

Hear students' thoughts about how Feb. 14 should be celebrated. Read page 3.



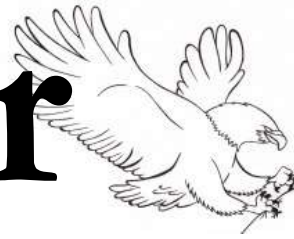
Forget candy, flowers. What ideal gifts would you give loved ones? Read pages 6, 7.



Sideravages run Disney: 48 miles in four days. Sound crazy? It's true! Read page 8.



The Eagle Flyer



February 2018
Kennedy High School
422 Highland Avenue
Waterbury, Conn. 06708
Volume XIII, Issue V

Competing as lawyers

By Jenilyn Djan
Staff Writer

Win or lose...they still prevailed. Students are already contemplating the 2018 season after competing at the Waterbury Courthouse Thursday Dec. 7, 2017 for the Mock Trial Regional competition, where students practiced a semi-altered case mimicking an actual trial about whether a man was guilty for the deaths of four family members aboard his ship. Students won their defense while the prosecution side lost.

"It was a good season, even though I was just an alternate. I was able to learn a lot this year," Melany Junco, a sophomore.

Students have been practicing since August 29, 2017 once a week every Monday for this competition, and have even done a few Saturday and additional practice sessions to be more prepared.

"Even though we lost at the competition, the students did great," said Mr. Clark, teacher of the Talented and Gifted and team adviser.



Legal Eagles: Kennedy's Mock Trial team

The defense side of the team won their case, but the prosecution lost.

"Even though we lost, I thought our prosecution did great," said Kariny Topoleski, a sophomore.

The Mock Trial team hopes to advance to the next round next season.

"Our team worked really hard this year and next year we'll work even harder to advance," said William Bryant, a sophomore.

LEGAL EAGLES Kennedy's Mock Trial team competed at the Waterbury Court Thursday, Dec. 7, 2017. They won one case and lost another. Members are, front row, left to right: sophomores Nadia Evon, Melany Junco, juniors Risper Githinji, Jenilyn Obuobi-Djan, Derya Demirel, Marin Delaney, Kaitlyn Giron, and sophomore Samarah Brunette. Back row: Adviser Mr. Clark, sophomores Tesi Tili, William Bryant, Kelsey Goldbach, senior Fuka Reale, junior Susana Mejia, sophomore Kariny Topoloski, and juniors Ariana Padilla and Edgar Yopez.

Photo compiled by J. Djan/staff



TOYS GALORE The annual DECA toy drive, which changed in 2017 to be held in school the first two weeks of December rather than outside on a Saturday 'stuffing a bus,' brought in about 50 toys (some seen above) from students, club members and school staff, according to club adviser and business teacher Mrs. Sasso. Sasso donated the toys to Waterbury's St. Vincent DePaul Shelter Monday, Dec. 18, 2017.

Photo by E. Acevedo/staff

DECA toy drive brings in 50 toys for city shelter

By Elena Acevedo
Staff Writer

Outcome remains same despite toy drive being moved indoors

Did two weeks change what previous years received in a day?

"(We had) 25% participation from club members," said Mrs. Sasso, club adviser and business teacher.

Many club members did not donate toys to the 2017 Distributive Education Club of America (DECA) benefiting St. Vincent DePaul Shelter, but the outcome was about the same as the 2016 DECA toy drive held outdoors to 'stuff a bus.'

"It didn't change the outcome," said Sasso.

Sasso said she plans on having the DECA toy drive run within the

school again for two weeks rather than the one Saturday outside since the outcome didn't change. About 50 toys were donated by faculty, students and club members, along with books which Sasso then donated after school on Monday, Dec. 18, 2017 to St. Vincent's. Members had different responses to how this year's DECA toy drive went.

"Last year I froze outside for hours and almost no one showed up," said Alyssa Ahrens, a junior who has been in the club for two years.

She donated a big truck with four smaller trucks inside because her nephew loves cars so she figured another little boy would love cars. She

decided to buy a toy for a young boy because she feels no one really shops for young boys, they usually shop for young girls, which impacted another student's thought process.

"(I wanted) to include a boy and girl so no one would be left out," said Allison Rivera, a junior who has been in the club for two years.

Rivera donated a doll for a young girl and a box of cars for a young boy. Unlike Ahrens, the DECA toy drive is Rivera's favorite community service event, although she didn't like standing outside in the cold for hours, she did enjoy spending time with the members.

"No more standing for hours out-

side in the cold," said Brian Portela, a junior who has been in the club for three years.

Portela donated a chess game, action figures and a set of Hot Wheels since he wanted to donate a variety of toys.

"It's easier to pick out toys that a young boy would like rather than a young girl, because I picked out toys that I liked when I was younger," he said, mentioning that he did enjoy the Dunkin Donuts Sasso provided for the outdoor drive but not the bitter cold.

"I think us doing it outside was just a good way for the members to bond with each other," said Sasso.

Celebrating Black History month: what else can high schools do?

By Jurea McIntosh
Staff Writer

Elementary school students complete projects, read books but what happens in upper grades?

"We Shall Overcome" is a well-known gospel song which eventually become a protest song associated with the Civil Rights Movement.

During the month of February, the United States celebrates Black History Month since President Gerald R. Ford made it official in 1976, but as Waterbury students from different schools and backgrounds discuss the month's importance as well as the importance of representation, the question raised is are schools doing enough?

"Having a whole month set aside for celebrations, lessons and so much more will help build a sense of belonging among the black students and teachers in our schools," said Ama Ansah, a senior from Crosby High School.

With growing issues of racism, inequality and oppression in today's society, Black History Month is a time to remember the struggles and value the contributions of black people.

"Black individuals have pioneered so many advances that impact our society greatly, from medicine to political rights," said Deborah Marin, a senior from Waterbury Career Academy.

Canada and the United Kingdom also celebrate

Black History Month: the former does so in February, while the latter does so in October.

"Everybody should be able to express themselves and have their own sense of belonging," said Zhaelynn Cooper, a senior.

While Waterbury elementary schools have celebrations for Black History Month, ask students to do projects, and read about historical figures like Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King, Jr, some students feel the high schools do a poor job.

"We can do more; the elementary schools do so much more and all we have is a few announcements," said Rebekah Merancy, senior.

It is important that all students feel represented during their own culture's celebration, and every president since Ford has acknowledged February as Black History Month with his point that this is the "opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history," according to author Treye Green on www.ibtimes.com, the international business times website.

"It's important for people to acknowledge

and respect different ethnicities and cultures around us," said senior Alessandra Leitao.

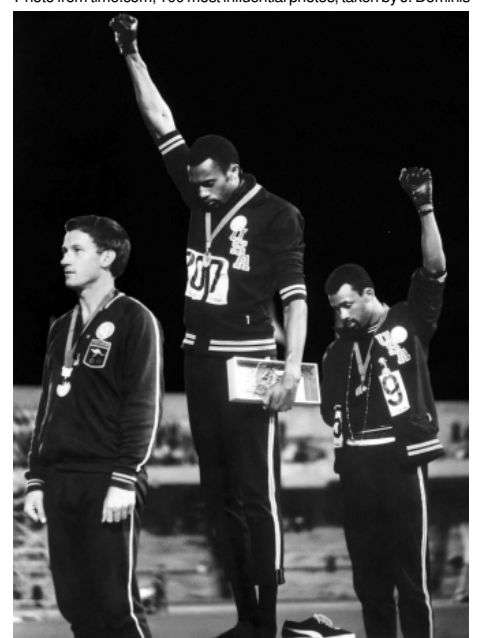
What can high schools do to make Black History Month inclusive?

"English teachers can focus on black authors who offer diverse narratives of what it means to be an American. Educators should strive to teach writers not usually included in the literary canon, and they can ask students to reflect on which authors they think curriculum should include. History teachers can encourage students to 'build their own textbook,' offering supplemental readings with histories of non-white males or differing perspectives of historical events," according to Leah Shafer from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

President Ford originally requested that all Americans "recognize the important contribution made to our nation's life and culture by black citizens," according to Green.

ICONIC GESTURE At the 1968 Olympics, gold medal sprinter Tommie Smith, center, and bronze medal sprinter John Carlos, right, raised black-gloved fists to call attention to how America must treat blacks as equal, according to time.com. Smith took his shoes off to represent black poverty.

