



# Spirit Week Fosters Connection and Creativity

**Dallas Chan, Junior**

Hong Kong Adventist Academy's Spirit Week was a memorable week organized by the SA that brought students together through creativity, school pride, and fun. Each day had a unique theme that encouraged everyone to participate and express themselves, making the atmosphere more energetic than ever.

Spirit Week began on Monday with Pajamas Day, allowing students to come to school dressed in their most comfortable sleepwear. The relaxed outfits created a cozy and cheerful environment, helping students start the week feeling comfortable and excited. Some students even came in with matching pajamas or animal onesies!

On Tuesday, Twins Day challenged students to find a partner and dress alike. Seeing matching pairs around campus added humor and highlighted the strong friendships within the school community.



Kelly Ho, Breanna, Kelly Yip, and Audrey on Pajama Day

Wednesday's theme, "Dress as Whatever Your Name Starts With," was one of the most creative days of the week. Students dressed up as objects, characters, or ideas that began with the same letter as their name. This theme encouraged imagination and individuality, and it was exciting to see how differently everyone interpreted their initial! Thursday was Pink Day (my personal favourite of course),

where students and staff wore pink to show school spirit and unity. The campus was filled with various shades of pink, creating a vibrant and positive atmosphere that brought everyone together visually.

Spirit Week concluded on Friday with Mathletes Day. Students dressed like mathematicians or wore outfits inspired by numbers, equations, and math-related themes. This day celebrated academics and math in a fun and engaging way, reminding everyone that learning can be enjoyable or even as some would say "trendy".

Overall, Spirit Week at Hong Kong Adventist Academy was a successful and enjoyable event. It strengthened school spirit, encouraged creativity, and allowed students to bond with one another. The week created lasting memories and showed how unity and participation can make school life more meaningful and enjoyable!

## The Engine Broke, But We Didn't: Zach's Vietnam Sailing Trip

**Brogan Archer, Senior**

***From November 6 to 14, one of our 12th graders, Zachariah Hmaidat, joined four other sailors on an offshore delivery from Vietnam to Hong Kong. For him, it was the first step toward a lifelong dream of sailing around the world, but the week at sea became something else entirely, turning into a lesson in the power of human connection and conversation.***

This idea of this trip first formed when a fellow sailor invited Zach. "I decided to take him up on his offer, since sailing is one of my favorite hobbies," said Zach. "I also want to become a pilot," he added, "so I knew this trip would help with my experience."

Once they were out on sea, life fell into a surreal, timeless rhythm. "We weren't awake for more than 4 hours at a time," Zach said. With no phone service, the five sailors were completely cut off from the outside world. Still, they were able to find fun and conversation in each other's company. They listened to podcasts, exchanged stories, and made food together. And although their view was mostly of the ocean, the five of them were able to find contentment on their boat and in their bond.

However, things took a turn for the worse when an unknown oil leak caused the engine to break down. Yet, what might have seemed like the worst moment of the trip quickly turned into one of the best and

most memorable ones. The laughs they shared and the jokes they made after facing this obstacle became a key highlight for Zach, as it led him to realize the strength of their group's relationship forged in such an isolated and challenging space.

In Zach's mind, the ideal sailing trip didn't have any wind or a broken engine. Nevertheless, this was a more valuable experience than any smooth sailing.



Zach's view on the boat

## Gratitude for my Grandma

***Fiction***

**Jocelyn Tong, Junior**

You were about my age  
When you married a man much older  
and became a mother  
I can't help but wonder how you felt  
saying your vows at the altar  
Were you jittery like me  
When I speak in front of new classmates?  
When you cooked for my mother  
Were you careful to avoid  
hot oil splashing onto your soft skin  
Like I am wary of foreign chemicals  
During experiments in science class?  
And finally, I want to say  
Thank you for all the sacrifices  
that you made  
So I can only wonder  
About all these things.



Illustration by Nicole Chan





## College Advice Column

**Kelly Yip, Sophomore**

When it comes to choosing a college, it can be easy to solely focus on ones that are popular or highly ranked. This can lead to students missing important details that are significant to their happiness and success. So, what are some underrated factors that students should research while considering colleges?

