ELHS Celebrates Best Buddies Week

High School Relationships

Girls’ Lacrosse

Volunteers for Cause

Taylor Grillo Takes to the Mic

Safe Driving Video Contest

The Day of Silence speaks to students at ELHS

BY KALEY ROBERTS

East Lyme High School will be a quieter place on April 15, 2011.

The Day of Silence, a day organized by ELHS’s Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA), is an annual date on which students around the country vow to remain silent. The vow is a protest; a statement to draw attention to the silence of closeted GLBT youth.

GLBT stands for Gay-Lesbian-Bisexual-Transgender, but it is more than just an acronym. It represents a group of human beings who are discriminated against publicly.

“I’ve been called names,” said GSA president, senior Patrick Moffat, “But I’ve just gotten used to them. Fortunately, ELHS is pretty accepting.”

Statistics support the tolerance that Moffat credited ELHS with. In schools across the country, 28% of GLBT students feel forced to drop out due to homophobic bullying, according to the National Organization for Women.

“I know in Montville, they have a GSA, but the school is a lot more homophobic,” said sophomore Matson McCrabb. “Kids there get called [derogatory names] on a daily basis.”

“So many GLBT students are forced into silence culturally every day,” said Gay-Straight Alliance club advisor Ryan Ainscough. “The Day of Silence allows us to speak with that silence.”

“The reason we do it at ELHS is for the silent people in our school,” said Moffat. “There’s no physical violence at ELHS, but there’s still a social stigma that makes it harder to come out. And if you take the low estimate that 2% of the world is homosexual, at least 26 kids in our school would be.”

Moffat hesitated. “Probably, over half of the gay students haven’t come out,” he said.

ELHS students spread awareness of dangerous driving through contest

BY STEFANIE DUDA

As a way to warn teenagers about the dangers of driving distracted, the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles sponsored a statewide video contest called From the Driver’s Seat to the Director’s Chair. Participants must focus on the topic of distracted driving and make a 25-second video.

There were 164 entries in the contest, and of the approximately 15, two finalized in the top 10 and successfully won first and second place overall.

The group who placed second consisted of sophomores Kaley Roberts, Madison Horner, Lee Brake, Page Burns and Caroline Regan, as well as Kendall Roberts, Heather Roberts, and Sally Cini. The group to win first place was made up of seniors Cam Lecce and Austin Begin.

Digital film teacher Grant Place asked students to act in, (continued as Videos on Page 4)
Out of 99 students who took a Viking Saga survey...

Have you ever used marijuana?

- 35% yes
- 64% I don’t use marijuana
- 2% I don’t know

If you have smoked/used marijuana, how often?

- 9% only once
- 2% a couple times a week
- 3% daily
- 4% a couple times a month
- 1% weekly
- 7% a couple times a year
- 10% only a couple times

MARIJUANA

What do you think about marijuana use at ELHS?

“Definitely the most commonly used drug here. I don’t really smoke but if I was looking for it, I would have no trouble finding and buying weed from a peer. It’s everywhere”

-senior girl

“I think it’s sad that students need drugs to hang out and have a good time.”

-senior boy

“I find no harm in partaking in smoking [marijuana.] Not everyone who smokes it is a burn out, and it only becomes an issue when it is abused.”

-sophomore girl

“Marijuana use at ELHS is extreme. Most kids have the attitude that it is not a big deal just because everyone does it and that is not true.”

-junior girl

“I think that people use it, but it’s not that big of a deal.. I mean they could be doing a lot worse.”

-freshman girl

Other statistics:

- Out of those surveyed, 83% said that they think marijuana use is common among students at ELHS and 10% said they did not know.
- 18% said that if someone offered them marijuana at a party, they would take it, 17% said that they might take it and 65% said that they would not.
- 20% said that they have been under the influence of marijuana while they were under the influence of alcohol.