Photo from time.com, 100 most influential photos, taken by J. Dominis



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Science shows why February has fewer days

By Alex Robinson, Mehdi Namazi
Graphic Designer, Staff Writer *Caesar's 46 BC calendar acknowledges leap year, 12 months*

Left with less than the rest. Every month other than February has either 30 or 31 days. Why is it that February has only 28 or 29? This is how the calendar has been for centuries, and it is said the Romans left it with 28 days after adding days to the other months trying to make the years' seasonal cycles sync up, yet students and city residents shared confusion on why February has less days.

"Thirty days hath September, April, June, and November. All the rest have 31, except for February, which got the short stick because it's cold and no one likes it," according to Lucas Reilly, the web editor for www.mentalfloss.com, a website with everything from quizzes to brain teasers on a variety of different topics.

February has only 28 days because the Romans added the month after the others. In the 8th century BC, they originally used the Calendar of Romulus, according to Reilly. This calendar was only 10 months. The year started off in March and this marked the spring equinox. Then the year ended in December.

"It's never really bothered me that February has less days in its month compared to the rest," said Jocelyn Bermeo, a Kennedy senior.

To Bermeo, 28 days in February is normal, life goes on whether there are fewer days in this month than others, while some cite Roman influences.

"Caesar's model helped realign the Roman calendar," according to Evan Andrews, a writer at history.com, a site that researches the history of the world as far back as pangea.

Leap years exist for scientific reasoning. Almost every four years an extra day was added to the calendar, Feb. 29, with the additional 24 hours ensuring the calendar stays in line with the earth's movement around the sun. The daily calendar in use today has 365 days in a year, but in reality there are 365.2421. Although that may not be much of a difference, over time it can add up. So leap year's purpose is to make up for any lost



time and keep the calendar in sync with space.

Some were aware of this fact; city resident George Anderson said he was shocked.

"Leap years actually mean something?" said Anderson.

Anderson could not believe leap years actually had a significant impact on society today. He said he believed it was an old tradition from long ago. Anderson was glad to have learned a new fact and was curious about the topic, wanting to know more.

"When did we figure out why we needed a leap year?" said Anderson.

Egyptians were some of the first to see the need for a leap year, according to www.timeanddate.com. Leap year was not practiced in Europe until the time of Julius Caesar. It finally became official in 46 B.C. Caesar and Sosigenes, a Roman astronomer, redesigned the Roman Calendar which now officially had the 12 months and 365 days.

During school breaks, do teachers overload homework?

By Elena Acevedo
Staff Writer *With projects, reading, more can city students truly enjoy vacation days?*

Were Waterbury high school students truly able to enjoy their 10-day winter break?

Some students had an enjoyable vacation and didn't have to stress about having to do loads of work over their break while others said they were inundated with homework during Christmas 2017.

"I didn't get any projects or any type of work," said Benjamin Brodeur, a freshman at Holy Cross.

Brodeur was able to enjoy his break and spend time with his family, and not stress about school. On the average Brodeur usually spends an hour and a half doing his homework, while another student spent more.

"I usually spend about four hours doing homework," said Brianna Bryant, a freshman at Kennedy.

Unlike Brodeur, Bryant had to finish her history project on climate change. Bryant was very surprised many of her teachers did not assign work over the break. On average she spends four hours doing her homework. She was able to have an enjoyable break and felt she was not overwhelmed with work since she got it done early, which wasn't the case for everyone.

"I wasn't able to enjoy my break, because I had to worry about completing my projects," said Evan Smith, a freshman at Crosby.

Smith was given two projects: he had to write a two-page paper on theatre for his history class and write a children's book for his English class. He was successful in completing his projects, but did not have an enjoyable break, just like a Sacred Heart freshman.

"Overwhelmed and stressed over break," said Ryan Weston, a freshman at Sacred Heart.

Weston was assigned a brochure for his history class and a packet of questions for his physical science class. He felt overwhelmed and stressed with the amount of work given. On average Weston spends about two hours completing his homework. He felt he was not able to enjoy his break as much as he would have liked due to all the work he had to complete, but one sophomore felt otherwise.

"I was able to enjoy my break, but it felt very short," said Christina Capozzi, a sophomore at Kennedy.

Capozzi on average spends three to four hours doing homework. She was given a study review packet to complete and she decided to work on her project that wasn't due until Jan. 12, 2018.

"I did enjoy my break, a break from all the stress," said Marnie DeLaRosa, a sophomore at Waterbury Arts Magnet School.

DeLaRosa choose to work on her English presentation that wasn't due until Jan. 11. She usually spends about three hours on her homework.

"Had an enjoyable break. I managed my time so that I wouldn't be stressing about it at the last minute," said Julia Mitnick, a sophomore from Sacred Heart.

Mitnick, unlike DeLaRosa and Capozzi, was given: a chemistry project, a history document-based question (DBQ) along with having to make flash cards for history, an English essay, and questions out of her literature book. She managed her time well, so that she would be able to enjoy her break and not have to spend it stressing and worrying, she said. On average Mitnick spends around one to three hours doing homework.

"I don't really spend much time on my homework," said Langston Racine, a junior at Waterbury Career Academy.

Racine enjoyed his break very much since he wasn't assigned much work. His only assignment was a set of eight questions for his AP Chemistry class. He was unable to complete the assignment, but was not worried or stressed over his break, just like another junior.

"Wasn't stressed because the work wasn't as difficult as I accepted," said Ariana Guareno, a junior at Crosby.

Guareno was given a chapter review for AP statistics and a scrapbook autobiography project for AP psychology. On average she spends one to two hours doing homework, much like another junior.

"About one and half to two hours doing homework," said Siobhan Gilmore, a junior at Sacred Heart.

Gilmore was given an English assignment regarding *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne where she had to write two essays on the symbolism and how main characters change in the book.

"Very enjoyable, I didn't get any work at all," said Nosa Lgbinewuare, a senior at Crosby.

Lgbinewuare said he had a stress free and worry free break. He felt it was very enjoyable because he didn't have to complete any projects or work.

"Very enjoyable, didn't have much work to complete," said Michele Vaz, a senior at Sacred Heart, who had to read and summarize *The Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer.

“ I wasn't able to enjoy my break, because I had to worry about completing my projects. ”

Evan Smith, freshman at Crosby High School

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What is a good way to celebrate Valentine's Day?

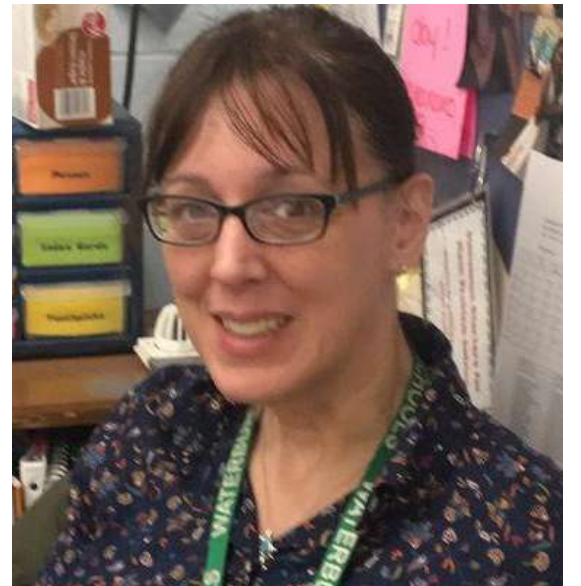
By Cameron Feliciano
Features Editor



"To spread love to the people outside of the people you know."
Yvette Olivia Vargas, senior



"Together with anyone you love."
Quincy Grant, sophomore



"Telling people you care about you love them; it's not about the flowers and candy."
Mrs. Rothen, math teacher



"Sharing and being to people."
Jordan Solberg, freshman



"Wait until the next day and buy all the candy that's on sale."
Derya Demirel, junior



"With someone that is special to you."
Zhaelynn Cooper, senior

History of Feb. 14 includes pink almonds, goats, wolves? Read on

By Lamyia Sultana
Poetry Editor

19th century print making methods helped produce lovely, ready-made Valentine cards

COMMENTARY

*"Wilt thou be mine? Dear love, reply,
Sweetly consent, or else deny;
Whisper softly, none shall know,
Wilt thou be mine, love? Ay or no?"*

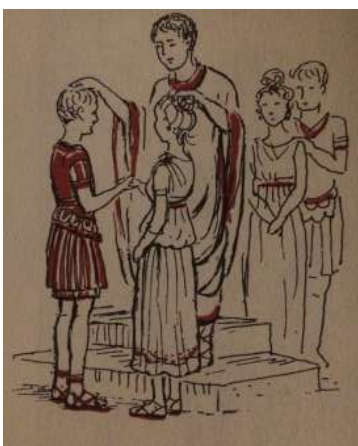
by Margery Brews, Valentines in the Old World

It is known as a lighthearted holiday: Valentine's Day, a time when people express feelings of friendship, affection, love, and especially love for someone special, according to author Edna Barth.

