

# The Spartan Spirit

Volume 7 Issue 3 November 2017



## SHS Community

### SHS Students Volunteer at Local Food Pantry

Written by Heer Patel and Czenil Santander

Edited by Juliana Choi

During November, many students and faculty at Stoneham High School volunteered at the local food pantry, an important need to many individuals in our community. Through volunteering at the food pantry, students were able to reach out and help provide families in need with the food and items needed to have the plentiful Thanksgiving dinner they deserve. Also, volunteering at the food pantry allows high school students a connection with their community and make an impact outside of their school.



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## **What is the Living Well Workshop?**

**Written by Juliana Choi**

A new program has been introduced into the SHS community: the Living Well workshops meet once a month in the library to discuss topics related to mindfulness (living in the present). But how did the concept of the Living Well workshops come about?

When Mrs. Polizzotto returned from her two year absence, she noticed that while she was gone, there had been an increase in anxiety and stress over issues such as testing and grades. The guidance department decided to be proactive and searched for various ways in which to offer some positive things within the school environment. As a result, the Living Well workshops came to be.

Each month, there is a different focus for each meeting. October was about saying “boo” to negative thoughts, while November was about gratitude. Future workshops may include art therapy, music therapy, yoga, empathy, and compassion, and if any students have ideas for future workshops, guidance staff will try to implement these ideas. All of these workshops have one theme in common: mindfulness.

At each meeting, students go into the library and sit in a circle or at tables in groups because a majority of the workshops involve discussion. Also, by sitting in a circle or groups, it creates a calming atmosphere for everyone. During these meetings, students not only discuss, but they also learn different exercises to deal with stress, such as breathing exercises that can be done by oneself. Maybe in the future, interested teachers could also hold the workshops in classrooms as well. The hope is that students who find the material intriguing, or find the exercises useful for their own daily lives, will keep coming back to learn more about how to deal with their stress and anxiety. After all, the benefits do not just happen overnight.

Overall, the hope for guidance staff is that, even when students leave Stoneham High School, these students can use the tools they learn in these workshops for the rest of their lives. Students also develop more self confidence as well mindfulness of their current lives. As students get older and become more mindful, they should be able to sift through all the things they struggle with and make their own paths to being successful. All these benefits are not just for students, since they can also help teachers. For example, as the guidance department decides and prepares the next workshop, they may find strategies and realize, “Oh yeah! This is great for us, too!”

As a society, everyone gets busy, stressed, and pulled in different directions, so it is important to maintain a healthy life. The Living Well workshops help students find the right tools to become successful in their own lives even past SHS. If you’re feeling stressed and anxious with no way to relax or lower your anxiety or stress, the Living Well workshops are the place for you.

**SHS Teacher Feature**

**Mrs. Connors**

Written by Ali Beaton

Edited by Juliana Choi

**Where did you go to school?**

I went to Stonehill College where I majored in mathematics and minored in secondary education.

**When did you know you wanted to be a math teacher?**

I always knew that I wanted to be a teacher. When I applied to college my senior year of high school, I applied declaring a major in mathematics. Majoring in math was difficult but allowed me to understand the struggles of my students. While I was in college, I volunteered for tutoring at a middle school program where I helped students with homework. It was during this time that I realized that I definitely wanted to teach math at the high school level.

**What made you choose to be a math teacher?**

Math has always been easy to understand for me and I have always been good at it. When I was in school, I was always helping my peers learn the material. When it came time to pick my major for college, I knew it would be in teaching. I love being able to teach students new things. There is nothing more rewarding for a teacher than to see students have that "ah-hah" moment!

**What is something you enjoy about your math class?**

The best part about teaching is that every day is something new. You never know what to expect.

**There's been a lot on the news lately about teaching for the tests (meaning MCAS). How do you feel about that?**

I think that testing students on what they know and can do is important. It allows the teachers, students, and parents to understand where the students are and where they need improvement. I do believe, however, that you should not have to teach for tests if the curriculum is aligned correctly. Students already learn everyday what they need to know to be prepared for MCAS. They are given the tools to be successful; they just have to use them.

**What is the hardest thing about teaching?**

The hardest part about teaching can be making a subject I love seem so much fun to others. Often times, students tell me that they hate math without giving it a shot. It is often difficult to change students' views about math and to allow them to have an open mind, that even though it is difficult, they can do it. I hope every student knows he or she can succeed in math class and that it can be fun.

**SHS Sports**  
**Written by Gianna Egitto**  
**Edited by Juliana Choi**

**Girls' Soccer:** Ending the season with 11-4-3 as their record, the girls' soccer team had a fantastic season. With the leadership of Alexandra Aresco, Gianna Egitto, Tiana Pignone, Emily Simpson, and Samantha Vetrano-Olsen, they were able to pull off two major wins, Wilmington (which has not been done in six years) and Wakefield. The girls made it into the tournament, but unfortunately, they lost in the second round to Austin Prep.

