

Headlight

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

Reflections on a Summer Well-Spent

Alex Stein
Editorial Manager, Senior

Another school year has begun and time to reflect on our summer vacations. I, for one, had an awesome summer. This summer when I told people I was headed to Ohio I was usually met with a puzzled look. You know, the one where their eyes squint and they secretly say to themselves “Huh?” My family and I traveled to Ohio. Yes Ohio. It’s a state. No, we didn’t go to go Ohio to visit family. Many people would ask me why I’d be so enthusiastic to go to Ohio for a week. For my brother and I, this trip to Ohio was a dream for us, something that I wanted to do for several years after riding my first major roller coaster at Canobie Lake Park when I was younger. A few people reading this just figured out what I’m talking about, the rest are still scratching their

heads. After visiting almost every major amusement park along the East Coast and watching the several Travel Channel documentaries discussing it, I was finally going to the biggest and best, Cedar Point in Sandusky, Ohio, also known as “The Roller Coaster Capital of the World”. Even before going I could recite every roller coaster in the park and remember which held world records. As we approached the front gate, the gigantic structures rose up in front of our eyes, determined to conquer each and every one. As we entered the park, I was overwhelmed by what behemoth to conquer first. The days of walking down Main Street USA at Disney World were instantly rivaled by the Midway at Cedar Point. I was finally here.

There was one moment while I was at Cedar Point that was instantly memorable. The first is for those who are truly amusement park

diehards. The second day we were there I was lucky enough to arrive when the park opened. Everyone like me gathers near the entrance and gets ready for “The Run.” As the clock ticks closer to 9 am, everyone gets into their starting positions. The National Anthem plays and it is like a prolonged starting gun. Once the song ends, the race is on. Several hundred people shove past each other trying to be first in line at the park’s most popular rides. The best way to imagine this is to think about the running of the bulls combined with a track meet. Picture Pamplona with a winner. It is unlike anything I’ve experienced before. Grown men are shoving young kids just so they can get the front seat. Luckily I was in good enough shape to easily get to the front of the lines. Upon reaching the lines, sweat was pouring down my face. I just ran through one of the world’s

largest amusement parks in a full out sprint. It was well worth it though, as I only had to wait 5 minutes for a ride that usually has a waiting time of more than 2 hours.

Cedar Point is one of the most incredible places on earth and if you are a fan of thrill rides it is a must see. I promised myself that I would visit Cedar Point and after actually seeing it, it has lived up to every expectation I had. I still can’t decide, though, if the rush to the ride was more exciting than the ride itself. It’s a tough choice, but there is nothing like pulling the lap bar down and taking off into the skies. So that’s how I spent my summer vacation. Ohio, yes, Ohio, is a lot more fun than I expected it to be.

Changes for the New Year

Daniel J. Plunkett
Reporter in the Field, Senior

September has arrived again, and both students and faculty are primed for the start of another successful school year at Marblehead High School. Even in the first week of classes this is evident, as there has been a significant change to the school that has the potential to affect every student.

MHS has a new tardy policy. Last year, students were only issued a detention for an unexcused tardy. This year, however, the rule has been changed, increasing the penalty for being late without a note. As it now stands, if a student arrives late without a medical (or other excusable) reason for doing so, they are not allowed to participate in extracurricular activities after school that day in addition to the usual detention.

Principal Ken Weinstein, now in his second year at MHS, gave his reasoning for the change to the rule: “Last year’s tardy numbers were much higher than we would have liked, so we needed a way to motivate kids to get here on time. It’s very important to the teachers that students don’t get to their classes late in the mornings, as it is disruptive to a good learning environment.”

The idea was inspired by Danvers High School (a comparable school to MHS), which has been using the same rule for a couple of

years with fantastic results. In the first few school days the change caused some minor pandemonium in the front office, but both students and staff quickly adjusted. Principal Weinstein said “there is marked improvement already. Almost 30% more kids than last year are getting to school on time in only the first week. Hopefully the trend will continue.”

