

Do MHS students still trick-or-treat?

By CATHERINE MAYO

In elementary school, it’s weird if you don’t. You beg your parents to let you stay up late and run around the neighborhood, collecting candy for as long as possible. Even in the week leading up to Halloween, you spend weeks planning your costume, which you are excited to show off to your teachers and classmates.

Then middle school comes around, and, for the most part, everyone continues to wear their costumes to school. While it might not be as big an event as in elementary school, many middle schoolers still wait in anticipation for the night of trick-or-treating to begin.

Once students get to high

school, however, there is a shift in the majority of students’ attitudes toward Halloween. Only a very small population of the school dresses up, and most of them are teachers. As a result, I set out to discover just how many of us at MHS still celebrate this spooky holiday.

Fifty-nine students from all four grades were interviewed about their plans for October 31st. The results? About 69% of MHS students are not trick-or-treating this year. On the other hand, a surprising 75% are still planning on dressing up and doing other Halloween-related activities, such as hanging out with friends, going to parties, and handing out candy.

That being said, 10% of the students interviewed aren’t expecting to do anything Halloween-related at all that night.

“I feel like at fifteen I am too old to trick-or-treat,” said Sophomore Thea Malcom when asked whether this change stems from a personal choice or an expectation from society. “It’s some of my choice but mainly just what the social norm is for kids of my age.” She later went on to say that she might go as long as a group of friends also supports her decision and goes trick-or-treating with her.

All in all, only around 28% of highschoolers are planning to go trick-or-treating on Halloween. This

low participation is quite a dramatic shift from middle school, when dressing up at school and going trick-or-treating was more widespread. But the moment high school comes around, it is suddenly uncommon. Perhaps this shift comes as students get older, and, therefore, are suddenly surrounded by new social norms and allowed greater independence, which all make the act of trick-or-treating less interesting.

“There’s a point where you’re like ‘okay I’m too old for this,’” said Senior Shannon Hale. “I think what’s gonna end up happening is I am just going to wander around with half-a-costume taking from the take-five bowls.”

The Lady of the Dunes

By NICO HAYDEN

The morning sun rose over Cape Cod on July 26, 1974, casting a golden haze over the dunes near Race Point. The air smelled of salt and sunscreen, the beach alive with the hum of vacationers staking umbrellas into the soft sand. It was a great day to take a dip in the ocean, sunbathe in the sun, and relax with the blue sky. It was the kind of summer day that promised nothing but calm until a small group of beachgoers strayed into the dunes and found horror where tranquility should have been.

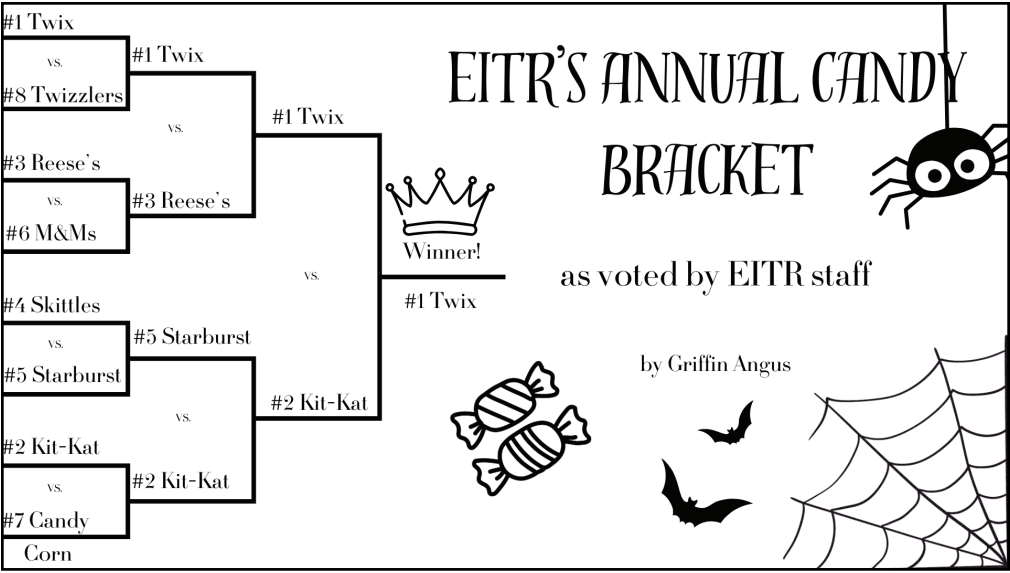
Lying face-down on a towel, the nude body of a woman lay motionless, her long auburn hair blending into the sand. For decades, this woman—known as the “Lady of the Dunes” remained unidentified despite repeated attempts: neighborhood canvases, thousands of missing-person matches, forensic reconstructions, and age-regression drawings. The body was found about a mile east of the Race Point Ranger Station inside the Cape Cod National Seashore. Investigators estimated she had died several weeks before being found. Her hands were missing, believed to be a deliberate act by the killer to block identification (Boston Globe, July 1974).

