

Skowhegan Scoop

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The Secret to My Success By Cameron Smart

When most people look at me as a senior today they see how successful I am, but what they do not see is how I became successful. It all started back when I was in fifth grade when I heard Michael J Fox in *Back to the Future* say, “If you put your mind to it you can accomplish anything”. This quote by itself has helped motivate me to strive to be my best and to never give up on myself. The quote has helped me push finishing homework at 12 pm, then sleeping and finishing it up at 5 am after getting back from Indoor Track at 11 pm. The quote has also helped push me beyond my limits outside of school in Cross Country, Indoor/Outdoor, and other extracurricular activities. The quote has made a big difference in my life and still does even to this day.

I would not have been so successful without this quote which shows how much a quote can affect a person. The quote has done so much for me. For example, it has helped me commit my time to help out with my community, it has helped me push to keep my grades up high despite multitasking sports and other activities outside school, it has helped me become a chief in Naval Sea Cadets a program I have been in for 6 years, it has helped me get into National Honor Society, and it has helped me motivate myself and others.

I believe that if anyone puts their mind to it they can accomplish anything. People just have to put themselves out there and not be afraid of making mistakes. Because you can learn from mistakes and become better at anything you do if you don't make the same mistakes again. This is the reason why I'm so successful today, and other people can be too if they put their mind to it.

Creative Responses to “How Are You?” By Jocelyn Cates and Allie Santy

We all know the classic, “Hi, how are you?” We know it so well that it takes almost no effort to respond with the one word answer: “Good.” Maybe if you are feeling proper, you might even say, “I am well. Thank you”. After a while, though, these cliché introductions can become boring, especially if you are in an environment where such lifeless communication happens every couple of seconds.

Socially speaking, using a classic response actually weakens the overall status of society. Not to mention half of the time it is not even honest! To add a little more color into our everyday conversations, here are

some practical ways to respond the next time you are asked the all-too familiar question.

How are you?

- Living in a dream. Don't wake me up.
- Somewhere between better and best.
- Happy and content, thank you.
- All the better now that *you* asked.
- Well enough to chat if you want.
- I'd say I'm a [number] out of 10.
- I haven't had my morning coffee yet, and no one has gotten hurt, so I'd say "pretty good" at this point.
- Average. Not terrific, not terrible, just average.
- I don't know, you tell me.
- I guess we're about to find out!
- My lawyer says I don't have to answer.
- At least there's plenty of room for improvement.
- I hear good things, but you should never listen to rumors.

(Courtesy of PairedLife.com:)

The Importance of Pronouns **By Savannah Lancaster** **She/They**

Whether you realize it or not, you use pronouns every single day. Pronouns are words that identify a person when we don't use a proper name. She/her, he/him and they/them are the most commonly used pronouns we use to identify a person. Often, pronouns reflect the birth gender of the person, but do not have to, as many people do not identify with their gender assigned at birth.

Using the incorrect pronoun for a person can be hurtful and derogatory. Every person has "preferred personal pronouns", which are the pronouns someone chooses to use to identify themselves. These are important to remember, use and respect as the person requests. Assuming a person's pronouns can be inaccurate and harmful as well, so it's always best to ask a person which pronouns they feel comfortable using.

Finding out what pronouns suit you can take time and patience but remember that you are appreciated and supported here at SAHS.

Our Civil Rights Team at the high school is currently working on an awareness campaign directed at educating the staff about respecting personal pronouns. If you would like more information on how to get involved, please see Miss Irish (she/her) in O-9 or Mr. Jones (he/him) in Woodshop A.

The Human Condition

By Mr. McFadden

I have such a hard time looking ahead. What am I going to have for dinner tonight? What are my plans for this weekend? What does next week look like for my classes? The further out that I go, the more fuzzy it looks until I just give up and leave it to Future Me. I daresay that I am not alone in this nearsightedness. In fact, I will boldly proclaim that this is part of the human condition.

Actions have consequences. We often refer to consequences as something negative, but good ol' google has informed me that a consequence is "a result or effect of an action or condition"—it doesn't state good or bad; therefore, it's fair to say that just as negative actions have negative consequences, positive actions have positive consequences.

