

THE MIRROR

APRIL 5, 2019
VOL. 31, NO.3
THE BROMFIELD SCHOOL
"53-50"

Students and Faculty Tackle Sexual Harassment

by Kate Selig and Julia Deng

In its last issue, the Mirror released a front page investigative journalism piece covering incidents of sexual harassment in the school. After publication, the Mirror examined recent actions taken by students, administrators, and teachers since the report.

Students met with administration four times as of March 28. The administration has since devoted a staff meeting toward discussing sexual harassment and created a Professional Learning Community (PLC) consisting of ten teachers to further examine the issue and potential solutions. The Harvard Press also ran an article on Feb. 24, titled "It can happen here: Student newspaper confronts sexual harassment."

Senior Meetings

Of the four meetings between students and administration, three were closed to the public. Students initiated the first two meetings with administration right after the release of the article. Principal Scott Hoffman then invited students to speak a third time with Chief of Police Edward Denmark. The fourth meeting was organized by Hoffman and Dean of Students Julie Horton on Monday, Feb. 25 for Bromfield seniors to discuss the issue of sexual harassment. Fifteen seniors attended.

At the fourth meeting, students opened by sharing their background and goals for Bromfield, before discussing the disconnect between administration and students. Hoffman clarified the process following receiving allegations, reaffirming that parents are always involved. One meeting attendee questioned Hoffman about his method of judging allegations, following his quote in the original article: "You're trying to figure out what makes sense here, and you look back and say 'hey, I can see this person doing this. I can see you saying that.'" He responded that the quote was correct but said he was intending to emphasize the importance of evidence. Hoffman said, "everything is

taken seriously, no matter who they are." Hoffman admitted that "'he said, she said' situations without corroborating evidence" are trickier, concluding that "At that point, it's not a matter of punishment, it's a matter of alleviating that situation."

Attendees also discussed the need for education for all grades and genders on the issue at hand. Students brought up the possibility of coupling the current Personal Safety class for Women with one for men, or a Gender Studies course. Seniors said that educating middle schoolers on harassment was just as important as well, emphasizing that any potential education needed to be serious. Senior Phoebe Clark furthered that "as soon as it gets patronizing or condescending, people tune out and it becomes a joke." Senior Anjali Shukla said that the education becomes funny when it is also not accurate. Hoffman concurred and further explained that the opportunity to create widespread conversation is a strength of a 6-12 grade school: "It's a matter of us establishing a culture of what is acceptable or not acceptable." Hoffman finished the meeting reminding students that the first goal of school improvement is to provide a safe, secure, and inclusive environment for all.

Student Reactions

Senior Mia Hopman, part of the group of students who addressed administration in the first meeting, explained, "I was super shocked when I first read [the article]. Well not shocked, but frustrated [the harassment] had gotten to this level." She saw a group of students going to the office, noticed there were no girls and joined. She said, "I wanted to be a voice and hear what everyone was saying since most of the people that were victims were females." At first, she was "really excited when I saw it was [the boys] who got riled up, but after [later] speaking with [Ms. Katelyn] Russell I realized it was sad that just the girls bringing [the harassment] up didn't start this whole movement [against

Continued on page 3...

Should All Students Be Able to Take Personal Safety?

by Hannah Taylor

Bromfield's Personal Safety for Women (PSW) class annually comes under fire from students for potential discrimination. PSW has prompted debate over whether all students should be able to take the class, as right now, only female-identifying students can enroll.



Ms. Katelyn Russell smiles about safety.

Photo by Olivia Gomez

PSW is a semester-long health and wellness course that Bromfield offers to junior and senior girls. In this class, students learn and practice RAD (Rape Aggression Defense) as a self-defense method and discuss issues ranging from sexual harassment and assault to gender inequality and students' own experiences.

PSW co-instructor Katelyn Russell, who teaches the class with Detective Daniele Fortunato, says that having a class open only to female students is "great." She says, "[PSW] is a really unique class and it creates an environment where students can learn about uncomfortable topics more comfortably. I think the same opportunity should be offered to our male-identifying students and as a co-ed class." Russell also expressed interest in running this class herself, but said that if any sort of "Personal Safety for Men" class were being offered, she "would not be the right person to teach it." Russell says, "As someone who identifies as female, I can relate to a lot of the struggles that students are going through in PSW... I've used these experiences to inform my teaching and I think that helps in this type of class. I obviously can't relate to everything and I still have a privileged perspective, but I do think it helps."

Russell believes that "awareness" is the most important lesson girls learn in PSW that is applicable to everyone, citing the examples of being aware of one's surroundings, listening to one's intuition, and following other basic personal safety measures. As a result, she believes that expanding the class to more students of all genders would lead to productive discussion and have the desired positive impact on students: "It's worth a shot, we can adjust as we go along and learn from experience, and try to do the best we can for you all." Russell concludes by saying a co-ed personal safety class is important because "having a personal safety for men and women just reinforces the gender binary and is not inclusive to all students."

Continued on page 6...

Putting Period Struggles and Stigma to an End

by Charlotte Foley
(a member of the Global Health Society)

The Global Health Society (GHS) implemented a period product dispensary system in the girls' science wing bathroom this past February. They wanted to respond to complaints about lack of access to good quality products in school and the stigma surrounding menstrual hygiene.

Many girls share the problem of getting to the bathroom to deal with their periods while avoiding embarrassing situations. Thus, the idea for the dispenser came about during a GHS meeting discussion. Sophomore Dharma Cooper suggested they talk about menstrual health. "I've been thinking about it for a while and I was wishing that we could have dispensers in our bathrooms. When Michelle

[Mazzu] and Vivian [Liu] started the club, it gave me an outlet to express that," she said. Club member sophomore Emily Douglas further explained, "Girls tend to get their periods unexpectedly and have to awkwardly ask others for products... I think the nurse doesn't al-

ways have very good quality products, and it's awkward and inconvenient to have to go in there and ask for it." Club advisor and health teacher Katelyn Russell said, "the idea really resonated with the group, so we took the idea and ran with it."

The system follows a "take one, leave one" policy. There are free tampons, pads, and liners available in a three-drawer cabinet and students who take supplies are encouraged to bring some back in return when they have a chance. The GHS obtained the initial period products through a community member's donation and individual students' supplies.

A suggestion box with sticky notes and pencils is on top of the cabinet so people can leave written comments for the club. Anybody who wants to share their thoughts or ideas on the new system can do so anonymously and conveniently.

Sophomore Victoria Ferguson responded to the new system: "I think it's amazing! Now girls don't have to do that embarrassing sign out of class (pad or tampon in hand) thing and can get a period product easily," she said. "However," she continued, "I don't know how many girls would be willing to leave products, I think that's something the school should provide."

The club is seeking more ways to fund this project, and Russell said that they are open to fundraising suggestions. The GHS held a bake sale after school and is planning another one at the transfer station this spring.

The club's goals go beyond opening up access to products in school. GHS wants people to think about this issue on a global scale. This fits with their mission of spreading

Continued on page 2...



Promotional image created by Charlotte Foley.

The Bromfield Mirror
14 Massachusetts Avenue
Harvard, Massachusetts 01451
Vol. 31, No. 3

Editors-In-Chief
Kate Selig | Julia Deng

Associate Editors
Charlotte Foley, Anya Buchovecky, Athena Wang

Layout Editor
Isabella Munoz

Writers
Hannah Taylor
Jackie Walker
Camille Gomez
Bodhi Chadran
Sophia Zhou
Jason Zou
Matt Zobbi
Felicia Jamba
Jacob Pulido

Copy Editors
Kira Houston
Katherine Worden
Melissa Mazzu
Jordan Hoover
Meenu Ramakrishnan

Photographers
Vivien Jamba
George Shen
Olivia Gomez

Advisor
Ms. Hyde

Layout Advisor
Ms. Fontaine

Period Products cont. from page 1

awareness for global health issues.

“Though it is difficult to imagine in America, girls and women in other countries face many problems when it comes to menstruation,” said club member, sophomore Hannah Chiou. “Even some women in America lack access to menstrual products, as they are expensive and high-quality products are not always available to everyone.” Chiou views GHS’s initiative as a small step towards “mak[ing] a difference in the area by providing products at school.”

Cooper said, “A lot of women in impoverished



Girls can choose from tampons, pads, and liners.
Photo by Kate Selig

areas can’t get the period products they need, and it becomes very unsanitary. It’s unhealthy not to have that kind of access.” Similarly, Russell said, “Lack of access to sanitary products is not only a hygienic concern, it limits girls lives. Many girls drop out of school around the time of puberty... This is a multifaceted issue, but researchers think that in part this has to do with access to sanitary products and the stigma around menstruation.”

She suggested watching the short film “Period. End of Sentence.” on Netflix to learn more about the goal the club is working toward. She also recommended checking out Nurtih Aizenmen’s NPR article titled “People Are Finally Talking About The Thing Nobody Wants To Talk About,” which discusses the rise of movements to improve menstrual hygiene.

Elynn Walter is an activist mentioned in the NPR article. To get the attention of rooms of officials, she likes to say things like “half of the people in the world have their period,” or “everybody stand up and say the word blood.”

The article additionally included activist Diana Sierra, founder of BeGirl. Her company designs and distributes waterproof underwear with a pocket that can be safely filled with any absorbent material girls can find, such as grass or fabric. “We’re not talking about rocket ships; we’re talking about sanitary pads,” said Sierra. “Yet they both have the same effect. They take you places.” According to UNICEF, girls in impoverished areas cannot even find tampons or pads, let alone afford them, so Sierra’s project works to improve this issue.

As Russell puts it, GHS believes that their new initiative will “hopefully open the conversation around this issue and reduce stigma” and “eliminate some stress and worry for our students.”

Nick Joe Sparks Conversation about Homework

by Bodhi Chadran

Students for Innovative Change is an unofficial, student-led organization founded by junior Nick Joe Lewis. The organization is dedicated to creating a conversation about the detrimental effects of excess homework and proposing solutions, whether it be through reforming teaching methods, decreasing the amount of assigned work, or making new rules.

Currently, Lewis reports the group has 15 members. He has already presented his general opinions on the topic of homework and is working on a proposal to submit to the Bromfield administration. Many Bromfield students became aware of Students for Innovative Change through a series of speeches from Lewis in January 2019. The speeches were delivered during various lunch periods and classes. The administration has been working on finding solutions for the issues that Lewis has raised through attempting to further educate staff and continuing to reach out to students.

“I think the idea of decreasing homework was appealing to most students because it frequently interferes with the personal lives of students,” said Lewis. Despite the fact that he has caught the attention of hundreds of students and faculty members, Lewis believes his role so far in the process of reforming Bromfield’s homework system is “relatively small” and hopes that major policy change will come eventually. For now, he recognizes that there will likely be no changes made this school year but that in the coming years, there is a possibility to change the amount of work given to Bromfield students.

The Bromfield staff has also been working to provide what they feel is the best environment for students based on their findings. According to Associate Principal Robin Benoit, the mental health and stress aspect of homework is an important concern among staff members. She mentioned the school’s administration is currently reading David L. Gleason’s “At What Cost?: Defending Adolescent Development in Fiercely Competitive Schools.” In the book, Gleason concludes that the main sources of anxiety and depression within competitive schools are an over-emphasis on students’ future, students being assigned too much work, and overscheduling.

Benoit admits that Bromfield is a fairly competitive school, referencing the pressure that many students feel leading up to their college application process, but she notes that most of the current push for helping students mentally has been in progress for quite some time, with new developments continuing to be made. For example, she said that counselors work to make school life easier



Nick Joe Lewis calls it like he sees it.
Photo by George Shen

by helping students make important decisions—including figuring out how to manage the right amount of work—but are also trying to reach out to struggling students.

Benoit acknowledged the various kinds of stress and mental health problems within the community. When addressing the nuance of stress within competitive schools, she stated, “[Students] are feeling stress from more than one place, so it’s really multidimensional,” noting cases of stress from academics, athletics, and students’ personal lives. Despite this, she remains focused on helping students succeed in aspects of life. Regarding students’ options when experiencing a problem, she noted, “I’d like to think that my door is always open.” In addition to guidance, she said that students can rely on herself and the leadership team, their student council representatives, or the Student Wellness Advisory Team (SWAT).

