



## Black History Month

Shelby Casimir, Senior Reporter



On February 1st, Black History Month commences. All throughout February, we celebrate the achievements, excellence, art, and culture that surround the Black experience. Whether it's with fun facts, quotes, or accomplishments, Black History Month holds an educational basis for everyone. It's a learning experience to reflect on Black History that's not often shown in the media or even in our history textbooks. I've heard haters say this month is "racist," which doesn't make any sense at all. The month was put in place because Blackness wasn't being celebrated. White history encompasses most of our lives rather than Black history. Not only is it celebrated in the United States, but also parts of Europe and Canada.

We are here to celebrate the Black lives who have made history. We are here to celebrate the Black lives that continue to push the envelope. We are here to celebrate Black lives that are not celebrated enough. We are here to celebrate Black lives because we should be respected, not tolerated.



# BLACK HISTORY MONTH



## Marblehead High School Democrats

Emma Szalewicz, Senior Editor-in-Chief

If you are a high school aged student who lives in Marblehead and wants to make a difference in our community, please join the Marblehead chapter of the Massachusetts High School Democrats, which is part of a nationwide organization. The group participates in phone banking and canvassing for local Democratic candidates, attends events, has postcard writing parties, and hosts fundraisers. If you are interested in joining or have any suggestions for the group, please contact chapter co-chairs Ginny Naughton and Emma Szalewicz at mhshsdemocrats@gmail.com.

## National Math Honors Society Pi Day Fundraiser

The National Math Honors Society, at Marblehead High School, is having a Pi Day fundraiser. The tickets will be sold during all three lunches between March 5th and March 9th. The pizza party will take place on Pi Day, March 14th, after school.

## Humane Treatment for Puppies

Alix Livermore, Junior Reporter

This past weekend as I traipsed through the Liberty Tree Mall after watching a movie, my friends and I passed the Pet Express store. At that point it was 9:30 at night and I did not like what we came across. Behind a grated barrier and layers of glass, 25 adorable puppies were staring at us. These poor young animals were not only going to be left alone in the dark until morning, but they were contained in glass enclosures so small that I've seen fish tanks bigger! I've been in this store before, but something about the puppies' soft gazes in the dark was particularly upsetting to me. So, I decided to do some research into the business to see if I could find anything interesting about their ethics and their treatment of the dogs.

The first questionable piece of information that I found was actually directly from the Pet Express website itself, where the company advertises many different types of warranties that they offer for their dogs: things like "Accident and Injury Coverage" and their "Three Year Hereditary Warranty." From this language you'd think the website was in the business of selling electronics and not live creatures! I was particularly concerned about the Accident Coverage because what are they implying? That if you "accidentally" break your dog that they will have you covered and just grab you a new one?

Another paragraph on that same page was clearly written with the intent to portray the business in a good light and show that they care about their puppies, but I think it came out wrong. It clearly states, "Please rest at ease, our products lie on shelves not in cages." Now, it's hard to tell whether or not the product they are referring to is puppies, but I'm fairly sure it is because the surrounding statements were talking about their supposedly good treatment of them. This therefore makes the statement completely absurd. First of all, the dogs are in cages and on shelves, so not only does this not put me at ease, but it's simply not true! And secondly, anyone who refers to dogs as "product" needs to consider that these are living, breathing organisms, and not a manufactured object.

I also found an interesting Facebook coalition called "Boycott Pet Express" which, as its name suggests, is trying to shed light on the shortcomings of these stores. They claim that they have traced the paths of puppies from so called "USDA Licensed Breeders" to Pet Express. And while the licensed breeders may sound like legitimate and humane sources of dogs, they treat the dogs as inhumanely as do puppy mills. Therefore, Pet Express and companies like it are able to distance themselves from the label of using puppy mills all the while really getting their pets from locations just like them.

If there is anything that you have learned from this article, I hope it's that you, the consumers, can help break this vicious cycle and save a dog from enduring the hardship of being locked up and gawked at.

## How One Paragraph Wreaked Havoc at Marblehead High School

Jillian Lederman, Junior Reporter

As the environment in the United States grows steadily more polarized, it seems that many people are forgetting the fundamental values and rights that define America. About two weeks ago, a student at Marblehead High School posted a controversial opinion about the Women's March that took place on January 20, 2018. The protest involved millions of people marching in large cities across the country, many of them protesting President Trump and his actions. This student's post condemned the people marching, arguing that their message was disrespectful to the president and to America. Quickly, his Instagram followers responded. By the end of the school day, the post had gathered nearly 300 comments, many of which angrily disputed the student's claims. Both at lunch and during classes, students could be heard heatedly discussing the post. Many reported it to Instagram in an effort to get the student's account shut down.

I was horrified. Was simply stating a controversial opinion enough to garner dozens of students' outrage and the risk of being banned from social media? In the past, it was not. Now, however, it seems that the level of tolerance for varying viewpoints has drastically decreased. One does not need to agree with another to respect that person's right to hold an opinion. This is a message that has been overlooked by many of the students at Marblehead High School.

I do not dispute the right of students to respond to this post with their own opinions. Debate is and should be a primary aspect of a free society. What I object to is the belief held by many that this student's action merits the shutdown of his account. He used words. Not violence or harassment, but words. Should it now be acceptable to shut down the speech of someone simply because his beliefs do not fall in line with the majority of the people receiving them? The right to free speech has been a bipartisan issue for hundreds of years. Why is it now becoming increasingly contested?

Marblehead High School usually feels very homogeneous politically. Most students have become accustomed to only hearing views with which they agree, so much so that when they encounter an opposing opinion, their first instinct is to revolt. In their minds, the opinions that they hold are unquestionably right, in large part because they have been surrounded solely by people who have told them so. They have fallen victim to confirmation bias, only seeking justification for ideas that they already support. As a result, they are entirely intolerant of any opposing ideas because they have never tried to understand why people might hold them. Instead, they ascribe negative motives that automatically render the opinions wrong and immoral. This is not okay, especially because it sets the precedent that anyone with controversial opinions will be effectively shunned by the community around them. The world is not like Marblehead High School. Outside of the tiny bubble that we all live in, millions of people hold beliefs that fall in different places along a vast spectrum. It is their right to do so. It is not anyone's right to shut them down for it. It seems that many people at Marblehead High School must learn this lesson before the bubble is popped.

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