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WEST STREET JOURNAL

Why We Need Winter Recess

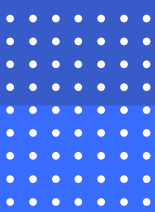
by *Tam Marien*

This is life not just in Milford but in New Hampshire and in New England in general. With snow on the ground and sometimes below freezing temperatures, we spend most of our time inside our heated classrooms and homes.

And so, we have our Winter recess. For a week, we get to stop thinking about school. Some of us would decide to stay at home and chill with a few friends; some would go on a family vacation. This break is such a valuable time for us to create memories with our families and friends. It is also a perfect time for self-care... to take a step back and re-evaluate our goals. We could get more hours of sleep, catch up with missing school work and address any level of stress.

For those of us who truly understand the value of time, we can make use of this one-week break in the most productive way. Create a list of things to do for the week. For instance, we could put in a time to build our online portfolio, apply for scholarships, find volunteering opportunities, or even look for a job.

Ultimately, the choice is ours to make.





CTE: The Key to College Credit, Real World Skills, and More!

by Payton Burke

Milford High School has gained a new Director of Technical Studies this year, and with CTE month this February, we at the West Street Journal figured it was the best time for an interview. So luckily Mrs. Samantha Belcourt agreed and met with Staff Writer Payton Burke to discuss the CTE programs here at Milford. The following is what ensued.


Did you take a CTE program when you were in high school? If so what were they?

Yes, I am a CTE student. I took office technology at Pinkerton; I am a Pinkerton graduate. I would not be where I am today without it. It gave me my first real job while I studied in college, and I got through high school because of that two year program. I made a lot of friends through the program and it all around helped me want to go to school everyday.

What do you think of Milford's CTE programs at present?

We have amazing programs with outstanding teachers. Our teachers have so much knowledge and skills that they bring into the classroom, and is so valuable to the students. I don't make the programs; the teachers make the programs.


CTE courses provide industry exposure through hands-on experiences and mentoring.



What do you hope to do with the CTE programs at Milford ? New programs? Expansions on old ones?

Absolutely, at present we are looking to add a health science program, and implement various pathways. We would like to expand into more health and human services pathways. Different pathways in behavioral and mental pathways. All different pathways into the health field.

What would you say to any students considering CTE programs but are on the fence?



I would tell them to think about what they are going to leave with. If you don't choose CTE what are you going to leave with versus if you do. What are you going to leave high school with. My big message this year is to educate students, parents, and the community about the value of these programs. There's a stigma that we just throw students that aren't going to college into these programs, but that's not true. They're very high skilled.

What are some benefits of joining a CTE program?

You can earn college credit, real world skills, make connections with industry, build relationships, and earn industry recognized credentials.

What would you say to the parents whose students are taking a CTE program here at Milford?

I would tell them that there is so much value in a CTE program. That students walk away with so many opportunities, career ready, college ready, and skills ready.

Once again, thank you to Mrs. Belcourt for allowing me to interview you and welcome to MHS.



Dungeons & Dragons Class Guide

by Jason Lewicki

(This is just my opinion, feel free to think whatever you want!)

What Is A Barbarian?

A Barbarian is, in essence, a warrior fueled by rage and bloodlust. Their strikes are fueled by anger, and they shrug off the attacks of their foes with ease. A snarling berserker, a proud tribal warrior, and a whooping maniac can all be defined as Barbarians, as despite their various differences, they are all united by a few core traits: their physical might, their indomitable resilience, and their skill at getting right into the thick of battle. No matter who your Barbarian is as a character, one thing is for certain: you will make your enemies regret ever having crossed you or your party's path.

How Does A Barbarian Work?

There are a few important things to note about a Barbarian when starting at first level. First, your Hit Dice, an amount of dice that determine your maximum HP, is a d12, giving you, the highest possible HP of any D&D class. Additionally, your Armor Class (how high your enemies need to roll to hit you) is determined by $10 +$ your Dexterity modifier $+$ your Constitution modifier when you're not wearing any armor, meaning that having high Constitution makes you both tougher and harder to hit. Finally, you gain proficiency with all weapons, all types of armor (excluding heavy armor like chain and plate mail), and Strength and Constitution saving throws, allowing you to better tough out effects that target your body. However, the most important aspect of being a Barbarian is your Rage feature: as a bonus action, you can enter a Rage a set amount of times before needing to take a long rest (8 hours of uninterrupted sleep/rest) to recover them. While Raging, you get a variety of benefits for the next benefits, after which your Rage ends: you take half damage from all physical attacks (specifically bludgeoning, slashing, and piercing damage), you deal increased damage with Strength-based weapons like axes and hammers, and you have advantage (roll two dice and take the higher number) on all Strength-based checks and saving throws. Entering a Rage essentially turns you into a nigh-unstoppable beast on the battlefield, taking reduced damage from the most common damage types in the game while dealing incredible damage in return. However, since Rage is a limited resource, it is wise to conserve your uses for important battles and encounters, lest you blow them all early and have to fight the final boss of the mission with only your regular abilities. Additionally, your Rage ends prematurely if you have not attacked or taken damage from a hostile creature since your last turn, so make sure you're popping your Rage in a situation where it will last. Finally, you cannot cast or concentrate on spells while Raging, so be sure to keep that in mind. Besides those features, you get more abilities as you level up from 1 to 20, including but not limited to: gaining advantage on all Dexterity saving throws that you can see the source of; being able to attack twice with a single Attack action; being able to move an additional 10 feet with the Move action; dealing more damage with critical hits; and finally, at level 20, you get a $+4$ bonus to your Strength and Constitution scores (with the new maximum being increased to 24 rather than the standard 20) and you can Rage an infinite number of times. Essentially, a Barbarian's abilities all contribute to the main functions of the class as a whole: taking damage, dealing damage, and never backing down from a fight.

