

# The Spartan Spirit

Volume 7 Issue December 2017

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## Midterm Tips and Tricks

Written by Grace Mullane

Edited by Juliana Choi

December brings about a flurry of carols, holiday shopping, decorating, and time with family. Students eagerly anticipate the holiday vacation and the time off from school. However, there is still a shadow that looms over January: midterm exams. The new year introduces an increased level of panic amongst students, but this does not have to happen. The following methods can be used to prepare for exams. Good Luck!

- ❖ Do not be afraid to ask teachers questions or ask them for extra help.
- ❖ Review notes and tests from the semester to narrow down what material the exam may cover.
- ❖ Utilize any study guides that teachers provide for you.
- ❖ Form a study group with peers in a certain class.
- ❖ If you are really struggling in a particular subject, peer tutors are available through the guidance department.
- ❖ Do not wait until the night before to study! This may get you through regular tests and quizzes, but it will make you miserable for exams! Spend a little time every day studying for a couple of weeks before the exam as this will help you learn and understand information.
- ❖ Stay positive!
- ❖ Get a full night of rest before each exam!

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## **SHS Faculty Feature**

### **Interview With Charlie Freeman**

Written by Ali Beaton

Edited by Juliana Choi

This edition, I am doing a special feature on our much loved head custodian, Charlie Freeman:

#### **How long have you been here at Stoneham High School?**

I have been at SHS for 38 years. I was on the outside crew at the high school for 17 years, and now I have been on the inside crew of the high school for 21 years.

#### **Do you see a lot of parents who went to Stoneham High School with children going to the school now?**

Yes.

#### **You are good to everyone, especially at the holidays when you bring in all that candy.**

#### **When did you start doing that?**

Maybe 15 years ago.

#### **Any memorable things that have happened to you?**

All 38 years I have worked here!

Thank you so much, Charlie, for all you do for our school!

## **SHS Community**

Student Council Charity

Written by Czenil Santander and Heer Patel

Edited by Juliana Choi

As the fall season becomes winter, many students see it as the beginning of sports, the beginning of a second quarter, or the beginning of the holiday season. But for student council members, the transition from fall to winter is well known as the steady approach of “candy cane season.” During the month of December, multiple student council members carried around a can of candy canes, advocating for the Globe Santa organization, a cause created solely to bring joy to local children for the holidays. With a donation of \$1, students received a candy cane of their choice. Every year, this fundraising activity grows as students generously donate for a great cause-- all while satisfying their sweet tooth. The total money collected was distributed to student volunteers, who used the donations to buy books, clothes, and toys for families and children in need for the holidays.

The money donated not only goes to charities like Globe Santa, but it also helps out members of the Stoneham community. It is important for high school students to help each other, and the candy canes give students a great opportunity to do so. By donating, students are providing help to numerous families in their community. The candy canes are a fun and unique way for high school students to help out their community.

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## **SHS Sports**

Written by Angela McKenzie

**Hockey-** Following an incredible post season in 2017, the boys' hockey team is ready to show the same grit they did last year. Coaches and captains alike are proud of their early work and hope this will transfer to success. On the girls' team, they are looking to prove that although they are small in quantity, they have the quality to propel them forward. The boys are currently 4-2-1 while the girls stand at 3-2-2.

**Gymnastics-** The co-ed SHS gymnastics team has been preparing individual performances and routines to prep for later success as the season approaches. Middlesex League All Stars Megan Ribaud and Keara Cronin, as well as senior captain Emily Simpson, are expected to lead the group through tough battles. With many new faces on the team, leadership from veteran gymnasts will be key as they look to improve this season. They are currently 0-1.

**Indoor Track-** Both boys' and girls' track are poised to make an impact on the Middlesex League. Following their first meet of the season, both sides garnered a win against Watertown in dominating performances. Some athletes have already qualified for the State meet in January, while others are on the brink of success. The boys are currently 2-3, and the girls are 5-0!

