

I Heart You

By Kirby Varnadoe-Russ

Not only is February home to one of the biggest chocolate and teddy bear-buying days of the year, but it is also an important month in health, known as National Heart Awareness Month.

Heart disease is the number one killer of Americans, and so it is important to stay fit and heart-healthy throughout February and the rest of your life.

I Heart the Gym

One of the ways to keep the heart healthy is to exercise, regularly. How should we Science & Mathers do that? By going to the lovely PEC, of course.

The gym is loaded with gym equipment, a dance/yoga studio, racquetball courts, basketball courts, and free weights. It may not be up to Ritz Carlton standards, but it is an effective gym all the same.

"It's not the biggest thing around, but there are definitely a lot of different exercise programs that can be done with our facilities," Coach Gonyeau said.

Gonyeau suggested that students go online to get ideas for workouts, then over time build a workout routine more suited for them as individuals. Of course, most students know we have a gym but don't take advantage of it.

"Well, the thing is, a lot of students don't make the time to come in. They all try to come in after school and then see that it's busy and then give up. What they should do is make time during the day... come in for 30 or 40 minutes during some free time," Gonyeau said.

But what about those who are not athletically inclined? Those who might cringe at the thought of sweating, who huff and puff after even a light jog? They must realize that it is never too late to start. Exercising does not have to be a grueling and unpleasant activity. As Cynthia Kuhn, the most recent speaker for senior student life, said, "even going for a walk will do, just as long as you do something."

The important thing is to get active. Daily physical activity not only promotes heart health, but also promotes neuron growth which aids brain activity and makes you smarter.

So there are benefits all around - not only will you have a svelte physique after you exercise, but you'll be ten times as smart.

I Heart Food

Now, we all know that the PFM is probably as good for your heart as a fried bologna sandwich, but what most students don't know are the healthy options that the PFM

offers.

Now, I know that it is difficult to eat healthily in the PFM for reasons other than availability of health foods, but if students make an effort to avoid the unhealthy food at least 3 or 4 times a week, think of how much healthier everyone will be.

The first healthy option in the PFM is the salad bar. The salad bar is always complete with salad, toppings, and most importantly, lots of vegetables and fruit to munch on. It may not be the ripest of the crop, but it's much better than not getting your plants in at all.

The PFM also offers a wide variety of vegetarian items, which are often more healthy than the main entrée because they contain, well, vegetables. Getting Raisin Bran instead of Fruit Loops will help you avoid that mid-morning sugar crash, and at the grill they have veggie burgers, which actually taste pretty good.

Not willing to give up your daily hamburger or pepperoni pizza? Instead of cutting out all unhealthy foods, try to gradually work health foods into your diet.

Researchers say it takes 30 days to break a habit, so if you work a little bit of healthiness into your meals every day, by the end of February, you'll be a lean, mean, green-eating machine.

I Heart My Heart

So whether you decide to treat your heart to something special this Valentine's Day by grabbing a bite of something deliciously healthy, or decide to make it work for your love by breaking the sweat you never thought you had, be heart conscious this February. Remember that if you take care of your heart, it will always take care of you.



Cheerleaders are now allowed to stunt and try more daring feats. •Photo courtesy of Britt Brown

Winter Track team to compete at state meet

By Gary Li

The winter track team has improved significantly this season, so I decided to dig deeper into the sport and contact Coach Nick Lehman, who is not only a Student Life Instructor, but also a teacher of the Student Life course, and a coach of the indoor track team.

How many years have you been coaching track and do you plan on continuing to coach track?

This is my 5th year coaching track at NCSSM, 4th as head coach. I will continue to coach track as long as I am here.

Is there any difference between winter and spring track?

The purpose of the winter track season is to prepare for the spring track season. The focus is on training, not on competition. Athletes who participate in winter track will gain a strong foundation of training and be able to start the spring season already in great shape.

The track team is much smaller in the winter because we take only the most focused and dedicated athletes. Competition is rare. Most of our athletes will compete only once or twice over the course of the winter.

When we do compete, the events are different than the

standard spring track events. For example, there is no 100, 200, 400, or 800 (meter race). Instead, they run the 55, 300, 500, and 1000. Officially, it's called "indoor track," but that's a bit of a misnomer since it is almost never actually indoors.

The only actual indoor track in this area is at UNC-Chapel Hill. They host the State Championship each February and one or two other meets during the season. Other than that, everything is done outside.

How many members are currently on the track team? Currently, we have 19 students participating.

What is a typical training day of winter track?

We have three training groups - sprints, distance, and throws. Each group has a separate training plan, and there is also some individual variation within each group, so there is not really one "typical" training day.

The throwers have mainly been in the weight room developing strength and power. The sprinters generally alternate weight room days and running days. The distance group will do long, easy runs most days, supplemented with some strength training and speed work.

Compared to last year's team, how is

the team this year?

This is the most dedicated winter track squad we have had during my time here. I have never had so many people training so consistently over the winter. All of our seniors are noticeably improved from last year and we have some promising juniors as well.

Last year and the year before, we only had two athletes qualify for the state meet. This year, we have eight. Our state meet is combined 1A/2A/3A, so when our athletes qualify, it really means they are competitive at the 3A level.

Is there anything else that you would like to add about the track team this year?

The state championship will be held Saturday, February 13 at UNC-Chapel Hill. Here's who we have competing:

Women's 500: Courtney Applewhite, Colleen McGuire

Women's 3200: Frances Dougherty, Callie Turlington

Women's 4x800 Relay: Ashley Baker, Frances Dougherty, Stefanie Schwemlein, Callie Turlington

Women's Shot Put: Chelsea Lineberger

Men's Shot Put: Antonio Kornegay

It should also be noted that Antonio reset his own school record at his first meet this winter, throwing nearly two feet further than he did last year.

Wrestling Small, but Serious

By Vlad Krokmal

NCSSM wrestling this year has certainly become a more serious endeavor. Wrestling is an individual sport which requires a sizable amount of people of all weight classes.

This year's team has been suffering from a variety of setbacks, especially numerous injuries and academic and athletic conflicts of team members. Of course wrestling is a difficult physical challenge, one that not many can devote themselves to amid academics and the little free time that is left.

One team member, Branson Kinsey, however, notes that he does wrestling because "It is a tough sport, very physically



Junior Chance Smith watches his opponent. •Photo courtesy of Britt Brown

demanding, and I am motivated by this challenge to go on".

Even with a small team, NCSSM has been able to do better than last year, currently holding a 2-4 conference record. A key match this

year for the wrestling team was against Granville central.

This match showed that the team could pull through even against some of the bigger challenges, being able to field every

team member and squeezing a victory. And even if the team size has not grown, the members of the team have certainly improved, winning their matches through quality, not quantity.

Cheerleading Renewed

By Vlad Krokmal

The renewed and reenergized Unicorn Spirit is, in part, due to NCSSM's reinvented Cheerleading team.

With the new coach, Katy Greene, the team has been able to soar to new heights, literally.

The team now has an arsenal of 4 types of stunts, something the team could not

do last year, and even new Uni-colored pom-poms. The NCSSM cheerleading team is split into two parts.

There is an 11 person competitive cheerleading team and a 25 person (including the 11 who do competitive cheerleading) cheerleading squad which pumps up NCSSMers during Basketball games.

The competitive cheerleading team has reached new

levels this year, placing 9th in NCHSAA competition and even getting a bid to Nationals, which NCSSM unfortunately could not afford.

With such an invigorated team, Arjee Restar notes "Cheerleading has given me confidence, as the only male cheerleader, to pursue what makes me happy without fear; cheerleading has become a part of my life."