“Over the years, there was a general consensus that we reduced the amount of homework that we gave,” said Ms. Kathleen Doherty, Bromfield US History II and AP Psychology teacher of 26 years. Doherty said that over 15 years of teaching US History II, she reduced the amount of homework assigned significantly. For her AP Psychology class, however, she mentioned that she has not reduced the amount of homework because of the necessary reading assigned regularly. She pointed out that although she notices the amount of work has decreased over time, students who are taking more classes will likely see a greater cumulative homework load each night, especially if they are taking

many honors or advanced placement classes.

In order to decrease students’ stress levels, she recommends that every student leaves space in their schedule for a study hall period. Study halls, according to Doherty, can decrease stress if used correctly by preventing students from losing sleep over homework or giving them time to “decompress” during the day.

Ms. Jackie Travers, Bromfield science teacher of 10 years, pointed out that although there is no official homework policy within the school, teachers will informally judge how much work to assign nightly, sometimes checking in with fellow teachers to prevent themselves from overwhelming students. In regards to a possible implementation of a homework policy, Travers suggested, “If the administration is going to ask us to cut back on homework, then I’d ask them also to ask the coaches to cut back on having [students] practice over breaks and things like that.” She explained that she has cut the amount of homework down very minimally but thinks that students have simply become busier with extracurricular activities and social media.

Despite the movement’s appeal to students, Lewis understands that many factors go into personal and psychological conditions of the student body and that decreasing the amount of assigned homework would not single-handedly fix this problem. Lewis acknowledged the differences in opinion between students and staff on the best method for solving this problem. He said, “We hope that in the end both sides can cooperate and share ideas to make a resolution that helps everyone.”

As it turns out, distinguished organizations may be on the side of Lewis. Both the National Education Association and the National PTA endorse guidelines created by researcher Harris Cooper known as the “ten-minute rule.” According to the rule, around ten to twenty minutes of homework should be assigned in the first grade. Then, for each additional grade level, students should be given another ten minutes of work, maxing out at 120 minutes in senior year. Anything over this is said to cause weakened mental health and stress.

"Pursuant to state law, no expression made by students in the exercise of such rights shall be deemed to be an expression of school policy and no school officials shall be held responsible in any civil or criminal action for any expression made or published by the students" (M.G.L. c. 71:82).

Sexual Harassment

cont. from page 1

sexual harassment at Bromfield].”

Hopman said the meeting “was more of a vent.” Although “we went in a little too angry,” “it was a good place to get everyone to see how affected we were.” She noted that the later meetings were more effective, especially when Chief Denmark and Guidance Counselor Drew Skrocki were brought in to talk with students. “Honestly,” she said, “I was a lot happier with Chief Denmark and Skrocki’s response as they wanted to deal with things on a bigger scale through health classes and middle school classes. I was a little frustrated with the way some of the members of administration felt [to us] like they weren’t listening and had preset responses.”

Senior Phoebe Clark attended the latter three meetings hosted by administration. At first, she observed students had a “sense of confusion and slight anger at the administration,” perceiving administrative response as an attempt to “cover and protect themselves,” which was why the initial meetings “didn’t really get anywhere.”

To her, the turning point came when she met with Chief Denmark, who she described as an objective third party who had a unique perspective on the situation as a law enforcement officer. She said he proved “things had been done [to punish the harassers],” which she had not expected after reading the initial article.

Clark hoped the school would implement comprehensive consent and sex education into the middle school curriculum. On her end, she also began talks with Russell and other past Personal Safety students to create a gender studies course that would be open to all students. She hopes to cover LGBTQ+ issues and toxic masculinity in addition to the subjects already discussed in the course so that “we can make it normal to have [gender equality issues] be a part of the discussion as much as STEM and arts courses.” Clark believes a course created by students would be “more respected as an [adult-created] class can come off as patronizing and detached.”

Overall, she said, “we need to create an environment where not even passing comments are stood for” because “we have a problem with a lack of comfort between students and administration. It is difficult to go to a middle aged white man to talk about a boy saying something to you, and it’s difficult to talk to adults in a position of power over something super vulnerable.” She concluded that she wants “to provide resources so that those students feel safe to communicate because if you can’t communicate with people who can help you, no one will be helped.”

Table of Contents

News.....1

Tackling Sexual Harassment

Should All be able to Take Personal Safety?

Period Struggles and Stigma

News.....2

Nick Joe Sparks Conversation

News.....3

Sidebar: Do you Identify as a Feminist?

News.....4

Tiling the Courtyard

NHS/Student Council Forum

CATCH my Breath Curriculum

News.....5

Quebec Trip Cancellation

Seniors Attend a Production of Hamlet

News.....6

Class of ‘22 take on Washington DC

Sidebar: Government Shutdown Potential

News.....7

Why is Milk Free?

Robotics Team Launches Program for HES

Science Fair

News.....8

Application Added to Language Societies

News.....9

Climate Rally

A Report from the Student Council

Sports.....10

Sports Roundup

Jayden Ndjigüe takes Basketball by Storm

Editorials/Column.....11

Bromfield’s Political Climate

LGBTQ+ Rights

Pros and Cons of Being a Triplet

Bromfield Clubs

Art.....12

The Mystery of the Moplan Mentor

Spiderman – Into the Spiderverse

Teacher Reactions

Following the article, the school also devoted an already-scheduled staff meeting toward discussing sexual harassment, and Hoffman initiated the creation of a Professional Learning Community (PLC), consisting of Ms. Bryce Mattie-Brown (co-chair), Ms. Katelyn Russell (co-chair), Mr. Ryan Deery, Ms. Amanda Failla, Ms. Patricia Nilan, Ms. Davida Bagatelle, Ms. Kate Keane, Ms. Cristin Hodgens, Ms. Jessica Haroutunian, and Mr. Peter Murphy.

Murphy said, “I did honestly feel like the school administration took the article and the subject very seriously.” Murphy noted that he, Deery, and Hoffman were the only male staff members in the group. While the school has more female than male teachers, he said, “I think the more that male teachers stand up against this, the more it will help solve the problem.”

“The school should more proactively make it clear through every means at their disposal that the Bromfield School is no place for harassment and bullying of any kind,” he said. “I don’t think that there are people who work here who say ‘who cares’ and ‘it’s no big deal’ about sexual harassment.” Additionally, he said, “we should explore the idea of other non-administrative reporting parties that people can go to so people who are finding themselves victims would legitimately feel that if they brought a complaint forward, it wouldn’t be swept under the rug.”

Russell and Mattie-Brown co-chair the newly founded Bromfield teachers’ Professional Learning Community. “Our goal is to examine the [Bromfield] climate” and “educate staff about sexual harassment and attitudes,” Mattie-Brown said.

Mattie-Brown and Haroutunian expressed their surprise at the currency of the incidents. “We’ve been aware of the protocol...we’re pretty familiar with the discussion on confidentiality on both sides of the coin,” Mattie-Brown said, but she admitted seeing the big picture of the situation shocked her. Haroutunian was also surprised individual girls were experiencing harassment. “I thought it was just culture with some groups at some ages,” she explained.

Mattie-Brown agreed on the importance of adding in education. She revealed that the Social Studies department has toyed with the idea of a gender studies class, but one challenge is that “it may not be able to reach diverse perspectives.” She said that Personal Safety for Women is “the best class we’ve offered at Bromfield,” in terms of the conversations that come out of it.

The message on equality and importance of gender-cultural education cannot only come from “a small group of female teachers,” Russell added. “It needs to come from everyone. It needs modeling,” she said. She believes that messaging from “different lenses” and subcultures such as sports teams would be powerful.

The three agreed that teachers need education on how to approach the issue of sexual harassment as well. “100 percent of our faculty wants to have a safe and respectful environment,” Mattie-Brown said, but Haroutunian added that students understand a lot more of coded slang and teen communication than teachers do. Russell also worried about online activity, explaining that on top of invisibility in terms of spoken slang, what students do on the Internet is truly invisible to her.

Mattie-Brown said that disciplining sexual harassment only addresses direct violence, not the underlying cultural layers and attitudes. “But I don’t even know if it’s a fault of the current system, when it’s already so pervasive in society. If women’s voices aren’t taken seriously in media and courts, how will they be taken seriously in terms of harassment?” she asked.

While some are saying “it’s not real,” women are more aware of the inequality because “they are living it,” Russell said. She advised all students to “take true unadulterated inventory” of their own perceptions and bias and “make strides to broaden your horizons.”

Administration’s Response

Hoffman explained his goal is to “make [our procedures] transparent while still protecting privacy so that when [incidents] happen, people know something changed.” To achieve this goal, in addition to meetings with students and faculty, he has “made it a point to go back to targets and check in on them.” He has furthermore moved the Bromfield helpline to a more prominent place on the school website. The helpline is an anonymous Google form where students can submit any concerns or issues they are having. In fact, Hoffman reported the form “initially got three hits so we were able to help kids that were really struggling.” The reports were not related to sexual harassment.

Hoffman has also entered in talks with Chief Denmark about potentially creating a “scorecard,” breaking down the types of disciplinary actions the school has dealt with in the past year and how the administration responded. He explained “the article pointed out that there were some who felt that administration sat on things or deferred to the police,” and while administration had taken action in those cases, “it wasn’t clear enough.” Although he does not expect the scorecard will be available this year, he eventually hopes to create one yearly.

Hoffman noted that the most common response he has heard from students accused of harassment in any form is “I was just joking.” Hoffman said, “that’s not good enough. We need to be better than that. ‘Jokes’ can really hurt someone.”

Superintendent Linda Dwight echoed Hoffman’s re-

Do you identify as a feminist?

by Kate Selig

The Mirror reached out to 25 male seniors and asked if they identified as a feminist or not. Fourteen did not respond for comment, three said they would rather share off the record, and the eight who did respond are quoted below.

Christopher Thornton

Well, I would say yes because gender equality is good. I mean, if you’re defining it as someone who actively participates in political discussion, then no, probably not, but if you just mean in terms on viewpoints, not necessarily activism, then I would say yes.

Ben Buchovecky

Yes. I think there has been a gender gap for a long time, and I think that it should be bridged so that we should have more equality between all genders.

Kira Houston

I consider myself a feminist because feminism is an important and necessary movement with a vast historical background; it’s not something people made up recently, but an ongoing reaction to systematic inequality. As a man, I want to support movements that uphold gender equality so that we can work together to build a more equal world.

Liam Wang

I don’t identify as a feminist, because I don’t like being called a “something-ist” in general. Labels like that make it too simple for people to assume who I am, and I’d rather people invent their own misguided labels of me, than to personally give them a way to refer to me and my beliefs without using my name.

Charlie Bardenheuer

I would say that I am a feminist because I think that people shouldn’t be disadvantaged because of their gender. People should have equal rights, no matter what sex they are.

Nikhil Kommineni

I would call myself a feminist as well because the definition of feminism is equality between genders which I support.

Raymond Li

No, I believe that the definition of feminism has shifted away from equality of genders. I believe that there is a disparity between genders in certain areas, but that the movement has shifted towards reparations and not equality.

Jake Catalina

I identify as a feminist. When people hear the word feminist, they don’t think “equal rights for men and women,” but that’s what it means. I believe everyone should be on the side of equality, which is why I choose to identify as a feminist.

marks about changes the school has made in the wake of the article. She especially commended the student-led meetings and administration’s efforts to break down barriers between administration and students. While she felt comfortable with current written harassment policy and the flowchart, she said Hoffman’s efforts to check-in again with targets could be improved. “That isn’t directly outlined in the policy,” she said, but “I think it’s been a needed change since the students didn’t feel heard.”

Furthermore, Dwight noted that Bromfield has begun working with Chief Denmark to bring education about Martin Luther King Jr.’s Six Principles of Nonviolence to the school, which is a program coordinated by Stanford’s Martin Luther King Jr. Research and Education Institute. She hopes this program will help students “talk about problems before they become bigger issues” and “solve problems between students in a more structured way.”

School Committee Chair SusanMary Redinger also felt the current policies in place, which have most recently been amended in January 2018 to reduce gendered language, were adequate. Although she did not anticipate any future policy changes, she did note that the School Committee has supported programs in the school that “break down barriers” and help students “see the impact that they have on other students.” The School Committee is also “committed to funding things like Refresh day and overall, trying to promote student health and wellness.”

