



The High School View

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Patriots ponder pledge

By EmmaJean Holley

The Pledge of Allegiance is now said daily at the high school. This policy reflects Massachusetts state law which states that "each teacher at the commencement of the first class of each day in all grades in all public schools shall lead the class in a group recitation of the "Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag."

Students and faculty have mixed feelings about this. "When we only said it on Mondays in our home-room, I often had to encourage people to stand up and say it," said French teacher Pierre Bonneau. "Now that the law is being enforced, I'm sometimes the only one saying it. I think that if we want these kids to understand the meaning behind the words, we need to educate them about it because I think a lot of the students

don't understand why they should say it."

Many students have a positive outlook toward pledging allegiance and view it as a patriotic homage to their country.

"It is a matter of respect to stand and at least look as though the rights we acquire from our country matter to us," said junior Sarah Gruner.

"We live in the best nation in the world, and people die for this country every day," said senior Maggie Johnson. "I think it's disrespectful not to take less than a minute out of your day to show your appreciation."

Senior Rafael Maciel believes it is the sentiment behind the pledge that makes it such a fundamental part of each morning. "One of my favorite things about this country is how patriotic people are," he said. "I feel that in order for a nation to be successful, the citizens



PHOTO BY DYLAN BROCKMEYER

Freshman Zana Van Rooyen recites the Pledge of Allegiance over the school intercom in the morning with administrative assistant Dawn Feinsmith.

must respect and be loyal to their flag, and country. The pledge shows this respect and loyalty."

On the other hand, some students choose to take advantage of the freedom to abstain from reciting the pledge.

feel supported but not oppressed."

To help teens express their creativity, the center is outfitted with a recording studio, soundboard, DJ booth and stage located below the teen center in its nightclub, the Base. "The teen center's equipment is really helping me pursue the future career in music I plan on having and helps put my previous musical experience to good use," said junior Tjark Aldeborgh, who often uses the recording studio.

The teen center also tries to embody a place where teenagers of all ages. "I have mixed feelings. I'm sad to see it go."

Had some of the RAI students remained in the high school, they could have become another dropout statistic. RAI is helping students to increase their learning ability. Graduates of RAI have gone on to medical and law school; they fly helicopters, and work as plumbers, carpenters and contractors, become parents—and more.

Junior Jeremiah Roberts, who recently moved from the high school to the RAI said, "It's hard. There's a lot of work." There are some drawbacks, though, to the closeness and smallness of the RAI community. Because of the relaxed hours that allow some students to work, some opportunities that exist in the traditional building, like electives, are not available to RAI students.

Margaret D'Angelo and Cynthia Cromwell are the teachers at RAI. Although RAI is a tight-knit community, Margaret says there are

superiority, and sectarianism," he said. "An imperative in every political system is to incite patriotic fervor among the masses. This maintains internal stability and acts as a justification of foreign policy. This is what the pledge does, and what adventitious events such as the Russian Revolution and 9/11 do. They provide a government a pretext under which to carry out any policy, regardless of its implications."

Senior Ian Tripp said, "What the law is doing is allowing those who wish to say the pledge to say the pledge. But it's essentially pledging allegiance to a strip of fabric while in the same breath acknowledging the existence of God, which I refuse to do, but I have no objection to the law itself since it's not forcing anything on me."

"I am proud to be an American," said senior Celia Mercier. "But I don't think saying words makes me more of one. What matters is what you do."

ed to its full potential, with the resources and staff available to accommodate the ideas and needs that teens may have.

Junior Jacob Lawrence said, "It's incredible and really impressive to see what this place looks like in action."

Every Friday night from 7-11, dance parties for teens 13-18, hosted by a DJ, will be held in the Base. Freshman Michael Dexter said, "The dances here will be a really fun thing to look forward to. The center is my second home; I love coming here."

sis of respect and integrity, and was named after an ex-slave, Rebecca Amos. She had to overcome difficulties in her life, much like some RAI students.

Dance parties provide outlet

By Katherine Donegan

Booming bass could be heard as teenagers cycled in and out of the Martha's Vineyard YMCA last Friday night. These teenagers were not at the Y to use the swimming pool or to do some late night weight lifting, but rather to attend the Alexandra Gagnon Teen Center's first DJ hosted teen dance party.

The DJ dance party was a step in the direction of the teen center's ambition to provide a place where teenagers can spend their weekend nights without negative influences. As Laurel Whitaker, co-assistant director of the teen center and mentor, said, "The goal is to provide a place for teenagers to come and be themselves while being safe. We wanted to create a comfortable place where teens can

Alternative education revamped

By Lily Bick

Last decade, the dropout rate at the regional high school was 1.9 percent, but it could have been higher. The Rebecca Amos Institute (RAI), an alternative education program that has been helping many students including some who might otherwise drop out of school to continue with their education, will be closing its doors and a new alternative education program will be taking its place next September.

The high school has two alternative education programs. The STAR program is for ninth and tenth graders, while the RAI is for eleventh and twelfth graders. Principal Stephen Nixon is concerned that separating the first two years of the students' high school career by system, schedule, and building is unstable. "It's not effective," he

said. "Now we'll have one continual program."

RAI is located on the high school campus, but outside of the high school building and schedule. Located in a former garden shed, RAI strives to provide opportunities for students who couldn't make it work at the traditional high school. Some have learning disabilities or other situations that make it difficult to participate in the high school. Others have found that the nontraditional learning techniques offered at RAI work better for them. "Amos is for kids who think outside the box, whose needs are not being met within the traditional building," said RAI director, Katharine Kavanagh.

"It's more nurturing, more one-on-one, and more conforming to the students' learning styles. It has really served its purpose," said guidance counselor Mary MacDon-

A return to high-school



PHOTO BY TRUDA SILBERSTEIN

MVRHS graduates spoke to seniors about college life last Thursday. Left to right Jack Wadleigh, Crystal Miske, Anastasia Thibodeau, and Randall Jette. 18 graduates attended the event.