



# 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.

## Remembering Mr. Bonneau

BY JULIA SAYRE

Beloved French teacher Pierre Bonneau died unexpectedly in his sleep on Dec. 18, creating a heartbreaking loss for the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) community. Students and staff members remember him as spirited, passionate, and always striving to bring his students joy.

Originally from Québec, Mr. Bonneau had been teaching at MVRHS for the past 12 years. He was the lone French teacher at the high school. Portuguese teacher Jane Sampaio said, "He was 'the French Guy' when representing our school. He was the whole program, and that is a big hat to wear."

Mr. Bonneau's wife, Lisa Bonneau, is a Spanish teacher at MVRHS, and his four children, Nick, Ren, JoJo, and Daniel, are MVRHS graduates. Nick and Daniel were students of his in the French program.

Outside school, Mr. Bonneau was always looking for ways to improve his French teaching skills.

"He engaged annually in outside professional development with the American Association of Teachers of French, and even presented at [its conference] one year," Ms. Sampaio said. "Mr. Bonneau always represented our school and community in a very professional and positive light."

Former English teacher David Wilson was friends with Pierre, and prior to COVID they would often meet for long coffees at Island coffee shops.

"Pierre was a person of great intellect, expansive interest, and most important to me, a dedicated family man. I will miss him greatly," he said.

A fond memory that both teachers and students share is when Mr. Bonneau would make his favorite delicacy: strawberry and chocolate crêpes. Whether preparing crêpes on special days during the semester, or passing them out at the Evening of the Arts, he made sure everyone got a taste of French cuisine.

"I would imagine that many people will remember him for his delicious crêpes and his *très authentique* beret," Ms. Sampaio said.

His signature beret and French style — which included dressing up as a mime every Halloween — delighted his students. "Almost every single day he wore a beret to school, and I can't remember a single day since when I was in 10th grade where he didn't have a full-on French outfit," senior and third-year French student Emmett Favreau said.

Fourth-year French student Zach Utz will remember Mr. Bonneau as "a genuinely great guy" and "always wanting to put a smile on people's faces," and also for his yard-decorating skills as his neighbor. "He got this replica model of the Eiffel Tower with a bunch of lights on it for his front yard. When he set that up, it was so great. I could look outside and see it," he said.

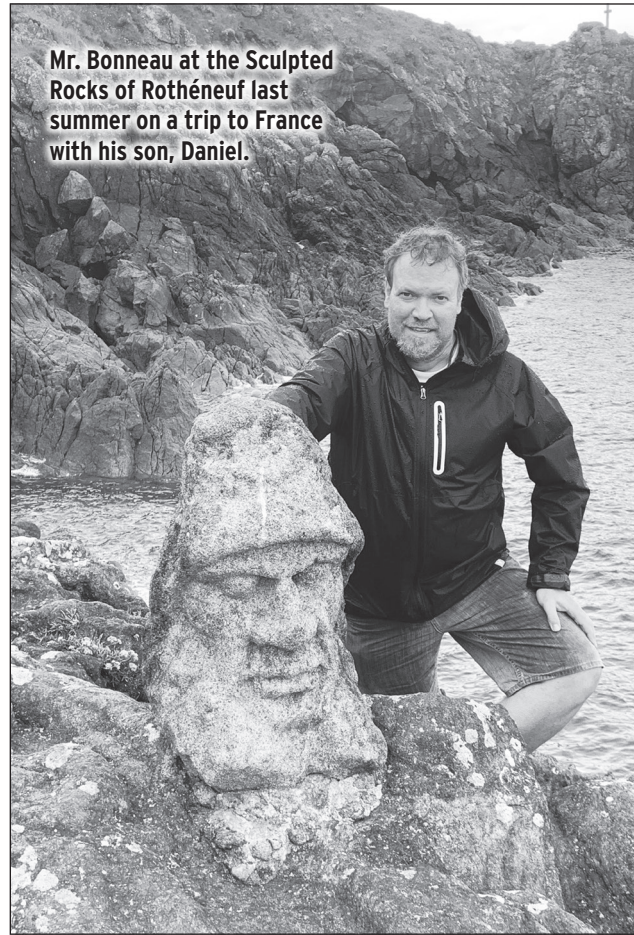
"He was one of the teachers who really cared," fourth-year French student Ruairi Mullin said. "He wanted you to do well, and genuinely always wanted us to succeed and learn French, because I feel like being able to speak French was such a big part of his identity. I think he wanted to pass that on to us."