The problem with things as gargantuan as climate change is that it's so hard to see the results or effects of our actions. This is because the brute force has been taken by our ocean so far. When you spend as much time in the water as I do, you begin to notice that things aren't quite right. Ocean temperatures are increasing, corals are bleaching, and storms are becoming more violent and frequent. This may not seem like an inland Maine problem, but the truth is that what we do here has global consequences.

The earth's climate is predictable—it follows a pattern and every time we have seen a break in that pattern we have been able to pinpoint why it happened. We are breaking free of this pattern as I craft this article, and scientists have shown time and

time again that the cause is humans. You may be wondering, "But how is the little fossil fuel I burn and plastic I purchase affecting the earth's climate?" As I digest this question something someone once told me resonates—nickels and dimes add up, especially when there are 7 billion people contributing. Digest those words for a moment. Now do you see?

Your next question might be, "Well, then, why should I care?" I recently attended a civil rights talk, and they showed me something called the pyramid of hate. The base of the pyramid is indifference, and it works its way up to the top—genocide. Half a billion people directly rely upon healthy coral reefs for their livelihood. Half a billion human beings' lives are at stake and it is our indifference that paves the way to their demise.

Maybe right about now you're thinking, "This is just too big to fix. It's hopeless." If you're thinking that, thankfully you are wrong. There is a solution to the mess we have caused, and it follows the same principle that got us into this mess...nickels and dimes add up. When there are 7 billion of us doing little things to combat climate change, those actions will have positive global consequences. Here are just a handful of things that you can do to combat global climate change—skip out on the plastic bag, buy as local as possible, grow your own food, hunt, bike or walk to your local destinations, raise honey bees...the list goes on!

It's time to put our nearsightedness aside. Let's fix our mess so that there isn't a bigger one to fix later. Let's ensure that future generations have a healthy planet to live on. This goal is achievable. We can do

this. If you are especially passionate about this global issue, consider joining the Eco-Team! We have expanded our school's recycling system and are going into our second year of raising honey bees on our campus. We meet on Thursdays in Miss Drummond's room (G10) from 2:30-3:30. I hope to see you there.



Students stealing honey from bees.

Promoting a Service Mindset

by Sophie Wheeler and Lizzy Steeves

The Skowhegan National Honor Society (NHS) has strived to remain active with community service despite the challenge of staying COVID-friendly. Even with all of these obstacles, our chapter of NHS has participated in numerous activities for our community. This year, we have been able to work more closely on projects in the school for our students.

In the fall, we worked with the Somerset Woods Trustees to create a woods trail open to the public; it is located off of Evergreen Drive in Skowhegan with a view of Wesserunsett Stream. We broke into groups, trimming twigs, trees, and other growth to make the trail safe. Additionally, we sponsored a Halloween Costume Contest

at the high school and donated the money raised to the Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers. Everyone who participated had fun, creative costumes, and the winners received candy and a Dunkin Donuts gift card.

After Christmas vacation, we decided an initiative focusing on mental health would be valuable for our school. Members handed out free "We need you here" bracelets and stickers during lunches. We also put up posters in front of the office, and students wrote positive messages on them, as well as the aspects of the pandemic that they find most challenging.

This winter, we were able to raise money and volunteer for the community. For Valentines' Day, our NHS sold Candy Grams that students could send to one another with messages attached. The money was donated to the Aliza Jean Family Cancer Foundation, which provides financial support for local families that have a child fighting cancer. During February vacation, members of NHS volunteered at the Somerset Snowfest at Lake George where we recorded times for a bike/ski biathlon and worked with kids to fly kites, rounding out the day with a good snowball fight.

Recently, we have been working on three activities. Students organized a clothing drive for the SCTC closet with a focus on spring clothes. Another group made a trip to the Dollar Store to buy items to donate to the organization "Box of Balloons," which is centered around free birthday party materials for families in need. Lastly, other NHS members recorded a student written story that will be played by the local radio station, HooSkow Radio.

Service is one of the four pillars valued by the National Honor Society; our NHS will persist in finding ways to volunteer throughout the year to help better our school, community, and selves. Applications will be open next fall for juniors and seniors, so make sure you apply to be a part of this amazing organization!

Finding the Silver Lining **By Ms. Scherpf**

The start of the 2020-2021 Covid 19 school year was filled with limitless unknowns for many teachers and students. Covid protocols such as masks! Social Distancing! 3 feet! 6 feet! Hand sanitizing! Hybrid learning! All remote learning! A-J and K-Z day! Green dots! Purple dots! And everything in between were part of the new daily routines.