The information and data published in ‘Outside the Classrooms’ is strictly for informational purposes and The Viking Saga does not encourage nor discourage any of the views presented.
Where to Go?

by Kate Kielty

As the end of April fast approaches, there is one date on many college-bound seniors’ minds: May 1, when enrollment fees are due. Finally, the question of “Where will I go next year?” will be answered. While several students who applied and were accepted early decision have had the comfort of knowing their future for several months now, there are still many of us left with the decision still looming, just waiting for it to be made. For those students, I have this advice: know the schools and know yourself.

With many competitive schools around the country experiencing an increase in applications, this year has probably been one of the most competitive for college applications. Even at East Lyme High School, there have been surprising rejections and wait-listings along with some unexpected love from reach schools. Yet, it is important for us all to remember that decisions should not be made based upon which school was the hardest to get into or which school our friends are most impressed with.

Prestigious is a wonderful description for several universities and is a word that is flung around in many acceptance letters, but do not let the word fool you. The questions that should be going through your mind are, “What can this school offer me?” and, “Will I fit in here without feeling pressured to change who I am?” By visiting the school and getting in touch with current students and professors, you will be able to get a strong understanding of the university and whether it is right for you.

It is easier said than done, I am aware, but as young adults, we should be trusted to also make decisions separate from our peers. In college, we will face many challenges with our new-found independence and while it may help to have a close friend from high school along for the ride, it is not necessary and will likely give reason to not branch out to new students in college. With that being said, it is also unreasonable to reject a school solely because a student from our class plans on attending.

We have worked incredibly hard to get to this point and we owe it to ourselves to go to a place that we will truly enjoy. The next four years shall be the most memorable ones of our lives and while no decision is a bad decision, it is advisable to make the best decision on where you, honestly, belong.

Guest Editorial:

The Truth about Texting

by Elena Felitto

“Yeah, I’ll text you about it later.” I either hear or use that phrase too many times every day to count. Texting has absolutely become the fastest and easiest way to communicate among young people, but there can be a big price to pay for its convenience at times.

People seem to become very bold, especially when it comes to relationships, and say things that they would not normally say in person, when they are texting instead of being face-to-face. This can sometimes make for an awkward meeting the next time the two people are face-to-face. Lying and bullying also become easier when two people are not face-to-face.

Another impersonal thing about texting is that tone is impossible to detect. It may seem as though a person is being completely serious, when he or she may be making a joke or being sarcastic. If that tone is misinterpreted, it can cause a multitude of problems.

Another potential issue is that one can not guarantee the conversation is private. All a person has to do is hit the “forward” option on their phone, and without the original texter knowing, the message is sent to a long list of contacts.

Texting is easy, fast, and convenient, but it is a tool that should be used carefully and wisely. Be careful of what you say before you hit the “send” button, because once something is out there, you cannot take it back.

Letter to the Editor:

Hi Kate,

I was so pleased to see your editorial about Planned Parenthood. It would be a great misfortune to so many people if the Pence Amendment is approved. I support your cause and encourage everyone to sign the petition to keep Planned Parenthood alive! Isstandwithplannedparenthood.org

Thank you for sharing this valuable information with the students at ELHS.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Carney Brush, Health & PE Teacher
Freshmen class views multiple presentations during CAPT testing

BY ZOE SMALLIDGE

During CAPT testing weeks, freshmen students only take the practice forms of each test. These tests are significantly shorter in length compared to the real tests taken sophomore year, and result in a lot of extra time for the freshmen.

“You have 300 students in a group and you need somewhere to put them,” said guidance counselor Marcia Goldreich, who planned the entire freshman CAPT activity schedule in three weeks.

“When CAPT first started, we’d have a field day outside for the freshman students. This used to happen in April,” said Ms. Goldreich. “Since CAPT has been moved back to March, we have to keep the students indoors. It makes it even more challenging.”

In total, the freshmen have 7.5 hours of sitting time in the auditorium after testing. This year, Ms. Goldreich filled their idle time with plenty of useful activities. Although previous years’ planners had sometimes viewed this time as a burden, Ms. Goldreich saw it as an opportunity.

One of the many presentations that the freshmen saw was comprised of student lectures, where seniors Graziea Fulchiero, Will Spang and a few others spoke about their WISE projects or various organizations that they are involved in.

