

Mandarin NewsLineSM

The Every Address Community Newspaper in Mandarin's 32223 and 32258 Zip Code

Volume 2, Issue 2

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November 2007

Many volunteers contribute to effort The gazebo is up! ... Billard Park ready for dedication!

By Karl Kennell



Raising the roof!

The butterfly garden is looking great. The butterflies have come. The park is ready! But it took some effort.

The first start on the gazebo was on a Saturday in September. Construction that day was halted though when rains arrived and a necessary template was discovered to be the wrong one. That day, like a baseball game, was called due to rain. The intrepid volunteers threw in their towels, literally and gave up to enjoy the nice lunch that had been prepared for them.

The following Saturday was perfect. But it was darn hot, very hot.

The butterflies fluttered around enjoying their new garden. Members of the Rotary Club of Mandarin led by President Major Harding quickly made progress while enduring the sweltering heat. They made

fast work of assembling the structural supports. There was only one brief setback to what was a very steady progression. That was when one of the shoring supports slipped during the assembly of the roof. It took a little bit of time to put things right and get back on track.

By the end of the day the gazebo was constructed and dried in. Susie Scott, president Mandarin

Community Club, was very appreciative of the volunteer expertise that members of the Rotary Club of Mandarin provided. The two Rotary Club exchange students and members of Scott's family also joined the volunteer construction party.

Mike Stancel from Boy Scout Troop #37 of Atlantic Beach led a workday at the park the first Saturday of October. Stancel and his volunteers undertook landscape improvements in preparation for the placement of the custom designed Veterans' Memorial monument on the site. The memorial pays tribute to the five branches of service. Part of his work party's activities was to mark and identify the variety of plants in the butterfly garden, enabling visitors and school groups to learn more about which plants attract which species of butterfly. Stancel led this volunteer project to achieve his Eagle Badge. His participation and that of his fellow volunteers from

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Students enjoy American sports and shopping!

Meet the exchange students at Mandarin High

By Karl Kennell



Destan Karagos (L) and Kevin Murphy (R) are enjoying being in America.

We recently had the privilege to chat with the two exchange students the Rotary Club of Mandarin is sponsoring this year. They are attending Mandarin High School as juniors. Sixteen-year-old Destan Karagos makes her home in Istanbul, Turkey and seventeen-year-old Kevin Murphy hails from Pergamino, Argentina. Both are very happy to be here and are enjoying their host families.

Karagos attends the American Collegiate Institute in Istanbul and Murphy studies at Colegio Normal Superior Joaquin V. Gonzales in Pergamino. Karagos first considered coming to the United States as an exchange student when her friend and fellow classmate returned from the experience. She immediately knew it was for her. Murphy's three older brothers are who

convinced him. All three had been exchange students in the past and just couldn't stop talking about the experience.

When asked what they like to do at Mandarin High School both responded, "Go to the football games!" Murphy went on to expand on his activities, describing how he plans to tryout for the soccer team.

He shared, "I've always wanted

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MHS NJROTC cadets gain real-world knowledge and experience

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to learn to play American basketball and I am enjoying very much learning and playing on the Christ Church team here."

Karagoz also plans to tryout for the soccer team. She is also a member of the Mandarin High School Interact Club. When asked about her future plans she said, "I don't know what direction I'll go yet. I just know that I would love to attend college here in the United States."

As she described how her father was a bit reticent about that idea it sounded a lot like the problem some of us parents have faced with in state vs. out-of-state tuition. We wish her success. She would make a great student at any one of our colleges right here in Florida.

Murphy is more settled in his plans. He plans to become a Forensic Doctor. He intends to study after high school at La Plata College in Argentina.

He looked us straight in the eye and asked, "What do you think about Forensic Doctors?" Taken aback just a moment we assured him that it was a very interesting profession.

When asked, "What is the best aspect you like about being here?" Murphy responded without losing a heart beat, "Prices of the clothes at the Mall. 50 percent off signs! I just love it!" Karagoz very sincerely responded, "I just really love being here."

Well friends, neighbors and parents we want to tell you how fortunate we are to have the Rotary Club of Mandarin support such

gracious students from a foreign land. Our own wonderful children are sure to receive a great benefit by welcoming these two into the student body of Mandarin High School, even if it is just for a year.

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the Stanton Rowing Team have been a great help along the path to dedication.

The Billard Park has been funded through a variety of sources including the Mandarin Art Festival, personalized tribute bricks sales in the Buy-A-Brick program, grants and donors. A special thank though has to go to volunteers such as the Rotary Club of Mandarin and conscientious youth like Mike Stancel, as well as many others who love our community.