Valentine, a priest or bishop who lived in the third century after Christ, was allegedly beheaded Feb. 14. When he was buried, the story goes, a pink almond tree near his grave burst into bloom as a symbol of lasting love.

No one seemed really sure of who St. Valentine was. But according to one legend, he was a Roman priest who wanted to help young people. When the Roman Empire needed soldiers, Emperor Claudius II decreed no one could marry or become engaged. Claudius believed that marriage made men want to stay at home instead of fighting wars. But Valentine wasn't having none of that nonsense, therefore, he defied the Emperor's decree and secretly married a number of young couples. He was arrested, imprisoned and put to death, which is how St. Valentine's Day came to be as a day of remembrance.

Legends like that are interesting but fail to



point out the history behind another legend. Feb. 14, when Valentine supposedly died, was the eve of an important Roman festival, known as the Lupercalia. On that evening, Roman youths drew the names of girls who would be their partners during the festival. Valentine's Day existed but in the Roman ways. Because of this, the Roman rulers often made a display of their cruelty toward Christians who were drawing people away from the older gods.

The Lupercalia festival was during the days when Rome consisted of a group of shepherd folk, living on the hill now known as the Palatine. During that time period, the time of Valentine, February came later than it does today, so the festival was really a spring festival.

There is no question about Lupercalia's importance. Feb. 15, the priests would gather on the Palatine at the cave of Lupercal, where according to the legend, Romulus and Remus (founders of Rome) had been nursed by a mother wolf, which is why in Latin, lupus is the word for wolf.

At the door of the cave, several goats and dogs were sacrificed, and then two youths would run around the streets of Rome lashing about with goatskin whips, where young women would crowd and wait for a lash of the whip because it was believed to make them better able to bear children. The goatskin whips were called the februa, then changed to februatia. Both came from a Latin word meaning to purify, which led to the name now for

February.

As time went by the festival died out and there has been no real Valentine's Day celebration in Italy for many years.

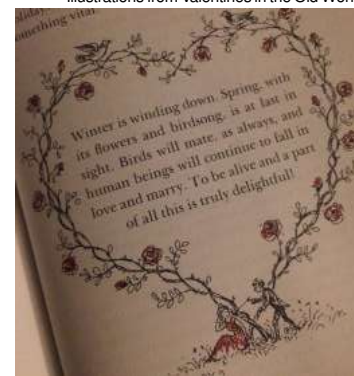
In France, for Valentine's Day, there were popular forms of pairing off, which were quite unique. In the area of the Vosges Mountains, the elders broke up into two groups: one group had a list of young women who wished to marry and the other had a list of young men. From the windows of two houses on opposite sides of a narrow street, they took turns calling out the names, in a way forming pairs. The couples would then meet.

If they liked each other there would be a meal and Valentine dance. If a young man did not like his partner he would ignore her, and for eight days the other partner would keep to herself. But at the end of the time, the deserter (the one who ignored) would be burned in effigy (a representation of the person) at a public bonfire. Sometimes a young person would be paired with an elderly person, just for fun.

This sort of celebration left many hard feelings and often led to trouble. In 1776, the pairing customs were finally banned, but here and there it still continued into the 1800s. After that again by the order of the government, St. Valentine's Day disappeared in France.

Austria, Hungary and Germany also had St. Valentine's Day courtship customs that vanished

Illustrations from Valentines in the Old World



a long time ago. In England, St. Valentine's Day was banned before 1660, but with Charles II restored to the throne, the holiday returned and the drawing of names resumed. By the 18th century, Valentine love letters and handmade love tokens evolved into what now people think of as true Valentines. With the 19th century, better printing methods existed in England and America to make lovely, ready-made valentines that grew interest in the holiday. Gradually, machine-made valentines

dropped in quality.

By the 20th century, the holiday had become mostly a children's holiday, taking place in schools. In the United States, printing of cards suffered due to World Wars I and II, yet Germany stocked Valentines for American servicemen stationed there, and that renewed Germany's interest in the holiday. The holiday mainly stayed alive in the United States and Britain, where people of all ages enjoy Valentine parties and the exchange of Valentines today.

Valentine letters have been written in many different ways, but poetic ways were the best ones, such as the verse below from one comic Valentine meant for a postman:

*"Haste thee with this Valentine, thou
silly man of letters,
And try to do the best you can to serve
and please your betters,
For I'd sooner live an old maid or else
give up the ghost,
Than wed a grinning postman as
stupid as a post."*

Staff Editorial

Spread kindness, love: Black History Month, Feb. 14 encourage joy

Thanks to former president Gerald Ford, February has become a month that reminds us of what we should do: honor the remarkable accomplishments and presence of black Americans. Sadly, it was only a mere 42 years ago, in 1976, that Ford made Black History Month an official U.S. holiday. Together with Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, this month is the ideal time to spread kindness, love and joy to people of all ages, including honoring our deceased heroes.

Author Treye Green wrote of Ford's request that all Americans "recognize the important contributions made to our nation's life and culture by black citizens." Notice Ford's use of the words 'life' and 'culture' since both describe day to day interactions. Green also explained Ford made a point to emphasize Black History Month is the perfect "opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history." Notice the phrase 'too-often neglected.' While it is important to recognize and learn about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. or Rosa Parks, there are many other black Americans past and present to reference and study.



What is equally neglected are the people in our lives who we might take for granted. Valentine's Day is also the perfect opportunity to thank mothers, fathers, grandfathers, grandmothers, coaches, teachers, siblings, and anyone who has pushed us to be our best. This is also what Ford referenced by making Black History Month an official holiday. Take the time to reflect, research and remember the ordinary as well as extraordinary people who never let the color of their skin be an obstacle to doing the right thing.

Leah Shafer from the Harvard Graduate School of Education encourages teachers to incorporate relevant, meaningful lessons regarding Black History Month into the curriculum. This is essential but also serves as a reminder to celebrate those who have brought progress, positive change and the potential to achieve more, into our daily lives.



The Eagle Flyer

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CITY LANDMARK Signatures Restaurant, the interior of which is pictured at left and the exterior of which is seen below, has remained in business while nearby restaurants including Pies and Pints have closed in downtown Waterbury. Signatures is located on 29 Leavenworth Street.

Photos compiled from restaurant website by R. Rosado/staff

Signatures remains 'gem'

By Raymond C. Rosado Staff Writer

Employees adore city restaurant COMMENTARY

A hidden gem? Signatures Restaurant will remain. While other restaurants around downtown Waterbury have closed like Pies and Pints and Drescher's, Signatures remains one of the finest in the eyes of its patrons and employees. Signatures, located at 29 Leavenworth Street, is built on historical ground. As you walk on the bright red velvet carpet outside the restaurant, it will take you into a place that will satisfy your culinary desires.

Known as a hidden gem, Waterbury residents find it mind blowing how this gorgeous restaurant stayed up-to-date with its utilities, cleanliness and fresh atmosphere, while others have closed, such as the Betsey Ross Diner. Betsy Ross, formerly located on 998 Wolcott Street, was known for its greasy burgers and outstanding French fries, yet possibly due to some violence surrounding the location, the diner shut down in early 2010.

"I find it unbelievably horrible that Betsy Ross Diner shut down. I never expected my childhood eatery to just disappear after all the tasty food and laughs that I had with friends and family," said Waterbury resident Kristen L. Taggett.

In our Waterbury community, we are so overthrown by violence we forget to acknowledge our actions do affect the world around us, which makes a long-standing restaurant noteworthy.

Signatures has a 4.7 out of 5-star rating online with 43 Google reviews, as of Jan. 30, and offers free Wi-Fi with outstanding weekly specials. Topping the night off are mind blowing desserts,

weekday happy hours and live-music nights.

"Thursdays always have been the days for me; I love waitressing, feeling like Elvis Presley's wife every time the performer starts singing," said waitress Ashley Caldwell.

Every Thursday night a well-known performer entertains both young and older folks. Many listeners gather and start dancing.