Other presentations included the Jim Linehan Dance Troupe, a bullying discussion, a few skits by Looking In Theater, and finally the movie “The Pursuit of Happiness.”

There is no budget for activities like these, so in order to pay for Looking In Theater and the Jim Linehan Dance Troupe to perform, money was used from the college and career fair earnings.

“I enjoy doing the preparing and planning. While planning, I would think to myself, ‘What would our freshmen like to see?’” said Ms. Goldreich. According to several freshmen, her thought paid off.

“I thought that the dancer guys were really inspiring in their message that you shouldn’t listen to the bad things people say about you, and just be yourself,” said freshman Kevin Kwon.

Fellow freshman Emily Leen said, “I thought that the Looking In Theater was really funny and was able to get most of the class involved.”

Overall, the week has been viewed as a success by Ms. Goldreich, and the freshmen are thanked for their cooperation.

“It was a lot of time to ask them to sit,” said Ms. Goldreich. “But they were really great!”

A still from one of the safe driving videos created by ELHS students featuring senior Cam Lecce.
A Celebration of Acceptance

ELHS Best Buddies club celebrates national week

BY ZOE SMALLIDGE

March is national Best Buddies month, where Best Buddies clubs from all over the nation celebrate their mission for the acceptance of people with special needs. At East Lyme High School, the club used a specific week of the month to try and spread their message to the school and community.

Each day, the club dressed up a certain way to show their support. The dress-up themes included a red day to show support for putting an end to the R-word, a day where members wore their Best Buddies tee shirts, a favorite sports team day and a luau-themed day.

“This week benefits those with disabilities and those who support others with disabilities. We want to get the word out there that we are all human,” said senior Kiersten Sinko, vice president of the club.

“East Lyme High School has been doing it for a few years now, but this year we really decided to go full out,” said Sinko. “We didn't face any problems, people are really supportive, and we were so surprised by the amount of people that dressed up in our honor.”

To start the week off on Monday, the club members held the main entrance doors open for everyone who came through them, and told people to spread the kindness. Signs were also seen around the school saying, “Happy Day of Kindness.”

“The big thing is just the acceptance and understanding of people with special needs,” said Beth Provost, a special education teacher. “It’s an all over, national event and the goal is to get the Best Buddies message out there.”

Along with dressing up to show support, the club also had a table set up near the main office during lunch where students and faculty could sign a pledge to stop the use of the R-word.

“We were trying to help remind people that what they say can have a big impact on others, that it can hurt other people’s feelings,” said Best Buddies president, senior Kristen Whewell.

“East Lyme High School just wants to get the word out there for other students to be aware of what they say because the word ‘retarded’ is actually very hurtful to anyone with disabilities,” said Sinko.

All together, the club received 195 pledges. Sinko said, “We never have done a spirit week like this, and to be honest, we’ve never had this many pledges either. We plan on hanging all of them on a big poster on the catwalk.”

Members of the Best Buddies Club greet students as they arrive to school on the Day of Kindness.

‘We were trying to help remind people that what they say can have a big impact on others, that it can hurt other people’s feelings.’

-Best Buddies President Kristen Whewell

Relay for a Day

The 25th annual Relay for Life will take place this year at East Lyme High School from 6 p.m. on May 14 to noon on May 15.

The fundraiser originated with Dr. Gordy Klatt who ran 83 miles in 24 hours in 1985 to raise $27,000 for cancer research. The teams participating this year will walk for 18 consecutive hours, and the money raised from sponsors will go to the American Cancer Society. Each team must have at least one person walking at all times.

There are three teams registered at ELHS: the Cancer Action Club, National Honors Society and Rhythm of Life. Senior Jen Cordero is the captain of both the National Honors Society and the Rhythm of Life teams, while senior Jenn Ward captains the Cancer Action Club team. In addition to the walk, there will be a pasta party fundraiser May 13 at ELHS with all of the proceeds going to the Relay for Life and the American Cancer Society.

There is still time for anyone who wants to participate in the walk to start a new team or join one of the existing ones. Contact Jen Cordero if you are interested in joining the Relay for Life.

