

THE WESTON HIGH SCHOOL WARHORSE

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit NO. 95
Westport, CT 06880

115 School Road, Weston CT 06883

October/November 2018

Year MMXVIII, Issue II

WHS Celebrates 50th Anniversary

Snapshots of the High School in its First Decade (1968-1978)

Catrin Zharry '19
Editor-in-Chief

Flipping through the past 50 years' worth of yearbooks, a current Weston High School student might be surprised to see that the quintessential American teenager hasn't changed much since 1968. The world can always depend on the average high schooler to be perfectly comfortable going from fooling around to falling asleep in a matter of hours (or even minutes). Regardless, Weston High school students have always had the reputation of being

dents were just as tired and goofy as they are now, clubs worked just

school had in 1968, the year it first opened. The town was concerned that

magazines to filmstrips, records, tapes, and other audio-visual media."

for financial aid." Certainly, this holds true today.



as hard to gain engagement from the student body, and our athletes were just as motivated

WHS wouldn't be able to open on time due to a strike by the bricklayers, who wanted an increase in salary.

The Evening Venture in Education (often abbreviated to E.V.E.) was founded in 1971 "to present to our jaded and overly grade-conscious students a new aspect of education."

In 1974, over half of the student body was part of the music department, which often held concerts, as it does today.

It consisted of about 6-8 weeks of evening courses held at the school to teach students what they were interested in—gymnastics, pottery, behavioral psychology, etc.

The school's first spirit week was sponsored by the Pep Club in 1977. Just like today, each day had a different theme, and the grades competed in a "Battle-of-the-Walls Competition."

In one wing of the school, students were taught practical courses, such as cooking, child care, and auto mechanics. Child Development had students apply what they learned by tutoring kids in pre-school, elementary, and middle schools.



A handful of committed students ran the school store well through the 70s, selling essentials such as pens, notebooks, and even gym uniforms. (1972)

In Student Life

Students were quite close with their teachers, even joining them in the teacher's lounge once in a while to ask questions relevant to their classes or even to seek advice on

Homecoming, which we celebrated recently, was once marked by a well-known and loved parade. The gathering was led down the street by a car carrying the crowned homecoming queen, and trailed by four floats that were each built by a different grade and compared to one another in a competition.

In Clubs

The yearbook of '72 notes that Company productions made adults uncomfortable by featuring kids reflecting big truths about the

world. In contrast, last year's spring musical, *South Pacific*, covered issues of racial prejudice in the 40s, and the show was embraced for its

complexity. Each school year, the theater also held an interclass play competition, in which each grade produced and directed a one-act play.

Also in 1972, the student council was working on proposals



Powderpuff game, 1976.

dedicated workers and players—a trend which can even be spotted at the very beginning of our high school's existence.

While WHS didn't start creating

and successful. Even so, there are some notable differences between WHS then and now that shed some light on how the high school has transformed in the past five decades.

not until a few years later that the high school would teach grades 9-12 instead.

The '78 yearbook mentions that WHS started the school day at 8 am

and ended at 2pm, making the school day 45 minutes shorter than it is today.

The library featured an Instructional Materials Center

(abbreviated: IMC) where students could check out materials that ranged from "books and



their college and career options. The 1974 yearbook notes, "With college tuition costs spiraling, many seniors are turning to scholarships



Boys, dressed up as cheerleaders, watch the Powderpuff game, 1976.

yearbooks until 1972, the first few yearbooks of the 70s alone reveal that high school stu-

In the School

Few are aware of the close call the



Bird's eye view of the cafeteria, 1974.

for Open-End scheduling and a Pass/No Credit grading system. Student government was suc-



Student working on school newspaper using typewriter.

cessful in establishing an outdoor smoking area for students that same year—clearly, times have changed! In 1973, the student government listed its major problems as “lack of communication and student involvement.” For a while, the yearbooks of the 70s revealed the theme of students not believing the student government was doing much, and student officers continuously trying to change that perception.

The newspaper—then called the *Oracle*—and the literary magazine—then called



It was Latin Club tradition for the newcomers to wear togas on their first day.

Inlook, now called *Filament*—both struggled to gain contributors. Our current literary magazine would actually look much more different today if it hadn't been for the club's 1973 deci-



sion not to be limited to poetry and short stories, but also to feature essays, plays, and artwork.

The *Oracle* struggled a lot in its first few years, but seemed to pick up momentum during its rebirth in '74, when it also changed its name to *Prism*.

The Latin club, called *Agmen Primum* (“First Line”) was started in 1972 and proceeded to become one of the largest, most active clubs of the school,



Girls basketball team.

gaining over 50 members in just a few years. They began holding a yearly show in 1973 called “Nox Latina,” in which they would

perform plays such as ones depicting a Roman wedding.

The Girls Varsity Club, composed of captains and other leaders of girls' sports teams, promoted sports-

manship, helped its members gain leadership experience, and financed special sports awards and tuitions for select girls to attend physical education camps. The girls who attended these camps would later aid in teacher the P.E. classes in the middle and high schools.

Key Club admitted girls into the club for the first time in '74, even though the national club banned girls from membership. WHS's Key Club had to officially call its female members “auxiliaries” because of this rule, but nevertheless considered them full members of the club.

In Sports

Right from the beginning, the WHS girls field hockey, basketball, and volleyball teams were very strong and went far in regional competitions. The girls volleyball team always won its third consecutive Western Connecticut

Conference, and the team was always sure to win a place in the state tournament. In the 1974-75 school year, the girls swim team and girls tennis team had their first seasons.

The gymnastics team was short-lived, only surviving the '77-'78 school year before getting cut due to limited practice space. The team simply converted itself into the gymnastics club.

In 1975, the girls volleyball team played the game for 10 consecutive hours in an effort to raise money for the team. That same year, the boys cross country team held a 24-hour marathon “just to see if they could do it.”

The boys track team was notorious for practicing inside after school and zipping past unsuspecting students and teachers, who were sometimes even knocked over. The first boys soccer game held at night was in 1977.

In an interview with the football team in 1975, players called their experience on the team, “Boss, savage, and outrageous,” “A bad referee,” “Gatorade,” and “Ouch.”

In an article titled “The Mosaic of Emotions that is Basketball,” the 1973 yearbook staff vividly described the referee at one of the boys basketball team's



A giant ring sat in the main lobby at the front entrance, where students often hung out.

footbath in the entrance of the pool. But let's remember that it was just completed in January, two months late, and we should at least

forget our obligation to anything beyond our personal circumstances. Yet in all of us, no matter how preoccupied we may be, lies dormant the energy expressed in the cheerleader's shouts... And thus she becomes a symbol of what all of us feel, but few of us so fluently express, our common commitment to ourselves, the school.”