Overall, Hoffman is still juggling questions of punitive consequences versus restorative justice for harassers and privacy protection while informing students that action had been taken. Hoffman also wants to bridge the gap between administrators and students. “We might not be there yet, but that’s where I’d like us to be,” he said.

He hopes students will continue to take the lead as, “while I like to think I have a powerful personality and if I say be kind to each other everyone will do it,” he believes that the best solution will be one led by students. He plans to set up another meeting with students to increase communication between the two groups. While he cannot guarantee he will accept all student suggestions, he explained that “it’s a lot easier to take a final word when you’ve been heard rather than dictated to.” He concluded, “Nobody loves to be challenged or told that you’re not getting it right, but these conversation and venues are important to making sure that we get it right for our community.”

McManus and Hoorneman Obtain over 1,000 Tiles to Decorate Courtyard

by Athena Wang

Art teacher Elizabeth Hoorneman and Social Studies teacher Kristin McManus are currently bringing the Bromfield community together by decorating a wall of the school courtyard with tiles painted by students and teachers.

This project aims to decorate one wall of the school courtyard with approximately 800 tiles. Every student and teacher at Bromfield is encouraged to paint a tile representative of themselves and their beliefs, such as pets or symbols of their passions. The idea of having student-painted tiles was inspired by an archeological dig in Italy that McManus and Hoorneman took part in during the summer 2018. “Why do people leave behind the things that they do?” McManus said, referring to the artifacts and cave paintings they saw in Italy. Some artifacts are not intentionally left behind, but some such as cave paintings aim to tell a story or give a warning. No matter the intention, each piece tells a story about the person and culture who left them behind, according to McManus.

By decorating the courtyard with tiles, Hoorneman and McManus hope to create a more positive atmosphere for the Bromfield community. They also hope that by leaving a tile behind, Bromfield graduates will have something nostalgic to return to, which was also inspired by Hoorneman and McManus’s participation in the archeological dig.

While this project serves as a time capsule for Bromfield, it also serves to combat a previous hate-motivated



The old Bromfield courtyard.
Photo by Athena Wang

incident. “We started [this project] last year,” Hoorneman said. “We started thinking about it in response to the rock incident.” In 2016, the large boulder the senior class paints every year was vandalized and painted over with various hateful symbols and words. “Coming back to the students and talking to some of them, it didn’t feel like they realized the seriousness [of the incident],” McManus said.

McManus described the school courtyard as ugly regarding its current state and stated: “So we thought how could we beautify it, and how could we encourage students to leave behind positive messages, even 10 years down the road?” Hoorneman agreed with McManus and added that the courtyard is “physically the center of the school and I thought it could also be symbolically [the center], like the heart of our community. And all staff and students could contribute to this community space.”

While this project is ultimately a school-wide endeavor, there are a few clubs and students who have contributed to the restoration of the courtyard. The Bromfield Garden Club has aided the tile project by cleaning up the courtyard in the fall of 2018. The Bromfield Garden Club aims to continue cleaning the courtyard when the snow melts. Furthermore, they plan to add new plants such as flowers.

Senior Hannah Taylor is also involved with the tile project. She is repainting benches and tables to put in the courtyard as her senior project. Hildreth Elementary School will also be including elementary school students in the painting process. As of March 14, Hoorneman and McManus have received a grant from the Harvard Schools Trust for 1,600 more tiles. The project has expanded to cover more than one courtyard wall and is expected to be a multi-year project. The Harvard Schools Trust has also granted funds to purchase flowers so that the Bromfield Garden Club can decorate the courtyard in the spring, according to McManus.

Hoorneman and McManus can be contacted if any stu-

Students Discuss Concerns in NHS/Student Council Forum

by Meenu Ramakrishnan

On Thursday, Feb. 28, the school’s NHS officers and Student Council members hosted a forum in English teacher and NHS advisor Mr. Peter Murphy’s room with the aim of identifying improvable aspects of the school. Murphy and student council co-advisor Ms. Janis Dyer sat in the back of the room, watching the small group discussion take place.

The conversation began with a prepared speech from senior Liam Wang who talked about the importance of looking at the school administration objectively and giving teachers the benefit of the doubt before creating resentment for no reason. He warned against “[getting] wrapped up in the pursuit of ensuring ‘proper justice,’ making demands to the administration rather than seeking to cooperate and further mutually beneficial goals, [and] getting sidetracked in policy rather than the curriculum and the environment.”

The students discussed the change in dress code policy at the start of last year. Many students were unaware of any modifications to the code even though it directly affected students. In addition, there was a general agreement that the school website page needed to be updated, especially the club page.

The topic then turned into a conversation about juuling in the Bromfield community. Here, students seemed to agree that there is a lack of consistency in how the administration tries to eliminate certain behaviors. For juuling, students alleged that punishment is given without prioritization of the development of a student. Students wanted to see administration do more to eliminate this behavior rather than using “scare tactics”; for example, students suggested a therapy class and an environment where students could talk freely about juuling without fear of repercussion. Students also suggested giving students that are caught juuling two options: a 4-day suspension or teaching about the harms of juuling to middle schoolers.

People shared the sentiment that the school needed to help middle schoolers find a club or school-related activity that they’re passionate about. Many felt that there has been a decrease in middle school participation in school-related activities which creates a problem for many clubs that lose members once students graduate. Students alleged that the administration treats the middle schoolers younger than their actual age and cited an example of Principal Scott Hoffman not allowing sexual harassment awareness posters to be put up in the school because middle schoolers could see it. Students felt this was problematic as they

felt that posters on how to recognize sexual harassment is important for the safety of students; that should not be inappropriate. A similar situation occurred when putting LGBTQ+ awareness posters in the middle school wing a few years ago, causing students to feel it was problematic because they alleged that it perpetuated the idea that LGBTQ+ community members are inappropriate.

The students then turned to the idea of a disconnect between administration and students. Students wondered if the administration might feel more of an obligation toward pleasing parents than listening to students. For example, for Class Day, many students felt while some of the comedies were inappropriate, however, at certain points, students felt the administrations level of inappropriate was out of proportion.

Many felt that the administration talked to students condescendingly and continuously brought up how their brains would be underdeveloped until the age of 26 so they can’t make good decisions; students felt there were other effective ways to pose that point. As one student put it, the brain plasticity development just meant you “weren’t at your final Pokemon evolution yet.”

The discussion transitioned to how the administration seemed unapproachable as it would be helpful to have a Google Classroom to increase communication between the administration and students and increase the use of digital media for students who feel uncomfortable talking to the administration in person. Students felt that it would be better if the administration asked what the students wanted rather than make assumptions.

Catching up on the CATCH my Breath Curriculum

by Anya Buchovecky

Throughout the month of February, health and wellness teacher Ms. Katelyn Russell taught the CATCH My Breath curriculum to all of her health classes. The curriculum is one of the many measures Bromfield is implementing in an effort to educate kids on the dangers of e-cigarettes in order to reduce usage, both in and out of school.

Coordinated Approach To Child Health (CATCH) My Breath was created by researchers at the Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living and at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Public Health. According to the CATCH website, they sought to create a series of lessons that would increase middle and high schoolers’ “knowledge of E-cigarettes, nicotine and addiction dangers while cutting their intended use of the product in the future.”

The CATCH My Breath curriculum consists of four 30-40 minute lessons. The first lesson covers the health consequences of e-cigarette use. It discusses how e-cigarettes work, the difference between e-cigarette “vapor” and water

vapor, the hidden chemicals in e-cigarette vapor, and the dangers of nicotine. The second lesson walks students through the decision making process of picking up an e-cigarette. It describes the motives behind student vaping, the effects of addiction on personal goals, the ways addiction affects one’s identity, strategies to cope with the social pressures of vaping, and how to refuse an e-cigarette if offered one. The third lesson highlights how advertisements portray vaping, the hidden messages in e-cigarette ads, the advertising industry’s teen recruitment strategies, and the potential profit motives of manufacturers. The last lesson teaches kids “smart exit strategies”: phrases they can use to get out of a situation where they have either been asked to use an e-cigarette or been peer pressured into using an e-cigarette.

Overall, Russell thinks that the lessons were well received and that teaching the course for the first time served a good learning experience for her. However, she hopes to make a few changes in the curriculum for next year. She reasons that “as you teach a subject for years, the material gets richer,” and that “there is always room to improve.” Next year, she

wants to spend more time talking with students, discussing what is in vape fluid, hearing students’ reasons for why teens vape, and teaching about vaping THC, the compound in marijuana.

Russell does not know if the lessons had any effect on kids that already vape, as vaping has addictive chemical components. Russell admitted she doesn’t have the ability to make every student quit vaping, saying that the best she can do is give students the best information to make smart decisions. Thus, her greatest hope is that the curriculum “affected one person, and that now they think differently about vaping.”

Student Feedback

Sophomore Taylor Caroom thought the CATCH My Breath curriculum was helpful as it “detailed the specific ways that juuling can harm one’s health.” Caroom learned about the dangerous chemicals used to flavor the vape liquid and the diseases they cause such as popcorn lung, a condition that damages the smallest airways in the lungs and induces coughing and shortness of breath. She believed that it

Continued on page 5...

Quebec Trip: Why Was it Canceled and Will it Run Again?

by Charlotte Foley

This February, administration canceled the Quebec City trip previously planned for May 25-27 due to unexpected under-enrollment.

Middle school French teacher and trip coordinator Ms. Lisa Terrio announced that the trip “did not reach the minimum number of students that we needed to make the Quebec City trip cost effective” in an email on Feb. 15. Terrio said that approximately 20 students had signed up for the trip by the deadline, which had been extended three times. Afterward, several more people signed up, but at that point, the trip had already been canceled.

The push for a Quebec City trip began back in September when a poll was sent out to French students in grades 9-12 to determine how many students were interested in the trip. Over 100 students responded positively, but in the end, only 20 committed. Trip coordinators opened the sign-ups to eighth graders to combat under-enrollment. It did not do much to increase the numbers. Past trips have generated enough student interest to fill two busses, which totals to 80 to 100 students. This year, there were not enough to fill even one.

Terrio did her best throughout the year to advertise the trip. She posted brochures and flyers around the school, conducted Friday morning announcements, created bulletin and TV advertisements, held student and parent meetings, and invited a tour company representative to speak to students. Terrio, Madame Anastasia Townsend and Madame Jessica Haroutunian spoke to students in class to spread information.

Based on the number of students that coordinators anticipated from the interest

poll, the cost was set at around \$550 per student. When only 20 people signed up, the price was raised to \$750.

“The school decided that that was too much of an additional expense to ask all the parents,” said Terrio. “Families had emailed asking about fundraising, but it’s just kind of impossible to think about raising \$200 per student who wants to go on the trip.”

“I don’t know if it’s just that people changed their minds, realized that they had other plans for that weekend, or what in particular,” said Terrio. “I know that since the last time the Quebec trip ran, the school is offering more trips like the New Orleans trips, or the Model UN trips, so maybe some students are choosing to go on a different trip instead of the Quebec trip.”

Terrio also mentioned the trip was difficult to plan since administration would not allow students to miss a day of school. She had limited dates on which the trip could run without costing students school days.

Sophomore French student Kayla Lem explained her reasoning for not signing up: “[The planned trip] was too short and I felt that it would’ve been too rushed,” she said. “I think the trip was a good idea for cultural and historical purposes, and I definitely agree that visiting a certain area and immersing yourself in the culture really helps, but I felt that there wasn’t enough time to truly absorb everything.”

Sophomores Sarah Sobalvarro and Marley Ferguson decided against the trip due to the cost. “I think a lot of people also didn’t sign up because of the cost, like a lot of families were only planning on sending their kids on the France trip, and the Quebec one seemed like it cost too much for only a couple days,” said Sobalvarro.



The Quebec flag features four fleur-de-lis. Sourced from quebec.com

Ferguson said that her parents “said no because it was way more expensive than it would be to go without the school.”

On the other hand, students who signed up expressed enthusiasm for the trip: “I wanted to go on a trip with the school, and my friends were going, and it seemed fun,” said sophomore Victoria Ferguson.

