

Headlight



Written by the students of Marblehead High School for our school and community

www.mhsheadlight.weebly.com

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The Most Important Lesson

Joanna Rosen, Senior
Editors' Assistant

It has been almost four full years since I first stepped foot in Marblehead High School in September of 2011. Arguably, I am a very different person now than I was then. Small, awkward, expectant, and eager, I could not wait to establish myself in this community and determine who I was and who I hoped to become. Movies, books, and TV shows had taught me that high school is where the outsiders find their niches; where the underdogs triumph after taking down the bullies; where people who are different learn to love and accept their quirks. This, however, is far from the reality of high school. It is no guarantee that one will find somewhere to belong; while there are many places in MHS where I feel comfortable, I am unsure of whether or not any one of these is where I belong. It is also no guarantee that you will encounter any bullies at all, or that you will even be the underdog. And sometimes there is no way to overcome the quirks and oddities that make you feel like an outsider. Becoming aware of these truths has helped me to make it through the four years I have spent as a student at MHS.

As this may very well be my last article published in Headlight, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the last four years of my life—or at least on what I can remember of them. Some people love their time spent in high school; I was not one of these people. However, I did learn quite a bit. I am not referring to the subjects and courses taught in the classroom, but to the life lessons from certain teachers and to the lessons that can only be learned through experiences with friends and adversaries.

Each person with whom I have interacted over my four years in high school has offered me something. Whether it was someone who reminded me of a chemistry test I had completely forgotten about, or someone with whom I have spent hours texting or talking to, these interactions add up.

So, to my classmates and school-acquaintances I would like to extend a thank you. We've spent four years together in classes, at events, in clubs and activities, but we never fully recognize how we impact one another each day. Thank you to the person whose name I do not know, but who held the door for me as I walked into school last week. Thank you to the girl in my biology class freshman year who complimented my outfit. Thank you to the boy who sat with me in French sophomore year and who never failed to make me laugh. You have all given me something. Looking at the big picture, these little things may not seem so important, but you must zoom in and focus on what they did in the moment to recognize their meaning. These people, fellow students whose lives I know nothing about, took two seconds to acknowledge me. In those two seconds, our lives affected each other.

While I barely know most of my grade, let alone the entire student population at MHS, those I do know and whom I consider to be my best friends have supported me, cheered me up,

helped me, and taught me so much more than I ever could have imagined. People whose existence I knew nothing of my first day of high school have become some of the most important people in my life. There are a select few whom I have known since pre-school, however, and who have stuck with me from the days of play-dates to the days of proms. But to this small but close group of friends, I would like to not only thank you, but to acknowledge how wonderful you all have been to me. Adjusting from homeschooling to a public high school is certainly not easy, and without my "squad," I have no idea where I would be right now.

I cannot reflect on my high school years without addressing the teachers who have devoted years of their lives to educating the privileged students of Marblehead, Massachusetts. A number of these teachers have deeply impacted the way I view the world, and have given me much to consider as I leave this school for wherever next year takes me. Maybe this means lessons about *The Catcher in the Rye* or *All the King's Men* that helped me recognize certain types of characters and certain types of people. Or maybe this means a personal anecdote about not knowing what you want to do with your life, and learning how to work with and accept that. Without these standout teachers, I truly would not have had the confidence or strength to push myself to apply to schools and prepare for life outside of high school.

Not every person whom I have met during my time at MHS has given me something positive, however. I believe it is important to understand that you learn as much from painful experiences as you do from great ones. Teachers you detest, friends who turn out to be toxic, failed attempts with crushes, bad grades, bouts of anxiety, and the stresses of applying to colleges all teach different things. The one common lesson that all these experiences can offer is that life does not end simply because one of them occurs. These challenges are ones faced by people of all ages, everywhere, every day. But without these unpleasant circumstances, you would never be able to learn how to cope with unhappiness and disappointment. So to the teachers who have given me undeserved bad grades, to the friends who have hurt me, to the colleges that rejected me: thank you. Thank you for showing me that these things do not ruin my life.

I am graduating in two short months. Undoubtedly, these last few months will fly by just as the first portion of Senior year has. While I have not loved my years as a high school student, I am appreciative of them and I am glad to have experienced everything; not just the exciting times with friends or the educational times with teachers, but also the times in which people let me down and the times where my anxious nature got the better of me. If life is only ever fun and happy, then the significance of these joyful moments is shrunken down and they become banal. With the recognition that sometimes life does make you want to crawl into bed and never get up, we can appreciate the good and be thankful for the bad. I believe that is the most important lesson I have learned at Marblehead High School.