Another notable addition to MHS is the new option of virtual high school. There are currently eleven students enrolled, taking a total of thirteen courses. Though only utilized by a few students, virtual high school is very important to the school’s administration. It gives kids the chance to work outside the bounds of school and pursue their passions. MHS can only offer a limited number of classes and is limited by the number of teachers and hours in the day. Virtual high school, however, allows students to explore whatever subject strikes a chord with them. The extra course options supplied by virtual high school provide many new opportunities for MHS students to delve into many intriguing subjects that Marblehead High School doesn’t have.

Hopes are high, and the upcoming year should be one of the best yet.

My Headlight Journey

Matt Lieberson
Editor-in-Chief, Senior

The weather is beginning to cool off. Tints of orange and red are appearing on the leaves of local trees. Football’s back with a vengeance, and the baseball season is winding down. Yep, these are all the signs of fall. With fall comes school, much to the chagrin of students across the community. The early weeks of the school year mark a new era at Marblehead High School. The new senior class has made their presence felt with their primal scream through the hallways to welcome the underclassmen, and a new freshman crew has risen to join the ranks of our hallways. And after everything has settled down, people start to adapt back to the daily grind of the school year, including myself. It is in this spirit that I, as editor-in-chief, give everybody a late Sunday night welcome to the inaugural issue of Headlight for 2011-2012.

I have spent the past three years on the Headlight staff, writing various articles under an ever-changing staff. The last 2 years, the newspaper roost was ruled by the double-trouble tandem of the Drumm twins, Michael and Brian.

The two of them left large shoes to fill, even with their diminutive stature. They set a high standard for this publication. Last year, right around their graduation, they announced that I would get the privilege to become editor-in-chief for this year. They trained me in the ways of the editing “force,” playing editorial Yoda to my Luke Skywalker. I manned the Headlight ship for the last few issues last year, and I got a good hold on how exactly an issue of Headlight is created. Now that the Drumms are onto bigger and brighter things at Harvard, they have left me and my loyal staff to run this publication. I would like to thank the Drumms for all they did last year, and for those readers who were fans of the Drumms, stay tuned, as they have promised a guest article or two at somepoint this year.

With the Drumms, as well as the rest of the Class of 2011, gone, this is the year for the Class of 2012. With a senior-heavy staff (5 seniors), this year looks very exciting. At the end of last year, the Headlight staff all looked very enthusiastic about the future of the newspaper. This year looks to be a lot of fun. Besides ignoring school as an entity altogether, the Headlight staff has

spent all summer tossing around random ideas for this year’s paper. The ideas ranged from serious, like publishing throughout the school, to sarcastic, like mocking the idiosyncrasies of the Marblehead Police Log in a future issue. Under any circumstance, the one thing that everybody on the staff agreed is that we want to make this year fun. We want the issues to be fun to write, and just as fun to read. MHS English department stalwart Mr. Ryan claims that “writing should have surprises in thought and surprises in language.” Hopefully this year, our newspaper will be full of both.

Before this first issue, I have spent a good amount of time recruiting underclassmen to join the newspaper. Anybody is welcome to join Headlight. (Quick sidebar-if any parents are reading this, GET YOUR KID TO JOIN!) My trips to various English classes were met with moderate success, garnering a few shy freshmen to commit to come to later meetings. As I went to these classes, I remembered when the editor my freshman year, Ian Kingsbury, came into my English class to try to recruit students for the newspaper. Ian, who became a mentor and friend of mine through Headlight,

caught my attention with his pitch to join the newspaper. He talked about the honor of being published in the community. He talked about the development of creative writing skills. What struck me most, though, was his claim that one of us in that class could be editor-in-chief one day. I laughed under my breath at this thought, finding it to be somewhat of a pipe dream. But something drew me to Mr. Higgins’ room that next Monday. I slipped quietly into the meeting, and was met with warm smiles by Ian and the other newspaper members. The next week, I wrote my first article, and I was published in the newspaper. I was so proud of myself. Now, I am standing in front of freshman English classes, making that same exact pitch to fellow students. Sooner or later, I will have to pass the torch onto someone new. Maybe one day I’ll read this paper and find a name of someone in one of those English classes. But before I get nostalgic, I have to focus on what lies ahead this year. And this year, I am more excited about Headlight than I ever have been.

Here’s to a good year.

TRIVIA!

What is the series record for the Marblehead-Swampscott football games?

Answer in next week's issue

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