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# THE SHARK TOOTH

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June 11, 2018

Issue 1 Volume 1

## MSMHS CREW TEAM MAKING NEW WAVES

By Halsey McLaen



What is crew? I asked a handful of students here and there the same question, and the answers I received ranged anywhere from blank stares to awkward coughs. *Crew*? What does that even mean? And then it's revealed to be *rowing*, a handful of people in a glorified kayak. As one of the two sports MSMHS offers, it's odd that many of us know so little.

Turns out it's a bit more glamorous than you'd think. Crew actually has a history that is richer than many other sports - it started all the way back in ancient Egyptian times and is one of the oldest sports in the Olympics. In 10th century England, rowing races took place on the Thames River. Today, at least 150 countries participate in it on a world-wide scale.

The sport is also literally no joke. It is incredibly beneficial in a physical sense - it works all major muscle groups, something few others can boast about. Every single member has to possess extreme strength. In a way, crew reflects our school's motto - no one in crew can succeed

without putting in copious amounts of effort.

But what about our crew?

In practice, it's a lot of running - jogs down to the stop sign and back, plenty of push-ups, burpees, curl-ups, and of course, time on the actual rowing machines. If I thought the fitness test was hard, it'd be nothing compared to everyday practice for the crew team. The other day I left school late and, walking out the front doors, I was bombarded by seven crew members sprinting across the bridge, stopping to do burpees, and sprinting down the hill once more. There is no conditioning period for crew - every day is conditioning.

Right now, the crew team doesn't compete. They're doing their first race soon - it's just exhibition, so they won't be "racing" per se - but think about going to support them! They do magnificent and impressive work and who knows, maybe in a few years they'll put a brand new trophy in the display.



## Welcome to THE SHARK TOOTH

By Emily Loflin, Editor in Chief

Welcome to The Shark Tooth, the newspaper of MSMHS! This is the first issue, created amongst AP exams and end of the year projects. The Shark Tooth is for the students to write about things they care about and to share them with their peers.

This summer, I visited the Newseum in Washington D.C. and saw something that completely shocked me - a journalist memorial. There were 2,305 names of editors, photographers, reporters, and broadcasters who lost their lives bringing news to the people.

All over the world, journalists face threats of imprisonment, abuse, and murder for simply doing their job. Journalists travel the world to inform the public of the latest news stories,

although by some they are seen as intrusive. Yes, they uncover secrets that some want to keep hidden, but that doesn't mean the facts shouldn't be known.

Where would we be without "nosy" journalists? From the Pentagon Papers to the more recent investigation into the NSA, journalists have exposed corrupt behaviors within the world and put their careers on the line to reveal the truth.

At the MSMHS Shark Tooth, we probably won't be revealing crooked government secrets, but we are still an integral part of the journalism community. It is in high school newspapers where many journalists fall in love with writing and if there is no school newspaper, how will

we become enraptured with the art of journalism?

The first reaction I got when I said that I wanted to start a newspaper was, "Why? We already have Fish Tales?" Yes that is true, but the purpose of Fish Tales is different than the purpose of a student-written newspaper. The Shark Tooth is a place for students to learn how to write in a way that makes others think and ask questions. If there isn't a school newspaper where else will students hear about the issues that are important to their peers.

As we grow and learn different techniques, but the purpose will remain the same - for students to gain insights into the opinions and perspectives of their peers.

## Effort Creates Ability Especially in FORTNITE

By Abby Mann



I will begin this article by stressing that I am, in fact, aware that I am among the least likely people to play Fortnite, as I am alarmingly bad at video games. That is, however, the reason that this article is even being written. Fortnite is so popular that even I have played it. Granted, I've played it about three times, but hey, that's more than I can say about pretty much any other video game.

For those of you who do not know what Fortnite is, first of all, where have you been? Second, it is essentially a cross between Minecraft and a multiplayer shooter game. At least, its most popular game type (Battle Royale) is.

In Battle Royale, players begin the game by jumping from basically a flying blue school bus and skydiving to their destination on what's known as a cloud strike. When they land, they load up on weapons, ammunition, and other supplies. Different locations on the island have different qualities and quantities of supplies, so some players are luckier than others. As soon as the game begins, the number of players, 100 at the start, begins to drop, as players kill each

other off. The goal of the game is survival: last person standing wins. There are group and partner options, but the solo mode seems to be the international favorite. Players must stay inside the storm eye, which shrinks every couple of minutes, or they will lose health, making them more vulnerable to attack by other players.