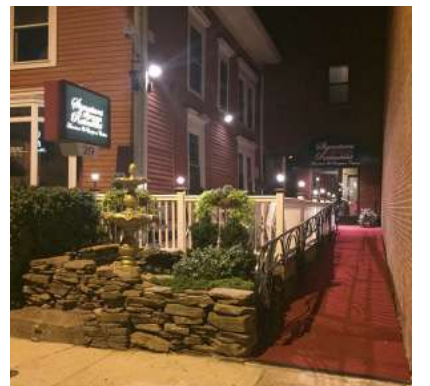
What else has made Signatures, just minutes from the city court house, a favorite?

"Signatures has lasted as long as it has because of the dedicated, hard working employees who care about their guests enjoying amazing meals (and) beautiful classic atmosphere," said manager Kendra Kondash.

Staff has also noticed the quality of food and recognize how hard their fellow servers work.

"Food is delicious, and the service is above standard. The air of the hidden gem makes you feel like you're in heaven every time you step foot (through) the glass doors," said server James Greene.

"Food is very good and consistent. Consistent service and an amazing atmosphere," said bartender Michael McDuff.



Animal testing: form of cruelty or crucial for humans?

By Derya Demirel Correspondent

HELPFUL OR HURTFUL Makeup and skin care products may be tested on animals, a practice PETA has called cruel.

Animal testing in makeup: safe and regulated or cruel and inhuman?

Students and staff voiced their positive and negative opinions on animal testing, primarily for makeup, with research beginning for this article in May 2016, and sadly, animal testing continues today.

"I know a lot of companies that test on animals are kept behind closed doors," said graduate Anthony Neves. "There's a lot of secrets we don't know about."

"Every day in countries around the world, animals are fighting for their lives. They are enslaved, beaten and kept in chains to make them perform for humans 'entertainment,'" according to the People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) website. "They are mutilated and confined to tiny cages so that we can kill them and eat them." "They are burned, blinded, poisoned, and cut up alive in the name of 'science,'" according to PETA. "They are electrocuted, strangled, and skinned alive so that people can parade around in their coats; and worse."

Many companies like Maybelline, Covergirl and Makeup Art Cosmetics (MAC) test on animals, or use ingredients tested on animals, according to PETA.

Products like the Benefit 'They're Real' mascara, Revlon Colorstay foundation, and the Maybelline Color-Senational lipsticks are all products that are also tested on animals.

Even household products such as Windex, Post-it notes, Vaseline and Band-aids are tested on animals, according to the Business Insurance website at BusinessInsurance.com.

"Animals can't decide whether they

want lipstick put on them," said junior Risper Githinji. "I want to find the right foundation color for my skin, but I don't want it to have to come from an animal."

"People are trying to make money off anything they can," said senior Jessica Dardha who continued to say companies know the damage of animal testing but, "they don't care if other people use their brand."

But, there are always opposing opinions.

"I do care about animals but I feel they should test it on animals before humans," said junior Will Mahony, who said it is safer than to sacrifice human skin and human lives.

"If they're testing to see if there's a reaction, it's okay," said junior Nijea McCowan, who also said humans may sue for the effects of testing, if products were tested on them.

Jocelyn Dinino and Alexander Rice, both juniors, agreed companies such as Lush, who test on volunteering humans, according to Dinino, are morally right and more companies should test on volunteers.

Dinino brought up Lush Cosmetics, which is a brand that tests on volunteering humans and fights against animal testing, which she believes more companies should do.

There are pros and cons to everything. There are more than a dozen pros to animal testing, including it has contributed to many life-saving cures and treatments and there are no other adequate alternatives that have a whole-body system, according to ProCon.org, a website debating



Photo illustration by D. Demirel/correspondent

the pros and cons to many controversial topics.

There are also opposing thoughts on ProCon.org.

Animal testing is unreliable in predicting how the product will affect humans and the fact that 95 percent of animals used to tests are not being protected by the Animal Welfare Act, are reasons animal testing is doing more harm than good, according to ProCon.org.

Yet, there's always a loop-hole.

"I'm sure they could use cultured skin cells," said biology teacher, Mrs. Wright, who said companies may be able to "simulate an other skin layer response (to the products)."

Other people do agree with the idea of simulating skin to test on.

"I don't believe it is necessary to use animals because you could essentially run simulations on how it would affect a human," said senior Vincent Sarlo.

"Because we talk so highly of our technology, I would think we'd have something to simulate human skin to test on," said junior Ariana Cruz.

Now I leave you with a question: do you believe animal testing is safe and regular, or cruel and inhuman?

Poetry Corner

Untitled

By Adriana May

Love.
A strong word used by many
But only meaningful to few
Love,
Is seeing faults and fixing them
And seeking positivity for the future.
But Love comes with a price.
When it engulfs your life into a never-ending obsession
you need to know that there is no way out
If only I knew that when I sold myself to Love,
I'd be playing crazy eights with the devil.
He soon became my best friend.
His comforting words justified my sins
and made me believe lies
He taught me hate
And made me chose lust over Love.
It wasn't until now that I realized,
I sold myself to the devil, --not Love.
For Love was just a contract with hidden messages
that can only be read by folding it certain ways
until you have folded it so much that
your hands ache of arthritis
and your heart aches from trying.
Oh well, you tried.
"Maybe love isn't for you," he says.
He holds his arms out and hugs you tightly.
Protect yourself from Love,
For you, might get sold to the devil.

Untitled

By Adriana May

In the shadows where I stay is where I'm meant to be.
Innocent girl in the slums is what they tend to call me.
I don't talk like the rest so they assume that's not
where I grew up
But little do they know I was here all along.
In the shadows is where you can find me
Lost in the shade of the trees all along the street.
--Nobody notices me.
8th grade graduation nobody cheered instead questioned
when I got there
Yeah I sing, but nobody cares
It's not like they have the ears to hear
Often interrupted by more important things.
Because like I said, in the shadows they can't see me.
My voice is but a whistle in the wind overpowered by
gunshots and car horns you can hear from miles away.
Small city, everyone knows everyone.
Except that little chubby girl who plays that small
guitar thing.
I am so tired of being,
Unknown,
But it is hard to become something when you are but
a thought,
Pushed to the back of everyone's minds
And the one who gets laughed at for trying to fit in.
Too happy and fake is what they call me because I
want to be friends with everybody.
I guess becoming known wasn't worth it after all
I'll just go back into the shadows and disappear when
the night falls.

Spring, summer fashion rekindles past trends

By Derya Demirel '80s inspiration, jewelry surfaces
Correspondent

COMMENTARY

As the new year approaches, so do the styles from the past.

The biggest names in fashion such as Gucci and Saint Laurent, open 2018 with their Spring/Summer (S/S) collections by putting together intense runway shows to highlight new trends while also rekindling old ones that can be viewed on the FF Channel on YouTube as of January 2018.

Silk is the new black.

The Creative Director for Saint Laurent, Anthony Vaccarello, broke fashion boundaries by producing a more Ready-To-Wear collection for the S/S 2018 collection. The show, set under the night sky, lit by the Eiffel Tower, was nothing less than extravagant.

The clothes, although more wearable, didn't leave anything to be desired. Silk pieces were a new addition to Paris Fashion Week that were well-taken. They'll be an exceptional, easy and elegant look in the coming months. Silk, and silk-esque fabrics, add class and a feeling of exquisite taste to the wearer. To juxtapose this light and soft fabric, there was an abundance of leather as well. Saint Laurent may be able to wear leather, but the every day person may be hesitant to wear all leather pants this coming summer.

We are dropping our crop-tops for a longer silhouettes.

Alexander McQueen's show left an imprint of trench coats in the brain. There is a recurring theme of elongated silhouettes this year. Longer tops and jackets are a very simple fix to throw into our daily style. What isn't so easy, is the amount of '60s floral. We're ditching whimsical and pinning for a larger, brighter, flower for 2018. Although it can be striking, a pop of this pattern on a blouse shouldn't be too hard to master.

Remember the clear plastic boots everyone hated? Well they're back.

SETTING TRENDS As the author illustrates by viewing fashion trends in this Jan. 17, 2018 photo, styles, designers' collections and entire fashion shows can be found online. In particular, the biggest names in fashion such as Gucci and Saint Laurent opened 2018 with their Spring/Summer collections by putting together intense runway shows found on the FF Channel on YouTube.