POP CULTURE REVIEW:

Spiritfarer

by Sophie Loss



Source: gamespot.com

Spiritfarer is a sandbox action game about taking spirits to the underworld. The game kicks off by introducing the player to the playable character known as Stella. Stella gets granted the job of being the new Spiritfarer from the previous one. Charon, the last Spiritfarer, gives Stella the Everlight, a glowing yellowish-orange ball that can be manipulated by the Spiritfarer to be used as tools. With that final task done, Charon goes into the Everdoor, the final destination of all spirits. And thus begins Stella's job of being the Spiritfarer.

Stella, with her newly appointed job, is now traveling in a boat through an unexplored ocean that contains many islands, storms, civilizations, etc. Her first task is to find a spirit to occupy the boat, leading to her finding Gwen. Gwen appears as a deer standing on her hind legs with white eyes. She is very down-to-Earth and headstrong and it shows throughout her time on Stella's boat. She teaches Stella the bare basics of how to take care of the spirits that will live with her, the main essentials being a house, food, and just plain old conversation. From there on out, Stella finds an even bigger quantity of spirits to inhabit her humble ship.

Quickly, it becomes evident that her ship will become too small to house more spirits so she has to upgrade the size using Albert's Shipyard. Albert's only job in this game is to upgrade Stella's ship and make terrible dad jokes. To gain these upgrades size using Albert's Shipyard. Albert's only job in this game is to upgrade Stella's ship and make terrible dad

jokes. To gain these upgrades Stella has to get a currency called 'glims'. Glims can be obtained by doing various events that are offered to the player. These events can go from trying to catch jellyfish, to trying to capture lightning in a bottle, with many more being added as the game progresses. The other object(s) needed to upgrade the ship is just raw materials. The materials are acquired when the player does mini-games to cut down trees, mine rocks, fish, farm, etc.. Only after the appropriate materials have been gained can the player upgrade the ship.

At some point or another, Stella will have to take these spirits to the Everdoor. Before she even gets there, the spirit will start to show signs that they will soon want to go to the other side such as isolating themselves or being strangely reflective of their past. After these signs are shown, the spirit will talk to Stella and admit that they are ready to go to the Everdoor. Stella will then travel to the door and when she arrives, all of the other inhabitants will go next to the disembarking boat while refusing to speak to the player. The spirit that will be traveling to the Everdoor will sit on said disembarking boat and Stella will have to paddle them to the door. On this last boat ride, the spirit will tell the player about their living life and about what their regrets were. This scene will always end with the spirit and Stella at the door with the spirit finishing their story when Stella runs up and hugs them. With that last sentimental moment, the spirit rises to the middle of the door and fades away, turning them into a constellation that shows resemblance to their spirit form.

Overall, this is a very bittersweet story full of drama, quests, and exploration. Oftentimes, I have felt myself get sucked into the game play for hours at a time. The music and artistic style is superb, along with the writing. I recommend this to anyone who likes calm games with inter-connected plot points.

A VICTORIAN VALENTINES

By Payton Burke



When you think of February, one of the first things that come to mind is Valentine's Day, and with that the images of candy, cards, and just about everything romantic. Things weren't always so black and white with this holiday however (red and pink?). So here are three odd or interesting traditions for this flowery festival.

If one was to think of the most romantic gift possible for someone on Valentines Day, what would it be? Well, according to some Welsh traditions, the answer is the love spoon. Traditionally carved out of a single piece of wood with simple tools such as pocket knives, the love spoon dates back to the 17th century when young men would typically carve them with symbols of their affections such as hearts, Celtic knots, etc. to create a unique and lasting gift to give to the beholder of their affections.

While these spoons have held traditionally romantic connotations over the last century, they have begun to be gifts to commemorate weddings, birthdays, and christenings.

A closer to a more traditional Valentine, however, is the paper purse - an origami like craft from the 1700's. They were a piece of paper folded in such a way that as the receiver unfolded it they would be greeted with a message, drawing, or sometimes even a small trinket on each of the folded sections. This created a nice twist on the classic Valentine's Day card.

What if one didn't want to send a card because they just hated a person that much? Well, in the early 20th century, the answer would be a vinegar valentine, a mass printed card dating back to at least 1840's that would be sent anonymously. Each valentine would have a comic and small poem of note with the messages ranging from light teasing to downright vile. Scholars are unsure how many were sent with light-hearted intentions and how many were sent with harmful ones, making them one tradition probably best left in the past.

Love Haikus

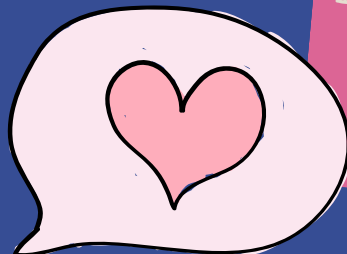
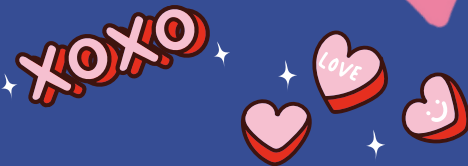
by Yours Truly

ROLLING SOME NEW DICE
THEY JUST KEEP ON ROLLING ONES
LEAST I STILL HAD FUN

PEANUT BUTTER CUPS
A NEVER-WANING TRUE LOVE
REESE'S IS THE BEST.
-MRS. HEIDER

Blonde and Beautiful
Barking, Roaring, (and quite loud)
The Duke of the Land.
- Payton Burke

—❤—
staring into the stars
I hear nothing but their breath
I hope this never ends
- Rana McCloat



Artsy Things



Marie-Anne

Rana M.

Featured Artist



Teo Schmidt



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