Kids and adults alike are playing this addictive game worldwide, including the majority of our students and even some of our teachers. Even after playing the game myself, I cannot figure out what about it makes it so addictive, but something about it just makes countless people want to spend all of their time on their screen of choice playing Fortnite.

## Profiles of Our Lil' Sharks

### An Insight into the Life of Rocco Spera

By Maddie Brunnock & May Courtney



This feature will interview one of the many future Sharks that will be arriving at MSMHS in 2030 and later. Our first Lil' Shark is 2 year-old Rocco Spera. Rocco loves baseball, the Yankees, Polo clothes, books, and John Deere Tractors. He is currently a student at Kiddie Kampus in Niantic. Rocco was interviewed with a series of questions asked and filmed by Dr. Spera at their home in Old Lyme.

**How old are you?**

2

**Who is your favorite baseball player?**  
Didi (Gregorious)

**What is your favorite color?**  
John Deere Tractor Green

**If you had to choose between Elmo and Big Bird, who would you choose?**  
Elmo

**Where do you want to work when you're older?**  
Dada's school

**How much money would make you happy?**  
A lots

**Do you love your younger brother Nico?**  
Yaaaaaaa

**What is your favorite animal?**  
Big Bird

**What is your dream vacation?**  
Cookie

**What does your dad do for work?**  
A principal

**What are your feelings toward today's political climate?**  
Elmo, Big Bird, and Cookie Monster



## Dear Ari Advice Column

Dear Ari,

**I just got all of my summer assignments and am already dreading the work. I procrastinate on almost everything and want to avoid doing that this summer! Any ideas?**  
- Slacker

Dear Slacker,

*I'm actually feeling the same way. Just a glance at the amount of AP/ECE work I have for this summer stresses me out... although it really doesn't have to. If you (and I) start working on these assignments as soon as possible, then it shouldn't be too much of a hassle to get it all done. I know that summer should mean no homework and pure freedom from anything and everything relating to school, but remember that you're gonna have to finish up those essays sometime before the beginning of next year. It's better to do it sooner, while you're still (sort of) in that school mindset, rather than later.*

Dear Ari,

**I have been so stressed this year between sports, homework, and clubs. I want to keep doing everything but I know next year my workload will be even heavier! Any suggestions on managing my time?**  
- Stressed Out

Dear Stressed Out,

*I completely understand what you're dealing with, especially since it's only going to get more and more stressful as you continue your time in high school (and college). If you don't already do this, I would suggest using a planner or organizer to manage the way you'll be using your free time after school. I've used this method personally, and seeing all the assignments I need to have done really helps me de-stress. Another big way to manage your workload is by doing as much work as possible in class. When you have extra time, or study hall, use it wisely!! (You'll save so much time by doing homework at school rather than at home.) And always keep in mind that, if all else fails, just talk to your coach or teachers. I'm sure they'll understand if you won't make it to practice or a club meeting due to a lot of homework; (I'm sure most teachers would understand if you needed an extension for an assignment, too). Good luck next year! I hope this helped :)*



### MOVIE REVIEW

By Maddie Brunnock



"Love, Simon" is a movie about a closeted gay teenage boy named Simon. He has a loving family and group of friends, and an anonymous friend whom he has met online and fallen in love with. The movie follows Simon as he attempts to figure out the identity of the anonymous classmate while trying to balance his friends, family, and blackmailer who is threatening to out him to the entire school. "Love, Simon" is a heartfelt coming of age story about finding and accepting yourself.



## Welcome Ms. Mastronardi!

By EJ Pearson and Emily Loflin

As we say goodbye to Mr. Contos, we welcome a new counselor into the MSMHS Family - Ms. Mastronardi!

As a college student at UCONN, Ms. Mastronardi studied psychology and then went on to get her masters in counseling at Central Connecticut State University. She began her career teaching in Hartford through Teach for America, an organization committed to providing equal opportunity education specifically in low income areas. She soon realized that she wanted to be able to help her students one-on-one rather than in a classroom setting.

When talking about MSMHS, she noted the unique atmosphere fueled by the teachers and students working together to meet the high standards. She also added that the team environment makes our school so different from others. Lastly she stated, "who doesn't want to be around aquariums all day?"

Dr. Spera believes that Ms. Mastronardi will become a fan favorite quickly. "We are very excited to have added an educator who loves students and is willing to do whatever it takes to support their academic and social goals. She is a hard worker and future rock star."

