



MICHAL RUPRECHT

Rocketry Club members prepare for their first launch on Saturday, Dec. 9.



GROSSE POINTE NORTH HIGH SCHOOL

SINCE 1968

NORTHPOINTENOW.ORG

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 20, 2017

UPCOMING
EVENTS

**STRING
EXTRAVAGANZA**
Wednesday, Dec. 20 at 7 p.m. at Grosse Pointe South's gym

**ALUMNI
LUNCHEON**
Thursday, Dec. 21 at 10:45 a.m. in the Student Union

BAND-O-RAMA
Thursday, Dec. 21 at 7 p.m. in the gym

**WINTER
BREAK**
Monday, Dec. 25-
Tuesday Jan. 2

**SCHOOL
RESUMES**
Wednesday, Jan. 3 at 8 a.m.

BEACH TO RETIRE AFTER 20 YEARS IN ADMINISTRATION

By Sofia Ketels & Katelynn Mulder
PAGE EDITORS

When assistant principal Tom Beach retires next month, he says the legacy he leaves behind is not only with the student body. After all, in four years all the students who knew him will have graduated. To him, the legacy he will leave at North will be with the teachers he has gotten to know, and the many students whose lives he impacted for the better.

"I know that my personal legacy with these families (is) at a very personal level. Nobody else sees those things. The students who are walking in the hallways, they won't know that," Beach said. "My overall legacy is that I know that there are kids who I have worked with over these 20 years who are doing incredible."

In January, Beach will be retiring after close to 20 years at North, 12 of which he spent in the role of assistant principal. He says that his main reasons for retiring are to spend more time with his family and to finally be able to enjoy a slower pace in his life outside the green and gold walls of North.

"For me, I like to get up in the morning and sit down on Saturdays and have a cup of coffee with my dog, and look out the window and reading my book and having some peaceful moments," Beach said. "For my job now, I get up, and I go. My feet hit the ground and work."

From the start of his career, Beach has made helping people a constant in his line of work. He worked in family child service agencies with foster kids for 10 years, working with the first child in Michigan to be diagnosed with AIDS before moving on to working in a psychiatric hospital, where he helped people with severe depression and anxiety disorders. This led him into private practice, where he remained for a few years before hearing about an job opening as a social worker in the Grosse Pointe Public School System. He was selected from a pool of over 100 applicants and has been in the Grosse Pointe schools ever since.

Beach's first year in the district saw him working at three different schools. He worked with the Children's Home of Detroit for three years and at Poupard, where he designed an after-school program for the kids. For the next seven to eight years, he worked as a social



SYDNEY BENSON

BIG MOMENTS | Assistant principal Tom Beach hugs Principal Kate Murray's children after being named homecoming grand marshall in 2015. Beach will retire after nearly 20 years as assistant principal in January.

worker until the job for assistant principal at North opened up.

For nearly the past 20 years, Beach has worked the long and sometimes tedious hours of a members of the administration, sometimes spending 15 hours a day at school. Regardless, he said he wouldn't have wanted any other position.

"The natural progression as people who come into the assistant principal job, the ultimate goal is to get to the principal job, and that was never my goal. I don't want to sit in that chair," Beach said. "I deal with kids who are struggling or kids who have issues with how they communicate with adults, how they invest themselves in their education. To me, it's about applying my skills to help them work through those issues. When I sit here with students, it's not about the discipline — it's about how did you get in this spot, what can you do differently, and what skills can I help you develop to do it better next time?"

Beach said that he will miss teachers' passion and commitment the most.

"Most students don't see the work and the love and the commitment that goes into standing in front of them every day being ready and going. They see this 49-minute clip, you know?" Beach said. "The preparation, the time, the absolute commitment they have — I have a lot of discussions with them. Over 20 years, you develop relationships with them. I've seen staff members get married and have kids and grow, so those connections, because I'm a fairly social guy, those connections are going to be missed."

Beach had such connections with counselor Brian White and senior Marco McMann, who said that throughout his four years at North, he and Beach had developed something close to a friendship, and the two talked a lot and messed with each other in the halls whenever possible.

McMann believes that Beach will be missed by the student body as a whole.

"His smile's pretty funny, too. He's gonna be a guy that we all miss," McMann said. McMann also said students will miss Beach's leniency. "If you get in trouble, he's gonna tell you what you did wrong, but he's also not gonna make you feel like you did something terrible, so I'm sure most are gonna miss that about him."

White said that he will miss Beach's patience and good sense of humor with students, in addition to his tendency to prioritize students.

"I think he has been positive for the community," White said. "While he was assistant principal, he has been very much an advocate for students and putting them first."

Contributing: Maggie Carron

INSIDE
"PEOPLE
DON'T GET
BLOOD
TRANSFUSIONS
UNLESS
THEY
ARE IN
A LIFE-
THREATENING
SITUATION."

PAGE 2

"MAKE
YOUR
VOICE
HEARD.
WE
CANNOT
AFFORD
TO LOSE
THEM."