While it's clear that many things have changed in the high school since its establishment in 1968, the school atmosphere remains essentially the same. We have both



Homecoming Parade.

games: “The fat ref spits out his whistle. ‘No goal.’ He sweeps his arms before him, ‘No goal’ and chomps down on his wad of gum.” In another detailed snapshot of an athletic team, the yearbook featured an inspiring speech the boys swim coach gave to the team:

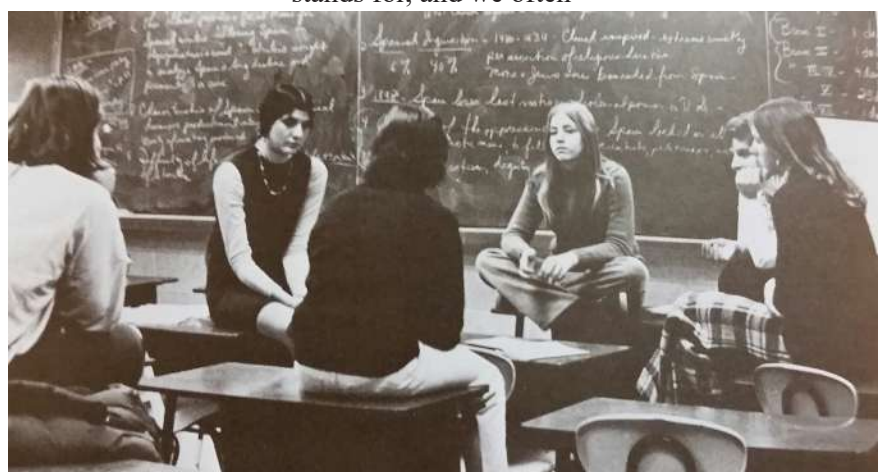
“From those of you who don't know me from my previous extensive coaching experiences, my name is CK—you can call me C or K or Coach, or anything you want, for that matter, since your mouths will be in the water most of the time. Now I know you're a little uncomfortable about the fact that the johns don't have doors and that you're likely to slip on the slime in the locker room before you tip-toe through the

be thankful that there are no more cracks in the pool, but that's a different matter entirely. My advice to you is to beat it out of the locker room quick and hop in the pool for a nice, light, quarter-mile warmup...”

A feature article on the cheerleading squad called its members “symbols of our common commitment,” describing them in appreciation. Though one would expect that high school students on the whole used to be more spirited than they are now, the writer of the article laments in 1973 that “Many of us, involved in personal affairs, become oblivious to the school spirit which is represented in all that a cheerleader stands for, and we often



failed and succeeded enough times to prove that what will always remain constant about the average WHS student is her passion to play, learn, win, and repeat. May all future graduates of WHS carry that mentality into their bright futures.



Literary magazine meeting, 1972.

National Domestic Violence Awareness Month

There is something more frightening than Halloween in October.

Charlotte Chen '20
Section Editor

October is a beautiful month—crispy brown leaves detach from their branches and sway to the ground as the weather gets cooler; little kids dress up in silly costumes as they shriek for candy, and pumpkin spice lattes come back on the menu. But October also serves as a grim yet important reminder of the things people are often oblivious to: October is national domestic violence awareness month.

This tradition of awareness began in October 1981 as the "Day of Unity" founded by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, "mourning those who have died because of domestic violence, celebrating those who have survived, and connecting those who work to end violence." With every year, the movement grew into the national event it is now.

In a single minute, an average of 20 people have been physically abused nationwide, summing up to over 10 million female and male victims a year. In the words of Juri Garone, "Domestic violence knows no bounds; it happens across religions, ethnicities, genders, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, ages; really, it has no limits. It takes

on many faces." One in three teens in the U.S. will fall victim to physical, sexual, emotional, or verbal abuse from a dating partner. One in three teens.

In the words of Officer Joe Mogollon, "People should be aware of the long lasting effects that domestic or dating violence has. Violent relationships in adolescence can have some serious ramifications by putting the victims at higher risk for substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behaviors and further domestic violence. Half of youth who have been victims of both dating violence and rape attempt suicide, compared to 12.5% of non-abused girls and 5.4% of non-abused boys."

So how can you tell if you or someone you know is in an abusive relationship? Typically, your partner will check your phone, email, or social networks without permission, be extremely jealous or insecure, belittle you, isolate you from family and friends, make false accusations, have constant mood swings towards you, be possessive, physically inflict pain on you,

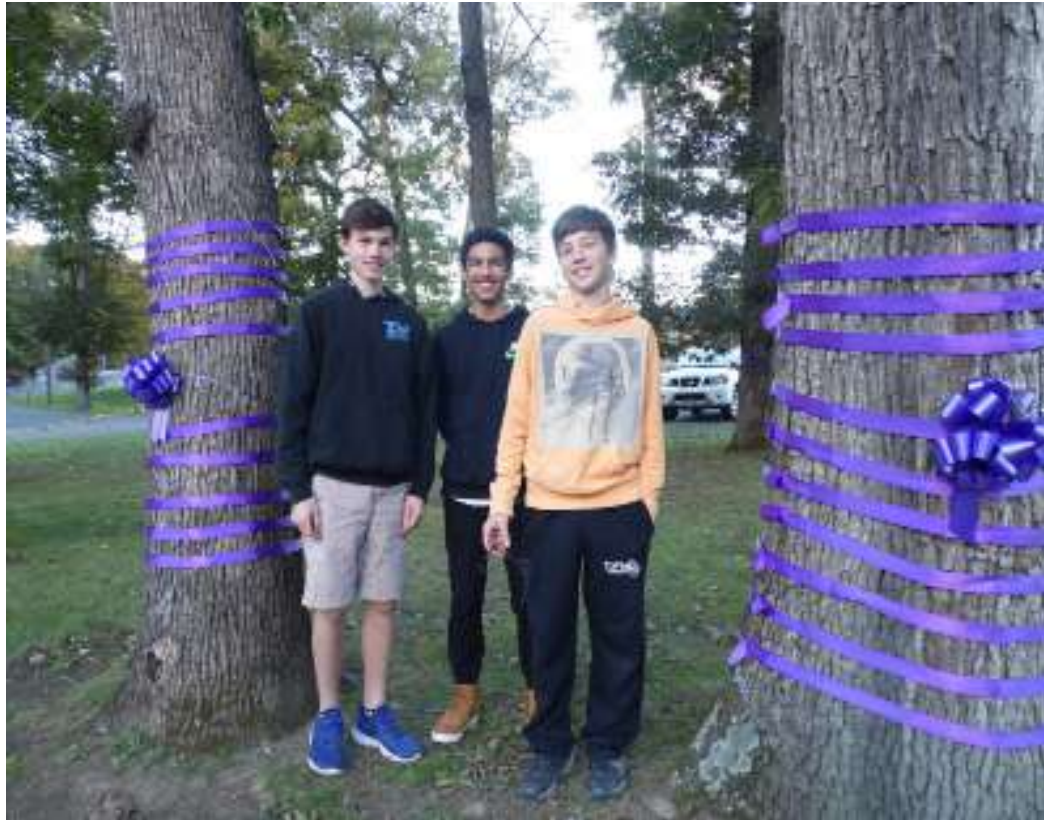
tell you what you can and cannot do, repeatedly pressure you to have sex, threaten or blackmail you, demand to know your location at all times, and this list goes on and on.