**Boys' Soccer:** The boys' soccer team had their best season yet with captains Joseph Carroll and Cameron Sacco. Having a 5-11-2 record, the boys were able to place in the tournament for the first time in six years. Even though they lost in the first round, they still made Stoneham High proud!

**Football:** What an amazing season football had! They received another Division 6 North title for Stoneham High. The boys moved on to the tournament, but lost to Middleboro. However, that loss did not stop the boys from beating their rivals, the Reading High Rockets, during the Thanksgiving game. This year's captains were Will Carino and Tre Pignone.

**Volleyball:** Stoneham High's volleyball team had a great season. Even though the girls had a 2-13 record, they put forth a lot of effort. Leading the team strong, captains Maggie McAllister, Leah Sacco, and Megan Cleary rallied the girls and pushed them to keep fighting.

**Golf:** With captains Philip Conway, Cameron Gilmartin, and Luke Nusslein, the boys had a 5-8 record this season. Making States, the boys came in 6th place out of 15 teams. Senior captain Luke Nusslein became an All Star this season.

**Girls' Cross Country:** Showing an outstanding performance this year, the girls' cross country team ended with an undefeated record of 6-0, and became the girls' Middlesex League Champions, the first time in 24 years! The girls were led by captains JengYu Chou and Khadidja Ramdani.

**Boys' Cross Country:** Leading the team with a 2-4 record, captains Jared Dalone, Jake Luongo, and Michael Reilly helped the team with a great season. Jake Luongo ran all the way to All States, placing 14th overall. Dylan Oesch-Emmel exclaims, "it was a great final season with a great group of guys!"

## **Op/Ed**

### **Should We Turn the Light off on Daylight Savings Time? In Favor of Daylight Savings Time**

Written by Grace Mullane

Edited by Juliana Choi

Daylight Savings Time (DST) has been a trademark of American life for years. However, some legislators are proposing the abolishment of DST in Massachusetts, provided that other New England states and New York would do the same. This proposal must not pass because the loss of Daylight Savings Time will have more of a negative impact than keeping it. DST was enacted in the US in 1918, when there was little electricity and the economy was largely agriculture, so workers needed to maximize the daylight for harvesting crops. Although the economy has shifted and we are now lucky to have light inside our homes and offices at any time, the principle of Daylight Savings Time is still relevant. Without DST, sunset would occur at an earlier time during the spring and summer. This would negatively impact retail businesses, who receive fewer customers after dark. Most people are more inclined to go home once it is dark outside; therefore, without DST, people would have less time to do hobbies and errands after school or work in the spring and summer. This means less fun in the sun during the time of year associated with freedom and youth. Additionally, in many parts of the country, even New England, the economy is still heavily influenced by agriculture. By abolishing DST, the pay of struggling farm workers would be cut and fewer products would be produced, as there would be fewer hours of daylight to complete the work. The notion of ending Daylight Savings Time permanently may have some benefits, but the positive impacts of keeping DST are much greater. In order to maximize the potential of the economy and keep the attitudes of New Englanders bright, we must not change our Daylight Savings Time policy.

### **Against Daylight Savings Time**

Written by Lindsey Rodrigues

Edited by Juliana Choi

Daylight Savings Time (DST) is a seasonal time change measure where clocks are set one hour ahead of standard time during part of the year. As DST starts, the sun rises and sets later on the clock than the day before. Originally, DST was implemented during World War I to minimize the use of artificial light and save fuel for the war effort. Even though DST was created for that reason, it has not been proven to reduce the amount of electricity and fuel used. Even if it were to reduce fuel, studies have not been able to confirm that conservation of energy. Contrary to common belief, DST actually hurts farmers, and it was not created for their benefit. They find it to be something that gets in the way of their normal schedule and throws off their crop rotation. In this day and age, energy and agriculture have made many advancements; thus, DST is no longer essential in this changing world.

# SHS Arts

## “Arsenic and Old Lace”: An Interview Behind the Scenes

Written by Alexa Meyler

Edited by Juliana Choi

An interview with the head of the makeup department, McKenzie Schmidt:

### **What is your favorite scene of the play?**

My favorite scene is the scene where Mortimer first finds out his aunts have dead bodies in the basement. He stumbles upon one in the window seat and freaks out.

### **Who is your favorite character and why?**

My favorite character is Dr. Einstein played by Shannon Tracy. From the beginning, that character is always so frantic and out of it. He is a makeshift plastic surgeon who butchers Jonathan's face.

### **How difficult was it to do makeup for so many people?**

It was very challenging to get the makeup done in a timely manner because of the updos and special effects makeup, but I have a lot of talented underclassmen to help me out and get the job done.

### **What is your favorite part about drama?**

My favorite part about drama is definitely the people. When you join drama, it's like getting adopted into a family. All the people are so kind and welcoming, and we become so close because of all the hours we spend together. I have made so many beautiful and amazing friends through my years of being in the drama club and memories that I will have for a lifetime.

## **SHS Arts**



\*Photo provided by Jess Su

Pictured (left to right): Stephen Landers, Adam Cappello, Shannon Tracy, Isabella Childs, Grace Gill, Eli Yoder, Hailey Costa