

Maintaining the Mountain View National Honor Society Web Site

A Complete Guide

**MOUNTAIN VIEW HIGH SCHOOL
NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY
BRANDON LAWN CHAPTER**

Welcome to the Mountain View National Honor Society web site. On the left, you can find links to information about projects, upcoming events, and announcements. Also, the minutes from the NHS meetings are posted. On the right, you will find an abbreviated list of upcoming events. This site is being regularly updated.

Latest NHS Announcements

Next Year's NHS Officers
Congratulations to our newly-elected National Honor Society officers for the 2007-2008 school year!

President
Ben Boudaoud
Vice President
Stefanie Higgins
Secretary
Mikala Michalski
Treasurer
Jacob Hodges
Parliamentarian
Beth Toolan

Point Requirements Added: 4 June 2007 02:29 EDT
The school year is almost over, and many have not yet satisfied the point requirement. Old members need seven points for this semester; new members need three. If you do not meet the requirement, you will be put on probation. If you are a senior and do not meet the requirements, you will not get your NHS stole. There are only two point opportunities left for the year. You can bring in items for the ice cream party on Thursday, and you can do the school beautification on Tuesday.

Any questions regarding points should be directed to Brody. Added: 1 June 2007 17:01 EDT

Link to This Site! Added: 29 May 2007 14:57 EDT
We were finally linked to from the [Mountain View Web Site](#). The link is in the left column under "Athletics/Activities."

Meeting Minutes for the May meeting have been posted Added: 19 May 2007 10:34 EDT
See [May 2007 Meeting Minutes](#)

Service Points & Support the Troops Added: 18 May 2007 21:43 EDT
Thanks to everyone who brought in items for the troops and to everyone who packaged the items for shipment. A special thanks goes to Ethan Carmody who has already given a monetary contribution to help send the items over to the troops.
Everyone who turned in stuff for the troops deserves two points, and should notify Brody. The updated points list will be in Mrs. Easter's room. Check it for accuracy, especially for "Support the Troops" points. Points for the "Pixie Stix" fundraiser have not yet been tallied.

Dues for Newly-Inducted Members Added: 15 May 2007 16:25 EDT
As a reminder for newly-inducted members, dues are \$5.00, and must be paid right away.

Service Points Opportunities for May 2007 Added: 10 May 2007 16:12 EDT
There are service point opportunities for members lacking in points! Everyone should be able to get two points for bringing in "Support the Troops" items (powdered drink mixes, magazines, games, etc.) tomorrow, May 11. This is open to anyone. There is a car wash this Saturday, May 12, from 9 A.M. to 1 P.M. with two-hour shifts. Also on Saturday is the opportunity to help out with the "Head Start" book drive from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. in two-hour shifts. The Hartwood Carnival is next Saturday, May 19, from 8 A.M. to 4 P.M. with two-hour shifts. Additionally, you can earn points by tutoring at AG Wright Middle School from 3:00 to 4:00 PM on Mondays and at Margaret Brent Elementary from 2:30 to 3:30 PM every other Tuesday. Questions regarding points should be directed to Brody.

Many Tutoring Opportunities (Service Points Opportunity)
It's a new semester and it's time to start earning service points! Be sure to stop in Mrs. Easter's room and see how you can get those points. Want to earn service points by tutoring on Monday, Tuesday, and/or Thursday? Check it out below:

- Mondays at A.G. Wright Middle School, 3:00 to 4:00 PM
- Every other Tuesday at Margaret Brent Elementary, 2:30 to 3:30 PM
- Thursdays at Garrisonville Elementary, 3:30 to 4:45 PM

Sign up for these tutoring opportunities in Mrs. Easter's room. Added: 30 Jan 2007 03:07 EST

Upcoming Events

May 26
Head Start
Books

June 5
School
Beautification

June 7
NHS Meeting /
Ice Cream
Social

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Preface

I have put forth considerable effort building the web site for Mountain View High School's National Honor Society. I am writing this document so that future web teams will be able to keep the site alive and in pristine condition. I will attempt to explain how to maintain all of the special pages, and how to work with and create generic pages. Furthermore, I have been as thorough as I can in commenting the code.

As a note on this document, for simplicity's sake, anytime "he" is mentioned, it should be read as "he or she." I was first taught English grammar before the political correctness made its way into the textbooks, and it was proper to say "he" when "he or she" was meant. I will simply use "he" because it makes things less complicated.

Requirements

The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" in this document are to be interpreted as described in RFC 2119 (<http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc2119.txt>).

Content

Adding a New Page

Adding a New Section

Site-wide Updates

Navigation Menu

Brief Events List

Coding Standards

Abbreviations

An abbreviation is a shortened form of a word or a phrase that usually, but not always, consists of a letter or group of letters taken from the word or phrase. For example, the word "abbreviation" can itself be represented by the abbreviation "abbr." or "abbrev." An acronym is also an abbreviation. Each

occurrence of any abbreviations should be marked up with the XHTML `<abbr>` tag, and the full expanded version should be placed in the title property.