Then, of course, as a teacher, I had to think about my curriculum, sending home course materials, Google classroom, and altering not only what I was going to teach, but how I was going to present the information. I was wondering, “How am I going to do all of this?” “Can I do all of this?” Our administrators offered encouragement. My friends and colleagues offered empowering support- as most of us were all curious about how this year was really going to play out. All of the “cheerleading” was welcomed and sincerely appreciated.

I could start listing all of the neat products and projects students have completed in the first three quarters of this crazy school year; I will refrain from doing so. Let’s pause, take a breath and reflect.

Who really has made it possible for me to survive three full quarters of this “unprecedented” school year? The students in my Family and Consumer classes!! As I struggled with the details of attendance, Google classroom, Apple TV, Promethium Board, how to do hands -on projects with students at home, how to deliver socially distanced food labs, wondering what day IS it, who’s supposed to be here today, and what is MY name, all of the students in my Family and Consumer Sciences classes remained seemingly calm and collected.

Students sat and listened whether sitting in person or Zooming from home. They seemed to rise to whatever challenge was presented to them. They tolerated all of my mistakes with technology, Google classroom and the slew of other daily routines! Often I asked for suggestions and input as we problem- solved the new challenges together. It seemed like when I was most afraid of disappointing or failing them, they ended up stepping up to the plate, developing solutions which far surpassed my expectations.

I’ll be honest, there were plenty of extremely stressful times for both my students and myself. Nevertheless, we persevered! I owe a special shout-out to all of the students who have been in any Family and Consumer Sciences class this year. I am thankful and grateful for all students guiding me through this daunting time in my teaching career. All of you are truly the heroes and essential workers. In my 2020-2021 Covid-19 school year, all of you are the silver lining!!

Theatre and Speech: Real Success in a Virtual World

by Sophie Wheeler

The old saying, “The show must go on” took a new form this year for student performers everywhere. In spite of limitations resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, the SAHS Theatre and Speech programs discovered new ways to keep the performing arts alive.

In the fall, SAHS Theatre presented three plays utilizing Zoom technology. Senior cast member Amber Savage commented, “It was unique and an experience I will never forget.” The challenges of creating performance pieces with participants Zooming from home were significant. Despite not being able to physically rehearse together, frequently unreliable Internet, limited access to props and costumes, and lack of sets and stage lighting, students presented three short plays: *Philip Glass Buys a Loaf of Bread*; *Stage Directions*; and *Words, Words, Words*.

On March 20, theatre students participated in the first—and hopefully last— virtual Maine Drama Festival, sponsored by the Maine Principals’ Association. The annual festival, normally a one-act play competition, was moved to an online, noncompetitive platform this year. Freshman Carolyn Snowman found the experience, “super fun and something I got to look forward to.” Skowhegan was one of 59 schools that either filmed its play submission or performed during a live feed. Skowhegan’s submission, *Chamber Music*, by Arthur Kopit, is an absurdist play that explores the roles of women throughout history.

The SAHS Speech Team enjoyed an undefeated run in a fully virtual season. Tournaments ran on Jitsi, an online conferencing platform. Students presented in virtual competition rooms, with judges and other student participants logged in as they performed. Between September and February, the ten-member team competed in several such tournaments, emerging as State Champions from among 15 schools. Junior Ella Conway expressed what it was like to work together, yet remotely, with everyone presenting from home: “Even though tournaments were online, I still felt a strong connection with the team, and we all supported each other despite the distance.”

Our Theatre and Speech programs have been provided with unique opportunities in an unprecedented year. Though it was like nothing we have never experienced, we have had fun and learned a lot, artistically and personally. Pandemic and beyond, the performing artists may embrace a new motto: “The show must go online.” As a senior, I am proud of both of these teams and what we have accomplished.



Outing Club

By Miss Drummond

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, there was concern that too much screen time and not enough exposure to nature was negatively impacting the health of children. With the shift to hybrid and remote learning, this concern has risen to panic levels for parents, educators, and many others. Not only are kids using screens for fun in their after school hours, they are now also spending hours at home and/or school accessing their education on electronic devices. While there are definite advantages to the fact that education, socializing, and, yes, even work meetings (bah!) can continue during a pandemic, the short and long term consequences to mental, physical and emotional health are significant. Certainly, however, these advancements in technology have allowed the routines of life to continue more successfully than they did during the flu pandemic of 1918. Luckily, Skowhegan Area High School students now have the opportunity to combat the isolation blues by participating in outdoor recreation activities through the recently resurrected Outing Club.