Students may be reassured to know



that Ms. Mastronardi can be relatable to students as she has many interests herself. Ms. Mastronardi likes to travel and has been many places such as Italy, Greece, Portugal, and Croatia. She also enjoys hiking, with some notable climbs being Mt. Washington, Mt. Adams, and Mt. Madison! In addition, she can be found rooting for the New York Yankees and the New York Giants.

We look forward to Ms. Mastronardi joining us for the 2018-2019 school year and can't wait for her to meet the rest of the MSMHS family.

## Getting Enough Sleep?

By Melanie Trotochaud

Sleep is an activity held closely in the hearts of teenagers. Teenagers *love* sleep. They love talking about sleep. From a biological viewpoint, this is understandable. Behind only infants, teenagers are the age group that needs the most sleep. Nationwide Children's Hospital recommends that at the absolute minimum, teenagers need nine hours of sleep. However, one study by the National Sleep Foundation found that only 15% reported getting eight or more hours on school nights. Many older adults tend to blame this lack of sleep on teenagers wasting night hours to stay up late. While teenagers tend to go to bed later, it is not because they do not want to go to sleep. It is because their brains are working off a different biological schedule that is not ready for sleep yet. A large reason for this is that, during adolescence, the biological clock is reset. Research indicates that teenage bodies start making melatonin, the hormone responsible for sleep, later in the night than adults, usually around 1:00 AM.

Lack of sleep compromises the educational abilities of children on a global scale. Sleep deprivation is perceptibly detrimental to information processing and retention. Schools currently start at a much earlier time than teenagers are able to manage healthily. Several studies have shown that expecting students to wake up for 8:00 AM classes is like expecting an adult to show up to work at 4:00 AM.

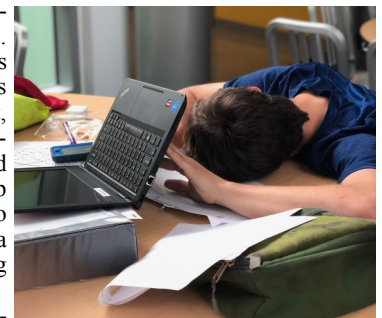
However, sleep deprivation is a cultural issue that harms more than teenagers. Sleep deprivation is a vastly overlooked root of human health problems. New research points towards heart problems being caused not by fat, but by an inflamed circulatory system suspected to be caused by sleep deprivation. However, no one wants to admit that a lack of sleep is killing people.

Our culture prioritiz-



es virtually everything else over sleep — school, work, family, friends, Netflix, and so on. We are living in a society that does not encourage healthy amounts of sleep. Especially in America, we are expected to always be working hard and pushing our limits. Unfortunately, this includes sacrificing dire amounts of sleep.

In our increasingly busy world, we have more ways to spend our time than ever. We have endless access to knowledge and learning, to fun and experience. We can now even easily stay up late to converse with others. When we are not working or studying for a world that requires increasing amounts of competition and dedication to be successful, there is an endless amount of books we can be reading, an endless amount of Netflix we can be watching, and an endless amount of conversations we can be having with our friends. In an effort to spend what limited hours we have left of our lives on living and experiencing, we cut more and more sleep out of our lives by choice. Even if we love sleep and recognize that we need more of it, we will always find things that, when given the opportunity to sleep, we will decide we love more.



## Hamilton and Peggy Book Review

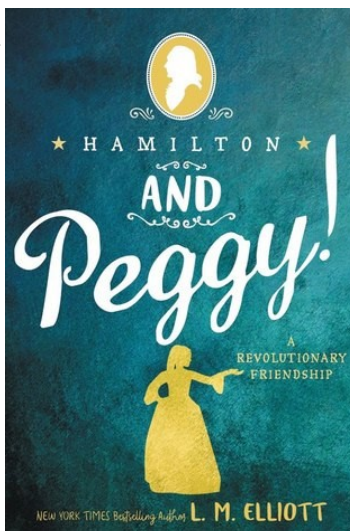
By Quinn Mignosa

"Angelica... Eliza... and Peggy!" Any Hamilton fan will recognize this lyric and be able to picture the witty and resourceful female stars of the musical, which has taken the country by storm. Author L.M. Elliott took advantage of this in her new book *Hamilton and Peggy: A Revolutionary Friendship*, based on the popular musical.

