

Headlight

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

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The Madness of March

Dan Rosenberg
Editor-in-Chief, Junior

There's really no competition for the best playoffs in America. Sure, the NFL and NHL playoffs are fun to watch, and the World Series is always intense, but the NCAA Basketball tournament, commonly known as March Madness, takes the cake. Over a span of two weeks, 64 teams compete on an even playing field to win the championship. The reason March Madness is so great is because of the infinite possibilities. Once the tournament starts, past successes and wins are left behind. The best team on any given day wins the game. This gives teams that would have no shot at a title in sports like football, a real chance at a championship.

March Madness is as American as apple pie. We're an underdog nation; even our beginnings, fighting against the British, make a great underdog story. That's why across America men and women and children fill out brackets, hoping a sixteen seed would finally upset a one seed. Our culture is geared to root for teams like Florida Gulf Coast University, a fifteenth seeded team that upset the storied program from Georgetown and that of San Diego State. It's why we rejoice, as a nation, to see a small school like La Salle take down the goliath team of Kansas State.

It's actually an incredible unifying factor as well. While few people watch the regular season of college basketball, millions of viewers every year tune in to the Final Four. Millions fill out brackets as well, trying to predict the out-

come of every game in the tournament. When one thinks about the core fans of other sports, it's often a fairly uniform demographic. But when March rolls around, men, women, and children, of all shapes and sizes fill out their brackets. It's another amazing idea, that a sports tournament can bring so many different people together. On a worldwide scale, the only competition that's comparable is the World Cup. But here in the United States we all don colors and cheer for the underdog, temporarily united in front of the television.

What amazes me most about the tournament, though, is the raw emotion displayed on and off the court. This is a college spot; there's no payment, no endorsement deals, not even a guarantee of playing in the NBA. What the student-athletes demonstrate on the court is a drive to compete, and more heart than any professional athlete I've seen. The tears of joy and of sadness are present after every game, the ecstasy of victory and the agony of defeat. March Madness is the truest form of the sport of basketball; no money, just young men playing for themselves, their families, and most of all their teammates.

Just like every year, I'll be watching on the edge of my seat like everyone else. The tournament is full of surprises, of upsets, of unexpected stars. So let's all have some hope for the little guy; because anything is possible when we get to March.

Gospel

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“When it comes to Gospel, it has to come with excellence and the performers have to work hard. We all have to come with the same focus of worshipping God, with excellence,” said Orlando Retana, a drummer, about the Marblehead METCO Gospel Concert. Every year, for many years, there has been a Marblehead METCO Gospel Concert, which was first organized by Ms. Elaine Munn, the former Marblehead METCO director. Now, current Berklee student Jermain Martin, 25, is the Gospel Concert Director. When asked what he wished to accomplish with the Concert, he responded, “My dream is to enrich the lives of young people, to realize that the best vehicle to success could very well be collaboration. Music is one of the greatest entities of life, and it plays a key role in education, and the development of a person.” When asked what he hopes will come out of the concert, Martin said, “Not only the town of Marblehead but other school districts and cities to be able to host and commemorate diversity through music and the performing arts.”

The money raised at this amazing three hour long concert will support scholarships to two seniors, one Marblehead resident and one METCO student, to help with their future academics. There were wonderful performances by Marblehead High School students, Joseph Stoddard & The Village Chorus, Kate Ferris & The Village Jazz Assemble, and The MHS Jazz Quintet. The jazz performances were amazing, with very talented musicians who allowed the listener to live the music and not just listen to it. Other performers were Bob Tirelli & the MVMS Select Chorus, LaQuandra Seymore, The Berklee College of Music Reverence Gospel Ensemble, and The Greater Bethlehem Temple MASS Choir. Saxophonist Clay Lyons, 24, said on his experience performing, “It was exhilarating and lots of fun, there were lots of passion, fire, emotion, the most important attributes of music. That is what inspires me to play with singers, what inspires me about singers, why I strive to play like a singer.”

The Gospel Concert, in fact, had good reviews from the audience. Janaya Randall, 17, and her partner Tyler Capasso, 18, said, “The concert was so good, the singers were so good and uplifting.” Capasso yelled with excitement, “I came not expecting much of the show because I came to a practice the day before, but after the first performance I was very impressed. The concert was very musical and joyful; I’m glad I came and I want more!”

During the concert the crowd was laughing, singing, and having a good time. The Gospel Concert was indeed very interesting, just like last year’s. The hosts were very funny and they kept the audience entertained and enthusiastic. When I interviewed host Tyler Merullo, 14, and asked how it feels to host, he responded, “I love it. I’ve been hosting the concert for three years and I’ve loved doing it since the first time. I would host the Gospel Choir for the rest of my life if I could.” That passion that people like Tyler exhibit towards music, gospel, empowerment, joy, and happiness is just amazing. Music is in fact life to some, and then it isn’t to others. Music is therapy to some, and then it isn’t to others. Music is in fact enlightenment to some, and then it isn’t to others. All people have their own meaning for music, their own meaning for anything at all.

Scholarship paperwork must be completed and turned in no later than April 1st, 2013. This includes all completed applications, letters, documents, and recommendations.

In addition, the Citizens' Scholarship Foundation of Marblehead Inc. has been renamed Marblehead Dollars for Students. They have been providing need-based scholarships to Marblehead students for almost 20 years. The application deadline for this scholarship is also April 1st.

Finally, Headlight would like to wish all of our readers a safe and happy Easter, and a joyous Passover. We hope you enjoy the day off this Friday!

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