The curriculum that Townsend taught piqued some students’ interest. Sophomore Meredith Greayer said, “Learning about Canadian history and culture in French class made me want to learn more.”

Terrio believes that a visit to Quebec would benefit students because it would be their “first real exposure to native French speakers.” She noted that it would be interesting for students to hear a French-Canadian accent since the pronunciation is different.

She also said that students would be “exposed to a new culture, particularly

through food.” Trip coordinators planned a traditional Quebecois dinner, a visit to a bakery, and a dinner at a sugar shack where maple syrup is made. The restaurant has “traditional Canadian flavors” and live music which would help students “taste and hear a new culture.”

Terrio planned a nighttime ferry on the St. Lawrence River and a daytime walking tour to have a view of the city during both the day and the night. She said the hotel, Hotel Pur, was selected for close proximity to the downtown.

Next year, Terrio plans to offer the trip again. She will send a poll asking students whether they would prefer the trip in the winter or spring, as the successful trips in the past have taken place in the winter. She hopes that starting the advertising earlier in the fall will give students and parents time to raise money.

Seniors Attend a Production of Shakespeare’s “Hamlet”

by MJ Gamelin

On Tuesday, March 5, seniors in Ms. Jessica Hyde’s AP English Literature and Honors Literature classes visited Regis College in Weston, Massachusetts to see a production of Shakespeare’s “Hamlet.” Both classes had recently finished reading the play. The performance was full of revenge, madness, comedy, romance and murder—a typical Shakespearean family drama.

Shakespeare & Company, a group that aims to bring theater to schools across New England, performed the show. They have come to Bromfield in previous years, putting on shows such as “Macbeth” and “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.” This time, Bromfield came to them, along with two other school groups who also viewed the 90 minute performance. The production was abridged from the full run time of over four hours. Six actors portrayed the story of the prince of Denmark and the kingdom’s descent into chaos.

After the performance, the actors led a 15 minute discussion with the audience. Each actor gave a statement and then asked the audience to stand if they agreed and sit if they disagreed. They expressly stated that there was no right or wrong answer. For the most part, audience members seemed united over the phrase “It’s unmanly to show emotions.” No one stood, and a student from another school yelled, “Down with the patriarchy!” to which the audience responded with laughter and cheer. Most students also agreed that children should confront their parents when they do something wrong

(though probably not in the manner that Hamlet did, given the result).

Despite the fatalities, students disagreed on whether or not Hamlet’s actions were justified. Some defended the homicidal prince, pointing out that his uncle murdered his father and married his mother two months later. Others disagreed, saying Hamlet could have handled the situation better. A student from another school, to jokingly quote the TV show Brooklyn Nine-Nine, commented, “Cool motive, still murder.”

The statement on the existence of supernatural forces also had mixed reactions. “Hamlet” includes discussions of fate, destiny, and the afterlife. Hamlet even gets a visit from the ghost of his deceased father. These strange events make the audience question the presence of the inexplicable in our own lives. Senior Liam Wang, expressed his opinion on the matter: “the supernatural doesn’t have to be like how it’s portrayed on TV. It doesn’t necessarily mean ghosts and stuff. The supernatural is beyond our understanding.”

After the activity, actors opened the floor for questions. Students were eager to hear about any mishaps or flubs during the performance, to which the actors replied that no show ever goes perfectly. With the complexity of Shakespeare’s dialogue, it is easy to mix up words and make mistakes, but this, for the most part, went unnoticed by the audience. However, this led students to ask the question: “how much time do the actors have to prepare?” Before the tour began performers revealed they only had only two

weeks to learn their lines.

On return to Bromfield, students analyzed the lighting and set choices, the actors’ interpretations of the characters, and even how each character’s costume reflected their inner mental state. A big point of discussion was the casting. A female actor played the titular role of Hamlet, a rare occurrence in the world of Shakespeare. Some students loved this decision, calling it a “take that!” to the often sexist Elizabethan era. Others thought that Hamlet’s actress was more aggressive rather than introspective, which didn’t match their interpretation of the character.

Students also discussed how some actors had to play more than one character, as there were only six actors and twelve characters. In some cases, such as Ophelia/Rosencrantz (both of those characters being portrayed by the same person), the characters were portrayed so differently, audience members forgot they were played by the same actor. But for other actors, namely Laertes/Guildenstern and Polonius/Horatio, the audience found it hard to discern between the two characters if not for their different costumes.

Overall, the reception of the performance and the field trip as a whole was positive. As students get older and schedules fill up, class field trips become less and less common, so many of the seniors saw the outing as a rare treat.

Catch My Breath

cont. from page 4

is important that these lessons are taught, as “vaping is often talked about but little is mentioned about the exact harms caused by vaping.” However, she said the lessons “didn’t really change my opinion on vaping because I already knew that vaping is bad and I don’t really like it.”

An anonymous student who vapes explained, “the CATCH My Breath curriculum did not particularly change my mind.” They thought the lessons were slightly helpful as “they touched on some not well known risks of vaping and [informed students of] the different types of chemicals found in the e-liquid that aren’t widely known.” Overall, this student believed that “it’s important kids know the risks of a somewhat socially acceptable fad.” However, they believe that these lessons are not enough to stop kids from vaping.

In terms of other ways of trying to educating teens about vaping and reducing the number of people that vape, sophomores Caroom and sophomore Maible Daly had a few ideas. Caroom thinks that in order to get kids to stop using e-cigarettes “we need to change the way vaping is discussed in our society, especially with adults and how it’s discussed in such a negative way. If we were to remove some of the stigma in how adults talk about vaping, anyone that might do it to rebel might be less motivated.”

In addition, Daly explained that there should be a change in how the school responds to vaping. She believes “if an addicted student were to come forward to a trusted adult in the school asking for assistance, instead of rebuking the student and punishing them, the administration should instead help them to combat their addiction through some sort of program or through other means.”

Class of 2022 Takes on Washington D.C.

by Jordan Hoover

On March 14 at 6 a.m., the freshman class boarded two coach buses and departed for the annual trip to Washington D.C. Students arrived early at Bromfield where they underwent a bag check and declared themselves present. Students’ roommates were determined ahead of time and students were sorted into busses by who their roommates were. The students stayed in D.C. until March 17, giving the students and chaperoning teachers ample time to explore and learn.

Over the next three days, the students continued to visit many sites. They visited Arlington Cemetery to see the changing of the guard. They also visited museums like the Smithsonian, the Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the Newseum. Dispersed between these stops, the students visited the Iwo Jima Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial, the Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial, and more. Students greatly appreciated the freedom they enjoyed when visiting these memorials and museums. The students also visited the Capitol on a guided tour. The students first watched an introductory film about the history of the Capitol building and then toured some rooms with their guides.

A student favorite was the performance of “Shear Madness” at the Kennedy Center. The show was an interactive mystery where the audience helped the characters in the play solve the case. The cast of the show made the performance more enjoyable by referencing the different school groups that were watching and by incorporating audience opinion on who committed the crime. The mystery was ultimately decided by student vote.

In the survey Horton distributed after the trip, students reported they would have appreciated more downtime at the hotel with their friends. For instance, the highlight of freshman Catherine Finnigan’s trip was “being able to spend time with my friends on the bus.” However, students disliked the pizza and dance party at the hotel on the second night that was organized by the tour although it allowed them to spend more time with their friends. Freshman Robin Miller explained, “The dance party was not what I was expecting. I wish we had had more time to visit our friends’ hotel rooms.” As a result of this feedback, Horton sent out another survey to the sophomores, juniors, and seniors asking what they would have rather done instead of the pizza and dance party. These alternative options included bowling, a movie, or a renaissance dinner.

Student consensus overall was that the trip was educational. Freshman Olivia Ren said, “I learned about the atrocities that millions people had to face as a result of the Holocaust. I also learned how reporting news is vital to show people what is happening around the world, potentially sparking action.”

Personal Safety cont. from page 1

other basic personal safety measures. As a result, she believes that expanding the class to students of all genders would lead to productive discussion and have the desired positive impact on students: “It’s worth a shot, we can adjust as we go along and learn from experience and try to do the best we can for you all.” Russell concludes by saying a co-ed personal safety class is important because “having a personal safety for men and women just reinforces the gender binary and is not inclusive to all students.”

Some high school students share Russell’s sentiment. Senior Mia Hopman explained that having a girl-only PSW is important because “it [is] a safe space created by only girls being in it.” She also believes that having a separate class for everyone would be beneficial. She explained that she would want this class to be more education-based than self defense with lessons on gender inequality and sexual assault. Hopman feels that teaching these lessons to male students is important and would be interested to hear their perspectives on these types of issues, especially as there is a “disconnect” between women and men in what they experience. She concluded by saying, “There’s definitely the possibility people would take it as a joke, but I would hope people would be serious about it. I think if people take it seriously it will definitely be a positive outcome.”

Senior Phoebe Clark agreed with Hopman. She described PSW as “one of my favorite classes I’ve taken and one of the best experiences.” Clark also appreciated the safe environment the class created for girls, allowing them to share their own opinions and experiences openly. She feels that there should be a co-ed class as well and thinks that a gender studies course would be the best format. She explained that such a course would cover everything from toxic masculinity to gender identity, and “guys who would take the class could see the things we go through that we’ve normalized as women.” Clark believes the most important takeaway from a gender studies course would be that “fundamentally, we’re all equal people, but we have different experiences based off our gender.” She expressed concern at the fact that those who need the class the most might not be the ones who would sign up for it but believes that the result would be positive overall.

Seniors Kelsey Fort and Aurora Abraham did not take PSW but expressed that they saw the value in it and think the school should “offer something similar for guys and maybe overlap [that class and PSW] sometimes for discussion.” Though interested in the idea of a co-ed class, they were both worried about it “hinder[ing] women’s ability to talk about issues” and were not sure if male students would be interested in taking such a class. However, Abraham finished by saying, “I would definitely be willing to take a class like that, and I wish I took PSW

this year after hearing all the good things about it.”

However, not just female students saw the importance of a co-ed class—male students did as well. Senior Sam Rachman stated that he would be interested in taking a class similar to PSW and feels that this sort of class would be beneficial because students would be “doing things that make more of a bond between people, in a way, so there’s less judgement.” He explained that he would want lessons to cover relevant current news as well as gender studies and health.

Senior Kira Houston expressed similar thoughts to Clark, explaining that he would want this class to take the format of a gender studies course and incorporate the lessons from PSW, without the self-defense portion. Houston said that he would specifically want lessons on “cultural inequalities relating to gender” and on “how women and other genders have been oppressed and what you can do to combat that from any gender’s perspective.” He stated that “as a dude, I would absolutely take that class.”

Younger high school students who plan on taking PSW in the future also expressed interest in taking an ad-



Mace is a common form of self defense.
Sourced from mace.com

ditional class open to everyone. Junior Colleen Makosky and sophomore Holly Jones both shared this sentiment. Jones then shared that at a recent course selection meeting, one of the boys in her grade had asked if he could take PSW as a male student and was told he could not. She did not think it was fair that there was no opportunity like this for him. She says, “personal safety isn’t just a female thing. It’s a human safety thing too.”

such as the Spy Museum or the Holocaust Museum could still be visited during a shutdown because they are not owned by the government.

If freshmen couldn’t go inside federal buildings key to the Washington experience, would they still visit? “Seeing the exteriors of buildings would definitely still be a possibility, and we [visit exteriors] even when the government is running for some places we don’t have time or an appointment to tour, like the Supreme Court and the White House,” said Horton.

Shutdown Potential

by Jacob Pulido

In January, as the government shutdown dragged on, the Bromfield community questioned how the shutdown would affect the freshman trip to Washington D.C. While the shutdown ultimately ended and students attended the trip, the Mirror investigated what would have happened to the trip had the government remained in a shutdown. As political polarization increases in government, the chances of a shutdown overlapping with the D.C. trip only increase as the years go on.