Spanish teacher Justine DeOliveira will never forget the qualities Mr. Bonneau

brought to school every day. "He was just so spirited and passionate. He could come off as being quiet, but I think his personality would show through with his jokes that would always add a smile to our faces," she said.

Ms. Sampaio will remember him in a similar way. "Mr. Bonneau was always a gracious and helpful colleague. If I asked him anything, he always had time to share his perspective and work," she said.

Mr. Bonneau wasn't only teaching his students about the French language, but also about French history. "[The history] was tied in with learning French, and he would take time to teach us about France and Québec," Emmett said. "Just hearing him talk about the history of it really passionately was



Mr. Bonneau at the Sculpted Rocks of Rothéneuf last summer on a trip to France with his son, Daniel.

COURTESY LISA BONNEAU

very interesting."

Mr. Bonneau was always looking for new ways to immerse his students in French language and culture.

"He put so much work into the trips, like when he took students to Québec, and he also worked so hard with the Film Center to do an annual French Film day," Ms. DeOliveira said.

There never seemed to be a dull moment while sitting in Mr. Bonneau's class, or even in the hallway outside his classroom, where he would play French music on Fridays. "He would always make class interesting," Zach said. "He would bring in real-world applications to what we were learning. He would play us music, and we would learn French through the music, and we would watch French movies."

"I don't think we'll ever forget him," Ms. Sampaio said. "A bit of Mr. Bonneau will be present with us for many years to come." **HSV**

## A new furry friend in the SAO

BY LILY SEBASTIAN AND CAROLINE WALSH

School can be stressful and overwhelming at times, but having a puppy roaming the halls has a way of brightening even the bleakest of January days. Maeve, the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School's (MVRHS) first designated therapy dog, can now be found in the guidance hallway — hopefully, attended to by her owner, school adjustment counselor Matt Malowski.

Mr. Malowski has taken it upon himself to get his yellow Lab puppy certified for therapy. The process takes about a year, so until next winter, Maeve will be in training.

"I help students deal with social, emotional, or any



Maeve, the newest member of the SAO.

COURTESY MATT MALOWSKI

type of mental health challenge that comes their way," Malowski said, "but having a therapy dog can sometimes help break the ice for

students who might feel a little reluctant to talk."

Students are encouraged to seek out their adjustment counselors in the Student Affairs Office (SAO) if they are experiencing mental or emotional distress, and counselors Malowski and Amy Lilavois have been looking for ways to encourage kids to reach out more.

The SAO is hoping students will find it easier to open up about personal issues when there is a puppy sitting at their feet or in their lap.

"Sometimes when you bring animals into institutions, there is a homelike feel, and it helps make the environment seem less institutionalized," Malowski said.

Junior Isabelle Ribeiro said, "I think the presence of a dog helps us feel more safe and calm because dogs

tend to make us happier."

Students who are struggling mentally or in need of support may experience an initial feeling of shame about going to a school counselor. Malowski said, "Dogs can't physically talk. They will automatically love you unconditionally."

This unconditional love is what makes the interaction more therapeutic than a normal session. Malowski says that the biggest form of emotional support for adolescents is touch. "Having that physical connection is just something that we counselors can't provide," he said, adding, "Any dog can lower heart rate, lower blood pressure, and release endorphins."

Isabelle said, "Going to the SAO might make us feel happier and safer with the therapy dog there. It will hopefully increase kids' motivation to get help." **HSV**

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