



# 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.

## Israel-Gaza war incites discussion

BY FINN ROBINSON AND LULU WHITE

It's been two months since Hamas's attack on Israel, an attack that killed 1,200 Israeli civilians. The Gazan death toll of Israel's subsequent invasion and ongoing operation in the Gaza Strip is currently 17,170, according to the Gaza Health Ministry. In response to the appalling flare-up of this decades-long conflict, the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) history and Civics and Current Issues (CCI) classes have attempted to address it.

Most senior CCI classes have discussed the ongoing conflict to some extent. History teacher and department head Ena Thulin said, "[The history department] has mostly met because of our own interest in the subject, and not so much about regulating or controlling how [the Israeli-Palestinian conflict] is discussed in classes. Civics classes seem to currently be

diving into the topic head-on, and exploring it."

Corinne Kurtz, who teaches both humanities and civics, said students have looked at the conflict in her civics class through different news sources. "One of my goals was to figure out what is happening, and make sure we hear both sides, or at least begin to drill into the complexity, like Israel's government is not the same as Israel's people, and Hamas isn't exactly the same as the Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip," she said.

History and civics teacher Olsen Houghton said, "In [my civics class], it was brought up almost immediately, through [regular] current events presentations. Students wanted to know some of the background, and they were pretty unaware of how Israel was created, and how the West Bank and Gaza were constructed," he said.

Senior Jack Zheng decided to cover the conflict in his presentation. Jack said, "It was

an interesting topic because there were no right or wrong answers, necessarily. [Defining the problem and the solution] differs based on the perspective of the situation."

Like many of his peers, Jack didn't know many details about the conflict going into his project. "I had some background information, just from basic history classes," he said, "but [those classes] didn't really go into depth about how complicated the situation is."

"[Jack's] presentation brought up all kinds of things," said Mr. Houghton, "and we talked through it, and the message was: You have to understand both sides to understand what's happening there."

Senior Huck Moore said, "It has been pretty unbiased, because Mr. Houghton gives both sides; however, you can just tell that everything [that comes from U.S. media sources] leans toward Israel. The stuff we hear from the president or senators is all pro-Israel because [the U.S.

government] is an Israel supporter."

For those who aren't seniors, what is their main source of information about the conflict?

History teacher Amy Jaques hoped to convey the geopolitical nature of the conflict during a study of the Middle East in her freshman global studies classes. "It's not religion," she said. "It's land, it's power, and it's security. I want students to understand that [the conflict stems from] the governments and the leadership. It's not the citizens, not the people."

Junior Nyoka Walters said, "For the current conflict, most of my information comes from Instagram and TikTok." She added that none of her classes or teachers have really mentioned it, but she does discuss it with her friends. When asked if she felt satisfied with the education she was given on the topic at MVRHS, she said no, because she wants to know more.

Ms. Thulin said she has



LULU WHITE

mostly heard from Jewish students who are grappling with how to deal with the rise in anti-Semitism that is happening in schools around the country. "I've also talked to some parents who are worried about the anti-Semitic backlash that's happening around the country reaching MVRHS," she added. "I've heard less from students with questions about Palestine."

"There is no reason that we should be acting in any way, shape, or form anti-Semitic, and it is not anti-Semitic to not support the Israeli government," said Ms. Jacques.

"It's anti-Semitic to blame the Jewish people for the Israeli government's actions, just like it's anti-Muslim to blame Muslims for the actions of the Hamas leadership."

Ms. Thulin said that one of the aims of class discussions is to seek out and consider different perspectives, especially with regard to emotionally charged issues.

Speaking to the complexity and nuance of the conflict and current war, Ms. Kurtz said, "There's always at least two sides to every story. Usually, there's about 72 sides to every story." HSV

## Holiday pop-up store offers authentic learning experience

BY BRADY VOUGHT AND NIKEYA TANKARD

On Thursday, Dec. 7, the MVRHS pop-up store opened for business. Located in the Edgartown Mad Martha's store, the event was the culmination of months of outreach, planning, and advertising by teacher Paul Angelico and his business and marketing students.

"Early in the semester, I met with Principal Dingley and talked about the idea of a pop-up store as a way of teaching kids how to start a business," said Mr. Angelico. "It's more of a hands-on approach, as opposed to book

learning and reading about how to start a business. It's bringing in people from the outside, and giving kids firsthand experience on how you do things if you're running a business."

Over the past few months, students have been learning how to advertise, how to reach out to local businesses for products to sell, and how to run a store and interact with people in a business environment.

Marketing student and junior Madison Mello volunteered to work at the shop, and spoke about how doing so compared with learning in class. "I like this a lot more," she said. "I feel like you get to

see how people have to set up everything, and [take] inventory, and figure everything out. It feels like how a business actually works."

Senior Brooke Ward agreed. She was tasked with marketing the event through writing press releases and designing flyers: "It was really fun getting to be a part of the pop-up. I don't think I would have learned as much if we were taught with books."

Products sold at the pop-up included MVRHS merchandise and artisanal products donated from Island Honey, LeRoux, and Island Grocer. The store also featured

items such as cookies made by culinary arts students, and gift certificates for oil changes from automotive

students. All revenue from products sold goes toward the high schools' student activity fund.



BRADY VOUGHT

Business teacher Paul Angelico helps junior Madison Mello with the register.

Mad Martha's owner Brook Katzen, who donated the space, views the business students at the high school as the future leaders of the local business community. He reported that the venture was a financial success. "Reviewing the sales report, it seems like they were successful in selling everything they were offering," he said.

Mr. Angelico, who supervised students at the store every shift, and greeted each customer who entered as if they were an old friend, said, "Overall, it was a big success. Great support from teachers, administrators, and the local community as a whole." HSV

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# The High School View

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