Horton said, “I believe in the trip so much, both as a way to explore our country’s government and history and as an opportunity for the freshman class to create shared experiences and memories. The ability to bond as a class will exist even if the itinerary couldn’t be all that we might have hoped, and to me, that is just as important, if not more so.” According to Horton, even if government buildings were shut down, students would still visit non-government operated museums and other attractions instead. Museums

Aspiring Scientists Display Projects at 51st Science Fair

by Jordan Hoover

In the Bromfield School Gymnasium Friday, March 8, aspiring student scientists, inventors and engineers in the 8th to 12th grades completed and displayed their creative projects at the annual 51st science fair. Tables that packed the room were filled with informative projects ranging from homemade hoverboards to wildfire prevention tips. Between the hours of 2:30 and 5:00 p.m., the projects were judged and presented. The science fair was then open to the public between 7:00 to 7:45 p.m. Awards were announced at 7:45 p.m. in the auditorium.

The 6th and 7th graders were absent from the science fair and were scheduled to present instead in front of teachers and students during the early release day, March 20. To encourage the students to follow through and work hard on their projects, the middle school teachers thought it would be easier to have separate science fairs so that the younger students wouldn't be intimidated by the older students.

Around 60-70 judges, consisting of 42 faculty judges and 20-30 community members, evaluated the students. Volunteer judge Nick Browser, a consulting

engineer, has judged the science fair for nearly 15 years. He said, "I like the variety of projects I see and I like the enthusiasm of the students showing what they have done. And it's fun to see what people's interests are."

Browser further explained why the science fair was important: "I think science benefits the society because science answers questions... Science allows us to say 'why does this work?' and 'why is this the way it is?' It gives us the answer that's objective. I think sometimes that students are turned-off by science because they think it's too geeky and hard or that it takes too much time away from friends. And the science fair shows that science can be really fun in it's own way."

Many students demonstrated Browser's point by selecting topics they were invested in, perhaps based on a question they might have had about the world or an area of future study they want to pursue. Senior Cynthia Jo, for example, worked with her sister, sophomore Liza Jo, on a project titled "Electricity and PH over a Salt Bridge." They won a Harvard PTO award and a grade 10/11 category first place. Cynthia plans to continue ex-

Continued on page 8...

Bromfield Robotics Team Launches After-School Program for HES

by Felicia Jamba

On Feb. 8, the Bromfield Robotics Team put their minds together to brainstorm a new way to connect with the Harvard community. By the end of the meeting, they came up with an idea: an after school robotics program for students at Hildreth Elementary School. It would be hosted every Friday at Bromfield in Mr. Lavigne's room 275 for grades 3-5.

The project launched with freshman Tiana Jiang emailing Principal Scott Hoffman, outlining the program and asking for his assistance. Attached was a potential advertisement flyer to illustrate the activities the students would participate in. The name of the program? Robotics Lab. It would take place from 3:15 to 4:45 p.m., and the flyer explained, "Students will be able to experi-

category the team is judged on is Community Outreach. This is where judges look for efforts the team has made to make FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) known throughout their community, connect with their local STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) community, and to recruit people who take interest in engineering.

For Community Outreach last year, the Robotics Team went to HES to present their team robot and teach students about the team and FIRST competitions. They were also able to experiment with Lego Mindstorms robots that the Bromfield Robotics and Programming class had created. However, Jiang explains, "the one day event is very minimal compared to what other teams had completed for Outreach. It plays a big



Students piece together their robot.
Photo by Vivien Jamba

Why is Milk Free?

by Sofia Zhou

Have you ever wondered why milk is free in the cafeteria? Do you ever think about the nutritional value of school lunch? The role of milk as a component of school lunch is an important one that the government maintains.

US Department of Agriculture (USDA) mandates that milk is included in school lunches because it is "one of the most important sources of calcium, and contributes substantially to the protein and vitamin A content of a meal." Milk has been federally maintained as part of a student's diet since 1940. Its purpose is to increase calcium intake, which was, in a 1965 survey, "substantially below the recommended amounts." In an school-served 8 oz carton of milk, there is approximately 305 mg of calcium.

One carton of milk in Bromfield costs \$0.50, and if you buy lunch, the carton is included for free with your meal. Conversely, one bottled water costs \$1.00 in the vending machines. Chef Paul estimates the milk and water sales in the cafeteria: "We probably go through 200 cartons of milk [every day], and... we probably sell 100 waters a day." These estimates were backed up by a Bromfield survey on milk and water, where the data show about twice as many students reported purchasing milk with school lunch as those who responded with juice or water. Some don't purchase a drink at all. Some students, like freshman student government president Olivia Ren and freshman Catalina Lora, do not buy milk because of lactose intolerance or stomach discomfort, while others, such as freshman Catherine Zhou, do not like the taste of milk. Others still opt out of drinking milk because without straws, it is harder for them to drink.

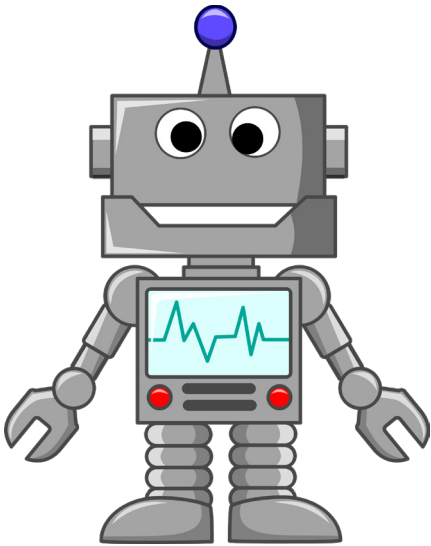
On the contrary, some people, such as freshman Felicia Jamba, credit milk for healthy bone growth. Indeed, according

to an article released by the University of Minnesota, "calcium is the most abundant mineral in the human body and it is essential for life." Calcium is especially necessary in adolescence, where pubertal bone growth requires high calcium intake (1000 mg/day). Unfortunately, the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) observed in a 2003-2006 survey that 50% of 9-13 year old boys and 9-18 year old girls fall below their estimated average calcium requirement. However, not all agree that calcium is necessary for bone growth. The Food and Agriculture Organization, a United Nations entity, notes that there is "great variation in calcium intakes across the world, which does not appear to be associated with any corresponding variation in the prevalence of osteoporosis," and that this "paradox... clearly calls for an explanation."

The debate over the benefits of milk extends beyond just osteoporosis. A 2009 study conducted to conclude whether or not to recommend dairy in a vegan diet claims that "accumulating evidence shows that consuming milk or dairy products may contribute to the risk of prostate and ovarian cancers, autoimmune diseases, and some childhood ailments," and so milk and dairy should not be part of the diet. On the other hand, a European study from 2016 asserts that milk intake results in "reduced risk of childhood obesity," "reduced risk of cardiovascular disease," and is "inversely associated with colorectal cancer, bladder cancer, gastric cancer, and breast cancer." And a 2014 cohort study on middle-aged Swedish men and women (Sweden having a very high consumption rate of milk and dairy products) draws the conclusion that high consumption of milk "may be associated with a higher rate of death."

Overall, while the scientific community may still be undecided about the benefits of the drink, milk is here to stay in Bromfield's cafeterias. Drink up!

ment with and control the team robot. They will also learn about the process of building and programming this robot and all of its functions." Additionally, the students would engage in more hands-on projects such as



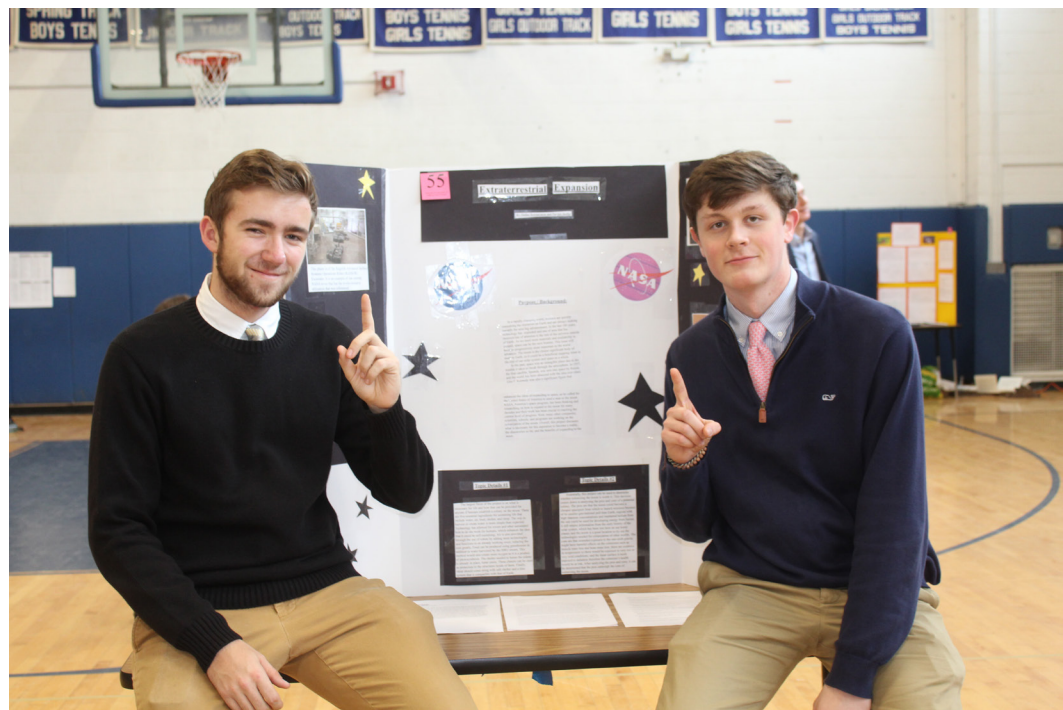
"building and programming a unique LEGO Mindstorms robot. Applying their creativity, students will work in teams to design a robot that can complete various challenges." The students work with the Robotics Team members throughout their journey.

The Robotics Lab will accomplish several things for the Robotics Team. Known as the Sliced Breadboards 11460, the team competes in many FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) competitions where the team and their robot are judged. These competitions are hosted internationally and teams can advance to higher levels of competition depending on how well they perform. One

part in awards. Good Community Outreach can get you nominated for both the Motivate and Connect awards. We would like to be eligible for those." Additionally, the team hopes that the Robotics Lab will introduce future Bromfield students to the team and possibly lead them to participate in their future years.

The class would also help the team raise funds for competitions. The mandatory supplies FIRST sends out annually usually cost about \$1000, with robot parts and competition fees adding another \$2000 to their annual budget. Senior student leader of the Robotics Team Kiara Munz explained that "the team was very lucky to have 3 sponsors this year: SAME: Society of American Military Engineers, Harvard Schools Trust, and Sencio Systems. Their support has helped us a lot and we can't thank them enough."

As well as making individual team member donations, the team occasionally hosts bake sales at the transfer station which generally bring around \$200 each. The Robotics Lab would significantly move the fundraising needle, as the class costs \$85 per student. However, Robotics Club teacher advisor Keith Lavigne explains, "although the fundraising is beneficial, our most important goal for this program is to promote excitement and enthusiasm for robotics and STEM education in HES students that can later participate in our team." The Robotics Lab will start this year on March 29 and grades 3-5 can sign up through the Winter-Spring Spectrum registration page, which is accessible from the Harvard Public Schools website.



Stefan Scornavacca and Patrick Stoffel studied extraterrestrial expansion.
Photo by George Shen

Science Fair

cont. from page 7

ploring her interest in science through college and plans to major in biology. Students are always encouraged to participate in the science fair. Two out of the three higher level Advanced Placement (AP) science classes require participation in the science fair. Preparation for the science fair began back in September. Ms. Deborah Pierce, science department leader and biology teacher, first ensured that students know what they want to investigate. Then, she located judges and reserved the auditorium and gym for use. After, she continued to finalize the logistics of the event so that the night would run smoothly. Ms. Jackie Travers, a 9th grade science teacher, stated how proud she is of the participants: “I am always impressed by what people come up with for science fair. I really do think this is one of the proudest moments in the school year.” Recognition at the science fair is awarded in two categories: community awards and academic awards. Local organizations selected and awarded the community awards to the projects that they thought connected to their organization’s goal or purpose. For example, the Bare Hill Pond Watershed Management, an organization that focuses on the preservation and use of on water, honored water-related projects. They selected two projects for recognition: sophomore Matthew Atwell for his project “Factors that Affect the Speed off a Boat” and senior Phoebe Clark for her project “The History of Climate Change Through Studying the Ocean’s Core.” The Bromfield faculty judges gave the academic awards to the students at the award ceremony.

