



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.

Hooked on electronics

By Caitlyn Clark
and Ashley Gwynn

Whether students are becoming Cyborgs with iPods, cell phones, and other technology attached to them, or whether they are just joining the technological revolution, the debate in the school rages about the role of these devices in the classroom.

The School Council has finally compromised on a revised policy. The previous policy stated that, "music players, video players, headphones, cell phones, etc. should not be visible or used during regular school hours." But that has now been changed to a more lenient level, allowing students to use their devices with the permission of a school administrator for academic purposes.

During the School Council's policy revision process, members conducted a faculty-only survey about the matter. One question asked, "If given these options of restricting student use of personal electronic devices during school hours, which would you most likely support?" The question gave a variety of nine different options to

choose from. The highest majority of voters chose, "a complete ban."

"I don't think they should be banned completely," said assistant principal, Carlin Hart. "But there should be a balance between the discipline and allowance of the devices. I even have a PDA that I use during the day to keep track of my meetings. It has recorded every meeting I've had since the beginning of the school year in September."

The previous policy did not work because it was inconsistent. Even teachers hold different opinions on the situation. "I'm in between on the matter," said Mr. Hart. "I'd like to see them put away in backpacks. So if they are visible, then warnings should be given to put them in a bag, instead of confiscating them right away."

Two problems with the electronic devices involve the potential for cheating and distraction during class. It's possible to record facts on phones and iPods. It's also possible to text answers from a test to other students.

"Music gives kids a zone while they work," said Janice Frame, an art teacher at the high school.

"You can't use a phone to cheat while you're painting or drawing. And as long as you get in the zone, whether it's from the music on your iPods or music players, then I'm okay with it."

While some teachers believe that the policy should be more severe, others feel that it should be more lenient and allow the use of electronic devices during specific times in the school day, such as during lunch, the passing time to classes in the halls, or even during study halls.

"There are different situations when the policy should be in effect. The texting should stop during lectures, learning time, and speeches," said Mrs. Frame. While that is true for some people, there is also another problem with texting during school.

"We changed the electronic policy for several main reasons. One of them being the bullying and the harassment issues," said assistant principal, Neal Weaver. "The school is trying to prevent drama as much as possible, which is why we needed to alter the electronic policy. But since most of the drama is transferred through text messages, we couldn't just ban cell phones and then not ban music players. So we had to revise the policy so that it was fair," said

Mr. Weaver.

The new enforcement policy for electronic devices is nowhere near the severity of other local high schools in the state.

"I researched other schools' electronic policies and found out that they are completely banned from school. I presented the research to one of the Council meetings and

we decided that even though a complete ban is the easiest method to solving the problem, we just couldn't do it," said Mr. Weaver. "The School Council wanted to be somewhat flexible by giving teachers the option to allow the use by students of personal electronic devices for academic purposes only."

Students kiss Blarney Stone



PHOTO COURTESY OF KERRI O'KEEFFE

Students and chaperones take a break during this year's Irish History class on the top of Blarney Castle in Ireland. Everyone returned on April 22 after the week-long sojourn around western and central Ireland. Landing in Shannon in western Ireland, they drove south to Dublin, Achill Castle, and Crossmolina to visit Mrs. Wintraub's house.

IMPers go to Chicago

By Julia Sadowski

During April vacation, the IMP members from the Island's not-for-profit theater organization Troubled Shores' Inc, took a trip to Chicago for the Chicago Improv Festival.

IMP is an improvisation group for regional high school students which consists of freshmen Della Burke, sophomores Mariah Mackenzie, Vivian Ewing, Sarah Swift, and Ashley Girard, and senior Ray Ewing.

To be able to go to the Chicago Improv Festival, the group, coached by Donna Swift, were accepted into the festival after submitting an audition tape. The main focus of the trip was for the IMPers to build their improvisational skills such as

scene building and editing, and ways to teach younger IMPers. "In Chicago we had an assigned coach," said Mariah. "She worked



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARIAH MACKENZIE

IMPers pose with former IMPer Ed Cisek (back left) and Artistic Director of Teen Comedy Fest, Emily Dugan (front left.)

with both long and short form improv. Long form is more theatrical and short form is more gimmicky. In Chicago they were more into the long form. We also went to six shows that were part of the festival."

The trip to Chicago also present-

ed the IMPers with the opportunity to get to know each other better than they already do. "We know each other well from performing, but we had never spent a lot of time together when we're not performing," said Ray Ewing. "On the

trip we shared an apartment together for five days. We went to classes, saw shows, and had our own performance."

Because Troubled Shores is a not-for-profit organization, the IMPers had to fundraise for their trip. "We did massive amounts of fundraising," said Mariah. "We stood in Cronig's forever raising money."

Despite the expense, the IMPers enjoyed their time in Chicago. "We learned new teaching techniques, and we also got to see performances by people from shows like According to Jim and Mad TV," said Ray. "It was a really fun time."

Portuguese language change

By Paul Bagnall

The Portuguese Parliament is changing it's nation's language.

In the changes, some silent letters and accents will be dropped from the language, effectively integrating the Brazilian Portuguese dialect into European Portuguese. The reasoning behind this is to improve global business communications by reducing some of the confusion with the language between countries.

Regional high school Portuguese teacher, Stephanie Pavao, said, "Why should we lose our originality just because there are more people in Brazil? A high school freshman can figure out the difference between one form of the word and the other. The changes are mostly one sided."

The amendment has stated that changes will make the Portuguese language easier to learn. "It's equivalent to the difference between British English and American English," said Ms. Pavao. "The differences were so slight I don't see a reason to change it."

"I don't think that we're going to

see the effects of this for a while," said Ms. Pavao. "since most teachers are refusing to teach it." But for people who've known this language their whole lives, it will be difficult to re-learn. Ms. Pavao, as well as other teacher's, are afraid that the Portuguese will lose the uniqueness of their language and its historical background. "For the number of teachers I've talked to, all of them oppose it," said Ms. Pavao.

"It's not that big of a change," said Rodrigo Alves Fernandes, high school senior and one of the many Portuguese resident's living on the Island. Rodrigo thinks that this is the right step to get more people to more easily learn Portuguese. "It's the right step because it will help unify all the Portuguese speaking nations more," said Rodrigo.

"The older generation will have the most problems with this change," said Alana Trindade, a freshman who moved from Brazil to the Island last summer. "It's going to change the way we see our language, but not how we pronounce it."

EDITORS IN CHIEF: *Eliza Gowell, Sophie Lew*, ASSISTANT EDITORS IN CHIEF: *Emily Mercier, Kayla Montambault, Tye Stien*, ASSISTANT EDITORS: *Naomi Pallas, Julia Sadowski, Naomi Scott*, PHOTOGRAPHY EDITORS: *Haley Koorse, Taylor Smith* ART EDITORS: *Janelle Fortes, Taylor Stone*, INTERNET CONSULTANT: *Ray Ewing*, MASTHEAD ART: *Ashley Drake*, FACULTY ADVISER: *Dan Sharkovitz*