

Headlight



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

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November 27, 2014

358 Day Countdown

The Beginning of the End

Thank God for Thanksgiving

How Homework Affects What We Do With Technology

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About 1,825 days ago, a mental countdown began ticking in our minds. In 2009 we watched the junior girls run around in thirty-degree weather with barely anything on. They were like queens to us, much different from our eleven year old selves. We viewed them as tall, pretty, independent, and outgoing women, ruling over the rest of us. Throughout the last five years we have dreamed of what our Powderpuff experiences at Marblehead High School might be like. We imagined the cold on our skin, the red and black we would wear, and the feeling of our classmates surrounding us.

A right of passage for senior girls, Powderpuff is a long standing tradition of flag football between Marblehead and Swampscott. As a senior girl, I counted down each frigid night practice to game day – the culminating two hours on Piper Field in front of hundreds would be worth the frozen fingers and late nights. I am proud to say I was a part of the 2014 Powderpuff team that defeated Swampscott in a 27-7 victory. Offensively and defensively, the team came together after our month of hard work and was able to gain a quick lead during the first quarter. As half time approached, Marblehead left the field with a twenty-one point lead and sealed the win in the second half.

I sit down, experiencing the discomfort that accompanies the chairs of the kids' table. I may be the oldest non-adult in the house, but I actually enjoy sitting with babbling three- and five-year-olds who think they're twelve. It brings me back to the days when homework wasn't an issue, seven hour long sleeps weren't a delicacy, and I could lose myself in a game of Candyland. One feeling that has never changed is my love for food, and the feeling I get when my mom brings the first plate out from the kitchen on Thanksgiving Day.

Our generation has probably seen the greatest amount of new technological advances. Within the last thirty years we went from room-size computers, to computers that fit in our hands and turn on almost instantly. With all these advances, the question is, what are we using this technology for? I spend the most time checking my email and Instagram, playing video games, checking on my fantasy basketball team, watching videos, and doing my homework, etc. According to the New York Times, most people spend their time online on similar things like YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, email, Tumblr, and homework.

Did you see the Marblehead girls on Piper Field score four touchdowns and win the game? That was not us. But did you see the Marblehead girls blowing horns and whistles, being as annoying as possible? Did you see the Marblehead girls trapped in the visitor stands, boxed in by the Swampscott football team? That was us.

As quickly as it began, the game was over. The game had ended, we had won. We celebrated as a class at Saturday night's Progressive Dinner with awards, congratulations, and teary eyes. Coming home from my unforgettable day, I realized my long awaited senior year was already a third over. Fall sports had ended, college applications had been sent out, and admissions were being received. We had won Powderpuff and eaten our way through Progressive Dinner. It was all going by too quickly, and I realized I needed to step back out of the commotion and take it all in.

I nibble on a dinner roll since squash soup has never been a favorite of mine, and my stomach growls as scents of cranberry and turkey tickle my nose. My three-year-old cousin spills his soup and his brother looks on in disgust. Everyone laughs at something that probably isn't even funny, and aunts and uncles, moms and dads, and brothers and sisters are all rejoicing that they are reunited, if only for a short time. All kinds of delicious smells waft from the kitchen and the joyous mood is contagious. There's a reason why Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday; I just can't place it. I think it's a combination of everything the few days of giving thanks entails.

Now that I am in high school, I feel like even as much as I like to play video games, and as much as I like to get my homework done, I now spend about half of my time on homework, about 25 percent playing video games, and the last 25 percent I spend on everything else. Isn't that just a waste of my time? I know some people might think that I am talking about the 25 percent that I spend playing video games but I am not. I am, in fact, talking about homework.

That day, as I ran by a group of smiling young girls, I saw myself five years ago. The emotions I felt were ineffable. As of November 22, 2014, I no longer feel like a little, underclassman girl. A sense of pride and wisdom has entered my body. My expectations for attending the Powderpuff game as a junior girl were met. It was a pleasure to keep this tradition alive. Thanks to the MHS girls class of 2015, there is a drought next door. The swamp has been drained, and we, the MHS girls class of 2016, plan to drain it again next year.

Senior year: the beginning of the end, filled with the moments that matter, the moments that are going by as fast as a two hour Powderpuff game. The only way we can commemorate these moments is by living in each and every one, celebrating the miraculously fast months that have passed, and the many senior year traditions to come. The idea of living in the moment is one I will carry with me from senior year through college and the rest of life, through the good times and the bad. We must remember these moments in order to reminisce, years later, over dinner with high school friends, and to retell stories about the time a hundred girls came together as a team and subdued the Swampscott blue.

My stomach is bursting with turkey, oodles of bread, and steamed vegetables, but the smell of dessert makes room for more. My Bubbe comes in with a tray full of pumpkin whoopee pies, my aunt carries apple pie (even though she knows my dad is allergic), and my mom has the cream squares—my personal favorite. After grabbing an assortment of treats, I sit down to enjoy the thing I look forward to since the last Thanksgiving. Picking up the cream square I examine it to find the best spot to sink my teeth in. I finally take a bite and taste the cream squished between two layers of chocolate and sigh. It was worth the three hundred and sixty four day wait.

We receive hours of homework with due dates squished together as close as possible so we can learn as much as possible. There are many ways to learn new things in the world, especially technologically. The time we spend on our homework limits the time we have to learn outside of school. In a way, homework actually decreases the quality of learning that is separate from the school day.

What Happened to Thanksgiving?

Alicia Katz, Sophomore Reporter

But now, Thanksgiving seems to only serve the purpose of a meal in between Halloween and the Holiday Shopping Season. Why? I find myself walking into grocery stores, home improvement stores, and even pet stores to find my answer. Aisle after aisle is decorated with the "Winter Season." There are ornaments, gift bags, and even trees! Websites are advertising holiday deals and special offers "just for the holidays." Why now though? Why do they ignore the one holiday when we say 'thanks'?

easy to see the effect it has on the population around the country. Black Friday has become a *holiday* that overshadows Thanksgiving. It has become such a big event it interrupts our Thursday celebration. These large companies promise special deals, but only if you get there first. Some of these "special deals" are even offered on Thursday, so they can tear you away from your family and take your money earlier than you expected.

The excitement of Halloween has finally fizzled out. We've traded in our pillow cases for mashed potatoes and gravy, our costumes for turkey, our candy for family and friends. But we looked around and saw we were alone in this exchange. We walked into the grocery store to see they had exchanged pillow cases for stocking stuffers, costumes for Santa hats, candy for Christmas ornaments and menorahs. The aisles all revealed evidence of the slow death of Thanksgiving.

The reason is simple: Saying 'thanks' does not put money in companies' pockets. Thanksgiving provides little to no commercial use for these large corporations. As a result, they skip the holiday entirely and focus all advertising energy on the infamous Black Friday. Whether you participate in Black Friday or not, it is

This Thanksgiving I implore you: do not think of the holiday shopping season just yet. Do not leave your family to get the best deals or to save the most money. Instead, stay at the dining room table, cut yourself another slice of turkey, and spend time with your family this Thanksgiving season.

When I was younger I remembered celebrating Thanksgiving with my family. We sat around the table in our dining room and enjoyed each other's company. Some of my fondest memories came from those days.

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