



**WHAT'S THE DEAL
WITH ENERGY
DRINKS?**



**FISHING CLUB
INTERVIEW**



DUNKIN' REVIEW



**INTERVIEW WITH
MR. LEVINE**

SPARTAN SCHOLASTIC



Help Wanted!

Hello everyone! This is the first issue of the Spartan Scholastic. It took us a long time to create this paper which is why we're asking for help. We promise the club is fun so please join! We meet every other Thursday in Ms. Guilmette's room for an hour. We hope to see you there!

Enjoy the paper!

SO, WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH ENERGY DRINKS?

By: Grace MacSween

In recent years, a new trend has arose when it comes to fighting back against 7AM drowsiness. Instead of coffee, many teens are opting for energy drinks to stay awake and alert during the school day. So, what is the appeal? What exactly are Redbull, Monster, and Bang doing to our bodies, and why do we like them so much?

First, let's state the obvious. Due to natural sleep patterns, it is difficult for the average teenager to fall asleep before 11PM. In order to achieve top performance, teenagers need about 8 to 10 hours of sleep. Let's say you go to bed at 11PM and wake up at 6:30AM—that's only 7 and a half hours of rest. That's the estimated average hours that a teenager sleeps per night. Obviously, many get less than that. To someone who hasn't gotten enough sleep, a cold, caffeine-packed concoction in a can is very attractive.

While the average serving of coffee has 100mg of caffeine, energy drinks such as Redbull and Monster pack about 150mg of caffeine in a 16oz can. Other popular energy drinks such as Bang and it's competitor, Reign, have approximately 300mg of caffeine in the same-sized package. Caffeine is a stimulant, making its users feel awake and alert by preventing adenosine (a chemical that makes us feel drowsy) from binding to its coordinating receptors in the brain. This is a superpower to those who need a morning boost, and it can have other positive effects. For example, caffeine improves your mood, reaction time, and can even jumpstart your metabolism. However, too much caffeine—for teens, experts cap this at about 100mg—can have very negative effects such as anxiety, jitteriness, digestion issues, and even arrhythmia. Caffeine is a drug, and in high amounts, it is very easy to get addicted to. The not-so-pleasant side effects of caffeine withdrawal include irritability, migraines, low energy, and depressed mood.

But it's not just the caffeine that makes energy drinks so popular. Many energy drinks contain 0 calories due to the substitution of sugar with artificial sweeteners such as aspartame and sucralose. While these artificial sweeteners are FDA-approved, recent studies have found that they may have negative effects on your metabolism, blood-sugar, and healthy gut bacteria. Energy drinks with sugar can have over 50 grams in one can, which is much more than the recommended daily amount. Other popular ingredients, such as taurine, can have negative effects in excess such as low blood sugar. Because so many ingredients are packed in one serving (oftentimes twice to three times the recommended daily amounts), it is no surprise that energy drinks have become both extremely popular — and extremely controversial.

Like everything else we consume, energy drinks are probably okay in moderation. However, it is very important to take a good look at what you're putting in your body, especially on a daily basis. So, next time you need an energizer, consider just how much "energy", you need.

Interview with the Fishing Club

By: Clarice Stumpf and Sydney Costa



Who knew Uxbridge has a fishing club!?! Apparently, the fishing club began in 2014 right around the same time as the High School was built. It's been around for almost six years!?! Six whole years, and yet, if you were to ask students if they knew about the club, the majority would say they've never heard of it. So why has the fishing club been so underground? Well, we asked them. We interviewed both the teacher advisor, Mr. Balunas, the fish fanatic and math maniac himself, and the club captain, Nate Smith. They explained the extreme dedication that being transcendent fishermen takes. This club is not about casual, relaxed, dig-up-some-worms-in-your-backyard fishing, and they wouldn't be caught dead using an open reel fishing pole with the rod facing up. Nay, this club is about tournament fishing, they fish for glory.

Tournament fishing is exactly what it sounds like. Anglers compete to see who can catch the largest fish on the tournament grounds. The fierce nature of competition requires would-be contestants to spend long hours practicing and preparing. Both Balunas and Smith said if they could, they would spend all day fishing. Their dedication is also shown through their investments in equipment. A lot of money is needed to sustain a passion such as tournament fishing. For these reasons, the club remains very small. It only has nine members, but all nine share an extreme passion for fishing.

