Farewell to the Beloved, Paula Brackenbury  - Jay Silver

So much effort goes into the Rostrum. Not many people recognize the people behind the scenes of the newspaper. There are writers running frantically grabbing scoops and photo-ops to make a deadline, editors yelling at the writers to fix the punctuation and then there are the faculty members. The faculty members hold the paper together. Without them, we would just be average teens with writing and editorials to share. Right now, the Rostrum has two advisors. One of these women, Mrs. Paula Brackenbury, is retiring after years of teaching at the end of the school year.

Mrs. Brackenbury, after working in the field of journalism, became a teacher in 1965. She took time off to raise her children and came back to WHHS in 1996. She works with special education students helping them succeed. Mr. Roger Erickson, Chair of the Special Education Department for six years, told me “The fact that she [Mrs. Brackenbury] goes beyond job description, beyond her contract. She maintains a level of professionalism that goes second to none and she always has the best interests for the students at heart”. Mrs. Brackenbury helps these kids get jobs, go to school after college and always keeps in touch with them after college. Mr. Erickson also told me that he is going to miss “seeing her kids and seeing how happy they are when they are with her” (On a side note, he is also going to miss her Boston accent).

continued on next page...

Congratulations Westie Seniors. Class of 2015

Shine Bright Like a Diamond

Gabby Murillo
Favorite Memory: Jr. year getting tutored in Math by Pablo & Sergio.
Miss the Most: My 5th period salad.

Farhan Sumra
Favorite Memory: The Library
Miss the Most: The Library

Maria Nahuatlato
Favorite Memory: Peer Advocates
Miss the Most: Friends and great teachers.

David Martins
Favorite Memory: Chemistry class with Mrs. Hartsoe
Miss the Most: Easy school work.

Jake Lynch & Devin Hines
Favorite Memory: Hockey
Miss the Most: Hockey

Diamond Addison
Favorite Memory: Chorus
Miss the Most: Mrs. Bruneau

Tom Wilkerson
Favorite Memory: Football
Miss the Most: Football
Montell Greene

Favorite Memory:
Mrs. W’s English class

Miss the Most:
Getting lifesavers from Mrs. Lynch

Brandon Matos

Favorite Memory:
Library

Miss the Most:
Library

Sarah Clark & Pristie Fernandez

Favorite Memory:
First year involved with Unified Sports and 7th period in the LMC

Miss the Most:
Friends at WHHS

Oscar Molina

Favorite Memory:
Sophomore year

Miss the Most:
Friends and teachers

Annasse Rajeh

Favorite Memory:
won ULD Debate

Miss the Most:
AP Physics

Rochelle & Rachel Cabral

Favorite Memory:
Helping out with activities

Miss the Most:
Being involved with activities

Alice Obas and Mohamed Mubarek

Favorite Memory:
Senior year

Miss the Most:
Will miss the comfort of WHHS

AJ Brundridge

Favorite Memory:
Learning how to play piano

Miss the Most:
Band

Kharl Reynado & Nurul Saffian

Favorite Memory:
Mock Trial

Miss the Most:
Friendly faces

Favorite Memory:
Band

Miss the Most:
Friendly faces

Andrea Lavado

Favorite Memory:
Friends

Miss the Most:
Small community at WHHS

Maurice Jones

Favorite Memory:
Ms. W’s English class.

Miss the Most:
High School

Congratulations to WHHS Unified Sports Team. Voted number one in the state in Unified Sports. They received the Michaels Cup Award in the CT Interscholastic Athlete Conference. There are 17 athletes and 10 WHHS student helpers.
Continued from front page...

I also spoke to Mrs. Dana Martinez about Mrs. Brackenbury. She has worked with Mrs. Brackenbury for 15 years. She, like Mr. Erickson, also agreed that Mrs. Brackenbury cares so much for her students. She told me that Mrs. Brackenbury helps her students achieve jobs and helps them succeed in the future.

I also spoke to Mrs. Marilyn Lynch, co-advisor to Mrs. Brackenbury. Mrs. Lynch and Mrs. Brackenbury have been working together on the Rostrum for six years. She describes Mrs. Brackenbury as “caring to all her students and helping to those in the Rostrum. Mrs. Brack is also a die-hard Red Sox fan which makes her amazing too. I will miss her and congratulate her on her fine teaching career.”