Career Fair

East Lyme High School hosted the annual Career Fair in the commons from 12-1:30 p.m. on March 31. Students in study hall or those who had permission from a teacher had the opportunity to meet representatives of certain schools and career fields. The fair gave juniors and seniors who may have been unsure of what path they would like to take in the future a look at technical education, health care, teaching, cosmetology and many other fields. Schools such as Johnson and Wales University, Gateway Community College, Mitchell College and Three Rivers College along with the Armed Services set up booths and informed interested students in what their school or field has to offer.
When I becomes We
The rewards and struggles of new relationships
BY KALEY ROBERTS

"High schoolers are new at falling in love," began school psychologist Michael Sullivan. "It's the first time in life that people are intimate, emotionally and physically—it becomes overwhelmingly powerful. Especially at the beginning of the relationship."

To help dissect the beginning that Dr. Sullivan touched on, nine East Lyme High School couples granted The Saga an interview. Under fictionalized names, they revealed the raw reality of a relationship's first phases.

One anonymous source, Edward, has been dating Bella for a couple of months. "I still can't get her out of my head," he said. "I want to be with her as much as possible, and I'm trying not to waste a second of it."

Meanwhile, long-term-relationship member Elizabeth Bennet gushed, "I really liked knowing that [Mr. Darcy] felt the same way I did."

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"The more time you put into your relationship, the more your two identities tie into one. If you're always with that other person, you're more likely to someday say 'Wait a minute, where am I in all this?'" -school psychologist Michael Sullivan

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Nala, who has been with Simba for over a year, described her relationship as "very happy."

"I still have the same feeling I had when we started dating—there are so many laughs," she said. "At the beginning we'd talk until like two in the morning."

Passionate? Undoubtedly. Excessive? It is debatable.

Most couples acknowledged that sometimes, time with friends is sacrificed to be with a boyfriend or girlfriend. None, however, recognized it as an unacceptable amount, and few thought it problematic. The friends on the outside saw that division as less fair.

"I've had friends who, when they start a relationship... basically shut everyone else out of their life," said Gandalf.

"I don't even know if [my friend Hermione] noticed how absorbed she's become in her relationship and her relationship only," said Harry Potter. "It's like she forgot about everyone else."

Nala, who has been doing a balancing act longer than most, explained that, "Some time has to be given up if you want to grow close with the person you're with. I try and make sure I split the time," but, she admitted, "It's hard to mix both."

"The more time you put into your relationship," said Dr. Sullivan, "the more your two identities tie into one. If you're always with that other person, you're more likely to someday say 'Wait a minute, where am I in all this?'"

According to Dr. Sullivan, it is as dangerous to lose track of yourself.

"No one's meant to be with one person all the time," he said. "You need friends too, because just one person cannot be the answer to all your needs. A boyfriend or girlfriend cannot be everything."

A boyfriend/girlfriend cannot be everything, but each of the nine high school couples agreed that their significant other played more than just a romantic role. Genuinely, they all echoed the same sentiment: "I am dating one of my best friends."

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Categorizing the most common types of high school relationships
BY MIKE DEFARIA

The Sweethearts
Though "The Sweethearts" are practically a myth in the modern high school environment, they do exist. This couple begins dating early in high school. From that point on they are a pair, constantly with each other, as they enjoy the beautiful high school experience. Finally "The Sweethearts" go to college and break up after two months.

The Big Shot
Every so often a lucky guy somehow manages to date an older girl, and upon doing so becomes an egomaniac. This relationship consists of the male doing everything he can to please his older girlfriend. For example, it's typical for "The Big Shot" to show up to classes 10 minutes late because he was too busy walking his girlfriend to class.

The PDAdorable
This couple can be found lurking in the depths of the B-wing hallway during lunch and breaks between classes. The PDAdorable spend every single minute together locking lips and embracing one another as if they are stuck together with crazy glue. This couple's actions truly are disturbing to other students, leaving them mentally scarred.

The Freshie
This type of relationship only exists during freshman year. The Freshie consists of a three to six week cycle filled with overwhelming and unnecessary drama. There are several key stages to this relationship: couples fall in love and post it on Facebook, get into fights and post it on Facebook and then break up, posting it on Facebook.