For nearly fifty years, she was known only as the “Lady of the Dunes.” Despite exhaustive searches, neighborhood canvases, and thousands of missing-person reports. Several attempts to identify her followed, including exhumations in 1980, 2000, and 2013, and numerous facial recon-

structions (Cape Cod Times, 2013). None provided the answers authorities sought until modern DNA technology changed everything. On October 31, 2022, the FBI, working with Massachusetts State Police and the District Attorney’s Office, announced that the victim had finally been identified as Ruth Marie Terry, a 37-year-old woman originally from Tennessee (FBI Press Release, Oct. 31, 2022). The breakthrough came through investigative genealogical DNA analysis, a method that uses public genealogy databases to match DNA profiles across family trees.

In August 2023, prosecutors revealed that Terry’s husband, Guy Rockwell Muldavin, who had married her mere months before her disappearance, was identified as the principal suspect in her murder. Muldavin died in 2002 (NBC Boston, Aug. 2023). District Attorney Robert Galibois described the development as “a milestone” in a decades-long investigation, though he acknowledged that, without a living suspect, “full courtroom resolution may never come.”

For nearly half a century the “Lady of the Dunes” haunted Cape Cod — a grim reminder of how a single brutal act can echo across generations. The identification of Ruth Marie Terry shows how modern science, particularly forensic genealogy, can bring long-awaited closure to even the coldest of cases. It also highlights the deeper tragedy: a woman lost, a family left waiting, and the enduring shadow of unanswered questions.



Marching Band takes on MICCA

By ALYSSA ZULLAS

The MHS Marching Band might be tiny compared to Quincy’s, which appears to have over 250 people in its marching band this year. But this didn’t stop Milton from having a stellar performance at both the MICCA (Massachusetts Instrumental and Choral Conductors Association) competition on Oct. 19th at Norwood High School and at State Finals on Oct. 26th in Quincy at Veterans Memorial stadium.

This medal-and-star-based competition was founded by a group of music educators led by Paul M. Alberta. The number of stars you receive from the judges determines if you get a bronze, silver, or gold medal. Specifically, bronze is three stars, silver is four, and gold is five.

“There is always some pressure that we feel as band directors to deliver the best show possible so at each competition, there are the natural nerves and anticipation that come with performing and getting feedback on our performance,” said Rebecca Damiani, the director of the MHS Marching Band, “The hope is that the band performs well and the judges’

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feedback is useful and reflective of the performance.”

A band’s performance on the day of MICCA determines its showtime at State Finals, which occurs the following week. The Wildcats have been participating in this competition since 2014. They received three stars and a bronze medal last year. This year, however, MHS earned three stars at MICCA regionals with their “Dreams” show before working their way up to a four-star performance and taking home a silver medal at State Finals this past weekend!

“You can never really prepare enough”

Preparation for MICCA begins two full weeks before the school year starts. In the next month and a half, while the marching band gets ready to perform at Milton’s home football games, they also put in the work to make their performances the best they can be, with rehearsals as early as 6:45 am. “You can never really prepare enough,” said Ms. Damiani, “there is always work to

Tune in next time for the “Cold Case of the Month,” the Elephant in the Room’s newest series!

MICCA-Continued from page 1.

be done, so having a clear rehearsal plan and schedule and communicating that out to students and staff is really important.”

One of the most important pieces about performing at MICCA is the music – specifically, how well the bands perform it and the effect it has on the judges.

Damiani described how in order to choose the perfect set of music, the staff begins by “storyboarding” the show, or brainstorming both a theme that performers will connect and songs that might fit it best. Once

chosen, the songs are also specially arranged to show off each musician’s strengths throughout the performance.

