

# The Knightly News

## A True MVP!

By Kate Wallace, '19  
Knightly News Reporter

Tommy Greaves recently won the Vantage Sports Network Video Contest for his Unified Sports film and received a bundle of prizes for his achievement. Tommy competed against high schoolers from across the state. He exclaimed, “I won \$3000! I was very proud.” After being interviewed in a professional broadcasting studio, Tommy received a new camera, microphone, and a carrying case that he uses to record interviews with fellow students. Tommy’s video focused on the Unified Sports team as he showcased what the team stood for and the hard work they put in. Tommy encourages students to join both the video production class, where he learned to make his award-winning video, and the Unified team. If anyone wants to join or watch the Unified team, they have two basketball games coming up, including March 6 and March 8.

## Dancing in a Winter Wonderland

Nikol Jara, '18  
Knightly News Reporter

On February 3, 2018 FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) and SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) hosted the first Winter Semi-Formal in a decade. The event raised money for both clubs, provided an opportunity for students to collaborate and strengthen school community, all while offering an entertaining and inexpensive night out for the student body. The Winter Wonderland themed dance wouldn't have come together without the energetic and enthusiastic combined help of FBLA members Nikol Jara, Ian Whitehouse, Gavin LaBrec, and SADD members Juliana Fabrizi and Jackie Grace, along with many other club member. The decorations transformed the cafeteria, leaving it unrecognizable as the place we rush to each weekday at 10:59 am. Mrs. McManus, FBLA mentor commented, “It was nice to see the different groups sharing ideas and compromising to achieve the goal of a successful fundraiser.” Everyone who attended looked spectacular. Pictures from the dance can be found on the Winter Wonderland classroom page (code wfo7cfk). Finally, Mr. Hall ended the night with a performance of a classic celtic song on his flute, making the night unforgettable. Both clubs would like to thank all who attended.



photo courtesy of Nikol Jara

Students posing with Mr. Hall at the Winter Formal!

## Vaping....A Teen Craze!

By Mrs. Carr  
WHS Health Teacher

Vape products and e-cigarettes were initially developed to help people quit smoking but have become the new craze among teens. In many high schools vaping and juuling are daily bathroom rituals while some students will even go as far as to vape or juul in class. The question is “why”? When asked this burning question, a number of high school students responded with answers which were all very similar. Some

said, “It gives you a head rush” or “It eases my anxiety”, while others simply think the flavors are good and it looks cool because you can “do tricks or ghost it”; one student even admitted that he adds THC (the active ingredient in marijuana) to the liquid to “get high.”

Once again, the tobacco industry has found a way to captivate the impressionable teen audience, through manipulative advertising by making harmful products seem cool and trendy. Unlike cigarettes, we are only starting to understand some of the health risks associated with vaping and

juuling; although, like with any tobacco use, many e-cigarette users are choosing to “turn a blind eye” to what scientific study has revealed. Recent studies have found:

- Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine which has addictive properties similar to cocaine and heroin and can affect brain functioning in young people. Is this why that nagging headache will be relieved with a quick vape or juul?
- Popcorn lung – look it up!
- “Smokers cough” and bloody sores have recently shown up in vapers—you may not feel sick but what’s with that irritating

cough?

- Lowered immune resistance —how often have you been “sick” since you started vaping?
- Cancerous tumor development due to the 42 harmful chemicals identified in e-cigarette products
- Pre-term deliveries and stillbirths in pregnant women
- E-cigarettes are the latest “gateway” drug —what can the advertising companies get you to try next?

## Equal Opportunity Statement

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## My Take on Talking

By Kate Wallace, '19  
Knightly News Reporter

As I walk in, I’m plagued with this undeniable fear that I know nothing. What is the American Dream? Why do people strive for it? What is that Obama quote from paragraph 2? Despite the countless hours I’ve spent preparing for this moment, everything suddenly washes away from my mind. It’s a blank slate, and all I can think about is how I’m not ready for this. But I am. As I see my family and Ms. Mal smiling at me from the back, it comes to me; I’ve prepared like never before. I stand in front of the room nearly full of strangers, whose sole responsibility is to judge and critique me on the thing I love, and take a deep breath. Suddenly, this

calming rush of information comes over me, and I open my mouth. For the next 9 minutes and 45 seconds, words flow from my mouth without hesitation. Word after word, phrase after phrase, quote after quote, I speak on the idea that inspires me; the American Dream can be achieved by those who put in the work and effort it takes to achieve it. Suddenly, just as quickly as I started, I’m done. I want nothing more than to curl up in a ball and decompress after that rush of words, but I can’t, for part two, the dreaded Assigned Topics, still lies ahead of me. What will it be this time? I find out what my fate will be, and with a mere 5 minutes to prepare, I’m back to yet another wave, leaving me with a blank mind as strangers stare at me. Once again, that calming deep breath