Application Added to Language Honor Societies

by Anya Buchovecky

For the first time, the World Language language department is requiring applicants to the department’s honor societies to submit a formal application. Up until this school year, the Spanish and French National Honor Societies did not require an application. In February, students in grades 10 and higher were informed of their eligibility to apply to the World Language Honor Society, which includes La Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica (the Spanish Honor Society) and La Société Honoraire de Français (the French Honor Society). They were given two weeks to apply and were notified of their acceptance on March 8. In previous years, students received a letter of acceptance from World Language department leader Profe Fraser, stating that they had “maintained at least an A- cumulative average in their language class, and maintained a B average or higher in all other subjects during the quarter of selection.” The letter also specified that, students must have averaged a “cumulative grade of B- in all other subjects for work awarded secondary school credit.” This year, the same academic requirements must be met. However, students who are interested in being a member of the Spanish or French Honor Society must now also fill out an application. The students must first answer to three short response questions in three to five sentences:
Why do you enjoy learning other languages?
Do you think it’s important to learn other languages? Why or why not?
What are your long term goals for learning Spanish or French?

Students must also type a 250 to 300 word essay in the language that they are currently learning. Students who applied to the Spanish Honor Society wrote about Roberto Clemente, the namesake of Bromfield chapter of the Spanish Honor Society. Students applying to the French Honor Society wrote about the meaning of the French Honor Society motto “liberté, égalité, fraternité” (“Freedom, equality, brotherhood”) and how it could be applied to their life. Fraser stated that the application was instituted this year because “as a department, we want the language honor societies to mean more and an application would make that happen.” She explained that “the department felt there was a need for kids to do more to get into the society.” Fraser reasoned that “other language honor societies in the area require an application, so an application seemed right.” Fraser believes the more stringent requirements are the first step toward fostering a greater presence for the societies throughout the school. Sophomore Spanish student Vivian Liu noted that some of the questions were looking for the same type of answer, and the application took away from time that could have been spent on other work. Despite this, she would rather have an application as opposed to no application, so “there aren’t a bunch of people who are in the society that don’t even care about the language. With the application, it gives everybody a chance to get in who really wants to.” The application “makes the society more like a ‘society,’” she said. Liu enjoyed the application and the essay topics because they made her “think about why I was learning this whole other language and the benefits that could come out of it.”

Sophomore Spanish student Michelle Mazzu did not mind the application as “it was pretty easy and did not take too much time,” mainly because “it was not very laborious and only took about 1 hour to complete.” She added that the application “seems as though it will make applicants more accountable” and that it “makes the society seem more selective.” Sophomore Spanish student Annie Segaloff agreed with Mazzu and explained that the application is important as it “shows dedication and gives the appearance of devotion to the language.” After hearing about the application Segaloff felt “less inclined” to apply. She ultimately decided to apply, commenting that it was “well worth” doing so, but wished there had been more time to respond to the questions and meet with language teachers about the essay. Sophomore Dylan Winchell applied to the French Honor Society. He believes that honor societies are “big deals” and that it is necessary for people to put some work in to get accepted. He explained that “the application was a good way to show who really wants to get in.” In contrast, sophomore Tori Ferguson did not apply to the French Honor Society as she “didn’t have the time to do it.” Ferguson felt “somewhat less motivated” to apply to the honor society after hearing of the application process. In addition, she thought that the essay topic was difficult to answer because it was “kind of abstract, and there was no right answer to it.” Fraser does not plan on removing the application for the French and Spanish Honor Society anytime soon. She hopes that this will lay the foundation for the honor societies to put on movie nights, go to restaurants, and take part in cultural nights and community events.

Senior Yohhan Kumarasinghe netted a game-changing three-pointer in the staff-senior game. Seniors won 53-50.



Students Join Global Climate Rally; Leaders Receive “Productive Detention”

by Kate Selig, with contributions from Harvard Press reporter Marty Green. This article appeared in the 3/22 issue of the Harvard Press.

More than 100 Bromfield students walked out of classes Friday, March 15, joining well over a million young people from 128 nations around the world in a protest against their governments’ inaction on global warming.

The global climate rallies were inspired by activist Greta Thunberg, a 16-year-old student in Sweden who has protested outside the Swedish Parliament every Friday since last August in lieu of going to school.

Junior Anna Shlimak, one of the student organizers of the Bromfield event, explained she had found out about the movement just five days before the global date. She joined members of the Bromfield Green Team and the Politics Club, including juniors Liza Toll, Fiona Morrison, Rachel Shrides, Lwiza AitDowd, Celeste Keep, and Meenu Ramakrishnan, to begin organizing a Bromfield walkout. While a statewide walkout was already planned to take place in Boston that day, Shlimak reported the group thought a community-oriented, local walkout would be more practical than encouraging students to miss an entire day of school by going to Boston. The group also began to plan who would speak at the event, eventually deciding on Shlimak, Toll, Shrides, and Ramakrishnan, along with sophomore KeeSeok Lee and juniors Fiona Nash and Pedro Pellegrino.

The group approached the school administration Thursday, the day before the planned walkout, to discuss potential school approval for the event. Shlimak explained, “We approached them respectfully to discuss the matter at hand, and we apologized for the short notice. Their response was level and transparent. They told us that they would be unable to support the movement due to school policy, and that there could be consequences for students who chose to participate.” The school was especially concerned about the last-minute timing and safety of the event.

Principal Scott Hoffman said the school administrators are always looking for ways students can express themselves constructively, without disrupting education in



the event on social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram. On the day of the event, students distributed green and blue ribbon-pins and used word of mouth to further increase participation, making sure, according to Shlimak, to “disclose the fact that consequences may come as a result of walking out.” Overall, Shlimak explained that “marching raises awareness, which will hopefully translate into voting and making a political change.”

Students streamed out of classrooms at 9 a.m. Friday to join the walkout organizers in front of the school. Hoffman and other administrators patrolled the doors, occasionally warning students that they could face disciplinary action if they left the school.

Students shivered in the light rain as Shlimak opened the walkout with a moment of silence for those affected by climate change before the student speeches began.

Lee, one of the students whom the organizers asked to speak at the event, explained he joined the leadership team the day before. He said, “I think that if we want to save ourselves and the Earth, we have to act on climate change.” In his speech to students, he named climate change as “the biggest danger to our existence right now” and asked students to “Wake up! Take action! Send letters to local politicians, protest, advocate to try and stop climate change, and most importantly, never stop using your voice for change in this world.”

Ramakrishnan, one of the walkout organizers, said she

doing so. Students might have chosen to make their point with a gathering either before or after class hours, he said, but any time students leave class, there will be consequences.

The group took the potential consequences in stride and began to advertise

spoke out because “We are the ones that are going to be impacted the greatest, not the previous generations who messed up the climate for us.” She ended the walkout by saying, “This mass walkout shows lawmakers that they need to start prioritizing climate change if they want to stay in office. We are not going to put up with them blindly following corporations’ bidding in exchange for money, and we want comprehensive climate change reform. Our future depends on it.”

After the 20-minute walkout, the students who organized the event served two “productive detentions” with the school’s administrators, where both groups discussed concerns about the implementation and response to the walkout. Students shared concerns about the school’s disciplinary policy, while administrators voiced worries about students’ disrupting class time for political movements.

Ramakrishnan found the detention “reasonable,” as the administration “cannot show favorability to a certain political spectrum,” she said. However, she noted that the administrators “kept talking about how a lot of students were there just to skip class,” while she observed that students were respectful at the walkout. “It’s wrong to treat us like 5-year-olds, incapable of making our decisions,” she said, adding that she believed the majority of students outside were truly invested in the movement.

Another group of students has since formed a counterwalkout against the Green New Deal (GND). Organized by seniors Christopher Thornton, Raymond Li, and Yohhan Kumarasinghe, the group wrote in an email that they hope to “protest the implementation of extreme, counterproductive, and unrealistic solutions to climate change.” They characterized the GND legislation as “alarmingly radical.” The group hopes to host the walkout Friday, May 3, with administrative permission.

With any student demonstration, Hoffman said he asks students to think about the outcomes. “You’ve brought awareness and that’s good,” he said, “but what’s next?” And he asked the same question about school disciplinary policies: “After the consequences, what’s next? How do you get the students to think about what happened?”

A Report from the Student Council

by Vice President, Hannah Taylor

The Bromfield Student Council is comprised of the vice president and class representatives of each grade, as well as the members of the Student Advisory Council, School Council, and Regional Student Council. The Student Council is advised by Dean of Students Julie Horton and social studies teacher Janis Dyer. Together, members discuss and propose solutions to issues within the school, as well as plan events. At the time of writing, we have met three times since the last issue of The Mirror.

On Friday, Feb. 1, we met to discuss the issue of sexual harassment in Bromfield, along with senior Kate Selig and Julia Deng’s article on sexual harassment in the past issue of The Mirror and the student meetings with the administration that had taken place afterward. Student Council members who had gone to the meetings were concerned about whether or not administrative action was taken in the situations of sexual harassment, as well as what would be done to prevent and/or resolve similar scenarios in the future. Overall, students were hopeful that the meetings were moving in a positive direction and were happy that the administration had taken steps to listen to student opinions.

On Friday, Feb. 15, we met with Ms. Davida Bagatelle who told us about an opportunity to go to a community forum on the PROMISE Act and the CHERISH Act, current pieces of legislation in debate at the statehouse that are being promoted by the grassroots campaign group Fund our Future. Fund our Future is comprised of teacher groups, including the Harvard Teachers Association. Both of these acts

are education related, increasing funding for grades pre-k through 12 and higher education by 1.5 billion dollars in Massachusetts. The forum was held on March 11; unfortunately, no Student Council members were able to attend.

On Friday, March 8, we met to discuss the homework survey that we will hopefully be sharing with students later this year. We also discussed our plans for the annual senior luncheon and questions that the School Committee had posed at their last meeting.

First, the aforementioned homework survey is a poll that we discussed in past Student Council meetings this year. We created this survey with the goal of informing both students and teachers about the amount of homework given out per night in each class. In the survey, high school students will be able to enter the average minutes a night they spend on homework in each of their classes. We hope to compile the data and share the results. This will help students gauge how much outside work a class will require before signing up for courses.

Moreover, the survey will also help the teachers gauge what a student’s overall nightly workload is like, as well as how long the homework they assign takes their students to complete. With this information, teachers might be able to adjust their homework assignments with the goal of keeping students’ nightly work to a manageable amount. We had originally hoped to share this survey and share the results before course selection this year; however, Student Council advisors Dr. Julie Horton and Ms. Janis Dyer are still working out the



details.

Next, the senior citizens luncheon is a luncheon that Student Council—with the help of Chef Paul—hosts every year for the seniors citizens of Harvard. Senior Safiya Ali, Student Council treasurer, took the lead in organizing the event. Student Council members help Chef Paul prepare and serve food, and eat with the seniors to keep the conversation flowing. At the meeting, we went over our plans for the event and finalized all the details. On the menu was a garden salad to start, chicken alfredo pasta for an entrée, and dump cake for dessert. The senior luncheon took place Wednesday, March 20.

As for the questions from the School Committee, they first wondered what our opinions were on the school district’s switch from “Columbus Day” to “Indigenous Peoples’ Day.” After briefly discussing this change, we decided that we all agreed with it. The School Committee also wondered what our opinions were on the possibility of changing the Bromfield and Hildreth Elementary School (HES) start times and has proposed a few options so far: switching the start times for Bromfield and HES, putting both schools on the current HES schedule, or the less permanent option of the occasional delayed start in place of an early release day.

Student Council members had mixed opinions about making the switch to a later start time for Bromfield. A few of us felt that this would be beneficial cited that having extra time in the morning to sleep would improve student morale and focus. They said that even if one was to wake up at their usual time, having an extra hour or so to get ready for the day or do schoolwork would create a far more relaxed start to the day.

However, the majority of us who would rather keep the current Bromfield schedule stated that we would prefer to have the extra time in the afternoon, with the biggest concerns raised centering around sports and other after-school activities. Sports games run on a tight schedule after-school, so if Bromfield were to end at a later time, other school districts—provided they did not make this switch themselves—would have to adjust their sports schedule as well to match ours. Furthermore, some students do other afternoon activities outside of school, such as jobs or sports unaffiliated with Bromfield, so a change in the school schedule might hinder their ability in getting there on time.