identify these behaviors. One of the best things you can do for a friend is to be supportive, and to keep your door open. One of the first places they'll look for help is in

tions you can visit online are: breakthecycle.org, loveisrespect.org, and thatsnotcool.com. You can even contact a text line or a chat line: text LOVEIS to 22522. Local

helpful magnets that you can take home with the names of resources and their phone numbers. There is also a statewide domestic violence hotline 888-774-2900. There are even organizations within the school fighting the battle against domestic violence, such as Teen PeaceWorks, which conducts interactive workshops on healthy relationships and dating violence. Remember, you are never alone, and there will always be people around you who support you.

In honor of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the Teen PeaceWorks Club has worked with surrounding organizations to tie purple ribbons around trees to symbolize the victims of domestic violence: 13 ribbons with bows to represent the number of domestic violence related arrests in Weston in the past year, and 60 ribbons on trees that represent the average number of domestic violence related calls that the Weston Police Department responds to in a year. These ribbons serve as a visual to illustrate what many are oblivious to—the victims and wide-reaching scope of domestic violence. Perhaps you'll see them when your bus drives past these trees, or when you're taking a nice walk, but just remember what each of those ribbons represents.



A picture of some of the trees on Weston Road tied with symbolic purple ribbons. Pictured (from left to right) is Harrison Muller '22, Renzo Garone '22, and William Riley '22.

Photo Courtesy of Mrs. Juri Garone

Domestic violence is a multitude of things, and it can sometimes be difficult to spot. But when you do, there are many important things to do.

If you notice signs of domestic violence in a friend or family member, start the conversation. Let them know that you are aware of certain things that concern you. Ask them how their partner's behavior makes them feel, and help them

a friend. It is extremely important to spread awareness; only one third of teens in an abusive relationship tell someone about it. If you suspect something is happening, be open, and be there to help.

If you need help, don't hesitate to ask for it. There will always be people to help you: friends, family, officers, teachers, and neighbors. Some national organiza-

organizations are here to help too, such as the Domestic Violence Crisis Center (203-588-9096), who offers counseling, sustainability, legal services, and preventative education. You can also dial 211 to reach a helpline, contact the police at 203-222-2600 or in school you can come see Officer Mogollon (203-221-6522), or a school psychologist or counselor. The guidance office has

No Barriers Field Trip



Twenty students from WHS attended the No Barriers Field trip in New York City on October 5. (From left to right) Matthew Longhitano '22, Roger Bos '22, Victoria Simon '20, Johnny Lintel '22. -*Photo Courtesy of Roger Bos '22.*



(From left to right) Brooklyn Boehme '21, Daniela Bustamante '21, Annie Weinbrum '21, Maggie Maccabe '22, Isabella Shafer '21.

Photo Courtesy of Brooklyn Boehme '21.

Welcome to WHS: A Freshman Perspective

Lecia Sun '22
Staff Writer

Every school year, a new group of freshmen enter WHS beginning their high school careers. The event is full of stressful and exciting frenzies, as freshmen adjust to their new high school routine and environment. For some students, walking into the high school for the first time was like waking up in an entirely new world. To others, it was like stepping into a crowded room where they knew no one and still saying "Oh, I got this."

Here's a short list of what the high school is like to some of this year's freshmen:

Harrison Moy: "The hardest aspect of the high school to adjust to is the schedule because it is completely different from the middle school."



Rianne Withington (pictured above): "I formed many new friendships from the volleyball team. Everyone on the team is so enthusiastic and caring - I love it."



Felix Louit (pictured above): "The food is amazing."

Makenzie Lehman: "I like all of my teachers because they are all energetic, and they make the class challenging but interesting."

Katie Franco: "I really enjoy Honors Biology because there are a lot of labs and hands on activities, which makes the class more interactive."

Boys Soccer & Girls Swim and Dive: SWC Champs!



On Thursday, November 1, Weston Boys Soccer beat Joel Barlow 1-0, winning the soccer South-West Conference for the first time in Weston history! The Weston team could feel the support of the entire town behind it, with 600 Westonites at the game to cheer their home team on. *Photo Above Courtesy of Ms. Kathleen Moore*

Girls Swim and Dive secured their fourth straight SWC title!



A Senior's Reflection and Advice

Nicole Sztachelski '21
Staff Writer

As we approach the third month of school, students are officially stepping away from their summer routines. New classes, teachers, and expectations replace the ritual of sleeping in and relaxing by the beach on a warm summer day. Freshmen, new to high school, worry what their next four years here have in hold for them. The rest of us, even seniors, carry the same anticipation.

Not too long ago, the class of 2019 was starting their high school career, and now it's come to an end

as they wait for their college acceptance letters. Speaking with senior Hannah Greene, the best moments of her high school experience happened when she was spending time with her close friends and appreciating the small things. Greene says, "The most important thing to know is that you shouldn't be afraid to reach out to other people. Everyone eventually ends up with the people they're supposed to be with and the people that they will be happiest with, and that's what high school is about."

Greene, who is the President of Save The Children Club and captain of indoor and

outdoor track, explains what her concerns as a freshman were. "They were really normal. I was concerned about balancing sports and school, and even school by itself because I knew it was going to be a lot different in terms of the workload."

