



The High School View

The High School View is staffed and prepared entirely by students from the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School, and published on their behalf by The Martha's Vineyard Times, with the generous assistance of the sponsors whose names appear below.

Peers learn to lend a helping hand

BY RUSSELL SHAPIRO

Two by two, the students and teachers walked to the center of the circle, said a few words, handed each other a shirt, and returned to their seats. With this informal ceremony, the Peer Outreach retreat came to a close. On October 28 and 29, more than 50 students and teachers from the high school participated in the retreat, held at Alex's Place in the YMCA of Martha's Vineyard. The retreat's purpose was to teach all participants, each of whom was chosen by fellow students, how to make the school a safer place, and how to better deal with issues among their peers.

The program began nine years ago with instruction from the director of guidance Mike McCarthy to newly hired adjustment counselor Amy Lilavois. "I had the basis from a similar program at a school Mr. McCarthy previously worked at in Connecticut," said Ms. Lilavois. "The idea behind it was to make



PHOTO BY LEE FARACA

(Left to right) Julia Neville, Zana van Rooyen and other students play Simon Says at the annual two day Peer Outreach retreat at Alex's Place in the YMCA on October 29.

the school safer and more compassionate."

In order to create a diverse and representative group, a key component of Peer Outreach has been that its members are selected by a student vote. Ms. Lilavois said, "The thing that's so important is that it's peer nominated, so you get students from all social circles. It's not a popularity contest. Students nominate those people that they truly feel comfortable talking to."

The hope behind Peer Outreach is to more adequately equip each student and teacher involved in the program with the tools to recognize and remedy issues among their peers. Some of the key skills that are taught throughout the retreat are how to be a better listener, how to address when someone may need help, and how to diagnose the severity of an issue.

Senior Galya Walt, a student facilitator for this

year's retreat, said, "It's a time to reflect on how we treat others, and how we are as friends. It also teaches students about the severity of certain issues they may think they can handle, and encourages them to find an adult." Senior Kyle Dostal, also a facilitator this year, echoed a similar sentiment as he said, "It makes the school safer by teaching kids how to handle difficult situations."

The program has made a notable difference throughout the school, and on the individuals who take part in the retreat. Senior Dunovan Belisle, a participant in this year's retreat, said, "Coming out of the retreat, I feel much more comfortable helping people with their problems."

Galya shared a similar statement, as she said, "I don't know if more people will come to me to talk, although I hope they would, but it definitely made me a better listener and more aware of subtle cues that indicate someone needs help."

Junior Kaitlyn Marchand said, "I learned a lot about myself and how to be a good

friend to others and be a good, attentive listener."

Special education teacher Ryan Kent said, "A key component for me was the opportunity to learn and work with students I may never have had a chance to work with. I now know way more students and can access them for support just as far more students know me and can find me if needed."

Due to funding and logistical issues, it would be nearly impossible to have each and every student in the high school go through the program, though Ms. Lilavois regrets that it is not possible. "I wish that every student could take part," she said, "though it is great that there are even 100 students who might now approach me for help with an issue, that might not have in the past."

Mr. Kent said, "Those who attended now know each other on a different level. We shared a common experience and grew together as a result."

There is an effort this year to make the group even more inclusive, though. With the help of a few mem-

bers of Peer Outreach, Ms. Lilavois has started Peer Outreach Club, which meets after school on Thursdays, and is open to all who wish to come. The goal of the club is to teach many of the skills learned in the retreat, and participate in meaningful discussion about issues throughout the school.

Martha's Vineyard Regional High School Peer Outreach has left a lasting impact on the atmosphere of the building in which its members study and work. Its founder, Ms. Lilavois, said, "I think our school would be a very different place without it. I really do think my number one referral source is students. I think our school is unique in that so many students come to guidance and teachers with their problems." The experience from the Peer Outreach retreat has had long-lasting impacts for many participants, teaching skills that they may use for life. Ms. Lilavois said, "I have a lot of kids who tell me that they still use the skills they learned. They're just important skills for all types of relationships." **HSV**

Young spirits bring sweet treats

BY JULIA FELIX & ISABEL MOORE

Student members of the high school's National Honor Society (NHS) organized a Halloween party at Windemere Nursing and Rehabilitation Center for the residents. The party consisted of a performance by the Minnesingers, a game of trivia, and a multitude of laughs over cake and punch.