**Basketball-** Despite unsuccessful seasons last winter, the boys' and girls' basketball teams are ready for the new season. With many senior players on both teams, the boys' and girls' alike are ready to make an attempt at a banner season. The boys are currently 0-8, and the girls are 2-6.

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**SHS Voice**  
**Op/Ed**

Battle of the Greetings: “Happy Holidays” or “Merry Christmas”?

For “Merry Christmas”  
Written by Lindsey Rodrigues  
Edited by Juliana Choi

For many years, greetings during the holiday season have been debated. Should we say “Happy Holidays” or “Merry Christmas”? Advocates of “Happy Holidays” argue that America is a place of religious freedom, and they believe that “Happy Holidays” is more inclusive to all religions. But would it be the holiday season without Christmas? Christmas is the backbone of the holiday season. Christmas lights go up after Thanksgiving, retail stores decorate for the “holidays,” and people get into the Christmas season. Christmas is primarily represented with the colors red and green, and everywhere you look during the Christmas season, you can see all colors, but primarily green and red. Town centers around this time also put up a Christmas tree, and there are no protests against this. So what should we allow? People should be able to say “Merry Christmas,” especially since nowadays Christmas is not even specifically associated with Christianity. People who are affiliated with different religions, such as Judaism and Atheism, celebrate Christmas by putting up Christmas decorations, including Christmas trees, in their homes. In modern society, Christmas now represents for many a season to be kind and giving, and the greeting “Merry Christmas” reflects that ideal. Merry Christmas!

For “Happy Holidays”  
Written by Grace Mullane  
Edited by Juliana Choi

During the holiday season, people quickly revert to greeting each other with “Merry Christmas!” However, in today’s climate of diversity and inclusion, saying “Happy Holidays” is more appropriate. Although Christmas is the most widely celebrated and acknowledged holiday during December, it is important to include those who celebrate other religious holidays during this time. Many Americans practice a religion that does not publicly celebrate Christmas, such as Judaism and Islam. By constantly saying “Merry Christmas,” followers of non-Christian religions often feel offended and excluded. It is important that we are considerate of the beliefs of others while extending our well wishes to them. Christmas can be adequately celebrated without saying the exact words “Merry Christmas.” Over time, “Happy Holidays” has become synonymous with both “Merry Christmas” and “Happy New Year.” Therefore, by saying “Happy Holidays,” we can spread the most joy possible in a time that is all about giving and spreading cheer. After all, now is the time for the *holiday* spirit! Happy Holidays!

## SHS Arts

### Winter Concert

Written by Jamie Canney

Edited by Juliana Choi

On Wednesday, December 13, Stoneham High School hosted the annual winter concert. The concert included performances from our Spartan Chorale, Jazz Band, and Band. The Spartan Chorale sang well-known holiday songs such as “Linus and Lucy” from Charlie Brown, “White Winter Hymnal,” “O Vos Omnes,” and many more, and were accompanied by members of the band as well as the Jazz Band. Ms. Sousa, the Spartan Chorale teacher, conducted the chorus on stage.

Congratulations to all for a wonderful performance!



\*The Spartan Chorale pictured above

## SHS Student Life

### Semi Formal 2017

By Gianna Egitto

Edited by Juliana Choi

This year's freshman and sophomore class had a ball getting all dressed up, dancing the night away, and ending the night with after-parties. Everyone danced and sang together at the top of their lungs to throwback songs, and their feet ached as they stayed glued to the dance floor, never taking a break. This was one unforgettable night for the freshmen who looked handsome and beautiful. Spinning the beats, the DJ played undeniably amazing songs that peaked an interest for each of the dancers. The night did not stop there. The party continued its way onto party buses, delicious restaurants and fun trips to Boston. Thank you to the incredible freshman and sophomore class officers and advisors for putting on a memorable night. As well, thank you to the principal and vice principals for allowing the hosting of the Semi-Formal in the cafeteria!



Pictured Above: Aly Simpson and Joshua Davis

Bottom Left: Fiona Mahoney and Jessie Degnan

Bottom Right: Jake Reed, Matthias Nocado and Marco LoGrasso