



# 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.

## Fall sports face off on Nantucket

BY JULIA SAYRE

On a damp, dark Halloween morning, Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) athletes gathered in anticipation to board the boat to Nantucket.

Every fall sports season, MVRHS takes on the Nantucket Whalers on Nantucket's home field. Their rivalry has been strong for decades, and the day they play one another is filled with large crowds, the sharp blow of referee whistles, and the ringing of Vineyard cowbells.

For freshman Charlotte Scott, who picked up field hockey this fall, it was her first experience making the journey to Nantucket. On the way to the game, she said she felt a mix of nerves and excitement, adding, "We played against them already at home and won, so I hope we beat them on their own fields."



Elena Giordano, No. 5, runs after the ball during the girls' varsity soccer match.

RYAN GIORDANO

Other students were veterans of this tradition. Senior Ruairi Mullin has played soccer against the Whalers six times in his high school career. "I love playing Nantucket because that game always gets so heated," he said.

Vineyard quarterback and senior Atlas Zack, who has played Nantucket in other sports teams but never in football pads, couldn't wait to get on the field and fight for the Island Cup. "I was really fired up this morning. I went to bed fired up, woke up fired up," he said on the way to the game.

Junior soccer player Josie Welch was excited to play because the girl's varsity soccer team had beaten Nantucket previously. "I'm also a little nervous because we played them early in our season, and

they've most likely improved since then," she said.

After 11 hours of competition, the athletes were back on the boat. They were exhausted and had left it all on the muddy Nantucket fields. Ruairi put on a movie, and others brought out decks of cards. The Vineyard lost the football game 27-7, boys' varsity soccer lost 1-0, while girl's varsity lost 3-2. Junior varsity (JV) boys' and girls' soccer won 1-0. Varsity field hockey put up a fight and came away with a 2-1 win, while JV tied 1-1. Charlotte's first Nantucket game proved to be a memorable experience. "I gave it my all today, and I think we did a lot of great teamwork. Everyone really supported each other," she said. "My favorite memory from today's trip was our first goal; we all went crazy."

The journey to Nantucket can be a hard one, even when the school charters the Steamship for a direct island-to-island excursion, but the challenges don't end when the boat docks. "It's really hard to play on Nantucket because there are so many fans and it's loud, but that's the way it is, so we had to try and overcome that," Atlas said.

After a difficult game, Josie had mixed feelings about the final hurrah of the season. "We all know that we should have won that game," she said. "But getting to play as a team for the last time [this season] was really fun. I felt connected with everyone, and it was an emotional last game."

The ferry pulled back into Vineyard Haven, and the athletes prepared to switch out their jerseys for costumes. Family and friends greeted the athletes as they came off the boat and entered the cold Halloween night. **HSV**

Principal Sara Dingley believes there is value in being exposed to different perspectives and trusting students to decide for themselves where they stand. "Schools should teach students how to think, not what to think," she said.

Mr. Houghton agrees. "We aren't supposed to push kids in one direction or the other," he said. "If [the extreme] is there, in all its ugliness, then you can challenge it."

Senior Zach Utz said, "We should, in fact, be exposed to people like Ayyadurai because people like him exist in our country, and it is important to recognize that." He added, "I think that a lot of people don't understand that as 17- and 18-year-olds, we've formed our opinions already. We're not going to go into this hour-long Zoom meeting and be completely radicalized by [Dr. Ayyadurai]."

Dr. Ayyadurai could not be reached for comment. **HSV**

## Seniors unswayed by Dr. Ayyadurai's claims

BY THEODORE FAIRCHILD-COPPOLETTI AND HARDY EVILLE

On Oct. 20, Dr. Shiva Ayyadurai spoke to the "Civics and Current Issues" (CCI) class at the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) over Zoom. What started as a straightforward discussion soon derailed as Dr. Ayyadurai lost his temper in response to questioning from students. It was later revealed that Dr. Ayyadurai was live-streaming the event over Facebook without permission from MVRHS.

Dr. Ayyadurai, who is running as a 2024 Republican Senate candidate against incumbent Elizabeth Warren, holds numerous degrees from MIT. He describes himself as the "inventor of email" (a disputed claim) and a "world-renowned systems scientist, inventor, and entrepreneur." He is also an anti-vaccine activist and conspiracy theorist.

Dr. Ayyadurai is the first of three political speakers—billed as the independent voice alongside a Democrat and a Republican—invited as part of the CCI curriculum.

His visit was organized by history teacher Joellen Meuse. "I had never heard of him before until I saw his name on a campaign, so I knew him as an independent," said Ms. Meuse. "We reached out to a bunch of different people. He happened to be the guy that was able to come."

Ms. Meuse prepared 15 questions in advance, and plans to ask the same questions to the Republican and Democratic speakers.

"Once he started answering the planned questions, the Zoom chat filled up with student-driven questions," said Ms. Meuse. "The dilemma was, Do I open it up for Dr. Ayyadurai to answer? I didn't want to be the arbiter

of whose student question got chosen."

Dr. Ayyadurai took it upon himself to answer the students' questions as they appeared in the Zoom chat. After being asked to justify his views on vaccines and being accused of not creating email, Dr. Ayyadurai became angry and emotional.

"I felt betrayed by him when he changed his tone and his demeanor towards students, which was wholly inappropriate and inexcusable," Ms. Meuse said. "That got in the way of my goal, which was genuine: Let's hear different opinions and debate their merits."

Senior Sam Fetters, who identifies as an independent, did not feel represented by Dr. Ayyadurai. "I felt disappointed, because I know there are so many more articulate voices that could have represented an independent perspective," said Sam. "I

wish they'd invited someone who was maybe less polarizing and at the same time knew more about what they were talking about."

Concerns around the school's vetting process immediately emerged from the community following his appearance at MVRHS.

"[Dr. Ayyadurai] has been a pretty prominent anti-vax person nationally. It's just not hard to find information about him," said Mark Favreau, father of senior Emmett Favreau. "When you've got someone who has a loose relationship to facts and is actually probably fabricating them outright, that type of person doesn't belong in a meaningful conversation about civics or democracy."

Sam agrees that future speakers should be more thoroughly screened. "I believe that they should do a better job of vetting their speakers and trying to

find unique perspectives, without those unique perspectives being people who think that the pyramids were created by aliens."

Civics teachers have acknowledged this criticism about their vetting process and Dr. Ayyadurai's live-streaming of the discussion.

"I don't know if I will ever do a guest speaker on Zoom again. If I do, I will certainly have them sign papers about privacy rights," Ms. Meuse said. "In hindsight, I wish I had done those things. But I didn't assume this would happen."

However, students and teachers do believe that some good came out of the situation.

"I find it worked perfectly in the way that it got the community — both inside and outside the school — fired up," said history department chair Olsen Houghton.

The civics classes spent the

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