From playing a sport year-round to participating in one of the many clubs offered at school, stress can become a major aspect of a student's life. But how exactly can we keep our stress minimal while still doing the things we love? Greene says, "You need to know yourself and know what you are capable of. But either way, clubs and

sports help you learn to be more productive and they're a lot of fun".

Greene's years at WHS have left her with a valuable lesson in life. "I've learned not to be afraid to put myself out there and try new things. It's really important to start pushing your limits whether it's athletically, academically, or socially in high school."

Whether you're a current freshman, sophomore, junior or senior, the rest of this year has something to offer you. Will you simply let it pass by, or will you take a step out of your comfort zone and seize it?



Hannah Greene '19
Photo Courtesy of Hannah Greene.

The New Educators in Town: Meet Our Four New Staff

Eliza Banbury '21
Section Editor

Teachers are the heart of a school, and this year in Weston High School we have four new ones. Ms. Randi Green has joined our counseling department as the first College and Career Counselor in Weston. Mr. Nick Torres is the newest Social Studies teacher. Mr. Michael Aitkenhead is our new Environmental Science teacher, and Mrs. Stefanie Benson has joined him in the science department as the new Biology teacher. I spoke with all four of these wonderful educators to welcome them to Weston and to ask them some questions.

Ms. Randi Green

Ms. Green's office is in the back left of the counseling department, and there is a taped up piece of printer paper saying just that. Walking in, it's comfortable and refined. The trademark college pennants are hung up along one wall. The ceiling is unfinished - the office is "industrial chic", as Ms. Green jokes.

Sitting down, she welcomes me in and we commiserate over the early-morning exhaustion we both feel. Immediately, it's easy to see that she is friendly, funny, and absolutely smart - the best kind of educator.

She says that Weston has been great - it reminds her of her previous school in Mountain Lakes, New Jersey, a small town similar to Weston, where education was central to the town just as it is here.

Ms. Green hails herself from a Long Island high school and the University of Florida ("Go Gators!"). Her high school was Catholic, and her favorite teacher - who was both her calculus teacher and the school's principal - was Brother Shane,

who both challenged her academically and was open-minded and unique.

To her, Weston is different than her past jobs because of the tight-knit community, and the community's general focus and enthusiasm for academics. That's also her favorite part of Weston so far - the enthusiasm. She loves how many students and teachers chose to make appointments already, how excited students are for the next step in their lives.

This year, as the first person ever in this position, she is excited to "understand how things were done before, assess the community, implement programs and resources that they maybe didn't have" and try to give the students the best experience she can. She can't wait to get to know the juniors



*Ms. Randi Green,
College and Career Counselor.*

and younger kids and be a part of their entire process. To younger students who will get to know her later in their high school career, she hopes they understand that her goal is to have the most positive post-secondary planning process possible. She wants to support every student, at every level, whatever their goals are. Don't be intimidated by the college process, she says; everyone has a place they belong, and her job is to help find that place.

Mrs. Stefanie Benson

Mrs. Benson is in Mr. Grace's old room. I walk in and it is

freezing; she has closed the doors to try to retain some heat, but still, both our teeth chatter as I say hello.

Mrs. Benson has a bachelor's in Biology from USC, an education-field masters from Citadel, and is cur-



*Mrs. Stefanie Benson,
Biology teacher.*

rently finishing up her doctorate in a different education field. She went to high school in Pennsylvania, where her most impactful teacher was her senior year biology teacher, who "fostered [her] interest in the subject, even though [she] wasn't necessarily an A student". She has taken this approach into her own bio teacher career and says that the thing she cares about most in any of her students is their approach to learning, their curiosity, their effort; not their grades.

To her, Weston is different because of its community; "it's so collaborative," she says, "the teachers, the administration, the students, the parent's; the dynamic between everyone is great". This year, she is really excited to see all her students improve: "that's what every teacher pulls out at the end of the day: how did their students improve, become better individuals in that subject". Students going into her class should know that she has high expectations for behavior and ambition; if a student walks into class every day and tries their best, she'll be

more than satisfied.

Mr. Nick Torres

Mr. Torres and I talked over email, and I explored his website for a bit. There, he has photos of him, his wife Jackie, and their dog Dill. Not shown is their cat, Starbuck. The photos detail trips all over the world, his favorite being Rome, Istanbul, and Berlin.

Mr. Torres went to UVA, where he earned his BA in history. His focus was American History, but he took a variety of classes. Some of his favorites were Reformation European History, Law and Judaism, and West

African History. He later went to the graduate school of education at the University of Virginia, and he earned his Master of Teaching degree in Secondary Instruction in 2009. Before his higher education, he graduated from nearby Fairfield High School ("back when it was just one school"). His favorite teacher was his 11th grade US History teacher. "It that was the first time I struggled in that content area," he said. "I didn't particularly like him at the time, but when I reflected on the experience, I was very appreciative that he was a tough teacher".

What he really loves about Weston is the spirit. He previ-



Mr. Nick Torres, Social Studies teacher.

ously taught at magnet schools without sports, where school spirit really took a back burner. "I thought the Homecoming week celebrations were really

cool, especially Deck the Doors, and the Powderpuff game," he told me. "Those were things that I never saw at the magnet schools, and are really important for making a school into a community". Before students go into his class, he says they should understand he sees a class as different members of the same team. Classes aren't contests - they have no winners or losers. Everyone, himself included, are all on the same said, and every member of the group has strengths to offer.

Mr. Michael Aitkenhead

Mr. Aitkenhead's classroom is at the very end of the G wing, basically the corner of the school. He says that it's one of the reasons he likes Weston; he has his own classroom, rather than moving around between six different ones like he did at Staples for 15 years. He also loves the view of the forest out the back windows, and the kids at Weston, who he sees as less entitled and more responsible than past students of his.

He cites the "clean" lunch tables at the end of every lunch wave (who knew!) that surprised his at his first lunch duty. Weston, in general, has been "great so far, a great transition; a bit smaller than Staples, with a tighter community".

He went to high school in Milford, and his most memorable teacher ever was Dr. Hall, who "showed [Mr. A] a completely different way of viewing the world, and [he] has never been the same since". This year, he is looking forward to just teaching courses he's teaching.

"Environmental science is my passion," he tells me. "Get me into a classroom with interested, motivated kids, and that's my happy place". Students going into his class should know he is hard but fair and has high expectations. He really believes in the value of what he is teaching, that these lessons can guide students through their lives and teach them important lessons. He wants students to succeed and views the student/teacher partnership as give and take. Most of all, he truly cares about what is he teaching.