First, have a look at the college's career services and alumni network. Think of college as a decision for the next forty years of your life, not just four. A good career center will help you find suitable jobs for many years after graduating. Students should ask themselves, where do graduates from this school end up working? This network can be the biggest help in finding a career you enjoy.

Second, look into their student support services. College can be tough, and finding out what kind of help is available when you're stressed or struggling is important. Are tutoring, academic advice, or mental health counseling available at the college? A school that meets all those factors is more likely to have more students succeeding.



Third, dig into the campus culture and "fit." This refers to the vibe you get when you look at this college. Is it super competitive or more about collaboration? Is it located in a big city or is it a small town built around the campus? This factor ultimately depends on the student's personal preferences. If a student selects a college that doesn't match their personality, regardless of how high the school ranks, the student might be unhappy for the four years they study there.

Finally, research the professor's access and research possibilities. At larger universities, you might be taught by assistants, not the main professor. It is important to ask these two questions: "Will I ever be taught by a full professor?" and "Are there research opportunities for undergraduates?" Having a professor as a mentor can make a huge difference in a student's education.

In short, the best colleges are not always the most popular ones. They are the ones where you feel supported, comfortable, and able to grow. Do your research on these things and you'll definitely find a college where you belong.

## Joy in Chaos



Illustration by Nicole Chan

**Sekela Mwamakamba, Senior**

One of my favourite songs, "Firm Foundation (He Won't)", features a relevant lyric: "I've still got joy in chaos".

November is a month marked by gratitude and thankfulness, and thankfully so, because we don't take much time to be grateful on the regular. This month, however, we were struck by a great tragedy that makes being grateful a little more difficult than it already is. How are we supposed to be joyful in chaos? How are we supposed to be grateful when so many people around us have lost members of their families? I don't imagine any one of us would walk in the streets screaming with joy because we have a roof over our heads. How can we remain grateful while recognising the chaos and tragedy around us?

First things first: there are so many things to be grateful for. Pause for a minute to just contemplate, and you'll find out just how many things you can be thankful for. Perhaps it's because of the "rush" of life: wake up late, get to school

kinda on time, study, eat, go home, sleep. This cycle leaves us no time to pause and reflect on the good things, like the fact that we can go to school or the fact that we woke up in the first place. So let's all take time to pause, not just during Thanksgiving but every single day.

Following the establishment of an ever-thankful heart comes the difficult task of being "ever-thankful" amid chaos.

***"Gratitude, though, isn't about ignoring our struggles; instead, it's about recognising the good that exists with our struggles."***

Easier said than done, sure, but this allows us to see beyond the struggle and recognise the support, lessons, and opportunities we may not have noticed.

And perhaps once you realise just how blessed and thankful you are, you'll want to bless somebody else. Then you'll find yourself in a state of being joyful in chaos and having "peace that makes no sense."

## A Mystery Unraveled: Ms Whitley's Favourite Author

**Jocelyn Tong, Junior**

The undisputed Queen of Crime, Agatha Christie, has a special place in Ms. Whitley's library. Her love for Christie began with the iconic *Murder on the Orient Express*.

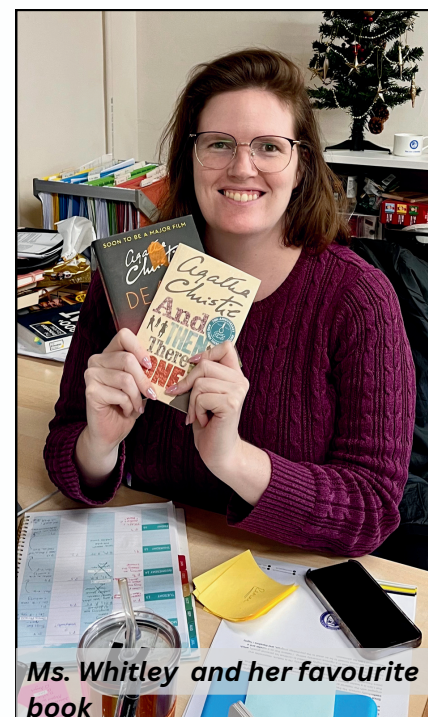
"I was genuinely shocked by that plot twist," Ms. Whitley recalls. "A rare experience for me. I immediately craved more." That electrifying moment cemented Christie as her favourite author.