So what does one of these tournaments look like? A fishing tournament is an all-day affair, averaging about eight hours, so sunscreen, water, and snacks (but no bananas, those are bad luck) are a necessity. There is a lot of downtime in between catches which Balunas likened to meditation

saying it was one aspect of fishing he really enjoyed and found it calming. However, once a fish bites, the meditation transforms into a fierce battle between man and his scaly, freshwater foe. One such technique all seasoned anglers have to keep in mind is the art of fizzing. When fish are pulled from deep waters too quickly, they can explode from changes in pressure and get fishy guts everywhere. So, a fisherman must puncture the fish's bladder with a small needle to get rid of the extra air. This only happens with certain types of fish so an angler must have the knowledge and know-how to deal with the peculiarities of each fish they come across.

Fishing can be a calm and carefree hobby where you cast your line and sit back in your lawn chair, admiring the water's gentle waves. Or you can rise at the first hint of light, put on your high-performance outdoors wear, pack your car full of gear and snacks (NO BANANAS), drive to the tournament grounds, use your exceptionally cultivated skills to catch a monstrous, behemoth fish, submit that fish, and win. If you aren't willing to do this, you're like most people. This is why the club is so obscure and unknown, tournament fishing is a very niche hobby. But, those who enjoy it really do enjoy it, which is admirable. Anyway, now you're in the small minority of people that knows about Uxbridge's fishing club!

Magic Mushroom?

By: Sydney Costa and Clarice Stumpf

It seems new health supplements and health fads are constantly popping up out of nowhere. Intermittent fasting, keto, and the ever-increasing list of superfoods have all been gaining increasing attention. It is a new addition to the superfood list that this article is going to cover. Long touted to have supernatural powers, the fungus *Ganoderma lucidum* has been highly prized in the Asian countries it grows. It is most commonly known by its Japanese name 靈芝 Reishi which roughly translates to "spirit-herb." The ancient Japanese believed it could grant eternal youth and even bring the dead back to life. These ideas, though fantastical, may have been rooted in some truth. The mushroom does seem to have a myriad of health benefits. Some people claim that this magical mushroom can boost the immune system, fight cancer, and relieve symptoms of a multitude of other health conditions. According to Medical News Today, these mushrooms contain polysaccharides, peptides, and triterpenoids, in addition to dietary fiber, minerals, vitamins, and amino acids. This seemingly god given food may not be what people think it is. Some researchers found that the mushroom does not help with health issues such as treating lung cancer, treating viral infections, boosting the immune system, and a variety of other illnesses. This "magical mushroom" also seems to have flaws, and may even be dangerous. Studies have found that possible side effects of ingesting this fungus are an upset stomach, skin rashes, liver damage, nosebleeds, bloody stool, etc. Sounds like a real miracle food...

With all of the inconclusive evidence on its benefits and risky side effects, we don't really know if you should try this trend out. It may be in health food stores like Whole Foods, but that doesn't mean it's safe. You should always do your research before you eat something that could potentially be dangerous. The risks of reishi mushrooms seem to outweigh the possible benefits, and it definitely has not been proven to bring people back to life. If it did, everyone would be buying it!

Satire: ‘Heartless Thief’ Steals Parking Space

By: Grace MacSween

Another great day at Uxbridge High School? Unfortunately, this is not the case for everyone as developments regarding a dangerous altercation in our very own parking lot have begun to emerge.

On Wednesday, November 20 at exactly 7:27AM, local senior, who will be left unnamed, pulled into a crime scene. Her “special parking spot”, “the one right next to streetlight”, had been mercilessly swiped. Believing this to be the work of one of her classmates, she brushed off the ordeal as a simple hag and continued with her day.

During flex, however, all of this changed. Overhearing a conversation at the breakfast cart, local senior discovered that the parking space theft was not done by another senior, but by a sophomore who just got his license yesterday. What was thought to be a harmless prank turned out to be an unforgivable felony. Under understandable distress, the innocent senior was left paralyzed in the nurse's office until second lunch as she endured the five stages of grief.

The events took a violent turn at 1:55PM as local senior confronted the sophomore, whose anonymity is necessary for his protection. The face-off was seen by all students cool enough to have their own cars.

“It was really scary,” reports a witness, who was lucky enough to have last block in the math wing and get to her car early. “I really thought I would have to call the police.”

We were able to reach out to the senior who fell victim to the horrific actions of someone who “doesn’t know how this whole thing works”.

“I’d like to note that this guy is a heartless thief for what he did to me,’ she said in her official comment. “But what I’m more disappointed in is the lack of guilt he feels.”

