



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.

Budget goes to towns



By Emily Goldthwait

While the School Committee unanimously approved the regional high school's proposed budget in early December, it now needs to go to the towns for a final vote.

"Our community is very supportive here," said high school principal Stephen Nixon. "We aren't like anywhere else. The budget was passed by the school committee, which is a good sign. Now it is up to the Island community to decide whether the new budget will pass."

Many students, teachers, and parents are apprehensive about what else could possibly be cut from a budget that already is down about \$1,000,000 from last year's if the budget is not approved by the towns.

One area that could be cut includes positions funded by Appendix A in the teachers' contract. The Appendix funds stipends for coaches, advisors, and coordina-

tors, and others. In all likelihood, without Appendix A positions there would be no coaches, no club advisors, and the production budget for the winter musical would be limited.

Without town approval, the possible crunch in next year's budget will most likely change student life dramatically and negatively.

In a public school system, the school has required costs that have to be included in the budget. "There are set costs that have to be paid that directly affect the core guideline of the school. We really only have about three percent control over it for components that are not required," said Dr. Nixon. "Insurance and retirement costs alone total three million dollars, with other set costs added in such as heat and electricity, things add up fast."

"If there was no Appendix A, pulling off the productions would be much more difficult," said Kate Murray, drama director. "I would have no production manager, choreographer, and costume designer."

The theater department has had a positive influence on many stu-

dents. "If I hadn't discovered theater my second half of high school, I don't know who I would have become," said Daniel Cuff, a 2009 graduate. "Theater helped to develop me as a person. Without that resource, I wouldn't have gone in the direction that I have in my life."

Sports programs could also be impacted if the budget is not passed by the towns. "From a coaching standpoint it would be much harder to have the athletics program that we do," said physical education teacher Donald Herman. "Members of our community support the programs by coaching for a very small amount of pay. Many coaches leave their other jobs early to coach during their seasons."

A budget cut would make the sports program much more difficult to organize. "The majority of students in each grade play sports and are actively involved in extracurricular activities," coach Herman said. "From a parental point of view, my children have become the people they are today because of sports involvement. They have learned discipline, hard work, leadership, and team unity through sports."

Students, too, worry about what could happen if the budget does not pass the towns. "Without the opportunities that have presented themselves in school-affiliated activities, my education would be negatively impacted," said junior Ashley Girard. "I want to have a career in the arts and I wouldn't have the education and hands on experiences that a student gets from participating in plays."

For many students who enjoy school in part because of the extra curricular activities it offers, the prospect of attending a place that may not be able to offer sports and theater and other such activities is

troubling.

According to school officials, four of the Island's six towns need to approve the budget in the upcoming months if it is to pass.

Basketball team practices for Saturday's big game



PHOTO BY TOVA KATZMAN

Sophomore Mia Benedetto, member of the junior varsity girl's basketball team, practices along side the rest of her teammates for their next away game against Bishop Feehan on Saturday, January 9.

Family, friends create book for Jena

By Caitlyn Clark and Emily Goldthwait

Many Island students and adults have just begun a special project for the new year—writing a book to honor the life of Jena Pothier.

The project, already started on Facebook, will offer a place for those who knew Jena to share their stories, poems, letters, photographs, and more. Together, they will write a book about Jena, who died in a motor vehicle crash last June, just after returning home from completing her freshman year at Plymouth State College in New Hampshire.

She attended the Oak Bluffs School, and was a 2008 graduate of the regional high school.

Said Jena's cousin Jay Pothier, "It's been an idea of mine for a few months now. After talking it over with the family and some other people and finding that the idea was well received, I decided to start by creating somewhat of a

timeline for people to have handy. In the coming days there will be a Facebook page dedicated to the book, so everybody can keep posted."

The book will follow a timeline of her life, eighteen chapters of stories from her childhood, to her adolescence, ending with her college voyage and last summer on the Island.

Those who want to write or otherwise contribute to the book in some way can pick a time in her life and start. There is no limit to how many stories may be submitted by any person.

"I encourage everyone to submit something for this book in her memory in hopes by the time it is finished, the book will have captured who Jena was as a person through the stories that made people love her so much," Mr. Pothier stated in his Facebook message. "After going to her memorial ceremony at Plymouth State I started to think of a way to

remember Jena. I've always wanted to write a book, but I knew this one couldn't be done alone," he wrote.

"There are a lot of favorite stories of mine that involve Jena," said Julie Perry, a close friend and a 2008 graduate from the high school. "She was so full of life and love and I can't seem to keep her out of my mind."

Julie and Jena met in kindergarten at the Oak Bluffs School and had grown up together. "Jena always used to tell everyone about how we met in kindergarten and had been friends ever since. I have memories of her from that time until college," said Julie. They also attended Plymouth State together.

"It's a great thing to keep the memory of Jena alive," said Julie. "I'm still not sure if I'll submit a story to the book, but I've been contemplating it for awhile."

Mr. Pothier said, "I hope all the people whose lives she touched in such profound ways can create an ultimate keepsake in her memory."

Resolutions, wigs, and sex changes welcome new year

By Kira Shipway

While resolutions like exercise, breaking bad habits, and challenging oneself in school seem to be pledged every year, the new decade has forced students to think more about how technology is affecting their lives. One popular resolution among students this year is to spend less time on the Internet—especially Facebook.

However, keeping a resolution is easier to conjure up than to stick to. "My New Year's resolution is to not have one," said history teacher Corinne Kurtz. "They're just too much pressure."

While New Year's resolutions seem to be getting harder to maintain each year, some students remain determined. "I'm excited for the future," said junior Ashley Girard. "My resolution is to learn a new skill, like baking or knitting."

Some feel they will be able to fulfill their resolutions. "I'm proud of myself," said sophomore Truda Silberstein. "I'm keeping my reso-

lution from last year to exercise more."

To celebrate the New Year, some students journeyed to Che's Lounge, where a hoppin' drag-athon with live music was hosted on New Year's Eve. Some high schoolers attended the cross-dressers event; girls wore tuxedos, top hats, and ties, while boys donned fishnets, lacy tops, and skirts. Attendees were encouraged to dress as the opposite sex, and those who did were exempt from the \$10 cover charge. Popular high school band Pierre, The Kahoots, who performed in tights and wigs, and brothers Max and Eli Berlow played at the event.

"One girl was dressed like a hill-billy with a mullet and a mustache," said junior Nina Levin. "I honestly thought she was a man."

Many were disappointed that they couldn't stay to celebrate 2010. "Town curfew doesn't allow noise after twelve," Nina said. "So unfortunately we didn't get to count down to the New Year."

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