



The High School View

The High School View is staffed and prepared entirely by students from the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School, and published on their behalf by The Martha's Vineyard Times, with the generous assistance of the sponsors whose names appear below.

Early grads exercise freedom

BY ALEXIS CONDON

In January, seniors Skylar Eddy, Alicja Vickers, and Cassie Casey graduated a semester early with aspirations to see more of the world and to acquire independence. So far, their experiences have much to offer seniors on the way out, especially when it comes to learning how to operate without a school schedule dictating their lives.

The desire to travel is a common motive behind students accelerating the graduation process. By doubling up on classes first semester, early graduate earns six months of freedom's in which they can explore individual interests and prepare themselves for their future.

Alicja Vickers views the opportunity as an eight-month gap before college. "I had this feeling of being done with high school," she said.

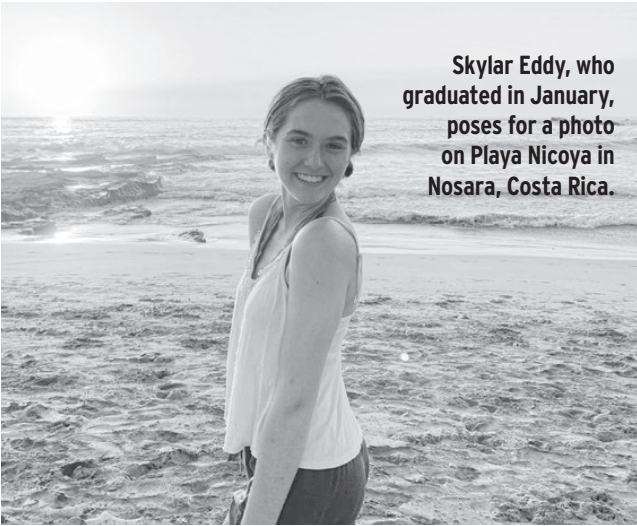
"I was starting to feel like the time spent at school was no longer productive after I applied to college."

In order to graduate early, a student typically must double up on core classes first semester to meet graduation requirements. Cassie Casey decided the summer before senior year to graduate early in hopes of traveling to New Zealand.

"It was challenging," Cassie said. "I was in fourth quarter mode the entire year. I knew that every assignment counted, every attendance and tardy, because that was it. If I messed up and couldn't graduate, I was stuck. But I would also be missing so much — spring sports, all the senior traditions, and possibly even walking the stage. I realized that soon I'd be out of high school, thrown out into the world no matter if it was January or June, so I decided

to push myself out of my comfort zone and grow in a different way than I had been these past four years."

Time management is of the



Skylar Eddy, who graduated in January, poses for a photo on Playa Nicoya in Nosara, Costa Rica.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY SKYLER EDDY

essence for those who graduate early, whether it be learning how to balance school and work while saving money during that last semester, or

learning how to create a new routine when life suddenly becomes unstructured.

"I went from having so much structure to having to build my own structure. I would go to sleep at 3am on a weeknight and sleep the next day away when I wasn't work-

So far, Skylar has had an internship with Island Grown Initiative (IGI) and has begun to work at the hospital in Human Resources. "At IGI I worked at the greenhouse, helping them with growing, cutting, watering the plants, and in the office," she said. "I just started at the hospital as an administrative assistant, and it's been great. I help put info into the online database, and help with new employees. Right now we're getting ready for employee appreciation week, so I'm helping a lot with that."

Skylar attributes her growing independence to her free time. She said, "My biggest fear was that I would have nothing to do. So at the beginning I made sure I had a lot of things going on, but now that I'm used to it I've gotten used to my life, and I've loved the freedom. Some of my best moments have actually been when I've been able to go on a long drive or walk my dogs."

Alicja has worked a part-time job as a receptionist at

a housing loan office. She said, "Graduating early was followed by many huge teenage milestones such as turning 18, getting my license, getting a real job, and managing my own bills. I've been forced to deal with these real world adult things and have felt the reality of self-support, all with the safety net of living at home."

Cassie departed for New Zealand in February with her significant other. With their savings, they purchased a van in which to live and travel, with a makeshift cooking, dishwashing, and laundry space. They have traveled all over the Island, occasionally staying with distant family members.

