



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.

Sergeant safeguards school

BY RUSSELL SHAPIRO

There have been 95 incidents of firearm violence in schools across the country since the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting two years ago this Sunday, according to the website Everytown for Gun Safety (everytown.org). In the office of the new School Resource Officer (SRO) Sergeant Mike Marchand, there is a large map of the United States with the location of each of those shootings marked on it. One of the key motivators for having Sergeant Marchand of the Oak Bluffs Police Department in the school is to minimize the chances of such an incident occurring at the high school. Sergeant Marchand spoke about the map in his office, and the location of many of the pins on it. He said, "Most are in small communities, so it can happen here." Sergeant Marchand has a vested interest in the school as he has a daughter currently enrolled. He said, "I wanted to make sure the program

was built correctly." Sergeant Marchand's office is strategically placed at the front of the school, where he is as close as possible to what is now the one entrance point while school is in session. "If anything happens, I can hear it and quickly address it," he said. That one entrance point now also has a security enclosure, where any visitor must first check in before being allowed into the school. Receptionist Inez Montanile, who greets and checks in each person who enters the school, commented on the security enclosure. "It's not bulletproof or anything, but it'll slow someone down if they want to do something." Principal Gilbert Traverso spoke about the presence of an SRO, which is now mandated by Massachusetts state law. He said, "It sends the message that safety is the priority. We want to reduce the possibility of a negative incident." Mr. Traverso previously worked at a school in Springfield that had two SROs and a security guard. Mr. Traverso described Ser-

geant Marchand's ability to become a part of the school. "He's blended right into the school community. I haven't heard any negative feedback." History teacher Andrew



PHOTO BY WILLOW WUNSCH

Officer Marchand stands with students at the high school as they wait for buses on Monday December 8.

Vandall said that Sergeant Marchand is doing much more than just acting as security for the school. "I teach Intro to Law, and I had him in to speak about student's concerns with police, and a number of other issues. It's valuable for students to hear it directly from him." Mr. Vandall also spoke about Sergeant

Marchand's importance to teachers. "I think he could be valuable to a teacher with a concern about a student." Senior Sam Potter spoke about Sergeant Marchand's value to students. "He is affiliated with the school but is someone new who students may feel more comfortable talking to than, say, an ad-

ministrative figure who has been at the school for years." Mr. Marchand spoke about his demeanor, and how he comes across to students. "I can't fix my size. I'm a big guy, but my demeanor is not meant to be intimidating." Mr. Marchand does not wear a typical police uniform. His regular attire appears

much like standard street clothes, a fact he discussed. "Statistics show an SRO is more approachable without a uniform. I don't want to be intimidating." Sergeant Marchand can help address issues with drugs and alcohol without placing a student within the legal system. Sergeant

Marchand said, "Every incident we've had with drugs or alcohol has stayed within the school."

Sergeant Marchand discussed his role in such issues within the school. He said, "I didn't want my role to be perceived as a disciplinarian. I'm considered a liaison to the school for the police departments on the Island." Sergeant Marchand's presence in the school was also considered to be of value because of the relationships he could build with students. "I can offer assistance to police departments with issues with students outside of the school. I would be considered less adversarial because I know them," he said.

Mr. Traverso spoke about the importance of having a safe school. "There are a

couple things I have a hard time dealing with--bullying and violence. If bullying doesn't take place, there's often no need for a student to come back and do something violent."

There is also a new program that Sergeant Marchand is helping to launch, called tip411. The program is designed to help law enforcement connect with the public, and will allow anyone to send an anonymous tip to the school about any issue. "We're going to try and launch it through the students," he said. "The tips will immediately come to myself and other administrators, and we can discuss how to deal with them. It could save a kid. Say a freshman is being bullied, we could get a tip, and combat it a bit earlier."

Mr. Traverso spoke about the importance of engaging students in the overall safety of the school. "Kids are the number one resource for safety. If they feel uncomfortable, they'll say something." Sam Potter also remarked on the safety of the school. "I feel very safe in our school, and the school's safety procedures have given me one less thing to worry about." **HSV**

Elite program scores Courtney

BY ELIE JORDI

Regional high school sophomore and soccer team goalkeeper Cana Courtney has qualified for the US Olympic Development Team. Cana decided to try out for the an Olympic Development team to improve her skills during the spring and winter months. The tryouts were held in an indoor facility in Marlboro. Cana said, "There were eight other girls fighting for a spot as the team's goalkeeper." Her athleticism was commended as she earned a place on the team.

The Olympic Development Program (ODP) offers athletes an opportunity to play with the best players in



PHOTO BY MOLLY HOUGHTON

Cana Courtney boots a ball down field on October 21 during the MVRHS fall soccer season.

their age group. They offer quality instruction from renowned coaches. And only the most elite players make

it on the team. The varsity goalkeeper coach, Ryan White, supported Cana's ambitions to try out for the ODP team. "Cana has all the traits of an elite athlete and ODP will afford her the opportunity to hone her skill set and elevate her game to the next level." Looking into the future, ODP provides Cana with the exposure she needs to pursue soccer at the collegiate level. Coach White added, "Athletes like Cana are the reason I coach -- they are always looking to improve their game and hold themselves to a higher standard." **HSV**

Carolers bring Christmas cheer

BY MADDY MOORE

National Honor Society (NHS) students took the Christmas message to heart by visiting Windermere last Friday. Students sang carols, and socialized with the residents. Senior and NHS co-president Caley Bennett said, "It's fun going there and talking to all the residents! They have great stories and they all seem to have fun whenever we are there." Both the students of NHS and the Minnesingers came together to sing a variety of Christmas classics

such as "Frosty the Snowman," "The 12 days of Christmas," and "Jingle Bells." Senior Grant Santos, member of NHS, said, "I think singing is a really easy way to brighten people's day, and it's a change of pace for the folks at Windermere. It's a special treat they don't always get to do!" Caley commented on how music can connect people of all ages. "It's really fun when we sing songs from when they grew up. I remember singing L.O.V.E. One of the ladies started singing and dancing along. It was inspiring to see how

music can take people back to a different part of their life." However, the residents are not the only people who enjoy this visit. This is the second visit to Windermere from NHS students this year and is surely not the last. Senior Josie Iadicicco has been volunteering at Windermere for over a year. She is also a member of NHS and helped organize the visit. "I went into this experience expecting to help others, when in reality they have greatly improved my outlook on life, and for that I am grateful." **HSV**

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