Beyond Christie's global fame, her work resonates personally. Ms. Whitley cherishes the unique, entertaining detectives like Poirot and Marple, finding comfort in the cozy, intricate worlds they inhabit. She also admires Christie's meticulous plotting, where every detail is crucial yet subtly placed. "She lays everything out so strategically," Ms. Whitley notes.

Ms. Whitley's love for a good murder mystery extends into her classroom. When teaching works with twists, she buzzes with excitement to witness her students' shock. She encourages them to make predictions and pay close attention to details—skills she hones through Christie's novels.

If she could sit down with Christie, she'd ask: "How did you come up with so many unique, compelling mysteries?" With two iconic detectives and a vast library, Christie's prolific creativity continues to astound her. For newcomers, Ms. Whitley's essential Christie starter pack begins with *Murder on the Orient Express*, followed by *And Then There Were None*, and then *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*.

Calling all literary detectives—Ms. Whitley has given you your first clue on where to start your next investigation.



Ms. Whitley and her favourite book

***This article explores Agatha Christie's works from an educational perspective, focusing on storytelling, critical thinking, and moral consequences rather than glorifying crime. It is included for academic discussion and literary appreciation in alignment with Christian values.***



## Volleyball & Football Score Wins in Macau Sports Tournament

**Chelsea Yau, Freshman**

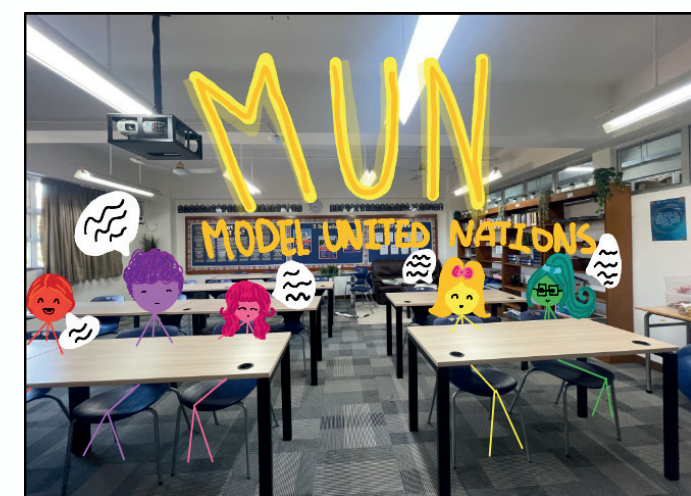
On November 28th, HKAA's volleyball and soccer teams visited Macau Sam Yuk Middle School for a friendly annual match. Both teams had prepared diligently to do their best in this tournament. HKAA travelled to Macau early in the morning and arrived on time for practice before the tournament officially began. From sets to passes, both soccer and volleyball players performed at their best in both the practice sessions and the matches that spanned throughout the morning.



The volleyball tournament was first, so when they arrived, volleyball was the main focus for both teams. Although the time for practice and windy

conditions were not ideal, they maximised their chances and landed a 2-1 set win for HKAA. The football team's match was held midway through the volleyball match. They fought and defended for the entirety of the football match, with strikers Jayden Chan and Edwin Hiu Long scoring two goals. The game ended with a win for HKAA, 2-0. Afterwards, Mr Marcelo bought them ice cream in celebration of their victory. They went with anticipation and came back as champions.