"I think if you graduate early you have to already be sort of an independent person," said Alicja. "You have to be OK with being happy and content by yourself for a lot of the time. All of your friends are in school, and there's a lot of alone time when you're not working or traveling." **HSV**

Youths target recycling at Climate Cafe

BY SARA CREATO

The Martha's Vineyard Regional High School's (MVRHS) Protect Your Environment Club (PYE), the Mass Audubon Society, and students from the Martha's Vineyard Public Charter School hosted the last of their several Climate Cafes on the topic of recycling this past Sunday at Rosewater in Edgartown.

The group has been holding these public discussions concerning different climate-related topics with guest speakers since January. Topics have varied from month to month, and have included discussions on renewable energy, food justice, and extreme weather.

Louis Hall is the faculty adviser for the club. "Protect Your Environment Club was the name of a club that I was a member of in college," he

said. "The initial club was started by my grandfather in the 1950s at the University Of Albany, and this was before recycling was cool."

Mr. Hall came up with the concept of PYE while sipping



Junior Ashley Biggs, and sophomores Amber Cuthbert and Rachel Salop, take part in the Climate Cafe at Rosewater.

EMILY GAZZANIGA

on a latte during one of his Latte Friday climate chats that he casually held during lunch at MVRHS. He then started the MVironment Club with chemistry teacher Dr. Natalie Munn, which was rebranded this year as PYE.

Junior Caroline Hurley said, "Some people [who attended

the discussions] were experts from the community, and some people just stumbled upon the conversation in Mocha Motts, which was cool because it led to good facts and knowledge and opinions from the community."

Josey Kirkland is the education coordinator and camp director for Mass Audubon, and she helped plan the Climate Cafes. She said, "Youths are so inspiring and can create such big and positive impacts. You are the ones who are going to be around in the future. I think it's important that kids are educated with all the information so they can make green decisions and feel empowered to make a change."

Rosewater owner Julia Tarka agreed; "I think that younger people can publicly shame adults into doing the right thing." **HSV**

Talents showcased at Pops concert

BY JAIDEN EDELMAN AND EMILY GAZZANIGA

There was a buzz backstage at the Performing Arts Center (PAC) last Thursday, as student musicians from the orchestra, jazz band, and vocal ensemble joined a number of soloists for the annual Pops concert.

Following an opening rendition of "Feeling Good" by senior Josephine Orr and alumnus Jake Hairston, the school orchestra took the stage. Conducted by instrumental music director and teacher Michael Tinus, the group bowed and plucked their way through three pieces, ending with an intense playing of "Kashmir" by Led Zeppelin.

After the orchestra performed, Ms. Chandler led the school vocal ensemble in a medley of songs from Les Miserables. "'Les Mis' is one of my most favorite shows," said Ms. Chandler, "the mu-

sic, the story, the grandeur of the show itself. I want the kids to be exposed to these amazing shows, and I hope the audience appreciates them, as well."

The Pops concert is one of only three school-sponsored events at which student musicians can showcase their work. The upcoming Evening of the Arts, which will be held on May 22 this year, provides the opportunity for smaller acts to perform in a more intimate setting.

Senior soloist Raven McCormack, who will be attending the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in the fall to study jazz, sang an original piece called "star-ryeyed" [sic], which told the story of her upbringing on Martha's Vineyard. She was accompanied by junior Skylar Hall's bass guitar.

"The Pops concert gives students who are not in the performing arts department a chance to display their mu-

sic," Raven said. "I hope they continue the Pops concert in years to come."

Junior soloist Ruby Suman, who was initially fearful to perform, appreciated the opportunity to overcome her stage fright. She performed "Turning Tables" by Adele, accompanied by Ayanna Fhagen-Smith on the piano.

Ruby said, "The best part of performing is the feeling that you get when you're on stage and the audience's reaction to your message."

The school jazz band closed out the night. Conducted again by Mr. Tinus, the group jammed through six songs before ending their set to thunderous applause.

Moving forward, Ms. Chandler hopes to incorporate theatre, dance, and other performing acts into the concert in years to come. "It's a great opportunity to show the diversity, skill and dedication of the musicians in this building." **HSV**

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