The DMX Couple
DMX is a famous rapper who released hits in the early 2000s due to his style of loud, screaming expletives; however, many couples do the same. "The DMX Couple" spends every weekend constantly in a fight. This duo sucks the joy out of every situation and scientists are searching for the bond which keeps them dating.
When We loses Me
Abuse trickling into high school relationships across the country

BY PAGE BURNS
Conflict is an inevitable part of any high school relationship, however, when disagreements become extreme, the relationship becomes emotionally draining. The word is abuse, and if it involves physical pain or emotional distress, the word applies.

However, this pain is weaving its way into the lives of couples by new means that no other generation has experienced: texting.

Teens Experiencing Abusive Relationships, (T.E.A.R) reports that 71 percent of teens regard boyfriends/girlfriends spreading rumors about them on cell phones and social networking sites as a serious problem. The increase in popularity for cell phones and texting allows couples constant access to each other, in which abusers will text their significant other to find out where they are, who they are with or why they did not answer a text.

“The abuser is very insecure,” said school psychologist Michael Sullivan. “They worry that the other person will leave them, which they try to control. Abusers act on impulse and can be very manipulative.”

The process of “textual harassment” has made it easier for abusers to fulfill their controlling desire.

“Patterns are very difficult to break and, without proper support, it is very easy to fall back into abusive patterns,” said guidance counselor Michelle Dean.

Trapped behind the memories of “when they are nice,” the reality for the abused cannot seem any farther away. Nearly 80% of girls who have been physically abused in their intimate relationships continue to date their abuser, according to a study conducted in 2005 by Teenage Research Unlimited.

“Students need to realize that there are supportive professionals as well as friends that can help them if they feel that they do not have any control in their relationship,” said Ms. Dean.

Having someone to listen and occasionally point out facts is what the abused needs in order to gain the courage to break free from the trap. Though this task may be difficult as well, it is vital to the health of the abused. Distraught and wedged between emotions, they need more than their friends help. Whether it is name calling, constant text messaging, continuous criticism, hitting, grabbing, choking, forced sexual relations or even financial mistreatment, the definition is the same. It is abuse.

What do You think?

“[High school relationships are] part of the teen-age experience.”
-sophomore Alex DeFord

“My thing with relationships is that people take them way too seriously. I mean, I hear people saying ‘I love you’ and it’s like, number 1, it’s been two weeks, and number two, you’re freshmen.”
-senior Brandon Purstell

“It depends on the maturity of the people involved whether or not it’s successful.”
-senior Lily Appleton

Everybody’s in one?

In a survey conducted by The Viking Saga, 221 of East Lyme High School students had this to say about high school relationships:

How long has your longest relationship in high school lasted?
- Less than 1 month- 5%
- 1-3 months- 19%
- 4-6 months- 16%
- 7-11 months- 12%
- 12-18 months- 12%
- 2 years or more- 8%
- I have never been in a relationship in high school- 28%

How short has your shortest relationship in high school lasted?
- Less than 2 weeks- 26%
- 2-4 weeks- 15%
- 1-2 months- 12%
- 3-4 months- 8%
- 5-12 months- 5%
- More than one year- 5%
- I have never been in a relationship in high school- 28%

How many relationships have you been in throughout high school thus far?
- 0- 28%
- 1-24%
- 2- 23%
- 3- 14%
- 4-5%
- 5- 2%
- 6-2%
- 7 or more- 3%

Do you think love in high school is possible?
- Yes- 74%
- No- 10%
- I don’t know- 16%

If you could go back and change a past experience in a past relationship, would you?
- Yes-53%
- No- 23%
- I don’t know- 7%
- Not applicable- 17%

april 12, 2011
FROM SWENSON’S SIDELINES

BY BRYAN SWENSON

On March 8, Boston Bruins’ Zdeno Chara laid a concussing, jaw-dropping and vertebrae-cracking hit on Montreal Canadiens’ Max Pacioretty that sent him flying into the turnbuckle.