As the School Committee was originally expecting more students to want a later start time than was seen at our meeting, we felt that it might be best for them to gather more student opinions before further decision on the matter takes place, especially as the opinions of Student Council members are not necessarily representative of the views students hold as a whole

The next meeting for Student Council members will take place on Friday, April 5.

Sports Round Up

by Sophia Zhou

Spring sports Boys tennis

Coach Ryan Holmes said, “We are very excited to get the season started. Tennis has had its ups and downs in recent years, but we think this year could be an opportunity to get back to our dominant winning ways. The commitment the boys showed last year will hopefully trickle into 2019, and with a favorable schedule, we plan on being one of the teams to beat in Central Mass.”

He continued, “Our goal for this season is to win our league. Last year we finished second in the league behind Littleton, but with the addition of a strong new player, and not losing any players from last year, we feel that we are the favorite to win this year. Several of the players on the team were also State Champion Soccer players, and we hope their winning mentality will run off on some of the younger players.

The returning starters are Charlie Bardenheuer, Jake Catalina, John Parlee, Tom Khuu, Nick Thornton and Ziyad Ali.

Last season we were 10-8, 2nd in our league.

Our biggest rivals are Whitinsville Christian, and Sutton. WC was much stronger than us last year, so we want to come out this year and at least be more competitive with them. Sutton has been a rival of a Bromfield for years. They eliminated us from the playoffs last year. We have a lot of soccer players on our team, and they have a strong rivalry with Sutton in soccer as well. Our goal is to flip the script, we hope to be the team that knocks them out this year.”

Girls softball

“I love helping players reach their potential,” said Coach Bob Miller, “so I’m really looking forward to seeing each player grow over the course of the season. I also look forward to helping to lead a team of players who support each other on and off the field. I just love the game itself and being on the field. So, during practices, you’re not likely to see me sitting on the bench. I’ll be out there throwing and

catching and running and coaching!”

Girls tennis

Coach Chris Holmes described that “I am looking forward to another year with the Bromfield Girls Tennis Team. Last year, we were very successful, as we reached the Central Mass Division III district final. Having lost three seniors from the starting line-up it will be interesting to see how we fare this year. We do have three of our core players back in, such as number one sophomore player Leimalia Tratnyek, last year’s top doubles players senior captain Alex O’Neil, and junior captain Olivia Noyes. We have ten additional returning players along with a handful of new additions to the team. Hopefully, some of these players can step into the starting line-up and perform well.

Last year’s record was 15-4 during the regular season. After receiving a bye in the first round of state tournament we won two rounds before losing in the district finals to Hopedale.

“Our toughest division III opponent is Advanced Math and Science Academy in Marlboro. They have beaten us the last few years. Our other tough opponents are Division I schools Wachusett, Nashoba, and Shrewsbury. We will see how we do against them this season. We have lost three seniors the last two years so we have some work to do to be as competitive as we have been recently. It will be interesting to see how we do.”

Cross country

“I would love to see some more kids qualify for New Balance Nationals,” Coach Greg Bourque said. “They have Middle School events now, so I think we may be able to get a couple of younger kids there too. We have a good size middle school team, so I am really hoping they enjoy the sport and will stick with it.”

Girls varsity lacrosse

Coach David Planchet said, “The team has worked real hard in the offseason again this year. We had a young team last year and I’m looking forward to see how the team can once again work together to accomplish our goals. This year will present challenges as we will not surprise anyone in the state saying Brom-Who? I feel the team is up for the challenge.”

Winter Sports Girls varsity basketball

Coach Bob Miller said the 2018-2019 season “was successful, as we made giant strides in improving the program. We are challenged to compete with some of our Mid-Wach D and C division opponents. Nonetheless, our team played hard and played together! We scored more points and gave up fewer points per game than last year. And, we had several games that went down to the final buzzer. For me, personally, this season was both a big learning opportunity and a great experience. As a first year Varsity Head Coach, I learned a lot that will help the team and me going forward. And I was very impressed with the resilience the girls showed and the enthusiasm and support of the parents!”

Boys and girls skiing

Girls skiing captain Isabel Barton said looking back on the season, “Our boys team was first in the league and we had Jack Donaldson Place 1st in slalom and 10th in giant slalom at states. There was a lot of depth in the team with a large number of boys who are all talented. This meant that there were people to step up whenever a member missed a race.”

“The girls team did well too, but the low number of members didn’t benefit us at all. We had the bare minimum of 6 girls which made the scoring a little harder. However, everyone on the team were powerful skiers that placed well.”

Barton stated that “Our goal for next season is to get more girls to join the team so that we can have a team; there needs to be at least 6 skiers to have a team. Also, to keep up the good work and keep improving our skiing.”

Swimming

Looking ahead towards next season, Assistant Coach and Spanish teacher Sabiha Madraswalla described that “Both Coach Amy and I are looking forward to so many things next year. Our main goals include growing our boys team, and having our girls team take top 5 in states (They placed 10th this year!). We also are hoping to get more members of our team to sectionals and states. We can’t wait to see how our team improves and grows next year!”

Jayden Ndjigue Takes Bromfield Basketball by Storm

by Jacqueline Walker

Last year, Jayden Ndjigue began playing on the Bromfield’s Varsity Boys Basketball team. Now a freshman, he returns to the court, again as point guard. His dedication to the sport drives him to hone his skills in the gym before and after the school day begins, training to be a better shooter and a better player. Not only that, but he was also chosen by coaches to attend the All-Star Team conference and to serve as team captain next year.

“I am really passionate about the sport,” Ndjigue explained. He said that basketball allows him to “express [himself] and let all [his] emotions out when [he’s] on the court. Ndjigue said that basketball has a long history in his life. He was introduced to the game as a small child by watching older players on TV. Describing his memories as a little kid, he said, “I used to always watch Celtics games on TV with my father.” He followed that by saying that it “really inspired [him] to play basketball.” Later in third grade, he decided to officially join the sport. While basketball began as a recreational pastime for him, he began to take the sport more seriously when he decided to join a club team.

During the season, official practices are two hours every day, six days a week. Coach Tim Skaggs said, “Jayden embraced his role” as point guard, and Skaggs considers him to be an extension of the coach on the court. Jayden demonstrates this by arriving at school early to get in as much practice time as possible.

Another freshman, Geraghty Vellante, who plays on both the junior varsity and varsity teams, mentioned that Jayden goes the extra mile “to get an edge on the competition.” He continued to say that the thirty minutes spent practicing on top of organized practices eventually began to add up. He said, “Soon the minutes turn into hours that turn into days, weeks, and even months that you have spent practicing getting better and people won’t be able to catch up to you.” Assistant coach Drew Skrocki weighed in: “If he had the chance, he’d be in there all day, every day.” Skaggs said that Jayden’s attitude is always very positive both towards the team and to the sport. Vellante explained that Jayden’s passion boosts the energy and confidence of



Jayden practices most days after school.
Photo by Julia Deng

the team and that it “gets the crowd roaring and the players on their toes.” Skaggs described it as a “reflection of his spirit and love for the game of basketball.”

Skrocki explained that “his competitive spirit can lift and inspire his teammates and bring them together to fight hard for a victory.” Although Jayden is only a freshman, Skaggs believed “he is mature in the game of basketball.” He described Jayden’s thought process like that of a chess

player, explaining that the freshman plans out his options on the court before they actually happen.

Although Ndjigue has not directly expressed specific short term goals, Vellante mentioned that overall, Ndjigue would like to see a larger basketball community in Harvard. Vellante said, “he wants to progress the team into what he believes it can be.” He also said that Ndjigue looks forward to playing teams such as Narragansett and Hudson who have been giving the Bromfield team some difficulty in recent years. Narragansett kicked the Bromfield team out of the first round of the Clark Tournament, one of the most highly anticipated tournaments for, as Skrocki explained, “the best of the best” public high school basketball teams in Central Massachusetts.

Ndjigue revealed that he has plans to continue the sport throughout his high school and college career. He has high hopes to “go to a Division 1 college and hopefully play on the team.” Skaggs has confidence that “putting in the time now” will help Ndjigue achieve his “future basketball endeavors.” Skrocki explained that “[Jayden] is incredibly talented and it is rare to see someone of his age to be playing so well at the varsity level... He has a very bright future ahead of him, and we are looking forward to the success that he helps to bring to the varsity team.”

Skaggs said, “I believe if you want to get better at anything you need to practice. There is an old saying in sports. Make the sacrifice now. One day you will face an opponent of equal talent. The difference in order to win may come down to how much more you practice.” He concluded with certainty that Ndjigue has a bright future in basketball.

Tackling Bromfield’s Political Climate

by Meenu Ramakrishnan

I think the Bromfield School has a predominantly left-leaning student voice due to conservative students’ lack of self-confidence. I do not think liberal students and teachers suppress conservative voices.

Politics has always been a hot topic for citizens; however, with recent political developments, politics has increasingly become a touchy subject for people. According to the Pew Research Center, “Republicans and Democrats are more divided along ideological lines—and partisan antipathy is deeper and more extensive—than at any point in the last two decades” after the 2016 election.

This partisan antipathy seems to apply to Bromfield as well. In the 2018 Bromfield School Climate Survey, 41% of respondents either disagreed or somewhat disagreed with the statement “students of all political views are accepted here at Bromfield.”

Republican freshman Vanessa Hedberg said, “I felt pressured to remain quiet in class, and I think that my views are my own, and my peers have made comments on my views.” According to another student who prefers to remain anonymous, “conservative views are in the minority, but it’s their responsibility to speak out on what they want to say.” The student continues to say, “I think teachers tend to take sides on sensitive political issues and that probably discourages people from speaking more than students [taking a side].”

In response to the growing concern over political division, Superintendent Dr. Linda Dwight said, “there were several students who felt unsafe expressing their support for gun ownership when Bromfield held the vigil against gun violence in schools. They felt shut down and scared. We learned this from parents sharing these viewpoints with us.”

The recent walkout has brought the issue of political conversation to the forefront again. I agree with the climate survey to a certain extent; in a liberal majority, conservative students may be discouraged to speak toward beliefs that the rest of the student body does not

agree with. However, I think the problem has been exacerbated by the 2016 election—the entire nation seems more divided than ever, and Bromfield is not exempt. I think it is important to note that the majority of left-learning students and teachers do not directly discourage their conservative peers from speaking out. The problem instead stems from conservative students who fear disagreement with their peers.

The only solution for the administration seems to be to discourage any sort of political conversation, which is impractical and ineffective. People are going to have different views whether it be in the majority or the minority in the real world; however, I think it’s important for the education system to emphasize the importance of allowing and empathizing with other peoples’ experiences or beliefs. For example, I think students felt scared in supporting gun ownership after the Bromfield walkout, but the alternative would be shutting down the people who do believe in gun control, which would be violating the first amendment. It’s important for students to understand that not everybody is going to agree with your beliefs.

There should be an emphasis in Social Studies courses on encouraging people to express their opinions—whether or not people choose to is up to them; to some extent, this is already true. However, many teachers outside of social studies courses take definitive stands on different issues, which I think should be avoided. I think in reality, most students are pretty comfortable expressing their opinions. The actual problem is just a lack of confidence or willingness to participate. Our school tends to promote respect during discussions, and to say people are scared of speaking out seems a bit dramatic; there’s no physical violence I have seen or heard about because of a political conversation.

Instead of disavowing political speech in school completely, the school should foster an encouraging environment for people with different beliefs with unbiased teaching and the promotion of all kinds of political speech.

Trump Administration Continues to Disregard LGBTQ+ Rights

by Athena Wang

The federal government recently permitted foster agencies in South Carolina to refuse service to same-sex and non-Christian couples in January, continuing a trend of governmental failure to protect LGBTQ+ rights.