“For example, this year, I knew I wanted to use Beyonce’s ‘Sweet Dream’ in a reimagined ballad setting—but we weren’t set on the rest of the show,” said Damiani. “The staff spent several months listening to different songs, creating playlists and scenarios where we could connect those songs and then we eventually settled on our show that had the theme of ‘Dream’ carrying through.”

For the MHS Marching Band, a typical day at MICCA is as exciting as it is hectic. “The bus ride is a lot of mental preparation because once we arrive at [the] competition, everything is scheduled out to the minute until we perform,” said Damiani.

Once Milton’s marching band performs and debriefs their performance, its staff listens to the judges’ feedback in order to prepare for a meeting at the end of the competition that involves the entire band receiving suggestions on how to improve. Throughout the day, students are also

given time to watch the other bands perform, get food, and of course connect with other musicians.

According to Ms. Damiani, the most important and admiring aspect of MICCA is “the community and the pride of the marching band community in general.” She said that, “...As a director, it’s exciting to see other bands and what they are working on. We are all supportive of each other’s programs throughout the season.”

ELEPHANTOM
ENTERTAINMENT

CROSSWORD

1. Autumnal Pie
3. Ghosts and _____
5. Spiders, Broad Species
7. Ghosts Saying
9. Devilish Statues
2. Sinder, Flare, Spark (Syn)
4. Summer, Spring, Winter
6. Halloween Adjective
8. Under The _____
10. Found in Hell, Abundantly
11. Freddy Krueger's Neighborhood

RIDDLE

I have a body, arms, legs and a head. But I have no guts and Im heartless. What Am I?

CONNECTIONS

Loomis
Bridger
Roberts
Kirsh

What connects these four words?

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Sincerely,
The Elephant in the Room Staff

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Pumpkin Whoopie Pies

Recipie By ELOISE MARTLAND

Whether you’re excited for Halloween or just looking for a fall festive treat, these whoopie pies are the perfect way to get into the spooky spirit. My family has these pumpkin whoopie pies every year for Thanksgiving and they are a fan-favorite! Yields about 24 servings.



Ingredients:

- 2 cups of packed brown sugar
- 1 cup of vegetable oil
- 1 ½ cups solid packed pumpkin puree
- 2 large eggs- whisked
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract
- 3 cups of all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 1 teaspoon of baking soda
- 1 teaspoon of baking powder
- 1 ½ tablespoons of ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon of pumpkin pie spice

For the Filling

- 2 cups of confectioners sugar
- ¼ cup of unsalted butter
- 8 oz of cream cheese
- 2 teaspoons of vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon of salt

Instructions:

- 1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees fahrenheit and grease

two baking sheets.

- 2. Drain the pumpkin puree by dumping it into a clean cloth and squeezing out the excess moisture
- 3. In a mixing bowl, mix brown sugar and oil until combined.
- 4. Add the pumpkin puree, vanilla extract and the eggs to the mixing bowl.
- 5. In a separate container, mix the rest of the dry ingredients- flour, cinnamon, salt, baking soda, baking powder and pumpkin pie spice.
- 6. Add the dry ingredients in two parts- add half of the dry ingredients, mix, and then add the other half. It is really important to not overmix in this step, mix just until combined.
- 7. Using a four tablespoon scoop, or spoon, drop batter onto baking sheets- be

- sure to move fast, because the cakes will start to rise!
- 8. Place in the oven and bake for 12-15 minutes
- 9. To make the filling, combine cream cheese and butter until smooth.
- 10. Add the confectioners sugar. Be careful - start slowly, so that the sugar does not spill out of the bowl! Then, increase the speed.
- 11. Add the vanilla and salt.
- 12. When the whoopie pies are out of the oven, let them cool for at least 20 minutes before piping on a spread of filling onto the bottom of the cookie. Then, after filling, place another cookie on top of the filling. Repeat this for all of the other cakes.
- 13. Finally, enjoy your whoopie pies!



Photo By LAURA FITTON
Drum majors and captains pose for photo before award ceremony.

THE SPOOKIEST, FRIGHTFUL SONGS YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR!

By Sophie Shaw

Monster Mash
By Bobby (Boris) Pickett & the Crypt-Kickers

Thriller
By Micheal Jackson

Somebody's Watching me
By Rockwell

Goo Goo Muck
By The Cramps

How Soon is Now?
By The Smiths

Night Boat
By Duran Duran

Everyday Is Halloween
By Ministry

1979
By The Smashing Pumpkins