This started an uproar throughout the NHL and the fan base. Whether they viewed it as the dirtiest or most fantastic hit they have ever seen, everyone had something to say about it.

After many news stories, much criticism and a looming suspension, there was no punishment at all for the Bruins captain.

But wait, it was not over yet. The Quebec police chose to investigate the hit to see if there could be any potential charges.

First of all, why? There was no punishment given by the NHL, so the police should not be trying to contradict the league. Hockey is a physical contact sport and players do get hurt. Even though Pacioretty got knocked out, the police should not be going so far as to press criminal charges on a hockey player.

There are better cases that police can be investigating, such as ones against actual criminals.

Chara was playing a hockey game; he was not robbing a bank or kidnapping someone. This is not the Quebec police vs. Chara, this is the Boston Bruins vs. the Montreal Canadiens.

Police might as well investigate every UFC fight because those guys beat each other senseless. Police should then put Steelers’ James Harrison behind bars for all the concussions he caused. They should just investigate every injury-causing athlete if they really think they could charge Chara with anything.

Some people think Chara critically injured Pacioretty intentionally, but that is part of the game. Hockey is for competition and entertainment, not for criminal charges so the police should stay out.

Sophomore Gabi Tauro competes in regional horseback riding

BY STEFANIE DUDA

Sophomore Gabi Tauro has had a love for horses ever since the age of 6, when she went to a horseback riding birthday party and realized she wanted to take lessons.

“I fell in love with all of the horses, and the responsibility and confidence I got from [them],” said Tauro.

Three years later, she started showing at a competitive level. She spends two to four hours at the Mystic Valley Hunt Club riding every day, and many of her weekends are devoted to competitions.

“[There are] one to two shows every weekend in the summer, and one show a month in the fall through spring,” said Tauro.

In a competition last summer featuring some of the best riders in the tri-state area, Tauro placed second out of 68 riders. Tauro’s last major competition was Regionals, which took place March 20 and 21.

In order to compete at Regionals, individuals must earn a minimum of 15 points. Tauro earned 26 points, the most on her team, over the span of the five shows prior to Regionals. Since the southeastern Connecticut team placed second in the region, they qualified to compete as well and Tauro’s highest score earned her the chance to represent that team at Regionals.

Should Composite Bats Stay Banned in the NCAA?

BY BEN OSTROWSKI

The metal bat has received a lot of criticism over recent years because of safety concerns. Critics say that the metal bat should be banned from all baseball leagues because of the initial speed of the ball coming off a metal bat puts the pitcher in a potentially dangerous situation. But the truth of the matter is that without metal being used with youths, leagues would not produce as talented of ballplayers.

Let me explain. Metal bats are much lighter than wood bats, allowing for increased bat speed. This helps a player to get around on a fast pitcher. The weight also affects the bat’s center of gravity, which in metal is closer to the handle, helping a player swing hard and stay balanced. These advantages allow players to learn correct technique while they are young. By the time these players are strong enough to swing wood, their form has been perfected by practice with metal bats. This system has produced thousands of major league ballplayers, and should not be changed.

As for the safety concerns, while it is true that balls come off metal bats faster than wood, and so the NCAA has changed their bat standards to combat this additional speed. Now, metal bats must fit new restrictions, which are expected to make metal bats more like wood in that the speed of the ball coming off the bat is decreased. The new bats flex less, eliminating much of the speed at which a metal bat hits a ball, and have smaller barrels, causing less direct hits.

With these additions to the metal bat, everyone should be content. The speed and weight of the bats remain, but the safety risk has been decreased, so that the young inexperienced players can still learn good form before upgrading to the heavier wood.

With these improvements, clearly the use of metal bats should not be banned.
Girls’ lacrosse team take part in St. Patrick’s Day race

by Dan Gaffey

While St. Patrick’s Day is traditionally celebrated with corned-beef and cabbage, or a dinner at the Black Sheep, over 30 girls’ lacrosse players celebrated the holiday by helping others.

On March 19, members of East Lyme High School’s girls’ lacrosse program volunteered at the third annual “O’Niantic” road race. The girls handed out water to thirsty runners, gave directions throughout the course, and provided all the contestants with friendly motivation to finish the race.

