

Headlight



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

2015-2016 Issue

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Biking Helped Us Bond

Jake Emerick, Junior
Reporter

There are many things I like to do with others. Among my favorite is to ride my bike with my grandpa. Since I was a little kid, he and I have shared many biking adventures together.

My grandpa is an amazing person. At 86 years old he biked 14 miles through a stiff headwind to get to a fishing spot over April vacation (the crazy thing is that I seemed to have a harder time biking, although I was on a one speed beach bike rental and he was on his road bike). Together we have gone to military cemeteries, visited monuments, met some very interesting people (one of them was a former Navy pilot who had encounters with several UFO's), experienced nature, and discovered some of the best ice cream places. Countless miles have rolled underneath our tires as he tried to teach me Latin or Italian terms, discussed history, and told me stories about his time in the army, or his European bike trips.

I will never forget the countless hours we spent at picnic tables eating lunch together as he told me about his childhood and explained how the court system worked in such detail that you could create an entire class on what he told me. Above my desk I keep a picture of him standing next to his road bike, dressed in full biking attire outside of Salem Harbor, after we had spent a day lost in Salem looking for the Pirate Museum and a specific restaurant that we were determined to find.

My grandpa is a very special person to me. We have very similar interests so we can have conversations very easily, and he is always answering my questions. I like to hear all of his stories and he likes to tell them to me. Biking is our binding force, the glue that brings us together. Through our mutual love of biking I have been fortunate enough to learn about an earlier generation and have learned a lot about a person who is very special to me. We all have something that helps us form relationships, and in my life biking has been a huge part of my relationship with my grandfather. Now that we have moved to a new state there are new adventures awaiting us.

Muhammad Ali's Legacy

Abby Schalck, Junior
Reporter

This past Friday, June 3rd, the three-time heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali passed away at age 74. Ali was known not only as the first man to become a three-time heavyweight champion, but also as a civil rights and antiwar activist in the 1960s. Ali had suffered for three decades from Parkinson's, a progressive neurological condition that caused both his physical skill and verbal grace to decline. Nonetheless, Ali did not shy away from voicing his opinion on politics, making a statement this past December criticizing Donald Trump's proposal to ban Muslims from entering the United States. Ali stated, "We as Muslims have to stand up to those who use Islam to advance their own personal agenda."

Born Cassius Clay, Ali first came into the public view after winning a gold medal in boxing at the 1960 Summer Olympics, and shortly after he won his first heavyweight championship title. Following his early success in boxing, he converted to Islam and changed his name to Muhammad Ali. As he became seen as a more influential person in society, Ali acted out against racism. For example, after being refused services at a soda fountain because of his race, he threw his Olympic gold medal into a river.

In addition to his fight against racism, Ali also was an influential anti war activist. In 1967, Ali refused to serve in the Vietnam War because of his religious beliefs. "My conscience won't let me go shoot my brother, or some darker people, some poor, hungry people in the mud, for big powerful America," Ali stated, refusing to enter the draft. Because of his refusal to fight in Vietnam, Ali was stripped of his boxing titles and sentenced to five years in prison. Although he was released shortly after on appeal, he was not allowed to box for nearly four years. During this time, Ali turned to public speaking, speaking on college campuses, and getting in heated debates about his beliefs.

After a period of not being able to fight, Ali returned to the ring and in 1978 became the first three-time heavyweight champion in the world. In 1984, however, Ali was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. While Ali's health declined, he still continued to voice his beliefs and remained an influential figure in many humanitarian causes. In recent years, Ali's health began to decline dramatically. Towards the end of his life, Ali could barely speak. However, he still managed to get his opinions heard through letters and other forms of media. One of Ali's last public statements was released following the terrorist shootings in San Bernardino. Ali stated, "I am a Muslim and there is nothing Islamic about killing innocent people in Paris, San Bernardino or anywhere else in the world, true Muslims know that the ruthless violence of so-called Islamic Jihadists goes against the very tenets of our religion. We as Muslims have to stand up to those who use Islam to advance their own personal agenda. They have alienated many from learning about Islam. True Muslims know or should know that it goes against our religion to try and force Islam on anybody. Speaking as someone who has never been accused of political correctness, I believe that our political leaders should use their position to bring understanding about the religion of Islam and clarify that these misguided murderers have perverted people's views on what Islam really is."

In all aspects of his life, athletic and political, religious and humanitarian, Ali was a man who transcended barriers and truly did "float like a butterfly and sting like a bee."

The Art of Summer

Andrew Dearborn, Sophomore
Reporter

I spent my first summer away from home seven summers ago, when I stayed two weeks at a camp in New Hampshire called William Lawrence. It was every boy's dream; there was riflery, sailing, camping, and rock climbing among other things. I returned to William Lawrence the next four summers. While I never went for more than four weeks, the days flew by. At the end of the four weeks, when I returned home, I always felt I had missed out on a lot, having been out of town for the past month.