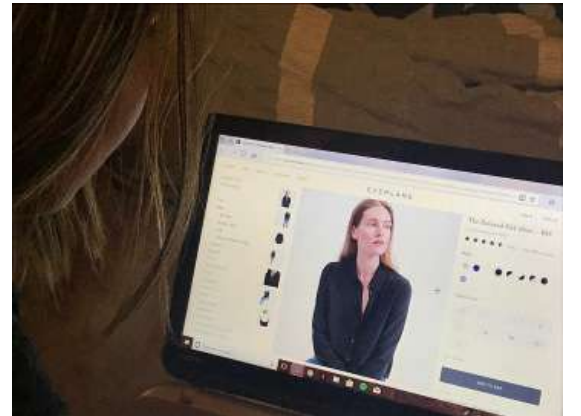


Photo illustration by D. Demirel/correspondent

Victory of Bangla makes Feb. 21 special

By Salma Akter 'Battle for 'beautiful language' shows Bengalis pride
Staff Writer

COMMENTARY

Can I forget Feb. 21 reddened with the blood of my brothers?

Many citizens of Bangladesh have fought with Pakistan because Bengali citizens were against speaking Urdu, and wanted to make the language Bangla their own national language. Many have lost their lives on the path but nothing stopped them to fight. On Feb. 21 the language movement started in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

"It is a proud feeling for our country (Bangladesh) and language (Bangla) and we're sure to share the pride of our language worldwide," said Tareq Mahmud, a citizen of Bangladesh, in a phone interview.

Ekushey February (21 February) is also known as Shaheed Dibas (Martyrs Day) and since 2000, Ekushey February is known as international mother language day.

"Amar sonar bangla (my golden bangla), day of Ekushey February always reminds me of how proud I am to speak Bangla, Bangla is our language and a beautiful language," said Kabir Hosan, 41, a citizen of Bangladesh, in a phone interview.

Students campaigning for the recognition of Bangla as one of the state language of Pakistan were killed when police fired upon them. Sadly, a university student, Rafiq Uddin Ahmed, a student of Debendra College, manikganj, and Abdul Jabbar, a young farmer from Gaffargaon, were killed. Abdus Salam, a bank employee, was injured in the firing and died in the hospital later, according to banglapedia.org.

"I admire those soldiers who lost their lives for our language," said Kamrun Miley, 24, a resident of Waterbury, Conn.

According to banglapedia.org, after the departure of the British, Bangla could be made the state language of the new state. Shortly after the creation of Pakistan, at the

first session of the Pakistan Legislative Assembly Feb. 23, 1948 Dhirendranath Datta proposed that Bangla be made one of the language of the assembly along with English and Urdu, but the proposal was rejected.

"It would've been unacceptable if we were to speak Urdu because I love my language and I grew up speaking Bangla," said Mohammed Ullah, resident of Waterbury, Conn.

Bangla was recognized as one of the state languages of Pakistan at a session of the National Assembly May 9, 1954, and is appreciated by those who are not fluent in it.

"I don't speak Bangla but it's a lovely language," said senior Shalline Ramjit.

On Ekushey February all Bengalis dresses in red and white, and people of all ages walk to visit shaheedMinar to pay tribute to those who gave their lives for Bangla.

"I used to visit shaheedMinar with my school and place flower to honor the death of the soldiers and now I can't do any of these things because I don't get any of the opportunities here in USA," said Miley.

Young men and women with artistic skill draw special motifs known in Bangla as 'alpana' on the roads, according to mtholyoke.edu.

"I miss the days when I use to relay with my school and draw alpana," said Afroja Akter, 16, now a resident of Waterbury, Conn.

Ekushey February (21 February) plays an important role in Bengalis awareness of their culture and national heritage, and the background to the rise of Bengali nationalism.

"I love my mother language, I love my motherland, we all will remember the brothers who gave their lives so we could speak our own language Bangla," said Taslema Akter, 31, a citizen of Bangladesh, in a phone interview.

File FAFSA before June 30 to see what funds you get

By Fuka Reale
Managing Editor

Filling out federal aid form must be done yearly, not just once

COMMENTARY

One of the most important processes of applying to college besides the application itself is filling out the FAFSA, or Free Application For Student Aid.

This form allows students to get financial aid in the form of grants, work-study and loans from the government in order to pay for college. Although the official deadline for FAFSA is June 30, 2018, it was important to file as close to October 2017 as colleges often award financial aid on a first come first serve basis.

Most state and individual schools have their own deadlines for FAFSA, so keeping tabs on the dates is important, according to studentaid.ed.gov.

In previous years, the FAFSA application opened Jan. 1, but with new changes, the application could be filled out as early as Oct. 1.

How can you file FAFSA? The application process is simple, but first you must make a free account on <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>, which needs your date of birth and social security number.

FAFSA should be filled out by both you and

your parent.

Your parent needs their 1040 income tax return available and their total household income as well as individual income for the previous year.

If you are filling out the FAFSA for the 2018-19 year, then tax information from 2016 is required. You'll also need W-2 forms, bank statements, and information about family investments, estates, stocks, and so on.

It is important to fill out the FAFSA accurately as possible as filing false information can lead to delays in processing. However if mistakes are made or if you want to add more colleges, the FAFSA portal allows students to log in and make changes.

After the system processes the file, it will send you an email confirming that it went through and an estimate of the amount of financial aid you are likely to receive from colleges called EFC.

Unlike college applications, filling out the FAFSA is a yearly responsibility and the amount of financial aid could vary from year to year.

The CSS profile, or College Scholarship Service, is another financial aid form required by certain private schools. This is a form supported by College Board and accessed on collegeboard.org.

Although it is very similar to the FAFSA and asks for the same information, CSS has a \$16 fee in order to send the forms to the specific colleges.

In order to check which colleges require the CSS profile, you can check the requirements for that individual college or visit profile.collegeboard.org/profile/ppi/participatingInstitutions.aspx.

Although this process is stressful and time consuming, it is mandatory if you are looking to go to college. My advice is to complete it as soon as possible and send them to all the schools you are looking to apply.

Once this is done, you can relax a bit and look for scholarships to get money that is not covered by FAFSA and CSS.

Good luck and be optimistic!

Musicians grow in confidence

By Isaac Smythe
Correspondent

COMMENTARY

With the Dec. 19, 2017 Kennedy winter concert coming to a close, the experience left not only myself, but other students more confident in their musical abilities. Both band and choir have come far since the start of the year, some first time performers have shown such growth.

"I know more than what I did before. (Music teacher) Mr. Knecht showed me how to do things right," said Laila Shabazz, a freshman trumpeter.

Everyone managed to maintain their composure quite well, making each performance sound more broad with each piece.

"I wasn't really worried about it. I knew it was gonna be good," said Josue Medina, a junior trombonist.

Despite the confidence of the music program there will always be pre-concert shakes and jitters.

"I was worried about messing up. I knew my parts but all those eyes on me made it both terrifying and fun," said Ludmila DePaula, a freshman clarinetist.

The mistakes are what make us stronger because there is always a way to fix them. Leading up to any concert there are always bumps in the road. With the right guidance and support, mistakes and bumps become shaped correctly.

"While our mistakes were noticeable to us, we ended up showing tremendous improvement as an ensemble," said senior Sebastian Cavada, a bass buitarist and music council officer.

Don't take journalism... if you like being bored, not learning any skills, gaining no career opportunities, or losing out on scholarships and awards. Otherwise, take the class next year! Stop by 105 for more information.

Listen up seniors: read helpful advice from college students

By Stephanie Velez
Business Manager

Labonne's employees balance work, college plus share tips on doing well after high school

Oh Mondays! What surprise will you bring to me next? Work and college is possible!

College students who work at Labonne's Market in Watertown, Conn. share their past experience and give tips on balancing school and work to help high school seniors prepare for college.

"It's important to develop time management skills. Working 28-32 hours a week and being a full time student is possible, but you have to handle your priorities first. I usually made a list of what needs to get done first and work down. Having a visual guide of what I need to get done helps me manage my time better," said Lindsey Cantoni, a senior at Central Connecticut State University.

Cantoni is just one of the students who works at Labonne's and goes to school full time. While college can be new and exciting, there are challenges associated with simply being a student.

"The most difficult thing is keeping up with all of my classes at once. It gets hard when all of my classes have papers due the same time period. The best part about college is what I learn in classes that are in my major," said sophomore Michael Deary, who attends Naugatuck Valley Community Technical College.