brings it all back. The Second, Third, and Fifteenth Amendments come pouring into my brain. I remember the importance of Article Two Section Four. I know this. I’ve prepared for this and after four minutes of words spewing from my mouth, it’s over; I’ve said all there is to say. Now comes the waiting game. Who will win? Who will advance to the next round with one more opportunity to inspire with their flow of words? Who will leave without victory, waiting until next year to give another speech? After what seems like ages, the decision has been made. I walk out, seeing hopeful eyes staring at the front, awaiting the same news I do, as the Chairman says, “And the winner is...”



Meet Mrs. Knight



By Kylie McCarthy, '21  
Town Crier Reporter

As the school year progresses, we are delighted to welcome new faces into the Westbrook High School community. One of which, is the new administrative assistant, Mrs. Knight. Before coming to Westbrook, she attended Gateway College in New Haven, Connecticut. Mrs. Knight explains how college was one of the best points of her life full of self-discovery and hard work in order to succeed. After college, she worked at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center on Plum Island, Suffolk County, New York for almost six years. When she moved to Clinton, she was in search for a job where she could help and support people. Mrs. Knight says, “I don’t know if I chose Westbrook or if Westbrook chose me.” She always wanted to live here, so when a position opened in the school system, she thought it was a perfect opportunity to do what she loves, and work close to home. Mrs. Knight is very found of Westbrook High School, its student body, and its mascot. She enjoys interacting with the various students who pass through the office everyday and hopes to create more relationships and bonds with students in the future.

# SEL: What Does It Mean?

By Mr. Bialicki  
Student Climate Coordinator

SEL stands for Social Emotional Learning, which is the foundation of all the work Teen Leadership has been doing with the Yale Center of Emotional Intelligence and the National School Climate Center in Manhattan. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process through which everyone acquires and effectively applies the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions. Last year, when students, parents and teachers participated in the National Comprehensive School Climate Inventory, the results revealed a lower score in this area for everyone. From this survey, students involved in Teen Leadership/School Climate collaborated with the District’s School Climate Council to develop goals for Social and Civic Learning across the district. They created curriculum on Empathy for 2nd graders and plan to present this in the coming weeks. Our 10th and 12th grade groups presented to all of grade 8 on how Social Media negatively impacts SEL, and, on March 8th, will help them develop “upstander” intervention strategies. A third presentation in May will focus on positive self-confidence and self-concept for students in the 7th grade. High school students will meet with the 5th grade in March to discuss the book “Wonder” and “choosing kindness”. WHS students are taking on the challenge of increasing the social emotion-