Mrs. Brackenbury told me (even though she is still unaware that she was being asked for this article) that she will be taking her retirement to help out her aging father, be with her family and possibly start writing a novel.

From all of the members (past and present) of the Rostrum, we wish Mrs. Brackenbury the best in her retirement and will think of her in the future.

**Congratulations Mrs. Brackenbury. Enjoy retirement.**

**SENIORS THAT COMPLETED 10 OR MORE HONORS COURSES.**

**PLAQUE IN MEDIA CENTER**

Sitting L-R: Kharl Reynado, Sal DelCollo, Cindy Li, Cindy Nguyen, Samantha Furtak, Lhamo Dolma, Nurul Sauffian, Sarah Flynn, Elizabeth Fournier, Madly Lima, Tianna Woolfolk, Alexis Severino

Standing L-R: Angela Riehl, Jesus Yanez, Michael Tran, Michael Smith, Lizi Bowen, Alice Obas, Julia Paterson, Amanda Lopez, Jenna Perno, Marisa Pacapelli, Jolie Morrell, Daniella Carr, Katerina Mazzacane, Matthew Marcello, Hailey Dias, Justin Tuschhoff, Yalda Jabarkhyl

Back row L-R: Syazwan Mohd, Anthony Lockhart, Toni Chambers, Tatiana Gay, Kayley Carr, Vanessa Marchey Brown

Missing: Vanessa Belton, Mikayla Hickman, Annasse Rajeh
Social Acceptance and the Problem that is ‘Body Shaming’  By Jamie Kelley

The problem with our society is that we don’t accept things for what they are. That goes for everything, not just our body weights. But there is so much societal pressure all the time to be beautiful, and really, what just is beautiful? Is it a size zero? A size twenty? It’s neither. True beauty comes from within. So why is that so hard for everyone to see? On every magazine cover that we see, there is always a smaller sized woman in even smaller clothes, never a ‘normal’, average body. These teeny tiny bodies are not average, and are unattainable for a majority of our society. And that’s okay! A bigger body is nothing to be ashamed of, ever!

So why is a large part of our community participating in the growing trend that is ‘fat shaming’ also known as ‘body shaming’? When I first heard about this trend, I was astonished beyond belief. So many women struggle with their weight, and it hurts to be picked on for things that you sometimes cannot control. Kelly Clarkson, American Idol winner and talented musician, was a victim of this ignorant trend. After the birth of her beautiful baby daughter River Rose, Kelly didn’t snap back into her pre-pregnancy dress size, she stayed at her pregnancy weight for a little while, which is fine! It’s normal to do so and the belief that women do snap back into a size 6 dress is ridiculous and in most cases, impossible. So when Clarkson appeared on TV for the first time after her daughter’s birth, people went wild and attacked her over social media by saying that she was fat, ugly, and that she really had let herself go, ignoring the fact that she had just done something amazing, she had just brought a human being into this world, carried that human being within her for nine months, and maybe was a little sensitive on the topic of her size.

“What happened to Kelly Clarkson,” one wrote, “did she eat all of her back-up singers? At least I have a wide-screen.” However, the sweetheart that Clarkson is, she took the beatings with a wide smile and poise, “I’ve just never cared what people think. It's more if I'm happy and I'm confident and feeling good. That's always been my thing. And more so now, since having a family – I don't seek out any other acceptance.” If you image search Clarkson on Google, Bing, or any search engine, you won’t find a picture of her current body easily. You’ll see pictures of her when she first won American Idol, when she was thinner, much thinner, and not a grown woman with the body of a mother.

Why do we do this? Put the idea that you aren’t good enough if you’re not skinny, into the minds of society? Who is the real winner here? The girl’s that starve themselves into thinness, or the heavier women that spiral into depression because they have a condition that prevents them from losing weight?

The only shame that resides within this trend, is the shame that people should have about their actions. Everyone is beautiful in their own special way! Our imperfections are what make us who we are. But body weight is not an imperfection! And it never should have been one. To quote another musician, Pink, “Oh, pretty, pretty please, don't you ever, ever feel, like you're less than ***** perfect.”