Elliott focuses on the role of young female patriots in the American Revolution. Peggy is the 21-year old daughter of a powerful rebel general. She is surrounded by influential figures fighting for America's independence and yearns to be part of the movement. This is difficult, however, because in 1775, American women are second class citizens. Peggy blossoms from a shy girl left in the shadows to a successful war correspondent through real letters between prominent war

figures. The book is chock full of interesting historical tidbits and holds true to the period.

*Hamilton and Peggy* has several minor downfalls. Hamilton fanatics may be slightly disappointed to know that Alexander does not enter the story until more than halfway through the book. Also, the extreme historical accuracy sometimes leaves the book reading more like an essay than a pleasure piece. However, I would absolutely recommend this work to anyone looking for a book with a self-reliant female main character. The book would also interest those looking to learn about the beginnings of our nation, and Hamilton's family's role in



the Revolution's success. Pick up *Hamilton and Peggy: A Revolutionary Friendship* if you are looking for an enthralling story of female independence at a time when this seemed impossible.



# Which MSMHS Teacher Are You?

By Melanie Trotochaud, Dana Goettler, and Ainslee Moorehead

Take the quiz below, record your answers, and find out what MSMHS teacher you are most like. It is like finding out who your spirit animal is but cooler!

## 1. Where would you look for information?

- A. In a book
- B/F. Google
- C. Reliable research with a correctly formatted Works Cited
- D. By figuring it out myself
- E. By asking reliable people

## 2. How are you likely to figure something out?

- A/B/F. Discuss
- C/D/E. Solve

## 3. How many new books have you read over the past two months?

- A. 4+
- B/C. 2-3
- D. 0-1
- E/F. Do articles count?

## 4. How would you support a friend when they are struggling?

- A. First give them emotional comfort, then try to help them solve their problem
- B. Give them chocolate, hugs, and love
- C. Tell them it's going to be okay and come up with a game plan
- D. Help them solve their problems
- E/F. Tell them a joke to cheer them up, then help them solve their problems

## 5. How much do you like to joke around in class?

- A. If it's relevant to what we're learning
- B. We can joke around and have fun, as long as we are getting things done
- C. It depends on what we're doing in class
- D. I'll joke back if provoked
- E. Whenever someone says something ridiculous
- F. Joking around and having fun is important to me; work hard, play hard

## 6. What's your pet peeve?

- A. People using words incorrectly
- B. Party poopers
- C. Colloquialism
- D/F. Getting interrupted
- E. Whiners

## 7. How long does it usually take you to get your homework done?

- A/F. A long time, but that's because I have a lot of homework and do it carefully
- B/E. Usually not too much more than 30 minutes
- C/D. I work efficiently to get all of mine done in class

## 8. What would you most love to get free tickets to?

- A. Theater show
- B/D. Concert
- C/E/F. Sports game



### Mostly A's: Mrs. Mann

You radiate caring and warm energy to all whom you surround. You are an unconventional thinker who is able to interest others in all the wonders you observe. You see the good in everyone, and are often considered the "mom" friend. Excitedly intelligent, you are filled with passion for the world that is utterly contagious.

### Mostly B's: Sra. Cronin

You are energetic, enthusiastic, and positive, and can often found shouting, but in a fun way that puts everyone in a good mood. You have an unforgettable, silly sense of humor and an absolutely contagious laugh. You are always supportive and there to cheer people on. You are also very strong and won't back down on what you believe in.

### Mostly C's: Mrs. Hardison

You hold your friends to high standards – and they are better for it. Once you resolve to do something, there is not a force on this earth that can stop you from accomplishing your goals. You make sure to put your best foot forward, and are all around, a boss lady who's not afraid to work hard.

### Mostly D's: Ms. Andruskiewicz

You have a hysterical sense of humor, but will always be calm, collected, and generally chill. You have admirable patience, and always make a point to ensure that everyone around you feels comfortable, and you lighten the mood of any room you walk into. You also probably play Fortnite after getting your homework done in an insanely quick amount of time.

### Mostly E's: Mr. Litvinoff

You are sarcastic, encouraging, and engaged, and you know when it is time to focus on academics, and when you can joke around. You encourage people to work to reach their full potential. You are very thorough and thoughtful, and not afraid to challenge others while always keeping an open mind.

### Mostly F's: Mr. Bradley

You are most likely to have be very sarcastic, maybe even to the point where your friends don't know if you're being serious at times. You also want people to do well and have fun while you're around them. You want people to feel welcomed into a family environment. You love to see growth, and you probably also enjoy throwing things.