

Headlight



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

2015-2016 Issue

www.mhsheadlight.weebly.com

October 29, 2015

Trick or Treat?

Jack Krivit, Junior
Reporter

I have finally made the transition from under to upperclassman, meaning that my days of trick or treating are ultimately over. Not only am I too tall and covered in splotches of facial hair, but to walk around in a costume among four foot tall elementary schoolers would really just make me depressed (not to mention the amount of embarrassment I would experience). So now that that part of my life is done, I have the freedom to do whatever I want this Halloween. The only problem is, I have no idea what to do. Trick or treating was always a safe activity to rely on, but now that I'm older, I essentially have to fend for myself. As I stress over my choices, I have to think: is this some kind of good fortune, or will it just prevent me from enjoying the holiday altogether?

Becoming a high-schooler is the time when Trick or Treating comes to an end for most students. However, it was more difficult for me to let go of the tradition, which is why I still went during my freshman and sophomore years. In order to avoid being recognized, I donned my homemade dinosaur costume that still somehow fit me, and mimicking a prepubescent middle schooler, practiced saying the three words that would grant me my reward. In both cases, although part of me knew that it wasn't necessarily right to take the candy, I just couldn't seem to let go of what I had been doing for the past fourteen years of my life. Other kids my age were going into Salem or throwing parties, already having moved on. But I was determined to have one last night before, as I believed it, I had to officially grow up. Before even an hour of collecting candy and being disapprovingly eyed by other Marblehead residents (thankfully they didn't recognize me), I decided it was time to go home. As sad as it was to admit, my days of Trick or Treating were over.

Although the tradition has officially ended, I now have to find something to fill the gap. Since this is a new experience for me, I am overwhelmed by the number of choices I can make. Instead of attending a party, I could go into Salem, or instead of that, I could always just stay in town and relax with some friends. This whole month has been an ordeal of worrying about what to do and if I will actually have a plan when the night of the 31st comes around. The reality of the situation though, as important as it may seem, is that it really is just a night. No one wants to miss out on enjoying Halloween, but the great thing about it is that it is an annual event. I am now past the age of Trick or Treating, meaning that I no longer have to worry about missing my "last chance to do it again." Although I have been stressing over what to do on Halloween, what I originally thought of as being a trick has ultimately transformed into a treat, allowing me to make whatever decision I want and not feel bad about not doing something else. So enjoy your Halloween everyone! I know I might.

Do you have a crazy family?

Tell us about them!

Enter the school-wide writing contest with your funniest Thanksgiving memory and you could be featured in one of Headlight's upcoming issues, and win a gift basket of homemade baked goods!

Drop your submission off in the MHS front office or send it in to mhsheadlight@yahoo.com by Friday, November 13 for your chance to win!

The Spirit of Halloween

Georgia Sullivan, Junior
Reporter

Halloween at MHS is the real deal. While talking to friends who attend other schools, I realize that not many places get into the Halloween spirit as much as we do here. At Marblehead High School, the girls from each grade dress up together. Not all schools are as inclusive; a friend of mine who attends high school in Connecticut says that dressing up for Halloween is only a senior privilege. Halloween has always been such a big part of the year, from elementary to high school, that it would be heresy to not celebrate it with the utmost zeal.

Each year, the girls in each class decide together on what they will dress up as. My freshman year we were Waldo from *Where's Waldo*, which I might add, made finding Waldo astoundingly easy. Sophomore year we were frat boys, which was "dope" as frat me would say. The junior class is always the group who blow Halloween out of the water. When I was a freshman, the junior class dressed up as Sumo Wrestlers. Their costumes were hilarious and seeing people struggle down the halls in inflatable suits was awesome. When it came time to pick a costume this year, I was pulling for something funny, when we finally settled on Greek Goddesses, which seemed to simply be an excuse to wear lots of bling.

Despite wanting to do something funny, I think being goddesses will turn out well. The grade was more divided this year than any in the past, but everyone still wanted to keep up the tradition of the grade being united.

Although Greek goddesses would not have even breached many of my peers' top ten lists for a class costume, we still managed to come to a consensus. This notion of class unity and Halloween spirit is an admirable aspect of Marblehead High that I hope will permeate down to generations yet to come.

Understand.

Lilly Tapper, Sophomore
Reporter

Think of your biggest anxiety. Imagine having it everyday. Is it heights? Is it elevators? Is it tests? With Selective Mutism, the anxiety is speaking. Selective Mutism (SM) is a disorder that occurs when people have anxiety about talking in certain public situations, such as at school or with strangers; however, they usually have little difficulty talking at home. This anxiety can cause people to seem "paralyzed" or "shut down" when asked to talk. October is Selective Mutism Awareness Month.

Children with Selective Mutism can go years without talking in school. Signs start to appear in a child at around three or four years of age. SM affects 7 out of every 1,000 people. Some people with SM might use gestures or facial expressions to get away with not being able to communicate verbally. In many classes, students are graded on their participation in class. There are always those kids in class that everyone knows as shy and who do not like to contribute to discussions. Some of these shy kids are actually shy, and some are not. SM is more extreme than just being shy: people are physically incapable of speaking when they are in situations that cause them anxiety. These students are penalized for not being able to speak. This is not right, and it is a reason why awareness of Selective Mutism is so important.

"If you run into a child who cannot speak to you, understand that it may not be his or her choice."

Selective Mutism can be overcome with various forms of treatment, including behavioral therapy. Exposure and positive reinforcement are also used to build confidence and learn to overcome SM in certain situations. If no progress is made in therapy, or the Selective Mutism is severe, medication can be prescribed as a form of treatment. The downside of not receiving treatment for SM is that people can experience years of suffering and miss out on age appropriate activities and growth. Selective Mutism is a disorder that a person will have for life. People can begin to overcome SM, but it will never completely go away. Others may be surprised that a person has SM because they do not seem to show the signs of it later in life. A common myth is that Selective Mutism is a form of autism. SM can be confused with autism because people with both disorders lack eye contact or have a blank expression. Selective Mutism is not on the autism spectrum because Selective Mutism is the inability to speak, while autism is the lack of social communication skills.

In the past, Selective Mutism was known as "Elective Mutism" because it was believed that children chose to be mute and it was caused by bad parenting. Today, experts suspect that SM is caused by genetics. It has been concluded that one or both of a child's parents had some form of anxiety when they were a kid. If you run into a child who can not speak to you, understand that it may not be his or her choice whether to speak or not. The child simply cannot speak, and the words just cannot make it out. The worst thing to do to children with SM is to bribe them or pressure them to speak. The pressure can "shut them down" more. People with SM face their anxiety everyday, and for this they have a lot of bravery.

Every year people celebrate a holiday in October. The tradition is to go up to people's doors and say "Trick or Treat" to receive candy. Imagine what this is like for children with SM on Halloween. They want to participate in the tradition, but they "shut down" and are unable to speak. There is always that one house that forces its visitors to say, "Trick or Treat," or they are not allowed to get candy. Keep in mind that people with Selective Mutism do not choose not to speak, they are incapable of it.

Halloween Consumer Spending Statistics

Annual spending: \$7.900 billion		Average amounts:	
Child costumes	\$1.240 billion	Halloween	\$93.42
Adult costumes	\$1.550 billion	Costume	\$31.52
Candy	\$2.330 billion	Candy	\$27.05
Decorations	\$2.020 billion	Decorations	\$24.79
Greeting cards	\$35 million		



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