While multiple papers being due the

“I wish someone had told me that it's okay if you do not know what you want to choose for a major or do for a career right away. It is not worth stressing about. It's more important you have experience, so take advantage of studying abroad and internships.”

Lindsay Cantoni, senior at Central Connecticut State University

same day can be a problem, so can taking certain classes that are required that are not in your major or degree area.

"The most difficult part about school is taking and spending time on general/required courses and homework that is not specific to my major. I find that I lose motivation easily. But it is an important step to completing your degree. The best part

about school is knowing that you're working towards your degree and creating a better future for yourself," said Cantoni.

So how nerve racking can the thought of college be?

"Not really, I'd say I got more nervous after I graduated," said sophomore Sean Domack, who also attends Naugatuck Valley Community Technical College.

Although Domack wasn't that nervous, Janessa Rasols, a sophomore who said she is proudly studying nursing, shared how nervous she was about entering the college world.

"I was definitely nervous about college when I was in high school. The idea of going and stepping up into a new world is exciting but can also be nerve wrecking. I was more nervous about the results from my SATs and college applications because of the universities I wanted to get into. In the end, I was accepted to the college of my first choice which was amazing. Hard work really pays off," said Rasols, who attends Christian College in Pensacola, Florida.

Whether you are a full or part time student, finding a job that accommodates your school schedule is key.

"It's a lot of time management, you need to be able to plan out when you'll have school, be at work, and when you'll be doing homework. I think the

important thing for me is to put school first, and thankfully I have a job that is very understanding of the schedule restraints that school presents," said Domack.

Deary also works with Domack, and has no problem with his job and school conflicting. So how are some of the bosses?

"Extremely accommodating; at the beginning of every semester my boss lets me fill out a paper telling her when I'm available. She never gives me any trouble with it, and I've never had a problem with scheduling time off," said Deary.

While interviewing every college student, each gave their tips, advice and past experiences of their college encounters. For example, if you're someone who has trouble waking up then morning classes may not be the ideal option.

"Don't take an 8 a.m. class. I've only ever dropped one class and it was because I woke up at 7 on the first day of my 8 a.m. class, realized I made a huge mistake and dropped," said Deary.

Before you can even sign up for that morning class, you have to be accepted into the college you are hoping to attend. So keeping your grades up during senior year of high school is essential.

"Here are my tips for the incom-

ing freshmen: don't let senioritis take over! Trust me on this, your last year is also your important year. Don't neglect the hard work you have done throughout the years because it will take a hold on you. Just work as hard as you do now and get to that finish line! Think about what you want to do and if you have passion towards it, don't let anything or anyone stop you! Lastly, don't stress too much about college applications, do your best and see where it will lead you," said Rasols.

It seems as though pushing the idea of finding out what you want to do in life starts so early in school. How is it possible you know by sophomore year of high school if you want to be a lawyer or teacher?

"I wish someone had told me that it's okay if you do not know what you want to choose for a major or do for a career right away. It is not worth stressing about," said Cantoni. "I've met many graduates who are working in a job unrelated to their major. It's more important you have experience, so take advantage of studying abroad and internships. Also, having connections with the right people will get you far ahead in the career world. Spend time to talk and make connections with professors and students who are related to your major or who share similar interest."

If time, money were no object, what gift would you give?

By Thomas Bishop III, Luis Leon Colon
Staff Writer, Correspondent

Ideas include helping out Puerto Rico, parents, homeless people



Have you ever wanted to give a present, but you never had the money nor time? As Valentine's Day approaches, and some are still cleaning up from Christmas--or paying off their credit card bills--people in Greater Waterbury shared their thoughts on getting the perfect gift.

"If I had the time and money, I would get myself a gift, and that (gift) would be getting my grandmother to be alive for a few more minutes (so) that I can tell her how much I love and appreciate her," said Mr. Mark Esposito, a fifth grade math and social studies teacher at Hopeville Elementary School.

Gang violence is getting worse each day and

people are losing their lives every day, which lead someone to think of the youth.

"I would build a studio for kids, that (way) they can stay off the streets," said Truddie Holst, a personal trainer and a Meriden resident.

The world needs homeless shelters; did you know that more than half a million U.S. people (564,708) are homeless, according to a 2016 report cited by The San Francisco Chronicle in June? In this state, on one given night, Jan. 26, 2016 when the Connecticut Coa-



lition to End Homelessness does their annual count, 3,911 persons were homeless in Connecticut.

"If I had time and money I would build homes for the homeless people, around the world," said Eudalia Dauila, a factory worker and a Waterbury resident.

Instead of thinking of themselves, some people would like to give to organizations or groups.

"If I had money and time I would give money towards the research of the cure of cancer," said Tatyana B., a sophomore.

Things happen in other countries like the hurricanes that went through the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, places which are still devastated.

"If I had the money and time I would rebuild my brother's house that got knocked down in the hurricane," said Santiago Colon, a factory worker and a Waterbury resident.

People are appreciative of their parents but might not have money to get something for them.

"I would buy my mom a house, because it is a struggle being a single mother and I just feel like she would really appreciate it," said Talia Anyala, a senior.

Do students prefer unhealthy food because of cost or convenience?

By Jaleesa Bellamy
Managing Editor

Eating healthy costs \$1.50 more each day

COMMENTARY

Pop! Opens a bag of chips. Crunch! Goes the bite of a cookie.

Are students at Kennedy gaining bad eating habits throughout the school year by eating so much junk food from being so tired?

The early mornings are no joke. Waking up at 5 a.m. really takes a toll on students. It's too much to wake up early, get ready, have a nutritious breakfast, and still catch the bus on time.

When the clock starts ticking 6:30, 6:35, 6:40 the bus arrives.

School naturally starts early, so each bus has to come even earlier. Making it to your bus stop is already a tough job, so students tend to grab the first things they see--which isn't always an apple.

Two for \$1! How does that sound?

The price of chips compared to a healthy bag of apples is so much cheaper. Chips are often two for a \$1 or 50 to 25 cents a piece, making it a quicker grab

for students, especially those students walking by the corner store on the way to their bus stop.

Trying to eat healthy actually costs about \$550 more per year, or \$1.48 per day, according to a study in the British Medical Journal from 2013 that was similar to a 2013 study from the Harvard School of Public Health. Imagine the price today!

Los Angeles Times author Jenn Harris, who cited the study, noted it included results from 27 studies in 10 different countries over a period of 11 years. Healthy foods were defined as fruit, vegetables, fish, and nuts while less healthy foods were defined as processed foods, meats and refined grains. The Harvard study found eating healthy costs a family of four an extra \$2,200 each year!

It's not like school lunch and breakfast isn't provided for free, if you can wait until you get to school. Students might just prefer the unhealthy snacks that they bring to enjoy, no matter what time it is.

Who wants to build...teddy bears?

By Irienis Perez
Correspondent

Do you wish about making a teddy bear?

Life management teacher Ms. Barbara Balnis explained to her students how to, and why, you should pin down the teddy bear's fabric proving that otherwise, your teddy bear can come out wrong, during one of her sewing lessons in room 123, period 5, Nov. 9, 2017.

"You don't want your teddy bear to come apart," said Balnis.

While cutting out your fabrics you want to make sure you pin each piece of fabric together before you lose any.

"If you lose a piece of your fabric it'll be harder work for you," said Balnis.

If you keep your notions and materials for your project all together in a bin or folder, there are more chances of your teddy bear coming out right.

"If you don't want your teddy bear's left arm a different color than the right one, I suggest you keep your materials in a safe place," said Balnis.

Area players enjoy Hartford volleyball tournament

By Toni Lopez
Sports Editor

Winterfest allows eight passionate players to enhance skills

'Tis the vollyseason!
The first Winterfest Volleyball Tournament for the 17 (age group) select team in the Northwest Juniors (NWJ) volleyball girls' club provided



the opportunity for eight members to try their best and have fun on and off the court competing with different teams regionwide, in Hartford's Convention Center Jan. 13-15, 2018.

"Winterfest allows you to see the things your team is doing well in and what they need to work on. It is a great tournament to gauge team growth," said coach Belen from the 17 select NWJ team.

One member from the select team discussed why she liked Winterfest.

"I like the environment. It's so big. It's crazy to see all the competition and all the people as passionate as me for the game," said Rachel Bracco, a Wolcott High School sophomore.

Another team member explained how the first tournament day went. "In the first tournament, I felt con-

fident on the first day as I got more comfortable with the team. As the days went on, I felt we all learned how to play together as a team, yet all learned what our own weaknesses and strengths were," said Victoria O., a Nonnewaug High School sophomore.