The annual race is held in celebration of St Patrick’s Day, and begins and ends at the Niantic Bay Bicycles shop after threading through the downtown main street area.

The girls who volunteered at the race were also helping their team. For every girl who volunteered at the race, the ELHS girls’ lacrosse team received $10 to go towards equipment, uniforms and other team expenses.

Unlike last year, when it was pouring rain, the girls had a large turnout for this year’s race. A total of 416 runners finished the race on the beautiful spring morning when the weather was perfect for running.

Seniors and varsity captains Jessica Lillquist, Kristi Albright and Lexi Haddock were all looking forward to this event.

“It’s always a lot of fun,” said Haddock. “This year we saw a couple of teachers running it, and a ton of students, parents, and other people from our town. I think it is great that we come out as a team and support the community, because those people are the ones who support us.”

Boys’ lacrosse teams begin community service

by Zoe Smallidge

For the boys’ 2011 spring lacrosse season, a unique new plan is being put into action; not by way of plays or tactics, but rather by civic virtue.

The team will be required to devote a portion of their time this season to volunteer work and community service.

“This year’s team decided that we’re going to do some work with the Big Brothers program,” said senior Zach Bartlett, one of the captains of the team.

“Kids are also choosing to go down to the youth lacrosse fields to help out and do other stuff like that,” said Bartlett.

The theme of the team project is community involvement, and the players will be able to use the experience they have received from high school athletics, and apply it to helping out in real world situations, such as a mentor-relationship in the Big Brothers program.

Also, high school players helping out at youth lacrosse practices will promote a strong branch between the youth and high school lacrosse programs, so in the end all of the athletes on the involved East Lyme lacrosse teams will benefit.

“I think it’s great because I know a lot of the younger kids look up to us and see us as role models,” said Bartlett. “It’s nice to be able to make an impression on them.”
T-Grillz Takes the Mic

BY PAGE BURNS AND ZOE SMALLIDGE

“I write about my life, you write ‘bout what you see in gangsta’ movies,” rapped famous recording artist, 50 Cent.

Although 50 Cent and sophomore Taylor Grillo have very different life experiences, this concept still serves as the inspiration to Grillo’s rap-writing mentality.

“If you don’t have a life story, then you won’t be able to write a believable rap,” said Grillo.

In November of 2009, a few years after her parents’ divorce, Grillo began writing down her emotions in the form of song lyrics. Though therapeutic to her emotions, Grillo did not feel that the lyrics were meaningful enough. With courage, she took the leap to rap.

“Rap tells a story, so it’s more fulfilling,” said Grillo. “I didn’t know what to do with all of the feelings I had.”

Grillo’s first raps were very basic. There was no rhyming and a simple beat. After listening to many Eminem songs, however, Grillo began to work on developing her style. It was not long until she could pump out a YouTube-worthy original rap in a matter of hours.

“It’s me in the music and no one else,” said Grillo. “The feeling is great. I love to write.”

“She’s not the typical female rapper hoping to become successful,” said senior Vik Grillo. “People should take the time to read her lyrics and learn what type of person she is.”

Grillo quickly became addicted to posting her videos, as well as checking in on Eminem’s YouTube fan page. Since there are so many viewers, Grillo decided to post a bulletin of her work. Almost instantly, she received a reply. Lusame Kales, an English speaking Saudi Arabian rapper, asked if she wanted to collaborate. After researching Kales more, Grillo took up his offer to work together. In her section of the song “Your Fire,” Grillo wrote her own lyrics, sending them back and forth until Kales approved. Next, she recorded her part and emailed it to Kales’ producer who put the song together.

“[Kales] now helps me promote my videos, which I would love to get produced. Working with him was a great experience,” said Grillo.

Though she is a self-proclaimed “work in progress,” Grillo continues to write and rap, trying to improve each time. Despite her hard work, there will always be a few criticizers. Grillo, however, has taught herself to let that go.

“Haters make you greater,” said Grillo. “You can’t let it get to you.”

“I think she’s an incredibly hardworking young lady that will get what she deserves and have a career that will suit her personality the best,” said Vik Grillo.