Examples:

```
<abbr title="National Honor Society">NHS</abbr>
```

```
<abbr title="Mountain View High School">MVHS</abbr>
```

```
<abbr title="pounds">lbs.</abbr>
```

Notes

In many cases it is better and more practical to simply use the expanded version of an abbreviation. For example, it is easier to simply type out “January” than to type “`<abbr title="January">Jan.</abbr>`”. Also, the `<abbr>` tag is automatically replaced with the soon-to-be deprecated `<acronym>` tag when Internet Explorer 6 requests a page because it doesn’t support the `<abbr>` tag.

Emphasizing and Drawing Attention to Portions of Text

Normally, *italicized* text is usually used to emphasize words or phrases, and **boldfaced** text is used to draw attention to important information. The HTML `<i>` and `` tags should not be used to italicize or boldface text as they carry no semantic significance. Instead, `` tags should be used to emphasize text. Browsers will italicize text marked up with `` tags. Also, the `` tag should be used to draw attention to text. The `` tag is boldfaced by browsers. If a piece of text needs to be italicized because it is the title of a book, the `<cite>` tag should be used. The `<cite>` tag is also italicized by browsers.

Validation

Every page must be well-formed. Pages are served as “application/xhtml+xml” to those browsers that support it. If a page is not well-formed, it will not be displayed on these browsers, but rather the user will receive an error message. On a well-formed page, all tags are properly nested, every tag is properly closed, and tags such as `<meta>` are properly closed with a space character (0x20) and a forward slash character (0x2F) before the final “>” character as in `<meta description="author" content="James Cassell" />`. Pages should also validate as XHTML 1.1, and can be validated at the W3C’s validation page (<http://validator.w3.org/>). All pages should be validated and tested on the test site before they are transferred to the live site.

Commenting Code

Comments describing PHP code should be marked with the “#” character followed by one space character (0x20). When commenting out a line of code, two forward slash characters (0x2F) (“//”) should be used. When commenting out multiple lines of code, a comment should start with “/*” and end with “*/”.

Comments in XHTML code are started with “`<!--`”, and end with “`-->`”.

Code Aesthetics

All code should be properly indented. Each level should be indented one horizontal tab (0x09) further than the level above it. The top level should have no indent.

Notes

The site automatically collapses whitespace before the page is sent to the user to use as little bandwidth as possible. The indented version of a page can be requested by appending “?pre=yes” to the end of the URL.

Code Quotations

While single quotes are technically valid, as a site-wide convention, XHTML attributes should be quoted with the double quote (0x22) (“”). This also applies to CSS documents. The single quote should be used to define strings in PHP whenever possible. Double-quoted strings are parsed for variables, and therefore put more load on the server. They should be used only when such parsing is required.

Style Guide

Grammar

All content on the site should use proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The site should have a generally professional tone, and should look and feel like a professional site.

Lists

- If any item in a list (ordered or not) forms a complete sentence, all items must begin with a capital letter and end with a terminal punctuation mark.
- If no items in an unordered list form a complete sentence, skip the capitalization and terminal punctuation.
- If the items in the list complete an unfinished introductory sentence, end all but the last item with a semicolon, add an “and” before the final item, and finish off with terminal punctuation.

Linking

Choose link text that concisely indicates the nature of the linked document. Do not link terminal punctuation. Prefer shorter links to long ones. Link to well-established websites rather than to ephemeral ones when possible to decrease link rot.

Avoid blind links: if, for example, you link a few words in the middle of a sentence to a book page on Amazon.com, provide title text so that the reader doesn't have to follow the link to understand your cleverness.

Alt-attribute text

Accompany each illustrative image with alt-attribute text that concisely describes the image for those who cannot see it.

Examples:

Good: Illustration showing the overlap of divs A and B after floating div A.

Bad: Image showing example.

Alt-attribute text uses sentence-casing.

Title-attribute text

You may attach title text to some markup elements to convey additional information. Many web browsers display this information when the user's cursor hovers over a link. A useful title attribute for an outbound link might read:

The results of PLAIN's 2004 study on plain English in legal documents.

Title-attribute text uses sentence-casing.

Code blocks

Code blocks should have a line length no longer than 51 characters (including whitespace). When this forces a line of code to wrap, you should mark it with a » and comment in the preceding paragraph "(Line wraps marked » —Ed.)."

We use a standard two-space indentation for lines. Each nested line is indented two spaces from the parent. A wrapped line is not indented on the wrap.