Weston is graced with an intelligent, dedicated staff of teachers, administrators, counselors, security officers, janitorial staff,



*Mr. Michael Aitkenhead,
Environmental Science teacher.*

and lunch workers. This year, three educators were added to that staff, and we welcome them with open arms. They, just like the rest of the WHS personnel, put so much energy every day into providing us with the fantastic education we are so lucky to have. So welcome to Ms. Green, Mr. Torres, Mrs. Benson, and Mr. Aitkenhead; thank you for dealing with us, and good luck.

They, just like the rest of the WHS personnel, put so much energy every day into providing us with the fantastic education we are so lucky to have. So welcome to Ms. Green, Mrs. Benson, and Mr. Aitkenhead; thank you for dealing with us, and good luck.

Homecoming Highlights



Girls Swim and Dive Team dresses up for its team spirit day. (From left to right) Katie Franco '22, Sophia Piscitell '21, and Nicole Linell '21.
Photo Courtesy of Lecia Sun '22.



The annual Powderpuff game from the view of the pep band.
Photo Courtesy of Lecia Sun '22.



Pictured left and top right: Sophomore decorations for Deck-the-Walls.
Photos Courtesy of Nicole Sztachelski '21.



Margaret and Venla by R. L. Rhyse

In Book Fourteen, *Margaret and Venla*, Margaret's saga continues: "A mechanical problem had delayed our Lufthansa flight, causing us to arrive late for Catherine's memorial service. I felt guilty but relieved. These events are particularly hard on the young for whom life is believed a given and not a gift."

R. L. Rhyse, a former resident of Greenwich, Connecticut, is the author of the books in the Margaret of Greenwich® Young Adult series. These include *Margaret of Greenwich*, *Margaret and Erika*, *Margaret at War*, *Margaret in Tokyo*, *Margaret and Eve*, *Margaret and Velda*, *Margaret and Emily*, *Margaret and Hillary*, *Margaret in London*, *Margaret at Barnard*, *Margaret at Barnard/Part Two: Deliverance*, *Margaret in Berlin*, and *Margaret in Manhattan*.

Read free chapters of *Margaret and Venla* at amazon.com, B&N.com, or the iBook store. This book is also available in a print edition.

www.margaretofgreenwich.com

"The idea hit me like my period, a little surprising and unwanted. You can often find a pattern after clearing the random noise."

Margaret and Venla is Book Fourteen in the Margaret of Greenwich® Young Adult series by R. L. Rhyse and published by WYSTON BOOKS, INC. These novels narrate the lives of a poor teenager and her wealthy friends in the richest town in America.

Greenwich's serial rapist turns to murder even as Margaret's worries skyrocket: odd bodily symptoms appear; a sex trafficking gang enters her life; and a powerful official nicknamed Lucifer (The Devil) requests their meeting.

But Margaret has allies too: Vladimir, a former general of Russia's Presidential Security Service, who considers her a daughter; Hedy, a shadowy figure in the Bundesnachrichtendienst, Germany's Federal Intelligence Service; a lawyer, Margaret's father, whose actions exemplify courage; and her boyfriend, Randy, who is the love of her life.

Pressure on the Press

Kelvin Green '20
Section Editor

A startling event has shaken Weston's quaint, self-contained community; an event profound in its implications, and heartbreaking in its poignancy. The Weston Forum has ceased publication.

After 49 years of conscientious reporting on the ongoings of our small home town, The Weston Forum announced in its October 11th issue that it would cease publication. The HAN Network, which is responsible for the The Weston Forum, stated that it will also cease publication of the Redding Pilot and the Easton Courier, as well as its online website. Such a massive rescaling begs the question: Why?

In a public statement, Publisher and CEO of the HAN

Network, Martin V. Hersam, said that "Due to economic forces buffeting our industry... we just could not sustain a publishing business here any longer". Although the company will continue to publish weekly newspapers covering Darien, New Canaan, Wilton, Ridgefield, Milford, Trumbull and Shelton, harsh economic realities have forced the HAN Network to dramatically downsize its business in the area. From merging coverage of Weston, Redding, and Easton into one publication, to streamlining their online presence, and finally dropping the towns entirely, the HAN Network is responding to "the recent volatility of the newsprint market".

Indeed, the entire newspaper industry has been upended in recent years. Debates surrounding the accuracy and impartial-



Photo Courtesy of The Weston Forum

ity of the press and the role of this time-honored institution in a technologically evolving and digitized world have sparked many controversies and discussions. But the most pressing concern in the eyes of the newspaper printing business is simple. People are not reading the paper anymore.

Mr. Hersam explains that despite the "best efforts" of employees and "years of strategic planning, retooling

and restructuring, we could not overcome the economic realities of tepid advertising and subscriber interest in this market." He concluded: "Newspapering is a business we truly love and it saddens us to leave after such a long run.

Unfortunately we could not operate at a financial loss here any longer". Hersam isn't the only one who is "saddened" by these turn of events. Without the local paper, how are our WHS

athletes and scholars to be recognized by our community for their accomplishments? How are the events pertinent to the community to be communicated? In a town numbering just over 10,000 residents, and a high school of about 850 students, what constitutes "news" in our area often involves the schools, and it is this connection between the town and the schools which is now at risk.

Without a local press what is to become of our community ties? My concerns in this regard extend beyond those of a Westonite and WHS student. The press is essential to civil society. Our nation has evolved on the principle of informed democracy and thus, an informed electorate is the cornerstone of our entire political system. With the midterm elections approaching, these

issues form a point of significant concern. How are aspiring local politicians suppose to connect with voters without the aid of local newspapers to spread their message? Although we still have The New York Times, The Washington Post, and The Wall Street Journal, these national papers cannot capture, or speak directly to, Weston's unique personality.

It will now be up to residents to seek information pertinent to our community independent of a local printed press. We shall have to reach out, self-educate, and connect if we want to learn about town events, school initiatives, and community gatherings. But most of all, we shall have to reach out to each other in order to maintain the bonds that bind Westonites together as a community.

The Truth of College Tours

Kelvin Green '20
Section Editor

It's that time of year! Seniors are flooding the hallway of the counseling office, most of them afflicted with the same zombie-like expression, a unique mixture of exhaustion and trepidation, like they just pulled an all-nighter frantically writing, and then rewriting, their college essays; or like they spent the weekend cramming in a semester's worth of volunteer hours in order to check the appropriate box on the common app; or perhaps they are still trying to up their SAT score with countless hours of additional test prep, all while participating in sports, extracurricular activities, and AP classroom

discussions. Juniors, and proactive Sophomores, watch in horror, knowing all too well what awaits in a few short months. Freshman, and the more laid back Sophomores, might be casually aware of the increased activity in the counseling office, but for the most part, they have yet to fall victim to the process of the almighty college application. They might even have enjoyed Halloween.