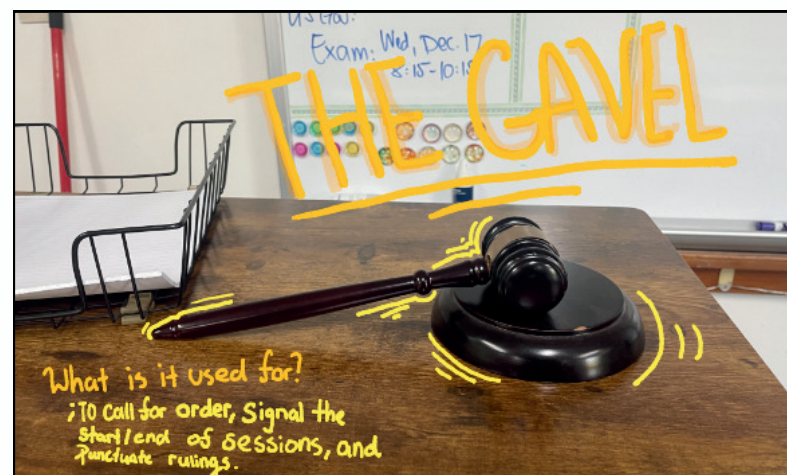
## Club Spotlight: Model United Nations



the future. I believe that in every student, there is the potential to become a change-maker, which makes educating pupils about the meaning of humanity so important. Recently, we worked on research about the humanitarian crisis in Palestine. It is a tough topic to grasp an understanding of, but it is the reality for many people.

**How often do you meet, and what do you do during the meeting?**

We meet once a week, every Thursday. We usually have pretty short meetings, if we aren't having mock conferences or actual conferences. During meetings, we discuss research that students have worked on based on the topic of the upcoming conference. Sometimes we have fun debates, relating or not relating to the topic we are discussing. Having fun little debates once in a while refreshes their mind and keeps it pretty chill.



**How has your knowledge about the world expanded by being involved in the club?**

I believe that I learnt a lot more about the current world and humanity through MUN. When creating this club, I had to research every topic that we'll be discussing. That factor really enhanced my critical thinking and analytical skills. I became more culturally aware because of this club, as I have understood that not everyone has the same opinions. Everyone has a diverse background, perspectives, and political ideologies.

**What can I do to sign up for the club?**

You can sign up for the club by emailing me (Carina)!! It's really simple, just show initiative. :)

## A Life-Changing Experience: Conall Archer's Baptism



**Conall Archer, Grade 8**

On November 16, I was baptized in Bayview Church by Pastor Soontorn. This was a life-changing experience, but also a scary one, as I was extremely nervous while walking up to be submerged in the water. It was a part of my life I won't forget soon, or ever. What led me to my choice in baptism was realizing how God helps me when I need Him. God loves everyone, regardless of whether they are baptized or not; however, being baptized means you choose to accept Him and want Him to work in your life.

On my road to baptism, I discovered that many people were willing to help me learn more about God and that there are many ways to take this journey. Those interested may study the Bible with a pastor independently. I hope my experience will inspire many others to take their first steps in accepting God as their saviour.





## Spirit Week Photo Gallery



**Pajama Day**



**Twin Day**



**First Letter of Your Name Day**



**Pink Day**



**Mathletes vs Athletes**



**Animal Day**



## Letters to the Editor

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**Word Limit:** Under 250 words

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## Thanksgiving at HKAA

*Kelly Yip, Sophomore*

Students gathered for a happy Thanksgiving celebration on November 28, 2025 to express their appreciation. While the middle schoolers indulged in delectable pizza, the high school kids were thrilled to savour the rich flavours of spicy Indian food. While the middle school children participated in their homerooms and dined in a more private setting, the high school students congregated in the gym and engaged in animated conversations. It was a lovely, unforgettable day full of connection and fun. As they talked with friends and told stories, the high school kids got the chance to sample homemade Indian food, which provided a unique touch to the celebration. I think that this day holds great significance, as it provides a meaningful chance to sit down, reflect with friends, and discuss even the smallest things we are grateful for. These heartfelt moments foster a sense of bonding and understanding, creating an atmosphere of warmth and friendship. Sharing a delicious meal while engaging in genuine conversations allowed everyone to deepen their relationships and learn more about each other. Overall, this event was an unforgettable experience for both high schoolers and middle schoolers, leaving lasting impressions and strengthening our school community.

## Puzzle



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