“I write about life,” reads Grillo’s Youtube account, taylorxdreamin. Though she is only immersed in the beginning of the rest of her life, Grillo hopes to stay true to this slogan and pursue her passion.

A True Saga Sound-Off

Two brands of quality headphones are finding their way to listeners at ELHS, but which ones reign supreme?

BY FRANCIS SHIELDS

At Best Buy, I tried on the Bose QuietComfort 15 headphones and was blown away. As soon as I put them on it was like I was in a different galaxy. No sounds were heard, not the drumming of the Rock Band, or the drone of the TV section, or even the kid begging his mother for Call of Duty, just total silence. In addition to the noise cancelling capabilities, the Bose headphones deliver excellent sound and your head is not blown off by excessive bass. These headphones are perfect if you travel often, especially on airplanes - they completely cancel out the constant humming of the jets. Lastly, their durability is unquestioned. With their high quality cords and flexible yet sturdy structure, they are made to last a long time.

The only issue I found with the headphones was the price: $300. That is a lot of money to drop on headphones, but they are well worth it for the avid music listener.

Just walking over to Best Buy’s Beats section made me feel like a G. The first headphones that caught my eye were the Monster Studio Beats by Dre. These headphones are big but look awesome with the glowing letter “B” on the side of the its plastic exterior.

Even with their bulky design, they deliver high quality sound with rich bass tones. I listened to the song “In Da Club” by 50 Cent and the quality was tremendous. Every single beat was delivered perfectly.

I found a few problems with the headphones themselves, however. They have major music leakage, so everyone else in the world can listen along with you, like it or not. Also, they are battery operated, and if you leave them on overnight by accident, you can find yourself with no headphones when you really need them. Lastly, they are $300, and with several problems, it seems like you are paying for the brand name and not the quality.
Confession Number 15: If procrastinating were a sport, I would be an award-winning varsity athlete. As deadlines approach, I always find some excuse to wait even longer to begin what needs to be done. Besides, why do now what can be put off until later? While most of my procrastination endeavors usually end in a midnight panic, a recent one has led to the discovery of what might be the most repulsive music video ever to hit YouTube. Yes bookworms, I am talking about “Friday” by the now infamous Rebecca Black.

For those of you who have not seen this viral video, it is a song dedicated to the excitement associated with the end of the school week and the upcoming fun to be had during the weekend. Not too bad, right? Wrong. Horribly, horribly wrong.

For 3 minutes and 48 seconds, Black’s sub-par voice drones monotonously as she relays every detail of her oh-so-exciting life as an eighth grader. Eating her cereal, waiting for the bus, seeing her also 13-year-old friends pull up in a convertible to take her to school, Black sings about it all. Reality check, sweetheart. Proclaiming to the world that you, “gotta have your bowl” before you head to school does not make it any more interesting. Also, you’re 13 years old, you cannot drive yet. Are your prepubescent friends even tall enough to reach the gas pedals of a car? I certainly think not.

And then, there is the chorus. The “I know a song that gets on everybody’s nerves” chorus that is always in the back of your mind no matter how hard you try to focus on everything else. One listen and I guarantee that you will hear, “Friee-day, Friee-day, gotta get down on Friee-day” for the rest of the week. Trust me, it is not something you want stuck in your head.

I close this confession with two pieces of advice. To Rebecca Black: Partying, partying, no! You are an eighth-grader. The most exciting moment in your life will probably be the first time you can go to the movies without a parent chaperone. And please, do not write a song about that. To my fellow procrastinators: be careful where your wandering attention span lands; you might find something even worse than “Friday.”
If you could rename the school, what would you call it and why?

“The Derek Zoolander School for kids who can’t read good and want to do other stuff good too ‘cause I wanna help kids who can’t read good.”  
-senior Joe Lussier

“Pembeezy’s House of Knowledge because Ms. Pembrook rules the school.”  
-senior Dan Connaughty

“Hargis High because... come on man.”  
junior Rafeed Hussain

Saga Soduko

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* For answers please visit www.thevikingsaga.org

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