Interview with Principal Millington

Linda Fitzpatrick, Senior
Editor-in-Chief

High school is a time warp — sometimes unbearably slow, other times gone with the blink of an eye. It is hard to believe in three days, I'll be considered a Marblehead High School alum. I've found a simple harmony in my daily life walking the hallways of 2 Humphrey Street. It's hard to imagine on Sunday I'll be making my final walk out these doorways, my tassel turned to the left, approaching a future I can hardly wait for, but with which I am entirely uncertain about.

This year, the Class of 2016 won't be the only MHS community members to make way for a brave new future. After a term which has brought great change to a once chaotic, unorganized school system, Principal Layne Millington will be leaving Marblehead High School, too. I sat down with the departing principal to discuss his future plans, legacy at MHS, and what he hopes the Marblehead community can do for the next principal.

What are you most proud of accomplishing at MHS?

"Peace and stability, which is huge. I mean, it was funny, when I got hired, the superintendent, who hired me, up and quit and the school committee at the time was in a state of turmoil with each other, that most of them actually resigned their positions. So, it's come a long way since that time."

How do you feel the community welcomed you in?

"The first year was very tough, understandably so. I was brought in as a change agent to try to make it stabilized and get the school back on track. So when you come in and you're looking at making big changes, that typically doesn't sit well until people get some faith and trust that you are pushing things in the right direction. I think the faith and trust came probably about nine months in and then everything has been quiet since, which has been great. The first nine months was pretty tumultuous."

Has working at MHS changed or taught you anything?

"It's interesting 'cause Swampscott was in a very similar position when I started there, so a lot of it was very similar work. I think a lot of it has helped me hone down what I want to do, for myself, for my family, for the future. I've loved being a principal; I wouldn't mind trying it again, but I think I'm going to start to look more for central office positions at this point in time. It helped me to kind of clarify that."

How does MHS compare to other schools you've worked at?

"As a principal I've always been a change agent. So, in other words, having to come into a school that needs some work. I've never had the opportunity to come into a school that's been stable for a while. That would be something nice to try for a change, but, it's hard to say because I haven't had that comparison. If I go back to Belmont [where he was Vice Principal], it was good, it was fun. It certainly wasn't as stressful, but it also didn't have the challenges. Sometimes the challenges are fun, figuring out what you're going to do. There's so much you can accomplish."

Do you have any advice for the incoming principal or the student body and other community members whom this change concerns?

"The biggest gift they can give is making sure that they let the new principal come in and get on his feet. Give him the six to nine months he needs just to get to know people, to know things, and really work very hard to make sure it's a good place for him to be. He's coming into a much different building. There's still work to be done, but things are much more stable and he's actually going to have time to get in and get to know people."

What are your plans for the future?

"I was planning on taking some time off. I'm picking at positions here and there, but I wouldn't mind taking a year off. I let them know in November that I had no interest in renewing the contract. That was on purpose. I wanted to make sure they could get a first round choice for a replacement. Typically what happens, when the first positions open up, the pool for candidates is thick, so you tend to get the best."

To Mr. Millington and my fellow classmates of the graduating Class of 2016, enjoy the little moments for what they are during these final days at MHS, remember the triumphs you've overcome that have led you to that stage Sunday, and in the words of actress Troian Bellisario, "Embrace failure and fear as if they were your oldest and best friends, and dance, don't walk, to this new beginning."

The Art of Summer continued...

And I think that's what kept me from going to camp for longer, the fear that I would be missing out on all the fun things that my friends would be doing. In reality, I wasn't missing much. Obviously I did miss some things, like the Fourth of July or boating trips, but otherwise I was probably having more fun at camp than I would have had at home. I remember every year being excited to be home and to be with my friends, but after a few weeks I would get bored and struggle to find something to do. I often wished I were back at camp. I always had the option to stay at camp longer; I could have stayed for seven weeks, but every year when the time came to decide, I stuck with four.

As summer approaches with alarming speed, I am reminded of those years that I spent at William Lawrence, and I'm glad I went; it saved me countless days of drowning in boredom. I was always afraid to schedule away my entire summer because I wanted free time, and I believe that's how a lot of kids feel as well. After a year of demanding academics, extracurriculars, and sports, the idea of sleeping late and doing nothing sounds very good to the average high school student. As a result of having a lot of free time though, kids crave activity, just like I did every summer, and just like kids have before me and kids will in the future. It's important to realize that there is a balance; summer should be part relaxing and part experience or adventure. The trouble is finding out what that adventure is for you. It's easy to become lost in the idea of doing nothing this summer because you want a break from the structure of school, but if you find something to do this summer you will be much more satisfied in September.

Headlight Staff

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