sum is the test portion of the event. The key to success in this area of the competition is memorization and repetition. Customarily the head of the team or team manager is in charge of creating a study guide or a system the team will follow to get the necessary information, but it is up to your team to decide who takes on this responsibility.

When you are teaching parliamentary procedure to your team, you should make sure to use the Robert's Rules of Order 10th Edition. Sometimes it can be difficult to find information in RRO, but by using the book to find all of your information it will create memorization in and of itself. When going to teach your team parliamentary procedure it is important that you get your team to learn the material by using a combination of studying, quizzing, and application in your team's practice meetings. By creating practice meetings it will create a deeper understanding of the material and will create a stronger, more cohesive team.

Time Management:

I am aware that each student on the team will be competing in more than just the Chapter Team event. This makes it extremely important to create a routine for your team to follow that will encourage them to plan how to spend their time on other events. However, you have to remember that the amount of time you put into studying for Chapter Team varies directly with the success of your team. In order to be a champion you have to make sure that your team members are the ones who put in the most time preparing for this event. How a team manages their time is very personal, and I recommend your team takes time and effort in making this important decision.



Hello Manatee County TSA! My name is Ian MacDonald and I'm proud to be serving as your Treasurer. This is my third year in TSA at W.D. Sugg Middle School. I'm an active member in my school's NJHS chapter and Student Council. I'm also involved in the Boy Scouts of America and the Order of the Arrow. I play soccer for The Clearwater Chargers U-14 and U-15c teams. My favorite events are Structural Engineering, Construction Challenge, Problem Solving, and Transportation System. When I'm not camping, playing soccer or hanging out with my friend you can find me working on a TSA project or watching something on USA Network (90% of the shows I watch are on that channel).

Stress Management:

During the test portion of the event it isn't unnatural to have built up stress and to forget your studied material. This makes it extremely important that you combat the stress by knowing the material in a way that will make you comfortable. It is imperative that you stay loose within the test room if you are attempting to earn a high score. You are allowed to take off your coat and tie once you have entered the testing environment and I recommend you do so. If you begin to feel parched there is also water inside the room with you, so you are free to stand up and get a drink. When you are taking the assessment you can never take it too seriously.

New Middle School Guide

By: Ian MacDonald, Treasurer

I'm sure that all of you are aware that every year the Middle School or High School Event Guide will change. This year it is Middle School's turn to get new events. This year ROBOT TOBOR and TSA Cup: Marine Design are no longer events at TSA conferences. Though there is an event where you build a boat this year, it is much different from before; Transportation Systems is the new boat event and is not powered by a motor but with rubber bands! If you go to a National Conference you find that pin trading is very big. So this year they made an event where you design a pin to help support your state at the National Conference. This new event took over the place of Graphic Design and is now called Promotional Design. Other events that changed names but still have the same basic concept are Zap It: Electrical Applications now is just called Electrical Applications, WRITE NOW: Technical Writing which is now called Essays on Technology, Technical Drawing now referred to as Technical Design, and Agriculture and Biotechnology Issues is now Agriculture and Biotechnology Design.

The events that are totally different this year are: Engineering Structure and Transportation Challenge. Engineering Structure (which is now Structural Engineering) used to be a bridge, but now it resembles a sideways tower because it is only 2 inches tall by 1 ½ inches wide. The event that was called Transportation Challenge is now Transportation Systems; this used to be a hovercraft, however, they changed it this year to a boat that stresses the importance of the design process before the construction of the boat.



I'm Mario Palmer your 2011 district Reporter. This is my fourth year in TSA and I am currently a Sophomore at Braden River High School. I love designing websites, playing baseball and Xbox. I usually compete in the Web Design, Chapter Team and Engineering Design challenges. TSA is something I enjoy greatly and spend a majority of my life working on my competition.

The only new event this year is Community Service Video. This event is all about how your chapter has helped the American Cancer Society in the form of a video. You can find all this information in the "Middle School Event Guide" also known as the CRG (Competitive Rules Guide). I hope to see you all at the District Competition and good luck this year Middle School Students!

New Date for Districts/ Holiday Party

By: Mario Palmer, Reporter

As you all have probably heard there is a new date set for the 2011 district competition. Usually the competition is held in February, but this year it will be on December 3rd. The reason for the competition being so early is that the Florida TSA State Conference is being pushed forward to February instead of April (like it usually is) this is due to the FCAT. There are to be no traveling during FCAT time, which caused Florida TSA to move their competition. This year the district competition will be held at Haile Middle School, this is also a change because it is usually held at high school and we would have more space; therefore there may also be some changes for how the district competition is ran.

On top of the district competition going on we will also be holding the 2nd annual Manatee TSA Holiday Party. This means that we will have even more people on this small campus, we will be sending out a list soon of what we are going to need from each chapter to help with the holiday party. Thank you can't wait to see you all at districts!!

Dress Code Policy

By: Greg Raynor, Sargent At arms

Hello Manatee County TSA, I would like to address the new formal attire change that has been made by the National TSA Board of Directors. The national TSA board of directors has decided to change the formal attire to gray slacks and a long sleeve blue shirt with the TSA emblem embroidered onto it (that you must purchase from National TSA at a price of \$30 per shirt). National TSA will start mandating this dress code starting in 2014. However, Florida TSA is choosing not to adopt this change and instead we will be sticking to the traditional formal attire of gray slacks, a white dress shirt, a blue blazer (with TSA patch), black shoes, and the red TSA tie.



Manatee County
TSA, it is my
honor to be
serving as your
Sergeant at
Arms. I am a
senior in high
school, but I am
finishing my
last year dual
enrolled at SCF.
My favorite
thing to do when
I get free time
is to read. My
main events are
Digital Video
Production and
Construction
Renovation. If
you have any
questions about
TSA or me don't
hesitate to come
up to me at the
district
competition or
anywhere else to
ask. Let's have
another great
districts, see
you there!

Also, girls are allowed to substitute the gray slacks with a gray skirt. However, this skirt needs to be at least fingertip length. Also, remember that all shoes should be close toed (especially if you have a speaking competition). At this district competition, (unless you are participating in a competitive event that has an interview or presentation) you may wear your gray slacks and the Manatee County TSA shirt that will be given to your chapter advisors before the competition.

If you are in need of a blue blazer I do not recommend that you go and buy one from a department store for hundreds of dollars. Buy a cheaper blazer from goodwill for less than \$10 and have it dry cleaned. This will save you money, as you will probably grow out of your blazer within two years of purchasing it.