Every quarter, the National Honor Society puts together community outreach and service projects. Senior Charlotte Potter, a member of the NHS said, "We thought that the gathering would be a fun way to brighten up the residents' day." She also said, "We broke up into committees a month ago. There was



PHOTO BY ISABEL MOORE

Senior Caley Bennett greets a Windemere resident at the Halloween party on October 31.

one for decorations, one for trivia, and one for costumes. We also invited the Minnesingers. We started planning the event at the beginning of September."

The NHS chapter advisor and special needs teacher

Jean Neble said, "Windemere is the members' community project. They plan on throwing an event for most holidays, and every year the NHS throws the residents a senior prom."

Windemere's memory

care coordinator, Mary Holmes, said, "I think it's a great event, and I was very impressed with how prepared the students came. The residents love being around the young kids and feeling like a part of the community. We are also always looking for volunteers to come in and visit with the residents."

The residents of Windemere had a chance to enjoy three songs performed by members of the high school's Minnesingers. One of the Minnesingers, senior Aaron Teves said, "We perform a section of our holiday ensemble every year for the seniors at Windemere."

Senior Samantha Potter, president of the National Honor Society chapter and a weekly volunteer at Windemere, said, "I really like the event. I think it's a great opportunity for us to give back to the people who have al-

ready given our community so much."

Windemere resident Norma Gaudreau said, "My favorite part of this is listening

to and watching people sing and enjoy themselves. I also enjoy seeing the kids, and I'm very glad to see them take an interest in us." **HSV**

Wyrd witches win



PHOTO BY MOLLY HOUGHTON

Last Friday, students and teachers alike dressed up for the Halloween festivities in the gymnasium. (Left to right) Kate Hennigan, Christine Ferrone, and Amy Lilavois earned first place in the group faculty costume category.

EDITORS IN CHIEF: Christopher Aring, Olivia Jacobs, August Welles • ASSISTANT EDITOR IN CHIEF: Russell Shapiro • ART EDITOR: Katherine Reid • WEB EDITOR: Elie Jordi
PHOTOGRAPHY EDITORS: Willow Wunsch, Kristine Hopkins • ASSISTANT PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR: Molly Houghton • MASTHEAD ART: Katherine Reid • FACULTY ADVISER: Dan Sharkovitz

JOHN KEENE EXCAVATION

Monday-Friday, 7:30 am-5 pm Saturday, 8 am-12 Noon
Old Stage Road, across from Takemmy Farm in West Tisbury
508-693-5975 or 508-693-0025

Edu Comp

Computer Sales & Service
Office & Art Supplies & More

4 State Rd, VH • 508 693 0803
educmpmv.com

GEORGE B. BRUSH
Attorney at Law

459 State Road,
West Tisbury
508-693-7733

MARTHA'S VINEYARD MUSEUM

Exploring Island History

59 School St., Edgartown
508-627-4441 www.mvmuseum.org

George A. Santos, Jr. O.D.

Adult & Children Vision Care,
Vision Therapy
Contact Lenses

638 Main St., Vineyard Haven
508-693-7222

mv
martha's vineyard insurance

508-693-2800
mvinsurance.com
Vineyard Haven · Edgartown · Oak Bluffs

H.N. Hinckley & Sons, Inc

ACE Hardware
Beach Rd., Vineyard Haven
508-693-0075

High School View

Get recognition for your public support

Call 508-693-6100

PRIVATE!

It's between you and us - we promise!

Family Planning of MV
517 State Road, VH • 508-693-1208
friendsoffamilyplanning.org