PAGE 3

District cited for over-suspension of minority special needs students

By Zoe Graves, Hannah Zalewski & Abi Murray
PAGE EDITOR, STAFF REPORTER & INTERN

The Grosse Pointe Public School System was one of 12 school districts in the state of Michigan cited for suspending black or hispanic special education students at a higher rate than other groups. According to Superintendent Gary Niehaus, the district is working to improve the issue.

"The disproportionality report is used by the Michigan Department of Education when we have special education students suspended over five days with more minorities being suspended than others," Niehaus said. "We had 10 special education students suspended for over five school days in 2016 - 2017. Eight of the ten were minority students. GPPSS has over 1,500 special needs students. We continue to monitor and watch our progress."

Niehaus said that the Director of Special Education and Deputy Superintendent for Education Services will be scheduling visits to the secondary schools in the district to make sure all procedures are being followed.

Sophomore Uveys Gerguri was shocked to hear that Grosse Pointe had been cited for disproportionality. Moreover, he believes that GPPSS will be able to fix this issue promptly.

"I thought Grosse Pointe was supposed to be mostly equal," Gerguri said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Grosse Pointe Public Librarian and Support Staff Association



The Association is led by library unit president John Clexton.



The Association has been asking for a contract since July.



The Association has raised concerns over the new health care plan proposed for library staff.

VS

The Grosse Pointe Library Board of Trustees

The fight for
**LIBRARY
CONTRACTS**

The Board of Trustees hired lawyer Steven Schwartz to negotiate.



The Board holds monthly meetings open to the community. The next meeting is Dec. 21.



The Board oversees the library system, its employees and a 6.2-million dollar budget.



ALEX HARRING

Public librarians, board of trustees spar over contract

By Anna Post, Michael Hartt & Cairington Stahl
EDITOR-AT-LARGE &
STAFF REPORTERS

Throughout the past seven months, the Grosse Pointe Library Foundation has attempted to replace the librarians' previous contract with a new one by implementing an updated Strategic Plan that leaves librarians across the community feeling fearful for their jobs. Grosse Pointe Public Librarians such as Danis Houser, who works at the central branch, have been fighting for a fair contract.

"We are not making outrageous or expensive demands, our requests have been quite modest and reasonable, as confirmed by the fact finding report," Houser said via email.

Negotiations circling this ongoing issue have remained tentative. In response to the changes, library workers across Grosse Pointe have been struggling to keep up with the provisional changes. The librarians have been working without a contract since July 1. Although many minor agreements regarding the Strategic Plan have been made, major factors such as health care and the surging budget cuts have yet to be resolved.

In response to the contract controversy, the librarians and the GPLF have chosen to negotiate through lawyers and now face high legal costs. According to the librarians' combined Facebook page, they have spent over \$60,000 in legal fees since July of this year.

The librarians also hired a third-party "fact finder" to go through the old and new contract and look for areas where the foundation is unnecessarily withholding available funding.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



To infinity and beyond

The Rocketry Club held their first test launch of the year on Saturday, Dec. 9.

By Zoe Graves
PAGE EDITOR



UP, UP AND AWAY | The girls rocket is launched. The launch took place in a field near I-94 and 26 Mile Road. "I learned that (Rocketry Club is) really fun in general as a club," junior Sam Plieth said. "It really helps you become more involved in science and stuff and it's just a really cool thing to do ... even if you're not certain about it just come out for one launch day and check it out and pretty sure you'd be surprised about what happens out there."



SHOWING OFF | The girls rocketry team poses with their rocket after the launch. The team consists of juniors Shannon Flores, Jill Peters and Clare Williams and sophomore Kamaria Chambers. Chambers joined Rocketry Club this year, and plans to continue with the club for the rest of her high school career. "I was already in chem club, so it was all combined so I just decided to join," Chambers said. "I learned a lot, because I didn't really know a lot about rockets, so it was all new honestly."



FINAL TOUCHES (LEFT) | Parent Mark Supal, junior Sam Plieth and freshman Will Eckerman stand inside Tim Hortons as they add the finishing touches before launching their rockets. According to Rocketry Club adviser Steven Kosmas, Supal helps make sure the rockets meet all of the guidelines in the Team America Rocketry Challenge rules. "We built a whole new rocket from bottom up," Plieth said. "So, we were kinda going into uncharted waters, we didn't know what to do because we were making our own design and that stuff."



PREPARING FOR TAKEOFF | Members of the girls rocketry team connect wires to their rocket as they get ready to launch. Since the girls rocketry team used a rocket from last year, their preparation process was simple. "We reused a rocket from last year, so we just sanded it and got it prepared, and we put an ignitor in it so it would go up," sophomore Kamaria Chambers said. "When we were getting the mass together, we found out that the mass was too low, so we put two golf balls in there, and a penny, a quarter and some nickels. And when we launched it to test it (the mass) was too high, so we brought it down, we took two nickels out and a penny."

FACES IN THE CROWD

Annie Fleming

Sophomore Annie Fleming seems like the student. Like most, she has aspirations, fears and struggles, but she also loves helping others.