I am a Junior. Like many of my fellow classmates, I am in the middle of touring prospective colleges with my caring, but overly involved, parents. I don't know about you, but the unbridled enthusiasm of my parents leads me to suspect that these college tours are more

about a their second chance to attend some hypothetical dream college than helping me make an informed decision. Every tour is the same: mom eagerly raises her hand to ask embarrassing questions of the admissions officer all while she salivates over program descriptions in the course catalogue, and dad is engulfed in a cloud of nostalgia reminiscing about what life was like when he was in college. Amusing, but not particularly helpful. I feel for my little brother, who at age twelve is invariably dragged from campus to campus, like a reluctant puppy tugged along on a leash. As a preteen, he is anything but self-conscious, apprehensive and uptight.

Unabashed, he asked our student guides a barrage of questions, many of which were surprisingly insightful. Do you have Xbox? What if I don't like the cafeteria food? Are friends allowed in your dorm room? How late is breakfast served? Can I bring my cat?

College tours are helpful, because it would be difficult to commit to spending four years away from home in an unknown environment. But it's equally difficult to get a real sense of what it would be like to be a student at a particular college or university when all you have to go by is a brief sales pitch from the admissions staff, a quick walking tour of campus which highlights the facade of a handful



Photo Courtesy of Swarthmore College

of iconic buildings, and the answers to your younger sibling's imprudent questions. I suppose that if you had the ability to spend additional time on campus -- observing students in a variety of settings, talking to faculty or sitting in on a class -- it might be easier to determine fit. Unfortunately, for WHS upperclassmen, time is the one com-

modity that's in short supply. I guess choosing the right college is a little tricky. So make the best of the limited time you have while visiting campus -- talk to teachers, hang out in the library, eat in the cafeteria, ask questions, lots of questions. And in case you are wondering, no -- you can't bring your cat.

A Simple Cure to the Deathly Silent Communication

Zoe Yung '19
Staff Writer

Everyday silent communication claims new victims. People are suffering from the ill side effects of the epidemic that has been raging at full force for years: the overuse of social media. These side effects include but are not limited to chronic and severe stress, worry, and anxiety (Dennis-Tiwary). In fact, “over the past decade, anxiety has overtaken depression as the most common reason students seek mental health counseling” (Dennis-Tiwary). The severity of this issue is evidenced by the most fatal consequence of this addiction: suicide. Addiction to social media is a problem that demands immediate action. The fix is simple but requires commitment.

Social media has undoubtedly revolutionized the means by which communication occurs and has

allowed for an extraordinarily unprecedented influx of exchanges of ideas and cultures. Social media has enabled people to stay in touch with each other and with the news both locally and globally. Senior Adrik Scaramuzza described social media to be “helpful in increasing one’s availability to talk and in bridging the distance gap between people in different countries.” Although social media has increased communication in those regards, it has significantly decreased face-to-face communication and has created detrimental effects to both society and to the health of individuals.

Each time one looks at an image on social media that is pleasing to the eye, the brain releases dopamine. The more and more pictures a person consumes, the more and more dopamine is released. Each time a person goes on social media, the duration of time one spends

on it will increase because the brain will need to release more dopamine in order for that person to feel that same level happiness. The brain will hunger for more and more dopamine for the feel-good sensation and the addiction has been

be very difficult at first but over time, replacing the source of the dopamine triggers will increase thus making it easier to be away from social media for extended periods of time. However, Junior Momo Burns-Min was in agreement with

time on social media—fifteen, three-to-four hours, and four hours respectively—they all preferred face-to-face communication separate from social media.

Face to face communication is another quick and easy fix that provides immediate benefits like quality time with others that is so essential for building trust in relationships. Scaramuzza says that “while social media increases one’s availability to talk, overall, social media is harmful because people rely on it too much to communicate.” Communication through technology muddles the emotional aspect of talking with others but speaking to each other in person allows for one to be more in tune with how others—and even one’s self—are feeling. Much social anxiety stems from being out of practice with real face to face communication with other people but research

has shown that happier people are actually those who are actively involved in sports and youth groups—places where there is a lot of meaningful social interactions. Inserting yourself in environments that encourage conversation outside the scope of technology also has its benefits. Verbal speaking is great for enhancing and adding to one’s vocabulary as one continually finds new ways to express oneself in ways other than emojis.

All in all, disentangling oneself from social media by devotion to more physical activities like sports or get-togethers with other people are two simple ways one can experience the same happiness—if not even more rewarding—they believe social media can offer them. All it takes is follow through and commitment.



Time spent on social media and the internet.
Photo Courtesy of **Zoe Yung '19**.

established. Exercise is a quick way to get the endorphins your body loves and is also rewarding. A three-month study showed that one hour of yoga significantly increased dopamine levels (Julson).

Physical separation from an electronic device may

both Seniors Adrik Scaramuzza and Illona Bos who believed that the physical removal from an electronic device is the easiest and probably most effective way to combat social media addiction. While Momo, Adrik, and Illona admitted that they spent a considerable amount of

A Review of Halloween Movie Marathons

Emily Semaya '21
Section Editor

October 31st is a night of trick or treating, dressing up with friends, and enjoying all the creepy festivities, however many television stations have been making Halloween a month long adventure. Here is your ultimate review of 2018’s Halloween movie marathons.

One of the most dedicated and famous marathons is Freeform (formerly known as ABC Family)’s “31 Nights of Halloween”.

Kicking it off strong, Freeform starts with showing ParaNorman, The Nightmare Before Christmas, and Hocus Pocus.

These three are the most played of the month on the channel, with the addition of The Addams Family. On October 31st, Freeform actually has a marathon of Hocus Pocus, with the movie playing on repeat for twelve hours.

AMC FearFest has another take on Halloween movies with

showing exclusively horror movies. Starting on October 14th, they show a mix of classic horror movies like The Poltergeist

and The Exorcist, and some lesser known, but equally terrifying films. FearFest makes sure all nine Halloween

movies are shown at least once.

A childhood classic, Disney Channel’s Monstober brings nostalgia

to many. Most of them lighter movies, Monstober offers Disney classics such as Twiches and Halloweentown, while

continuing to create more movies, the latest being ZOMBIES.