Mastering Languages Through Travel

Abby Schalck, Sophomore
Reporter

There are many ways in which to learn a language; taking a class, being taught by a tutor or a parent, or even using an app. But the most straightforward way to learn a language is to travel to a country where it is spoken. It is most beneficial to a person's understanding of a language to experience the use of it in the real world. To really learn and comprehend a language, it is essential that a person be immersed in a country that speaks it. Even though it may be difficult for some people to make their way to a foreign country just to learn another language, it is something that gives a person a huge advantage in the learning process.

I have a younger cousin who lives in a different country. She knew little English when she first came to visit my family in the U.S. However, after a few weeks in America, she was speaking bits and pieces of English sentences. Now she is completely fluent in English. Had she only learned the language in a classroom, she might not understand it as well. Being in another country forced her to learn English because no one here spoke her native language.

I have grandparents who have traveled to Mexico almost every year for practically two decades. Even though they are pretty much Spanish experts now, when they first went to Mexico, they were not very familiar with the language. Being engaged with the people in Mexico greatly helped them master Spanish.

I am certainly not an expert in Spanish, but I hope to be someday. I have been to Mexico before, and am planning on going again. It has definitely helped me to understand and comprehend the language further than things in a classroom have. While I do think that learning a language in a classroom setting is important as well, to become more connected with a language it is beneficial to be immersed in a country that speaks it if you wish to really master it.

**Looking for something to do
this Friday night?**

**Want to support MHS
a cappella and Dana Farber?**

**COME TO
ACAPPELLOOZA X!**

Friday, April 10th at 7:00pm
Featuring MHS Groups: the Jewel Tones, Luminescence, Serendipity and the Grizzly Freakin' Man Singers along

Sprint to the Finish

Drew Faria, Senior
Reporter-in-the-Field

By now, Back the Track flyers and events are as familiar as the cold that just does not seem to leave. In an all-out effort to reach the financial goal for a new track, the Marblehead All Sports Foundations will host a "Sprint to the Finish" party at Abbot Hall on April 11th open to all who wish to attend. Seeing reminders posted everywhere about the mission can get a little annoying, but allow me to plead my case for the importance of this as a four-year track and field veteran.

My track career began freshman year with no prior sporting experience. I felt coerced to join the track team in order to be part of an after-school activity. I arrived to the first few days of practice with a reluctant attitude. However, the feeling faded as I ran into new people (or sometimes, as they ran into me while I wandered, obviously, onto the track). I will admit, I was

pretty pathetic at sprinting, but I began to enjoy my experience on the track. Finally, I got the nerve to ask Coach Crowley during my sophomore year if he thought I could better help the team in another event. Although I really wanted to make a difference on the team, I prayed he would not suggest the mile or even worse, the dreaded two-mile. "Why don't you try the mile or the two-mile?" he suggested.

I walked out of his classroom ready to slam my head into my locker, for everyone fears distance events. Their workouts are ten times harder, and they always stay thirty minutes later than everyone else does. It was the ultimate Homer Simpson "DOH!" moment, but I still gave the mile a shot. I ran my first mile race about a week later, and I finished third for Marblehead. I could not believe what had happened! I met similar success in the next few races. Coach soon came up to me during a workout and personally thanked me for stepping up to help the team. I will never forget that moment. I had reinvented myself on the team. My role changed from a lousy sprinter to a third-place distance runner.

Part of me wishes that I could have started running distance as soon as I started track so that I could have been even better. The other part of me would not have changed a thing about my experience. I gained appreciation for

other athletes and events (I've tried nearly every race), and perseverance through the support. My coaches and team mates screamed their lungs out to cheer me on, reinvigorating me when I thought I had hit a wall. My journey has been filled with glory, defeat, laughter, anger, pain, and joy, to say the least. Track and my coaches have hammered commitment into my head. I am forever grateful for that. To say that track has changed my life is an understatement, for the sport has redefined my life and values altogether.

This upcoming Saturday, the Back the Track fundraiser needs your help in the final campaign to finish raising proceeds for a new track, which is so old and beat-up that track events are being relocated out of Marblehead. It would truly break my heart if the Marblehead track team did not have a track on which to practice, or worse, did not have a track team because the town could not afford to repave the track! I love this sport and can only imagine the impact it has left on others if it has turned me into a whole different person. So please, join the Marblehead All Sports Foundation in their "Sprint to the Finish" on April 11th, for I cannot describe in words how a new track may profoundly change a never-before athlete into a running fanatic like me.

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EDITORS-IN-CHIEF: Alex Kerai, Meredith Piela, and Liam Reilly

EDITORS' ASSISTANT : Joanna Rosen

REPORTERS IN THE FIELD: Riley Sugarman, Drew Faria and Becky Twaalfhoven

WEBMASTER: Alex Kerai

NEWS COORDINATOR: Amber Born

FACULTY ADVISOR: Thomas Higgins