Congratulation to Bertha Appia, Tatyanna Alvarado and Brisa Cruz for winning second place for the high-school level writing a plan to save energy in West Haven through the use of shower timers in homes. This was for the Energize CT eesmart CT statewide Student Contest. They visited the capital last Friday for the award ceremony. Congratulations. Job well done.
PACE Presenting to the Board of Education  By Susie Beyl

I am a Student Representative on the West Haven Board of Education, and honestly, most meetings go the same way each time. Typical business is up for discussion and debate. It’s interesting and informative, of course, but very typical. However, at the last meeting, there was a special presentation from a core group within our school that exemplifies all that West Haven stands for: the PACE program.

Run primarily by Ms. Martinez, the PACE program works to reengage struggling students in their own lives and educational pursuance. Students in PACE use modern day technology in order to work through contemporary problems as part of their specialized curriculum. A team of teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals provide one-on-one attention to PACE students to ensure that all educational needs are addressed. PACE program students receive attention that is tapered to their individualized needs.

A handful of students either wrote or memorized eloquent speeches about the program that certainly became the highlight of the night’s meeting. Students sung their teachers genuine praises. To see a group of kids care so much for their teachers and mentors was heart warming and it’s evident that they are well taken care of. When each student spoke, they had the utmost respect and support from their peers. It is abundantly clear that the students of the PACE program are a close-knit group within WHHS.

The students’ words were beautiful. Presenters explained that PACE permanently altered their lives. Many said that without PACE, they may not have had the motivation to excel or even show up to school. The students warmly reported that the PACE program was exactly what they needed to get back on track with their education and enjoy school. Any program that produces such well spoken, genuine, and hard-working students is certainly one of the highest value in West Haven High School.

West Haven High School Gets a Competitive Gaming Team  By Jay Silver

The video game world is slowly being segregated into our nation’s sports. E-Sports (or online sports) have been slowly becoming very popular. One particular video game, League of Legends, has been significantly rising in popularity. In fact, it has been so popular that it had more views on the internet streaming network Twitch™ (27 million views) than the NBA finals (18 million). West Haven High School had the chance to participate in the local chapter of the West Haven High School League of Legends Club.

League of Legends is a MMORPG (Massive multiplayer online roleplaying game) that has attracted more than 65 million players since October of 2009. Players use over 100 different playable characters to take down enemies in hopes to conquer the base (similar to capture the flag).

Gamers interested in competing in the 2015-2016 High School Star League Fall Invitational founded the club in 2015. High School Star League (HSSL) is an organization that hosts tournaments with over 600 schools (including WHHS) in tournaments with up to $30,000 in scholarships to the winning teams after a 5-6 week period.

I had a chance to speak with two members of the club about their opinions. Junior Damian Arbelaez and Team Captain, Junior Mohammed Ramadan, both commented on being involved in the games.

Ramadan, an active League player, is the team captain. His job is to not only help the team make plays, but also help weaker and less experienced players to gain the experience they need to compete. He told me he liked being team captain because “I enjoy teaching the team how to get better and having responsibility for decisions we make in game”. He said that he enjoys meeting new people and never finds the game boring. He also said he finds the game a bit tricky when players don’t work together. “Focusing on helping your team achieve a common goal rather than taking all the glory for yourself is the trickiest part of being on the team,” Ramadan.

Arbelaez, also a member of the team, said he enjoys playing the game for similar reasons as Ramadan. He said he likes working with players and getting better at the game. He said he finds it challenging to compete with disagreements.

I also play on the team as the Coordinator for the school: meaning I set up the matches between schools and play. I agree with my teammates that it is an amazing experience working with brand new players and experienced ones. However, I find it tricky playing with the more experienced players because it can be a bit intimidating playing against more experienced individuals.

Anyone interested in joining the gaming club should watch for announcements about the meetings. The games are usually held in E54 on select Fridays.
The second annual Westie Day of Hope was held on May 3rd 2015, in the WHHS courtyard. The charity event helped raise money for Camp Rising Sun, a Connecticut camp for kids with cancer or who have previous battled this horrible disease. The day was centered around a head-shaving tent to show support for cancer patients who lose their hair during chemotherapy. The event also featured numerous tables and tents that were setup by WHHS clubs and organizations to help raise money for this great cause. From pie in your face to hair chalking there was fun to be had by everyone.