Of course, most channels are showing at least some Halloween movies, these are just the most all encompassing and most famous. Happy Halloween!



Halloween decorations in the school library.
Photo Courtesy of **Catrin Zharyy '19**.

Unified Sports Brings Students and Communities Together

Ava Zielinski '21
Section Editor

“Unified Sports is a program supported by Special Olympics that strives to create a culture of inclusion and respect for individuals of all abilities. Ninety-Five percent of CT high schools have Unified Sports programs. Weston currently has a combined middle school/high school program. There are 11 Athletes and the number of partners varies weekly. The goal is to have consistent partners so that a relationship can be fostered with between the athletes and their partners. “ - Mrs. Nancy Johnston
Unified Sports started in 2008 as an

outreach of Special Olympics. There are currently 2,100 schools participating across 42 states. The primary goal of Unified Sports is to foster inclusion, acceptance and respect. One hundred and eleven high schools, roughly 85% of eligible high schools in Connecticut, have Unified TEAMS. In the Unified Sports team model, each student athlete with a disability is paired with a non-disabled student athlete. The pair train and compete together providing both sports training and peer modeling as well as developing friendships and providing

a more positive understanding of students with disabilities.

Weston High started a Unified Sports TEAM in the spring of 2014 with

the supervision of Coach Dennis Richitelli.

We received additional grant money in the fall of 2014 to further support the program. Under the direction of Coach Jason Akacki, we were able to expand the program to support 3 seasons, soccer, bowling and track. There were six Athletes and seven to ten Unified Partners that met on Monday after school from 2:30-3:30 to train.

Each year, we invite other SWC schools to come to Weston for soccer and basketball events. We also bowl at Nutmeg Lane three times during

the winter season and SWC Unified teams from Bethel and Joel Barlow have joined us for bowling. Unified Sports events are attended by staff, the Athletes families, Circle of Friends club members and Weston students. We have travelled to a basketball game at Barlow and hope to be able to travel again this year. We also hosted several school wide Zumba events last year and received instruction in Yoga. We attend the Youth Leadership Summit in Hartford every December and the last two years we were represented at both state and SWC end of the year sports banquets.



Unified Zumba. From left to right: Chris Burns '21 (red shirt), Jesse Rosenberg, Sophia Ericsson, John Layseca (Zumba instructor).
Photo Courtesy of Mrs. Nancy Johnston

After receiving a grant from Special Olympics Connecticut,

five Athletes and five Unified partners. They trained for Track under

Recruitment: Stressful But Rewarding

Zoe Yung '19
Staff Writer

Every Senior knows the date November 1st. Like Black Friday shopping for Christmas presents, the impending arrival of this day puts people in a frenzied scramble to get things done before time runs out. Guidance offices are packed with students anxiously lining up to get letters of recommendation and advice. Parents nervously hover over their child's shoulder, credit card in hand, ready to pay for their child's costly wish list. This expensive wish list is comprised of the different colleges their high schooler hopes to get admitted to. November 1st is the deadline for the Early Decision applications for college.

Unlike most college applicants, Seniors Siera Daly and Charlotte Proceller have approached the college application in a much different process: committing early to a college through recruitment of a sport (swimming) that they excel in. Applying to college through this method

shares many similarities and differences as the regular approach to the application process.

They have found--contrary to popular belief--the process to be equally, if not slightly more, labor intensive. Initially,



Siera Daly '19, recruited by Dartmouth College for swimming, dons her future school's gear.
Photo Courtesy of Siera Daly '19.

Proceller thought “I'm committed to the school so I don't have to apply to the school.” Unbeknownst to many, those who are recruited to play a sport in college must still apply to the school itself.

Proceller says the process “is still stressful because I still have to do the sport and I still have to do well and perform well. I still

have to work hard; I have to do [college], and that sport, and try to have a life outside of that sport.”

Like Proceller, Daly found the application process to be “very stressful because it added another factor,

another thing that needed to fit. Not only do the academics need to fit, but so does the swimming.” Daly furthered, “test scores do matter and all of that stuff is still important.”

Daly and Proceller began building their swimming profile at an early age. Because Daly saw her older sister go through the recruitment process, she decided that she too wanted to be recruited. “I kind of always wanted to be recruited because I have been swimming for so

long,” explained Daly. She continued, “I have been swimming competitively very seriously since I was nine years old.” Both Daly and Proceller have spent years training to meet times that would put them in a position to be recruited.

Their hard work is not without its benefits and reciprocity. Daly and Proceller's emails have been flooded with colleges wooing them; colleges can begin expressing their interest in them as early as their Junior year through informal emails and can formally reaching out them beginning of Senior year. Daly and Proceller's talent puts them in a comfortable position with much power as they can choose which college they like best out of the numerous colleges vying for them.

Proceller was strongly pursued by four schools. Choosing which college she wanted came with little difficulty. “I liked UConn the most. I liked their program. I

liked their swim team. I like their coaching philosophy,” explained Proceller.

Six highly ranked schools were all vying for Daly. In deciding, she narrowed her choices to three colleges, Georgetown, Colgate, and Dartmouth. While Colgate had familial ties (her older sister swam for Colgate), Dartmouth was the college that had the most meaning to her as its location of New Hampshire has always been important to her family who makes

ing where you think the best academics are and which has the best alumni networks, and where swimming fits in.... There's a lot of different factors that go into deciding.” Spending a weekend with each of the teams made it harder for her to choose because she fell in love with each of the different swim families. Daly ultimately chose Dartmouth because she “loved the coaches and the team is super nice. The campus is super beautiful.”

Committing to college clears the biggest hurdle in the college process. “I feel so good. It is so nice to know where I'm going. It's nice because I don't have to worry as much and can focus on school,” exclaimed Proceller.

Daly shared similar sentiments. “It is so nice. Once I committed, it definitely took off a lot of stress. It's a big relief.”



Charlotte Proceller '19, wearing swag for the University of Connecticut, which recruited her for swimming.
Photo Courtesy of Charlotte Proceller '19.

frequent trips there. “It comes down to find-

Top Sports Stories

Liam Crowe '21
Staff Writer

1. The 2018-2019 NBA season is underway! The Boston Celtics beat the Philadelphia 76ers. The defending champions, the Golden State Warriors, beat the OKC Thunder as they began their journey to 3 straight titles. LeBron James also made his much anticipated LA Lakers debut but lost 128-119 against the Portland Trail Blazers.