According to Tim Fitzsimons at NBC News, South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster asked the Trump administration for permission to refuse service to same-sex and non-Christian couples in foster agencies, citing the freedom of religion. I acknowledge that McMaster and foster agencies do have the freedom of religion as a constitutionally guaranteed right. However, I find it hard to accept that freedom of religion can be applied in this situation. McMaster implied that same-sex and/or non-Christian couples infringe upon these foster agencies’ freedom of religion, which does not make sense. A person’s orientation or beliefs cannot interfere with another person’s beliefs. Therefore, I believe there are no grounds on which to claim adoption violates these freedoms of religion.

If the foster agencies of South Carolina accept this waiver and refuse service to same-sex and non-Christian couples, they will lose a large number of potentially qualified foster parents. I believe this contradicts the mission of foster agencies, which is described in a slogan by South Carolina foster agency Care2Foster™ as “Finding a family for every child in SC foster

care.” Furthermore, these agencies are denying same-sex and non-Christian couples the right to a family, a human right listed under the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Overall, these agencies deny foster children potential families when they deny service to non-heterosexual and non-Christian couples.

As LGBTQ+ rights have improved in the past decade, discriminatory acts should not be allowed to be incorporated into national law, nor should they come close to being considered. The Trump administration’s decision to waive these foster agencies paints a clear message: LGBTQ+ and non-Christian communities are not a government priority. Same-sex and non-Christian couples will not be treated equally in contrast to heterosexual, Christian couples.

The discrimination displayed here may play into how LGBTQ+ and non-Christian citizens and students will be treated in the future in the United States. If this and other changes are overlooked, it is a possibility that more extreme action may be taken against LGBTQ+ and non-Christian citizens. I believe that spreading awareness about these decisions is key to protecting LGBTQ+ and non-Christian rights, and this discussion needs to involve everyone, including us students. As much as LGBTQ+ rights have progressed forward, complacency can’t be tolerated now.

Pros and Cons of Being a Triplet

Humor

- by Matt Zobbi*
- 1) Pro: Three people allows for a true democratic process.
 - 2) Con: Heated battles for who gets to ride shotgun on the way to the grocery store.
 - 3) Con: Everything comes in even-numbered packs, so there’s always either one too few...
 - 4) Pro: ...or one extra!
 - 5) Pro: Three times the manpower = quicker yard work.
 - 6) Con: “It’s mine, see? It has my name on it!” “Well, I had it first!” “You’re both wrong, it’s mine! See? It’s my favorite color!”
 - 7) Con: When my parents yell “Boys!” we have no idea which one they’re referring to, so we all come down at once.
 - 8) Pro: Siblings can be accomplices in a pinch (if they’re in a good mood).
 - 9) Con: We all “hate” each other, but there aren’t enough rooms in the house for everyone to have their own.
 - 10) Pro: Homework “help.”

Bromfield Clubs

Photojournalism by Vivien Jamba



Rocket club gathers around their project.



Green team discusses future projects.



ASL practices sign language.



Robotics club discusses their approach to building their new project.

The Mystery of the Moplan Mentor

Part 2: Missing Person

by Kira Houston

“The Mystery of the Moplan Mentor” is a serialized story divided into three parts. Part 1 can be found in the Winter 2019 issue of the Mirror.

“All the papers were blank!” exclaimed Cherrie Picket, dropping a blank newspaper onto Mr. Jekyll’s desk.

Mr. Jekyll’s eyes widened. “That’s quite the printing error.”

Otto shook his head. “I don’t think it’s that simple. Something about this whole situation is freaking me out. It’s kind of spooky.”

Colden nodded and coughed into his sleeve. “I second that.”

Mr. Jekyll pushed up his glasses as he looked over the paper. “Did you find any teachers who worked with the old newspaper?”

“I did,” said Otto. “Ms. Anciana was around when the old club was up and running, and she knew one of the lead writers.”

Mr. Jekyll looked up expectantly. Cherrie, Otto, Colden, and Grace looked between each other and nodded.

“Looks like we have some investigating to do!” smiled Cherrie.

Gracie knocked on Ms. Anciana’s classroom door.

Ms. Anciana leaned out from her desk and, seeing the group of friends, motioned them in. “Hello, you four,” she greeted. “To what do I owe the pleasure?”

“We were hoping we could ask you about the old newspaper club here at Moplan?” asked Cherrie.

Ms. Anciana sighed, as if she were steeling her nerves. “Yes, alright. I suppose I would be willing to talk about it. Only because I like you all so much.”

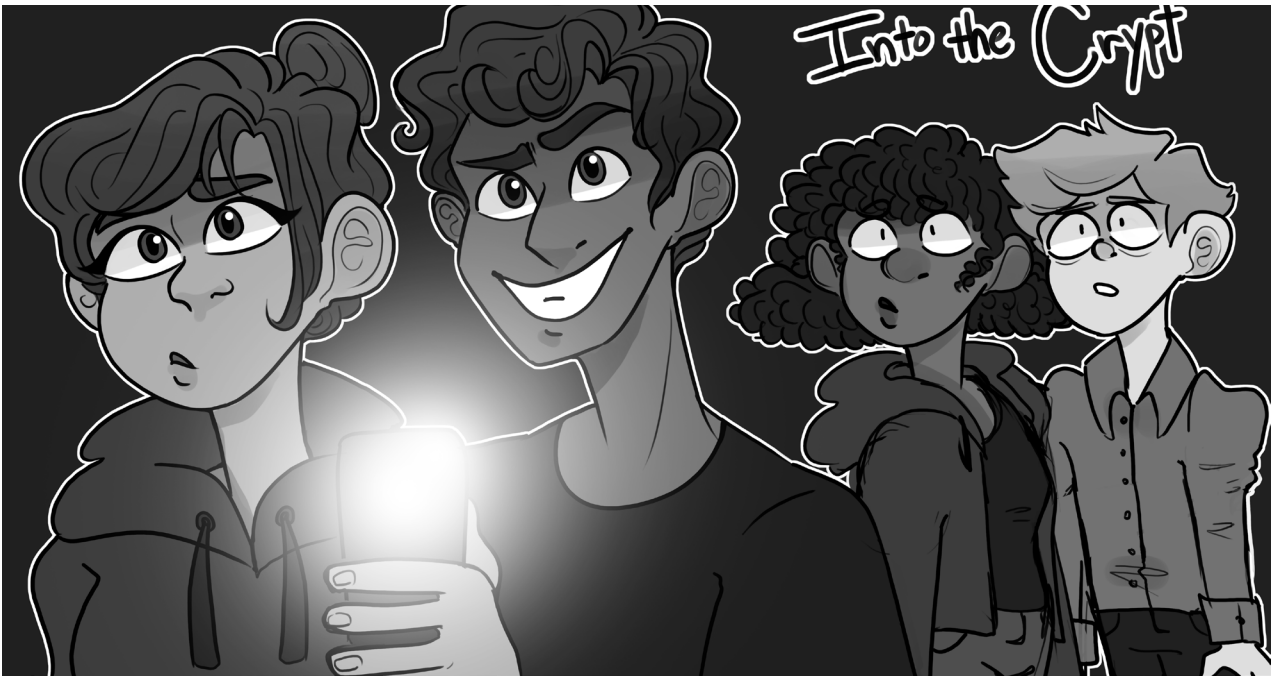
Colden and Otto looked between each other questioningly. Otto asked slowly, “Did something happen with the old club?”

“Our lead editor went missing. After losing her, the whole paper shut down,” Ms. Anciana told him.

The group of friends all looked alarmed.

“How have I never heard about this?” said Cherrie.

“It’s a rather short and sad story,” said Ms. Anciana. “Cassandra took over as head of the club after her sister who had just graduated. Her and her sister both were



truly gifted writers. I wasn’t ever her club advisor, but I was interviewed a couple times for the paper’s articles about the language department—and Cassandra was in my AP French class, so I knew her very well. The newspaper became a sensation under her leadership. Every article was polished and succinct, engaging and informative. The club grew to a record size. But just as the writing reached its peak, other issues started to crop up. Articles mysteriously disappeared, notes were mysteriously stolen. The technical difficulties got so far out of hand that, eventually, an edition of the paper was printed entirely blank.”

“We found those in the Crypt yesterday!” interjected Otto.

Ms. Anciana shivered. “Of course they were stashed down there. I should have known. Needless to say, Cassandra didn’t take the whole ordeal very well. She was furious. On top of that, some of us faculty were worried about a potential safety threat to students, with all the suspicious going-ons. A week after the blank newspapers were printed, Cassandra went missing. Nobody knows what happened to her. Nobody from the school has seen her since. As far as I know, her family is still searching.”

The four students were struck with a deep sense of loss, hearing Cassandra’s story. No wonder the newspa-

per had been abandoned for so many years.

“I’m so sorry to hear that,” said Gracie.

Ms. Anciana shook her head, dabbing at her eyes a little. “You know, I’m glad you all are reviving the paper. I think Cassandra would be proud.”

“We’ll try to do her justice,” coughed Colden.

Ms. Anciana nodded, and the students thanked her and awkwardly shuffled out of the room.

Once they made it to the hallway and shut the door, Cherrie breathed a sigh of relief. “Well, that was intense.”

“Agreed,” said Gracie.

“At least now we know what happened to the old paper,” said Colden. “Now we can move forward with the process, right?”

Cherrie and Otto both turned on Colden with accusatory glares.

“Are you serious?” cried Cherrie. “You don’t want to solve the mystery?”

“Yeah, dude—” said Otto, “the mystery!”

Colden looked desperately to Gracie for backup, but she shrugged. “I’m with them.”

Sighing, Colden slumped his shoulders. “Mystery it is, then. Where to next?”

“I know just the place,” beamed Gracie.

Spiderman–Into the Spiderverse

Movie Review: 4/5 Stars

by Camille Gomez

Sony Corporation released the animated movie, Spiderman: Into the Spiderverse Dec. 14, 2018. It has been highly successful, accumulating \$326 million worldwide and winning several awards. I gave this movie 4/5 stars for its aesthetic and high-quality animation.

The movie starts when a young boy from New York City named Miles Morales switches to a new school. After his move, his uncle shows him a sewer where he can paint and express his creativity as Morales has a passion for art. Soon after, a radioactive spider bites Morales, making him another iteration of Spiderman. He might not sound like your typical Spiderman, and you’re right; he is not. Spiderman: Into the Spiderverse takes the classic spider-bite backstory and puts a modern twist on it.

The movie incorporates five different universes with five unique versions of Spiderman. In the universe Morales lives in, Peter Parker has died, leaving Morales as Spiderman. In the other four dimensions, some variant of Spiderman lives on. The other heroes featured include the following: Peter B. Parker, an older version of Spiderman in a mid-life crisis and Morales’ mentor; Penny Parker, a Japanese schoolgirl with a spider robot from the future; Peter Porker, a Loony Toons-style cartoon pig who serves as a journalist in his free time; Spider-Man Noir, a man from the 1930s who is portrayed solely in black and white; and Gwen Stacy, a college student who performs ballet.

Throughout the movie, the spider-heroes try to defeat a man called Kingpin, who has activated a giant accelerator that can access alternate universes. All the spider-people aside from Morales arrive through this accelerator, causing an imbalance in reality. Kingpin intends to use this accelerator to find a dimension where his family is still alive, but this would damage reality and destroy all universes through a black hole. On top of that, the numerous spider-people who come to Morales’ universe through the accelerator need to use it to go home as well. The only way Morales can fix this calamity is if he defeats Kingpin, but throughout the movie, Morales struggles to adapt to his new-found superpowers and use them to stop Kingpin. Overall, the plot focuses on Morales’ development and acceptance of being the new Spiderman of his universe and what he learns from the other versions of Spiderman as they work to prevent the complete destruction of reality.

The animation in this movie gives both a realistic and comic-like aesthetic and has a design that makes it seem as though a comic book has come to life. The characters and settings are designed with great detail. The narrative blends comedy, action, adventure, and comic futurism. I usually dislike action movies, but this one was interesting to me. I highly recommend it.

Overall, I gave this movie 4/5 stars because I think it has high-quality animation and an engaging storyline. I did not give this movie all five stars because I think there



are too many spider-people present. Five made the movie feel a little overwhelming, and a lot of them weren’t important to the storyline. The movie would still have shone with a condensed cast. Into The Spiderverse runs 1 hour and 56 minutes. It has won a Golden Globe, an Oscar, and a Critic’s Choice Movie Award, all of which were awarded in the Best Animated Feature category.