This year marked the 32nd anniversary of the camp. Westie Day of Hope raised approximately $7,500. With a generous matching donation, Cabin 1 will proudly be fully sponsored by Westie Day of Hope. Events like this help ensure that these amazing kids can attend camp free of charge.

Congratulations to WHHS School Nurse, Mrs. Carol Roche on her retirement! She will be very busy taking care of her recently born granddaughter, Gabbie. Good health and happiness to Mrs. Roche.
Girls Tennis has managed this record during the Spring of 2015. In past years, the team's record has been less than satisfactory, but with Coach Kara Kaczynski's positive encouragement, the team has managed to pull away from a losing streak. Beating teams such as East Haven, Foran, and Lyman Hall, the girls have celebrated victory.

I am proud to call these young women my teammates. As a graduating senior, I will miss the bond of my teammates and the unforgettable memories of joy we shared on and off the court. Any graduating senior who has been part of any team understands this feeling.

To underclassmen who are afraid of joining a team, don’t be. Joining a group of people who share a common purpose or goal is an experience unmatched by most. I thank Girls' Tennis and Coach Kaczynski for unforgettable seasons and many laughs.

So girls! Whether you have picked up a tennis racquet before or have trained in this sport, I highly recommend and encourage you to join the WH Girls Tennis Team. This team is filled with fantastic individuals.

"We play hard, but we fight harder." - Senior Captain Nurul Sauffian

"A truly successful tennis team involves hard work, dedication to each other, sportsmanship and confidence. This is what the West Haven Girls tennis team is made of! I am so incredibly proud and lucky to coach such wonderful girls!" - Coach Kara Kaczynski

"I am so unbelievably proud of my team this year for fighting so hard in each and every match. Everyone's mental toughness and endurance has really shined through which helped lead us to our many victories this season." - Senior Captain Cindy Nguyen

West Haven High School boys tennis team won the SCC Division II championship for the first time in our school's history. West Haven (the No. 2 seed) defeated Shelton (the No. 1 seed) 5-2 at the Yale University Tennis Complex.

Coach Jason Kirck was named the SCC Division II Coach of the Year for tennis.

Congratulations!!

Congratulations to John and James Delgado for being named SCC First Team.

Congratulations to Mike Savino and Kial Watts for being named VIOs Sports Plus and Westie Blue Spring Athletes of the Year!

Congrats to Coach Richard Boshea, our new Head Football Coach. He is replacing Coach Ed McCarthy. Coach Boshea comes with a myriad of experience including 29 years of coaching the team in various positions.

Congrats Coach Bo!
Things to Consider Doing This Summer  

By: Dela Tarpeh

With the school year coming to an end, the one thing we've been waiting for all year is finally approaching. Yes, you guessed it, Summer. When you think of summer, some of the things that pop into your head are: the beach, Popsicles, late nights, and of course sleeping. You can't forget about sleeping. But although the Summer is a time to kick back and relax after a stressful school year, you shouldn't just waste two months doing nothing.

Here are some things you should consider doing:
1. Get a job. Nothing says summer than having a little spending money that you can use to treat yourself.
2. Travel. It doesn't matter if it's to a couple of towns over or to a state across the country. Leave your local area and explore.
3. Get an internship. They're good for experience and an excellent thing to put on your resume. Let's not forget it's a great way to build contacts.
4. Put Your phone down for a day. I know it sounds crazy in today's society, but it's something you should consider doing. Turn it off and spend some time with family and friends without the distraction of checking for texts or notifications.
5. Go camping. Get a tent and hit a campsite or just camp in your backyard. Make some s'mores and stare at the moon. Or something along those lines.
6. Go to a concert. Music is amazing but there's nothing like hearing your favorite artist In person, even if it's not from the front row.
7. Volunteer. There's no better way to give back to the ones around you and your community
8. Read a book. Yes, I know, it sounds boring, but think about the satisfaction you'll feel when you can actually choose the book you want to read. And for an added bonus you won't be tested on it.
8. Help around the House. Your parents or guardian will really appreciate it, especially if you do it without them asking.
9. Got to the beach. Fun fun fun in the sun sun sun.
10. Get in shape/workout. Set goals and strive to reach them.