2. The Boston Red Sox defeated the LA Dodgers in the World Series.

3. On October 14th, Tom Brady and the New England Patriots defeated the undefeated Kansas City Chiefs 43-40 in a game that's been considered an instant classic.

4. On October 8th, New Orleans Saints QB Drew Brees passed Peyton Manning for most passing yards in NFL history against the Washington Redskins

5. The 2018-2019 NHL season kicked off with a dramatic OT game between rivals Montreal Canadiens and the Toronto Maple Leafs

6. In the Premier League, the teams of Chelsea, Manchester City, and Liverpool are all tied for 1st place. Manchester United is spiraling out of control as manager Jose Mourinho continues to make poor choices for the team. United's fan base is calling for "An end to the regime."

7. After getting blown out 34-13 by the Philadelphia Eagles, the New York Giants record has slipped to 1-5 as tension rises for QB Eli Manning to be replaced.

8. Philadelphia Eagles running back Jay Ajayi tore his ACL on October 7th in a game against the Minnesota Vikings, a blow to the Eagles as well as fantasy participants because Ajayi was a top fantasy player.

9. "The Notorious" Conor McGregor has asked for a rematch against rival Khabib Nurmagomedov after McGregor was attacked post-fight by the Russian's training team. Khabib attacked McGregor's coach who was in the crowd, causing a riot in the arena.

10. NBA star Jimmy Butler of the Minnesota Timberwolves, after requesting a trade that didn't go through, created chaos inside the organization as by criticizing his teammates for lack of effort and divided the team before the season started.

Rivals Come Together in Co-op Ice Hockey Program

Zoe Yung '19
Staff Writer

Rivaling schools—Weston High School and Joel Barlow High School will be teaming together with Abbott Tech High School in a new division three boy's co-op ice hockey team.

Co-oping—the merging of two or more teams due to a shortage of players from each respective team—is not a program unfamiliar to this small town. Three years ago, ice hockey players at Weston High School had the option to compete on a co-op team with Staples High School—a partnership that eventually ended because Staples High School gained enough players to sustain their own team.

A freshman at that time, Travis Nussbaum '19, a student at Weston High School, had the option to compete on this co-op team but instead, chose to play on a club team independent of the high school. Connecticut is one of two states in the United States that regulate that a high school ice hockey player cannot play for both a club and high school team at the same time thus why Nussbaum chose to play club instead of for the high school team.

He explained "the advantages of not joining were that I would end up getting better with my club team because the hockey players who play club in Connecticut are a lot better than the hockey players who play high school because everyone opts to play club instead of playing high school so I would get a lot bet-

ter and I would just improve my game more."

Now a senior and seasoned ice hockey player, Nussbaum will be playing on this new co-op team with Joel Barlow and Abbott Tech High School instead of playing with his club team. He cites his reason as "It's senior year so I might as well play for the high school team" and with his experience, hopes to bring this young team to the next level—

from division three to division two—by the end of the season. Reasons aside from the glamour of playing for a more competitive club team for why one might choose to join a high school hockey team would be, as athletic director Mark Berkowitz describes, the privilege of getting to play and representing your own town.

Mr. Berkowitz continues, "Whatever the sport may be, when you get to wear the Weston colors and know that you're representing Weston High School, I think that's special. I think that I want to try and have every student who wants that opportunity, I want to find a way for them to get that opportunity and that's why this co-op is important."

This year, ice hockey players will be representing and wearing their Weston

colors in a new way. As they are part of a team comprised of three schools, they will be wearing jerseys representing those three schools as seen in both the color and initials of each school. When on the ice, these athletes will not only be representing Weston but also their close rival Joel Barlow.

The nature of this rivalry is profoundly influenced by the schools' close proximity to each other and



Mock-up of the jerseys for the new co-op team with the representation of each school in both colors (black for Barlow, gold for Weston, and blue for Abbott Tech) and initials.

its multiple similarities—one such being size—to each other but in the end, it is the similarities between the schools that give this co-op team the strong potential for success. Weston High School's athletic director Mark Berkowitz describes this rivalry as one that is both "natural," "fun," and "healthy." It is only natural that Weston finds itself in an enduring rivalry with backyard neighbor Joel Barlow. Like Weston, Joel Barlow has many athletes that compete at high levels thus, when oppos-

ing forces of similar—if not equal—strength come head to head, the competition, and in turn, the rivalry is intensified. Berkowitz says "we're on the field of battle when we're going against each other, we're going to have that natural rivalry because we're similarly sized schools—they're a little bit bigger than us—but we've always had some good competitions in a lot of different sports and it's fun.

It's a fun rivalry." It's a fun, healthy rivalry that challenges both teams to train hard so to continue matching each other in strength. It is this challenge that cultivates these highly competitive and well-conditioned athletes and it is the result that makes this co-op a team with potential. Berkowitz continues, "when we're not competing against each other, we're right next to each other. We're the same people so I think it makes sense when we can to join forces...and we know that we'd be better together than separate."

The teaming of Weston High School with fierce competitor Joel Barlow High School is not unprecedented. Going back about fifteen years, Weston has co-opted with Joel Barlow for both gymnastics and wrestling. Additionally, football players from both towns have—in the past—come together to play on a summer Aspetuck team. Weston's participation in a new ice hockey co-op program with close rival Joel Barlow shows how two equally matched forces can come together for a common cause with the potential to excel.

Student-Athletes of the Month

Ava Zielinski '21
Section Editor

October's student-athletes of the month are Kate Anderson '20 and Ryan Rupprecht '21. The students earned these titles through their athletic performances, academic excellence, and outstanding character. Each month, Weston's athletic department selects two students, one female and one male who model the excellence a student-athlete should live up to.

"It's an honor to be athlete of the month. When

I was a freshman I never would've thought I'd see my face on that board. It was



Photos Courtesy of Sarah Albert '21 & Nicole Sztachelski '21 (respectively)

totally unexpected but is a huge motivator to keep playing my hardest," said Kate,

who is on the varsity volleyball team. So far this season, Kate has had 139 kills and



has been working hard to contribute to volleyball's 6-2 record in the SWC, putting

them into the league's playoffs.

"I've been working really hard all season, all year, all summer. I wasn't really expecting it. I was walking by going to practice when Dan Frank told me. I think it's pretty cool, I didn't expect it at all, but I think it's well deserved after putting in so much work and running a lot," said Ryan, a key part of Weston's cross country team. Ryan's top 5K performance this season is 17:09, and has made much of a contribution to cross country's success.