In the fall of 2020, Emma Corwin, Americorps Outdoor Recreation Coach with the Main Street Skowhegan Program, contacted teachers at the high school and offered to help reestablish an Outing Club. Her persistence led to the formation of an official Outing Club registered with the non-profit parent organization, Teens to Trails. The mission of Teens to Trails is “to connect high school students to life-changing outdoor experiences.”

Founded in 2005 by outdoor enthusiasts Carol and Bob Leone in memory of their nature-loving daughter, Sara, Teens to Trails provides programming, training, and some financial support in the form of grants and scholarships for Outing Clubs and their members across the state of Maine.

According to its website, The Teens to Trails organization believes:

- that being outdoors provides essential nourishment, inspiration, and wholeness.
- in the importance of time to just be in nature, without measurement, agenda, or distraction.
- experience in nature with peers is critical for teenage development. It creates love and care for each other, ourselves, and our planet.
- high school outing clubs create inclusive, non-performance based outdoor experiences that break down social barriers and build lifelong habits of wellness.
- teenagers are losing their connection with nature at an accelerated pace.

As a life-long outdoor enthusiast and science teacher, the belief statement of Teens to Trails resonates with me. I am familiar with the research showing the benefits of exposure to nature on social-emotional well-being in young people, and I understand, first hand, how outdoor experiences have positively influenced my own health. Unfortunately, I am also aware that, despite the rural nature of Somerset County, access to high-quality outdoor programming for kids is the lowest of all the counties in Maine. With a poverty rate of 17.8%, the third highest of the

counties in Maine, much of what Maine has to offer for outdoor recreation is hard to access for low-income families due to financial barriers and lack of time and/or transportation.

It is with these things in mind that I agreed to take on the volunteer position of co-advisor to the Outing Club. Together, with co-advisor Kevin McFadden, some enthusiastic new student members and the support of Teens to Trails, I hope to steward this club to permanent status at Skowhegan Area High School. Even with the support of administration, the club faces obstacles in the form of transportation and financial backing for trips. Through fundraising, grant-writing and partnering with the Skowhegan Outdoors program, the club hopes to find ways to work around or eliminate those barriers and open up access to “life-changing outdoor experiences” to ALL students here at SAHS.

The Outing Club is somewhat unique in that its programming is student-directed. The youth members of the club brainstorm ideas for trips and drive the planning and preparation, while the adult advisors facilitate and guide the process. Ms. Corwin and Mr. McFadden are trained and experienced outdoor trip leaders with wilderness first aid certifications, so this new club relies heavily on their expertise as it plans outdoor experiences. So far this year, programs have included a virtual knot-tying and shelter-building clinic, a “10 Essentials” trip planning seminar, a cross-country skiing workshop, and an outdoor winter camping and survival skills clinic at Lake George Regional Park. Student members have expressed interest in planning a variety of activities in the future,

including hiking, canoeing, mountain biking, archery and perhaps even camping. All students, staff and parents who are part of the Skowhegan Area High school “family” are welcomed to join the Outing Club as permanent or part-time members. No outdoor experience necessary.

Happy Hiking!

SCTC has a new Commercial Truck Driving Program

SCTC has a new Commercial Truck Driving Program (CDL) starting next year which qualifies students to test for the State of Maine CDL Class B Commercial Driver’s Permit and License. Instruction is based on state laws, industry regulations, and equipment inspection.

Students in the Commercial Truck Driving program must hold a current Class C automobile driver’s license. Students must be 16 years of age to enter the program and must have a clean driver’s record.

There is still room for next year's applicants so apply today for this high-demand, high-wage career program!

Faculty Scrapbook: Guess Who?

Mr. Smith	Mrs. Libby
Mrs. Pollard	Mrs. Ireland
Mrs. German	Mrs. Grindle
Ms. Gourley	Mrs. Scherpf
Mr. Deagle	Mrs. Cyr
Ms. Strout	Mrs. Chase
Ms. Irish	Mrs. Haynie
Miss Brown	Mrs. Fitzmaurice





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