Control structures such as parentheses require spacing on the outside only

```
if (foo bar) {  
    // do something  
}
```

An opening curly brace should be on the line of the command that uses it. The closing one should be on its own line (or if it is part of something like an else statement, on the line with the else

```
if (foo bar) {  
    // do something
```

```
} else {  
    // do something different  
}
```

or

```
if (foo bar) {  
    // do something  
} else if (foo rae){  
    // do something different  
}
```

CSS blocks

In addition to following the above format guidelines, CSS blocks should be written with each property on a different line and with each selector on a different line.

```
p {  
    color: #000;  
    font-weight: bold;  
}  
em,  
strong {  
    font-size: 1.1em;  
}
```

Punctuation details

- **Acronyms and abbreviations:** Use the acronym element to include the full meaning of any acronym (an abbreviation that is pronounced as a word) and use the abbr element for abbreviations that are not pronounced as words. When in doubt, use abbr.
- **The ampersand:** Avoid the use of the ampersand except in article and page titles.
- **Citations:** The titles of books and other major works as well as the titles of magazines and newspapers are marked up with the cite element. The titles of articles and other short works are enclosed in quotation marks.
- **Commas:** Use the serial comma (the comma preceding the “and” before the last element in a list) except in headlines and subheads.

- **Company and publication names:** Capitalize the names of companies according to each company’s preference unless they begin a sentence, in which case they must be capitalized. Do not capitalize or otherwise emphasize the definite article before the name of a publication—even the New York Times.
- **Em dashes:** Put a space on either side of the em dash in all inline uses to help distinguish the mark from the hyphen for on-screen reading. Use the en dash instead for enumerated date ranges.
- **Hyphens:** Hyphenate compound noun phrases used as adjectives unless the noun phrase is so popularly used that hyphenation appears awkward. Do not hyphenate compound adjectival phrases whose first element is an adverb. And remember—as the man said, “If you take hyphens seriously, you will surely go mad.” (The man being, in this case as in so many others, the Oxford University Press style manual.)
- **Quotations:** Position punctuation according to Chicago rules (periods go on the inside, etc.). Use block quotes instead for more substantial quotations. Use the correct (“curly”) symbols, not a double prime. Preferred encodings are available in Appendix A. As nice as they are, single quotation marks are not used in *A List Apart* except to demarcate quotations within quotations.

Capitalization details

The words “internet,” “net,” “web,” and “website” should be capitalized as seen here (which is to say, not capitalized) when they’re found in sentence-cased text. E-mail and e-commerce take the hyphen, but not a capital “e.”

When using title case, capitalize the first, last, and all other major words. Lowercase “and,” “but,” “for,” “or,” and “nor” unless they are emphasized in a particular heading.

Examples:

A New Hope for Embedded Fonts

Arguments For and Against FIR Strike Back

When a headline-style heading includes a hyphenated phase, always capitalize the first element. Capitalize the second element unless it is an article, preposition, or any of the coordinating conjunctions noted above. Exception: if the first element is a prefix like pre-, post-, or anti-, or if the phrase is a written-out number, do not capitalize the second element.

When using sentence case, capitalize only the first word and proper names.

Known Issues in this Document / Decisions to be made

Function Name Format

It needs to be decided whether multi-worded functions should be named with underscores or with capitalization

Underscore example:

```
function_to_do_something()
```

Capitalization example:

```
functionToDoSomething()
```

Site Templates

Another decision that needs to be made is how we should do our templates. There are several possible options for this. We could use the Smarty Template Engine (<http://smarty.php.net/>), Drupal's PHPTemplate (<http://drupal.org/phptemplate>), or roll our own template system. If we roll our own, it will probably have some similarities to PHPTemplate.

Advantages of Using a Pre-made Template System

The advantages of using a pre-made system stem off of the fact that it would conceivably take less work to implement. Additionally, there are already templates for these pre-made template systems.

Advantages of Rolling Our Own Template System

The key advantage of rolling our own template system is that it can have exactly the features we want, and we can understand exactly how it will work. We can make changes to it without worrying about breaking too many things.

Political Decisions

Contact Form Link Opposed to Listing an E-mail address

It is proposed that instead of listing an e-mail address to contact people, a customized link to the contact form be created and placed where the e-mail address would otherwise be placed. The link would be in the format of "http://www.mvnhs.com/contact/lastnamefirstname/" where "lastname" would be replaced with the last name of the person to be contacted, and "firstname" would be replaced respectively with the first name.

Technically, this would not be difficult to implement. There is some concern, however, that it may impose some sort of privacy issue. The author of this document believes that the display of an e-mail address is more of a privacy issue than the proposed feature, and is only playing the devil's advocate.

Who Should Have Rights to Update the Site

Anyone who has rights to update the site should be responsible in what he posts. He should be technically knowledgeable in the site's maintenance, and should strive to keep its professional appearance with any new articles or announcements.

The method of choosing the people who will have rights to update the site has yet to be decided.

With the web-based system of updating the site, each person who has access will have a unique user ID and password. A record will be kept of who changed what, and when it was changed. This should help identify any perpetrator who may decide to abuse his power to update the site.

“He” vs. “He or She”

This issue was also mentioned in the preface of this document. It should be standardized whether simply “he” or “he or she” should be used when referring to an unknown gender. The same convention, once it is established, should be followed with “him” or “him or her,” and any derivatives of the same issue.