



The High School View

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NHS and ICUP collaborate for cleanup

BY MARIN GILLIS, HARDY EVILLE AND CAMDEN NAPIOR

Over 70 participants collected 39 bags of trash at 6 different locations this past Sunday as part of a large-scale cleanup project: a collaboration between the National Honor Society (NHS) and Island Clean Up Project (ICUP).

Students picking up trash along Edgartown-West Tisbury road were greeted with the constant honking of car horns. In other areas, students were thanked by passersby. Senior and NHS group leader Bella Thorpe said, "It was nice to have the support from people driving by and to see other people in a safe way while doing something good for the planet."

Junior Finn Lewis went to East Chop to participate in the island wide clean up.

He was enthusiastic when he heard about teaming up with ICUP for the beach clean up as he spends many hours on the beach surfing. "We live on a very beautiful island and it's important we keep it like that," said Finn. "In the long term I hope this project can help be a movement to help raise awareness in other communities about keeping our earth clean."

For groups like Best Buddies, a club designed to help people with intellectual and developmental disabilities form lasting friendships with their peers, this event was an important way to get involved with the school community and participate in events and activities that are not focused on disabilities. Best Buddies advisor and school librarian Kevin McGrath felt that the cleanup day was fun and easy for anyone to take

part in. "It's a good cause and there's a lot of value in being a part of that," Mr. McGrath said. "Feeling like you're contributing and being included is amazing."

With the ever-present challenges of the pandemic, NHS knew their traditional projects and service events were unlikely to happen this year. Leaders of the NHS pitched the idea to work with ICUP co-founders seniors Max Potter and Willa Welch.

"We loved the idea of collaborating with NHS," Willa said. "We had the idea of doing a big cleanup. We've always just done one spot because we don't usually have that many people or a set group like the National Honor Society has. With that group we could make something really big and exciting." Senior and NHS co-



PHOTO COURTESY OF MAX POTTER

Nate Porterfield loads the last few bags of trash from Sunday's cleanup.

president Pete Gillis said, "It is a great safe way for students to meet and stay safely distanced to help our community."

NHS advisor Dr. Caroline Fyler said "They are really stepping up to the challenges that we are facing this year. I love my time with this group of students. We all just love where we live, and there is a lot of

satisfaction that comes out of being able to do something for the island. It's a real feel good project."

Students were excited for the opportunity to be outside helping the planet. "I've always cared about the environment," said Willa Welch. "In one year we've collected so much litter, I think over 1,000 lbs now, which seems insane."

"It's an important project right now because it is a socially-distanced event and there's a lot to be said about gathering outside and doing something that feels good, and getting to see your friends," said Dr. Fyler. "We all are feeling a little isolated and a little lonely right now, so it is a really nice MVRHS community building event." HSV

Celebrating Thanksgiving sustainably

BY CHLOE COMBRA AND BROOKE CROCKER

This Thanksgiving, students and staff from the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) are making a conscious effort to reduce their impact on the environment by taking a more sustainable and ethical approach to the traditional Thanksgiving meal.

English teacher Spencer D'Agostino, who is in his 20th consecutive year of being vegan, tries to emulate the idea of a traditional Thanksgiving style meal as much as possible: "I try to do everything that you would see in the normal meal but swap out certain components with as close a substitute as I possibly can."

He uses almond milk in his mashed potatoes, for example, 'soy nog' instead of eggnog,

and a 'tofurky' made from a blend of wheat protein and organic tofu.

Senior Sophie Nevin became vegan with friend and fellow senior Kiera McCarthy after learning about the methods by which animals are killed for human consumption. "[We] wanted to become educated on our food and mostly animal cruelty, so we watched a bunch of documentaries on Netflix about animal cruelty," said Kiera. "After [learning] how the type of food we eat affects our body and factory farming, we were really scared."

Sophie says she feels much happier and healthier now that she has adopted the vegan lifestyle. "Most of my family isn't vegan, so I'll usually cook for myself on Thanksgiving," said Sophie. "There's a lot of different recipes I use, but I don't really make a substitute for meat.

I don't make a tofurky or anything. I just make pasta dishes or vegan mashed potatoes or roasted veggies or vegan stuffing instead."

Kiera said, "The past two years I've had friendsgiving at my house with all my friends, and I've cooked a whole vegan thanksgiving. It's pretty easy because you can veganize most of the side dishes like mashed potatoes and stuffing. [For turkey] we basically make some type of tofu dish and serve it with vegan gravy."

Both environmental science teacher Debra Swanson and Mr. D'Agostino share an affinity for animal rights as well. Ms. Swanson and her husband have been vegetarian for forty years. Ms. Swanson said, "One of the reasons we don't eat meat is not because we have anything against eating meat, it has to do with where the

meat comes from, from the factories that are inhumane."

"We've always done the traditional Thanksgiving meal," she said. "For example, pumpkin pie, apple pie, mashed potatoes, and all that stuff, just without the meat. It's for ethical reasons but also environmental reasons. The amount of deforestation and the methane that the cows produce — it's really environmentally damaging."

In addition to eating plant-based in an effort to reduce environmental impact this Thanksgiving, many have made other changes to their routine, such as composting leftovers. Sophomore Clyde



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY HARDY EVILLE

Smith said, "We have a compost pile outside. We compost all leftovers that we can't eat, but most stuff just goes in the fridge and gets eaten later. We mix it up and use it in gardens around the house."

"We try to compost all our organic food waste," said Mr. D'Agostino, "But with that said, we have basically no food waste in our house because we have a toddler who will eat virtually everything." Mr.

D'Agostino also encourages sustainability by buying locally grown produce using the Community Supported Agriculture program on Martha's Vineyard.

Mr. D'Agostino said, "[Thanksgiving] definitely used to be harder. I had to drive an hour to pick up a tofurky from a health food place that I special ordered. Now I can go to most grocery stores and find one." HSV

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