Other students in the parking lot at the time of the face-off report the sophomore swinging his lanyard around and offering his friends a ride (if they crouch down in the back). He was reportedly unresponsive to the seniors complaints and instead turned to show his friends his temporary license.

We are unable to reach the sophomore at this time.

Dunkin’ Winter Holiday Menu Review

By: Jackeline Lopez and Lulu Ruck

New holiday season means a new Dunkin Donuts menu! If you are a Dunkin fan, you definitely know about this one. In this review, we’ve given our honest opinions on three of the coffees on the menu that we ourselves have tried;

Peppermint Mocha Coffee



I enjoyed this drink very much, however, I don't recommend it for people who don't like their chocolate with a minty flavor, but I do like it so I had no issue. Those who enjoy that hint of mint, this is the drink for you. The peppermint flavor does outshine the mocha flavor but you can still taste both together.

Gingerbread S'mores Coffee



I don't recommend this coffee to most people with a sweet tooth like me, the coffee had neither flavor of Gingerbread or S'mores (at least to me). I felt like the coffee lacks lots of flavor even with extra cream and sugar. However, you truly won't know if you like the flavor or not until you try it yourself, so make sure to tell us how you feel about it.

White Chocolate Coffee



This is definitely one of the better flavors in the holiday menu for Dunkin', and I highly recommend it. Alone, without extra cream or sugar, it has a very different taste to just any regular chocolate-flavored coffee. It is very creamy and the distinction between regular chocolate and whites chocolate is truly there.

There's definitely more than just these things on the new Dunkin' menu, like the new Brownie Crumble Donut, the new Beyond Sausage you can get in a wrap or a sandwich, the new burrito bowls, and more. These are also our personal opinions, so make sure to definitely try them all before they go away after the holidays! Thanks for reading!

Interview with Mr. Levine

By: Ramsha Gul

Doesn't everybody want to know a little more about their teachers? They always keep their out-of-school lives secret and obscure but they are sure to have interesting information. After all, they used to be teenagers and students like us. Knowing more about our teachers helps strengthen our relationship as student and teacher. We interviewed Mr. Levine, a new member of the English department, and asked some interesting questions that revealed a lot about him. Obviously, we don't want to bore you with the minute details of the interview, but we are going to try to make it interesting for you guys to read. We are sure you will know a lot more about Mr. Levine by the end of this article. So if you want to know more about Uxbridge's new teacher, read this article till the end.

Mr. Levine teaches 8th, 9th, and 12th grade English. This is his first year at Uxbridge. Before this, he taught at Fairfield, California for four years. One really interesting thing that we learned was he originally wanted to be a history teacher. In college, he switched his major from history to English when he realized what his passion really was. Part of the reason he decided to pursue teaching is it runs in his family as both of his parents are also teachers.

Outside of school, Mr. Levine is a huge sports fan. He was a water polo coach and is great at aquatic activities. When he's not teaching, he is watching sports movies and spend time with his family. Growing up, he was an average student. He was not a troublemaker at all and was very shy. His first memory from school was when he was scared because his first-grade teacher pulled a yellow card for him meaning he was acting badly in class and he freaked out.

Teachers are usually very forgiving, but there is always one thing that makes them lose their minds. For Mr. Levine, that thing is students making fake excuses for not doing assignments. So if you are Mr. Levine's student, always give a truthful reason for why you didn't do an assignment because he hates lies. His discipline philosophy is simple: don't throw kids out of class, talk to them. He knows sometimes students are going through something tough and that is what makes them act a certain way. If a student is doing poorly, he believes he should build a trusting relationship with the student,



then push the student to do their best. The things that frustrate him most about teaching, are when teachers care more than a student. He hates it when teachers want to help a failing kid, but the kid doesn't take it seriously. He thinks the biggest challenges teachers face today are cell phones and tik tok because they distract students a lot.

Everyone fears something in their life. Mr. Levine fears failing to do his best to help his students. Not only teachers face challenges, but so do students. When asked what the biggest challenge students face is, Mr. Levine gave an excellent answer: judgment from others. He said kids don't have room to be kids anymore because social media influences their lives. They always have to think about how to maintain their presence on social media without being judged. The few words of wisdom that he wants to share are, and we quote, "These 5 years, may seem long but things you learn here are applicable. Learn to be better at things, and learn how to become better people." The things he likes best about teaching are: when students understand what he is teaching, when he can joke around with kids, and seeing them grow as people.

We hope by reading this article, you have learned a lot about Mr. Levine and we would like to end this article by a quote that Mr. Levine lives his life by: "Perhaps I cannot control the wind but I can always adjust my sails."