"Last June, I went to El Salvador on a missionstrip, and I got to evangelize someone, and I got to meet my sponsor child through compassion, and it was really life changing."

Fleming credits her youth group for getting her where she is today.

"I have a really awesome support system with my girls in my small group," she said. "We always talk about everything, and I always get great advice from them, and I have awesome mentors."

As she's learned compassion, she also knows to put a bigger emphasis on taking care of herself.

"I think the hardest person for me to forgive is myself because I'm so focused on making people like me, overcoming anxiety and things of that sort, that I forget to focus on me."

Cari Humphries

While many artists share their talent on canvases, junior Cari Humphries uses shoes.



"I was in (class) freshman year, doodling on a piece of paper, and a kid came up to me and asked if I could put that on a shoe," Humphries said. "That's how it all started."

Humphries was then asked by friends of her first customer to paint on their shoes.

She orders special paint online, so it doesn't crack or wear down on the shoes.

"I have painted on many different styled shoes, from Jordans to Timberlands to Chuck Taylors," Humphries said.

Humphries charges around \$25 for a pair of shoes. Along with painting, she also cleans and restores the shoes if they are yellowing on the soles.

But she doesn't do it for the money.

"I don't care about making money," she said. "I just like doing it for fun."

Nina Kozik

When people think of long distance, they picture different colleges, maybe even different states. Junior Nina Kozik's boyfriend, however, lives in a different country.



"He moved to a city called Hofheim. It's right outside of Frankfurt, Germany," Kozik said. "His family moved over the summer because of his dad's job. He doesn't speak German, but luckily he's in an international school located in Frankfurt."

Even though there is a major time difference, Kozik uses social media as much as she can to keep in touch.

"We communicate through FaceTime, texting, Snapchat and other social media," Kozik said. "We're not able to spend a whole lot of time talking because of the six-hour time difference."

After spending four months apart, Kozik and her boyfriend will see each other on Dec. 22. For two weeks, they'll be spending as much time together as they can, according to Kozik.

"He plans on coming back for some vacation and for college, but he's there for the rest of high school," Kozik said. "I fortunately have the opportunity of visiting him there this summer."

By Ray Jason, Sydney Semack & Erin Kaled

FIVE MINUTES WITH

Longterm substitute Michael Cowan

By Nick Asimakis
STAFF REPORTER

When substitute teacher Michael Cowan isn't in the classroom, he enjoys casting off on lakes and oceans all over America to participate in a variety of sailing events.

Cowan embarked on his sailing journey when he was only 8 years old. He learned to sail for 18 years, then taught at a yacht club in Connecticut. Now, he is continuing his coaching career in hockey. He is in his fourth year as assistant coach and team owner of the U14 Bulldogs travel team.

Cowan's first big sailing race was in Long Island, when he was just 9 years old.

"I started sailing with a program out in Connecticut," Cowan said. "Then I taught sailing and did anything I could do to get back out on the water."

Cowan likes to compete. He has taken part in a number of races and regattas over the years. Cowan has sailed boats ranging from 50 to 70 feet long, but the most recent boat he has raced was 50 feet. He sailed in a

regatta down in the Caribbean on a 70-foot sailboat.

"I sailed twice in St. Thomas with a regatta down there," Cowan said "But the most enjoyable regatta I did was down in Saint Maarten."

When he was younger, he went around the country with his partner sailing in multiple races. He would sail the local regattas or the larger events in California, Texas, Florida and Minnesota.

"It was all when I was a teenager, (in my) early 20s," Cowan said "It was a great experience for me. Really great."

The most significant race Cowan has done is the Port Huron to Mackinac. He has performed in this race 14 times.

"A number of years ago, my boat won our class and the overall," he said, "Which was a huge thrill for all of us."



FAMILY EVENT | Cowan with his wife Amy, daughter Courtney and son Dougie over the summer at local sailing awards. Both of his children won awards. Cowan said that his family is adjusting well to his new position at North, and that he's grateful for the opportunity to teach here. "My family and I go to Cape Cod every year, and that's where my family is," Cowan said. "And we go there every year and visit my family and run around moats, lots of beaches there."

FAVORITE BOOK

My favorite book, is probably a book called "(A) Death in Belmont" by Sebastian Junger. That's my favorite non-fiction book ... My favorite fiction book is "To Kill A Mockingbird." I'm teaching it this year and I just think it's the best. It's a great tone, great story, great humor, dry-witted.

FAVORITE MOVIE

I would say "Presumed Innocent," starring Harrison Ford. It's based on a (Scott Turow) book ... Great movie, it's with Harrison Ford, I highly recommend it. It's getting a bit old now, but I like it.

FAVORITE FOOD

My favorite food is pizza ... ust big fan of pizza, a connoisseur. I think the Farms Market Pizza is the best around here, but pizza in general is pretty good.

FAVORITE TV SHOW

I don't watch a lot of episodic TV, but I'd say "Designated Survivor" when I can pick it up is a good show. What else, I watch a lot of news, which is probably not great, but I try and keep in touch with the world. But "Designated Survivor" is a pretty good show, for sure.