A third team member discussed the potential to win some tournaments.

"I feel the team has the potential to win the upcoming tournaments because we have a lot of talent, and a lot of girls who are really dedicated and willing to work hard at practice for us to achieve this as a team," said Katie Butwill, a junior at Lewis Mills High School. "Since we have a relationship as a team we have the ability to outlast people who are the same skill level as us, but aren't necessarily as comfortable on the court."

SYMBOLIC Writer

Toni Lopez, who penned the article at left, stands before the giant volleyball in the lobby of the Convention Center in Hartford, Conn. where the Winterfest Volleyball Tournament was held Jan. 13-15, 2018. In bottom left photo, the Northwest Juniors' volleyball club is seen in a huddle during the competition.

Photos by T. Lopez/staff



Happy hedgehog, um, groundhog day: why 30,000 flock to see Phil

By Isabella Gaspard
Correspondent

Friday, Feb. 2 marks day when Punxsutawney newspaper editor began annual event

COMMENTARY

Spring is here... or is it?

Feb. 2 marks the "mid-point between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox," a.k.a. Groundhog Day. This holiday dates all the way back to the 1700s. Then, it was a German holiday known as Candlemas Day. Why "Candlemas?" Well, on this day clergy would bless and distribute candles throughout towns to protect people from the dark of winter, according to Stormfax.com.

Tradition--or superstition, whichever you

prefer--holds that if a hedgehog comes out of his hole and sees his shadow, there are six more weeks of winter to come, otherwise an early spring arrives. That's right. Hedgehogs.

The Germans originally chose these little guys to predict the weather. It wasn't until they immigrated to Pennsylvania that the Germans changed the appointed animal to the groundhog. Yet still, Groundhog Day wasn't an official holiday until Clymer Freas, the editor of the Punxsutawney Spirit newspaper, made it so,

according to history.com.

Freas took inspiration from a group of local local hunters who would hike up to Gobbler's Knob, Pennsylvania to see one particular groundhog and his weather predictions.

The editor formally named the groundhog "Punxsutawney Phil, Seer of Seers, Sage of Sages, Prognosticator of Prognosticators and Weather Prophet Extraordinary"... But for short, he goes by Punxsutawney Phil, or even shorter, just Phil. Freas would write "elaborate stories" about Phil's

predictions, and the public accepted them as true, according to articles.nj.com.

Nowadays, Phil is only correct 39 percent of the time, according to the National Climatic Data Center. However, the people love him no less. In fact, the annual Groundhog Day ceremony on Gobbler's Knob draws crowds of up to 30,000!

Can't make it all the way out to Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania? No problem! Text "Groundhog" to 247365 to get Phil's yearly prediction on Groundhog Day, according to huffpost.com.

Lose weight, attend church, some residents' 2018 goals

By Jake Liquindoli
Staff Writer

Others: read more, get organized

City residents shared their 2018 New Year's resolutions when it was still December 2017, and their goals include being organized, attending church and losing weight.

"Mine is to be more organized and to not procrastinate," said Sara Way, a SOAR freshman.

Due to the challenging academic program she's in, Way said she "has no time to have fun and do the things (she) loves to do" while another person focuses on his religion.

"My New Year's resolution is to go to church more often," said Robert Liquindoli, a Waterbury resident.

Liquindoli, a devout Christian, said his resolution is important to him because he is "thankful for the things in his life" and that he "has God to thank for them."

Due to raising his children and having a busy work career, he said he doesn't "really have time to go to church" but believes that if he follows through with his resolution, he will become a better person because "a spiritual person is a better person."

Another city resident wants to focus on his health.

"My New Year's resolution is to lose 20 pounds," said Francis Liquindoli, an amputee.

Since he has one leg, Francis Liquindoli, who is 78, said he needs to lose weight to be more comfortable.

He had "better upper body strength previously (and) wants to be alive as long as possible." He said he believes if he "lost the weight" he "would be able to follow through with it."

What do groups or organizations



DETERMINED City resident Mr. Francis Liquindoli, seen here during Thanksgiving, shared that his New Year's resolution for 2018 is to lose weight.

Photo by J. Liquindoli/staff

outside of Waterbury plan to do for New Year's resolutions?

"To read more books," according to happynewyear-2018.org., a website that provides popular resolutions. More specifically, this website mentioned a New Year's resolution for people who are struggling academically could be to "read more books" and it "encourages others to do the same."

Journalist of 40 years shares advice with newspaper class: make fact-checking priority

By Toni Lopez
Sports Editor

Keep digging deeper for real news

A journalist's job is to be honest.

Veteran journalist Mr. Steven Gaynes visited Kennedy to offer writing advice, plus talk about his background and some highlights of his career as a writer, while also discussing his weekly New Fairfield Citizen newspaper column 'In The Suburbs' plus his daily work at the Bridge Academy (a charter school) in Bridgeport, Conn. during period five journalism class Friday, Jan. 26, 2018.

"Take the risk at being honest," said Gaynes, who offered much advice to students who work on *The Eagle Flyer* newspaper.

When Gaynes was sharing his aspects of being honest he emphasized how fact-checking actually changes the writing of factual evidence.

"Dig a little bit and find out something personal," said Gaynes, of any topic a journalist researches.

Finding out something personal can be hard, but at least if you try to get a actual quote from someone it can make your story even better, as well as real, instead of relying on what someone else has said.

"A journalist's (most) important thing to do is to be factual and honest, and not bring up fake news," said Gaynes, who also created a current events quiz for students and urged them to stay aware of local and national current events.

Forget chocolates, flowers... what gifts could help others?

By Vivian Bunker
Staff Writer

With Christmas just past and Valentine's Day 2018 right around the corner, some people are hunting down the perfect gift for family and friends, but what if they went beyond the average gift to deliver someone what they desire most: their dream present, such as a healthy brother, which is freshman Kevin Demiraj's dream.

"If I could get anything that makes him feel better, it would be a Christmas miracle," said Demiraj.

Demiraj's brother, Orges Demiraj, is 18 years old and has cerebral palsy.

"He can't really speak to people or talk," said Demiraj, who knew this is what he wanted as the ideal gift for some time:

"Ever since I was five years old, when I first knew about it or understood it," said Demiraj.

Other presents on his wish list include soccer items because Demiraj is a huge soccer fan.

"Anything related to soccer would be fine like a soccer ball, cleats, anything," said Demiraj.

He is not alone seeking sports related items.

"(An) indoor basketball court," said Nathaniel Fields, a senior at New Fairfield High School, in

New Fairfield, Conn.

That was Fields' dream Christmas present, but not only to use for himself.

"I could invite friends over whenever I want to play some basketball," said Fields, "and basketball is really fun."

In addition, Fields was also asking for something a bit more acquirable for Christmas as well. "(A) blender," said Fields "because I can make smoothies."

Still, in the days leading up to Christmas Fields wouldn't let his dream present slip away so easy, making it a point to...

"Work hard and get a good job to afford it," said Fields.

Janaya Santos, a freshman at Kennedy, would also work hard, but for a different dream present.

"My dream Christmas present would be to have enough money to move out of Waterbury, to somewhere nice, with a big house, and a lot of land," said Santos, "and to be able to give money to my parents and family."

Santos wants to explore different things in life, but wants to support her family as well.

"I've always lived in Waterbury and I want to go somewhere new and get new experiences," said Santos, "and also, my parents and family

work really hard all the time so they deserve something too."

Something else she'd like to have?

"A laptop," said Santos. "Now that I'm in high school, there's a lot of work, and projects and stuff that require typing essays or just using the basic internet and I don't have a computer or laptop, so it's difficult."

During holidays like Valentine's Day, many look forward to receiving gifts that make life better or easier, but some find the act of giving gifts even more enjoyable than getting them.

"Giving presents is more enjoyable to me because it's nice seeing someone happy and excited when they're opening presents," said Santos.

Some say gift giving is an act of appreciation.

"When I give presents to my parents, I like to see them happy," said Demiraj. "I feel like it's a good way to appreciate other people."

And when receiving gifts, a present isn't the most important thing.

"(It's) more about the thought, than the present," said Fields.

But does the act of gift giving go too far?

"It's a very nice tradition, but sometimes, in America, it goes too far," said Fields. "(It) creates a lot of stress now a days with Black Friday,

and shopping, and people nervous that they won't like their gift."

According to psychology.com, Adrian Furnham, a professor of psychology at University College London and the Norwegian Business School, believes people today give gifts that are more specific to the recipient.

"What essentially makes a gift special," said Furnham, "is the ability of the giver to really understand the recipient--to show their close reading of, and attention to, the hopes and desires of others."

What makes a gift more preferred? Money or thought?

"Careful studies by American sociologists and published in consumer journals have shown no relationship between the cost of a gift and the extent to which it is liked or preferred," said Furnham. "The best predictor of how much a gift is appreciated is the amount of time, mental and physical effort put into choosing, making or preparing it."

So, between giving dream or realistic gifts, how should people know which is more special?

"Ideal gifts are those which one still treasures after many years," said Furnham. "The perfect gift is wanted, needed, deserved, and appreciated. It has to be chosen very thoughtfully and carefully."

48 miles in four days? Sideravages race at Disney

By Fuka Reale
Managing Editor

Family competes in consecutive 5k, 10k, half then full marathon

Racing for days in the land of magic and imagination.

Marybeth Sideravage, attendance counselor at Kennedy, and her family traveled to Disney World in Orlando, Florida to complete the Dopey Challenge, consisting of a four-day race leading up to a full marathon from Thursday, Jan. 3 to Sunday, Jan. 7, 2018.

"This trip was so magical because I got to share the experience with my husband and daughters. I am so proud of them for being able to do this," said Sideravage.

This year was the 5th anniversary of the Dopey Challenge: a 5k on Thursday, 10k on Friday, half marathon on Saturday, and a full marathon on Sunday. The Disney Marathon celebrated its 25th anniversary this year, according to www.rundisney.com/disneyworld-marathon/.

"Although I didn't run these races, it was still amazing to witness the hard work my family put into these races, it is no easy feat," said Sideravage.

Sideravage went on the trip with her husband, two daughters Elizabeth and Lauren, her nephew Kyle, her two sisters, and her brother-in-law.

"To run a marathon, you have to train many months in advance. My family began training in July and up until the races, they ran 20 miles in a day," said Sideravage.



MICKEY'S MAGICAL RUNNERS The family of attendance counselor Marybeth Sideravage, including her husband, two daughters, nephew, sisters, and brother-in-law, participated in various races at Walt Disney World Thursday, Jan. 3 to Sunday, Jan. 7, 2018. Pictured above is nephew Kyle Beynor, who completed every race over the course of four days to earn all the Disney medals. In photo on right, Beynor, Mr. Sideravage and Elizabeth Sideravage enjoy a meal at Disney. Mrs. Sideravage said her family began training in July 2017 and up until the races, ran 20 miles in a day. 2018 was the 5th anniversary of the Dopey Challenge, which featured a 5k on Thursday, 10k on Friday, half marathon on Saturday, and full marathon on Sunday.

Sideravage's nephew Kyle Beynor, who now has a career as a tennis professional in South Carolina, previously attended Woodland High School in Connecticut and won NVLs in tennis his senior and junior year.

"Kyle didn't have to train as hard as the rest of them. He wanted to get all the medals, which is given for every race and the challenges," said Sideravage.

The separate challenges include the Goofy challenge which is the half marathon and full marathon, and the Dopey Challenge, which is in total 48 miles, according to www.rundisney.com.

"What was most challenging was that we all had to get up at 3 a.m. because the races start at 5 a.m. when the parks are closed," said Sideravage.

All races take place within Disney's property: the 5k runs through Epcot, the 10k is on a highway near Epcot, the half marathon starts in Epcot and goes through Magic Kingdom, and the full marathon goes through all four parks.

"My daughter Elizabeth, husband, and Kyle did the Dopey Challenge, while my other daughter Lauren, my sisters and brother-in-law ran the half marathon,"

INSPIRATIONAL Elizabeth Sideravage and her father, at right and above, completed Disney's Dopey Challenge of four races in four days: a 5k, 10k, half then full marathon.



said Sideravage.

The Sideravages have run the marathon at Disney multiple times, but it all began when Mr. Sideravage began running races in Connecticut and heard about the challenges at Disney.

"He really wanted to get all the medals, and if you complete all four races, you get six medals all together for each race and one for each challenge," said Sideravage.

Disney has a Pasta in the Park Party held every night from Thursday to Saturday where runners carb up on pasta and dine with their favorite characters, according to blog.wdwinfo.com.

Unlike most Disney trips, the Sideravages went to run the races so they did not have time to explore the parks as much.

"Because we woke up early, and everyone ran so much, we were all too tired to go to the parks. They mostly wanted to relax and prepare for the next race for the next day," said Sideravage.

There are 27,000 runners who participate in the marathon each year. The application to sign up for the marathon and challenges begin in April and it is \$510 to participate in the Dopey Challenge per person, according to www.rundisney.com.

"These races are so magical because there are characters and bands all along the course. There are so many people cheering that it distracts from the

actual run," said Sideravage.

Sideravage has run 5ks in Connecticut and is working to complete the 169 challenge run, which is a competition to run 169 5k races in different towns in Connecticut.

"This trip meant a lot because this is the last time my husband is going to run the marathon at Disney. There might be half marathons for my daughters in the future," said Sideravage.

Kyle ran the marathon in five hours and Elizabeth and Mr. Sideravage ran the full marathon in under seven hours.



All photos courtesy of M. Sideravage

"You won't truly understand running and the physical endurance and mental toughness that is necessary to do these races unless you are a runner," said Sideravage.



Some freshmen find pep rally focused on upperclassmen

By Jazmin Estrella, Evalissa Caban
Staff Writer, Correspondent

First-year students still learning concept of pep rally tradition

COMMENTARY

Everyone gathered, but were we really in it together?

Grades 9-12 gathered in the main gymnasium at Kennedy to acknowledge the end of the fall sports season at the traditional pre-Thanksgiving Day pep rally, including the 'pieing' of teachers that raised money for charity but freshmen had a different take on it, Wednesday, Nov. 22, 2017.

"I think the seniors cheered the loudest at the pep rally," said Janaya Santos, a freshman.

The seniors were the key aspect of pep rally. Throughout the whole event, one could tell how the efforts were mostly concentrated on seniors. Due to this, some freshmen didn't find it very important.

"(It was) not important at all because the activities were not geared toward freshmen. It's more towards seniors and juniors," said Jade Domesuzki.

Despite the fact that not many freshmen participated, some would jump at the opportunity to be a part of it.

"I would do it, it seems fun," said Domesuzki.

While the freshmen all had different impressions of the occasion, the majority of them enjoyed it.

"I liked how we all came together to celebrate the different sports, it was nice," said Kelsey Darocha.

Pep rallies are still a new concept to freshmen, so some were unaware of what it was exactly until it happened.

"I didn't even know what a pep rally was until that day; until that day, I thought it was a pet shop," said Daquan Molina.

The pep rally was the perfect opportunity to spread love and encourage others. Something the freshmen could do was cheer on their favorite sports or friends.

"I went to the pep rally and I cheered for my brother, he's on the football team," said Luz Rivera.

Along with the fact that not much attention was paid to the freshmen, they don't get to experience the event often which allows its importance to fade over the years. For it to be significant to the students, in particular for freshmen as they progress through their high school years,

“(The pep rally) was not important at all because the activities were not geared toward freshmen. It's more towards seniors and juniors.”

Jade Domesuzki, freshman

the pep rally should take place more often.

"It should be done at least twice a year. It gets all the students excited," said Nixaira Hendia.

Regarding the pep rally's role in the lives of freshmen, in order to get a new perspective, who else could you ask but the adults who participated in it? After being part of the occasion for many years, teachers in particular might have an understanding of how it impacts freshmen or students as they advance grade wise.

"I think it's a little intimidating but it's a tradition and it's all in fun. You'll look forward to it when you're a senior," said math teacher Mrs. Rothen.

Winter sports continue

Compiled by staff reports

For updates on school sports, including:

- *girls' basketball varsity, jv and freshmen
- *boys' basketball varsity, jv and freshmen
- *boys' swimming
- *girls' indoor track
- *boys' indoor track
- *cheerleading

visit the Kennedy High School page at waterbury.k12.ct.us and click on the 'Sports' link.

You can also sign up for updates on sports schedules by visiting the above page, then clicking the link for 'Updates.' Be sure to follow the instructions for email, text or Twitter updates.

For more information, visit Kennedy's Facebook page or stats.ciacsports.com and listen to daily school announcements.