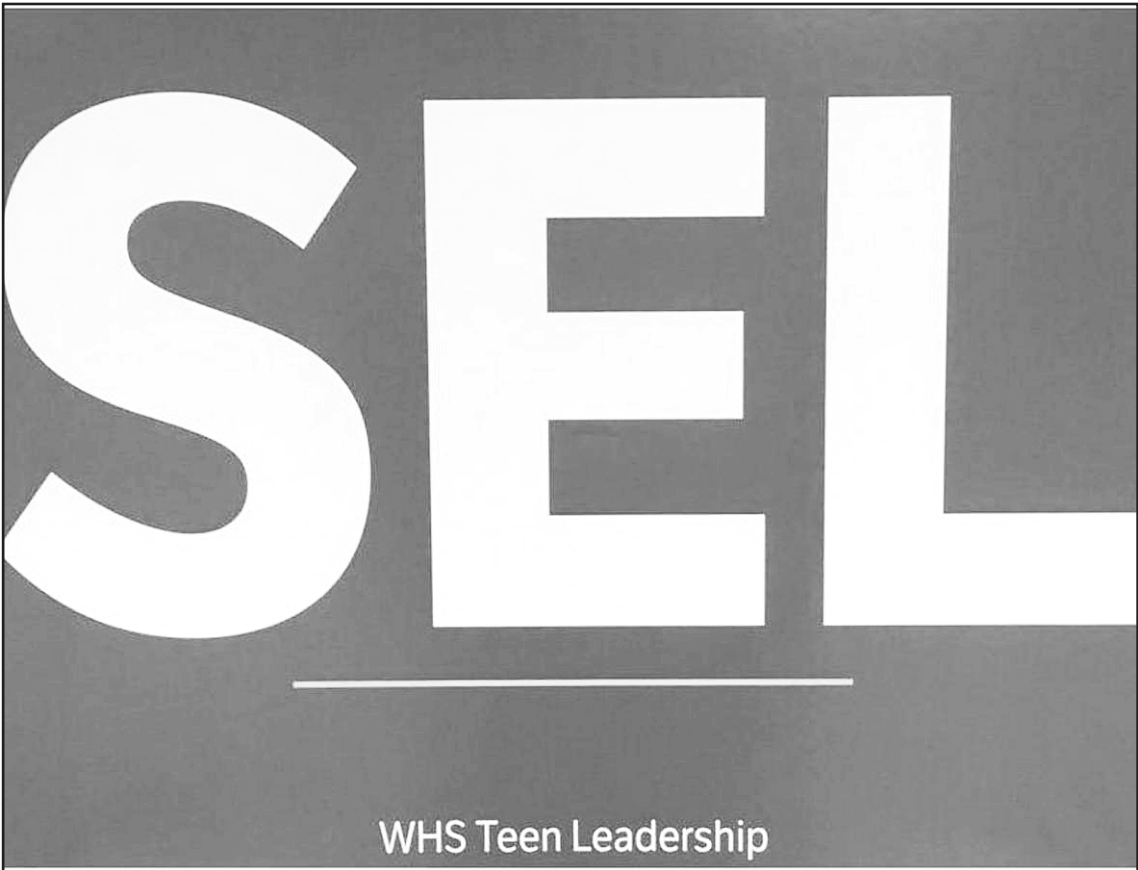


photo courtesy of Mr. Bialicki

## SEL stands for Social Emotional Learning

- al learning across our district.
- At the high school level, TL/School Climate Students are working on several projects during the second semester:
- Round table discussion with Oxford Academy students on collaborative school climate
- Attendance at Excellence in

- Leadership Conference at Cheshire High School
- Student exchanges between WHS and several CT high schools to better understand how other districts focus on SEL in their schools
- A one day statewide Student Restorative Practices Training
- “Awareness Day” is projected

before the end of the school year; the one in 2016 helped us receive the Facebook/Yale Changemaker Award of \$5,000 and a trip to Facebook headquarters in CA.

If you are interested in Student School Climate Teams see Mr. Bialicki.

## Tiptoe Through Tulips

By Kate Wallace, '19  
Town Crier Reporter

Not many WHS teachers can say they’ve been featured in a prominent magazine, however, paraprofessional, Ms. Trout-Kolb’s flower shop, Tulips Floral Design Studio, was featured in Connecticut Bride Magazine’s recent issue. Ms. T-K described the shoot as very different from what she normally does as it was a staged and styled shoot. She based her designs around a carnival theme, and the vibrant arrangements clearly fit the description. From a young age, Ms. T-K knew she loved designing. After realizing her passion could become a job, she attended design school and is now a professional floral designer. While Ms. T-K enjoys her, “happy place” at Tulips, she also enjoys working as a paraprofessional here at WHS. She balances her two passions through convenient scheduling. Since she’s off from school during the Tulips’



photo courtesy of Connecticut Magazine

## Ms. T-K's floral arrangements featured in Connecticut Bride Magazine

busiest time, summer wedding season, she never has to sacrifice one for the other. Ms. T-K’s process of creating floral designs begins with deciding what kind of flowers she needs and how many. After they arrive, Ms. T-K arranges the perishable flowers somewhat last minute and brings them to the venue to set up the arrangements. Ms. T-K offered some words of wisdom to students looking to pursue business,

saying that experience is key. “I would try things out. See where your strengths are and see where your passion is. I honestly think it’s important to find your passion.” Ms. T-K’s feature article is an incredible accomplishment for both her and her business, and it also serves as an inspiration to students to find their passion and know they can succeed with hard work and dedication.

## Well... Well... Well... ness Day!

Do you lie awake at night, thinking about all you have to do in the course of a day? Do you find yourself fighting with those close to you? Well, you might be suffering from stress. Learn ways to cope with stress at the Wellness Fair sponsored by the Westbrook Public Schools Wellness Committee of the Climate Council. This event will take place on Thursday, April 5th from 1p.m. to 5p.m. in the WHS Gymnasium and is free for school staff, parents and community members. A variety of vendors and demonstrators will be present with many great gifts and prizes for participants. Madeline Illinger, Director of Special Education and

Special Education Services adds, "The Wellness Committee hopes to support our school staff and their families along with our community members with information from our community partners/businesses on how to reduce stress and spring into action. The Fair will be set up in the HS Gym with over 40 vendors. In lieu of a vendor fee, our vendors are supporting the event by contributing a substantial raffle prize. Everyone who attends is eligible to win! It's a great opportunity to bounce into spring and discover healthy habits for your mind and body at the Westbrook Schools Wellness Fair!"



# GIRLS BASKETBALL:

## Small in Numbers but Big at Heart!

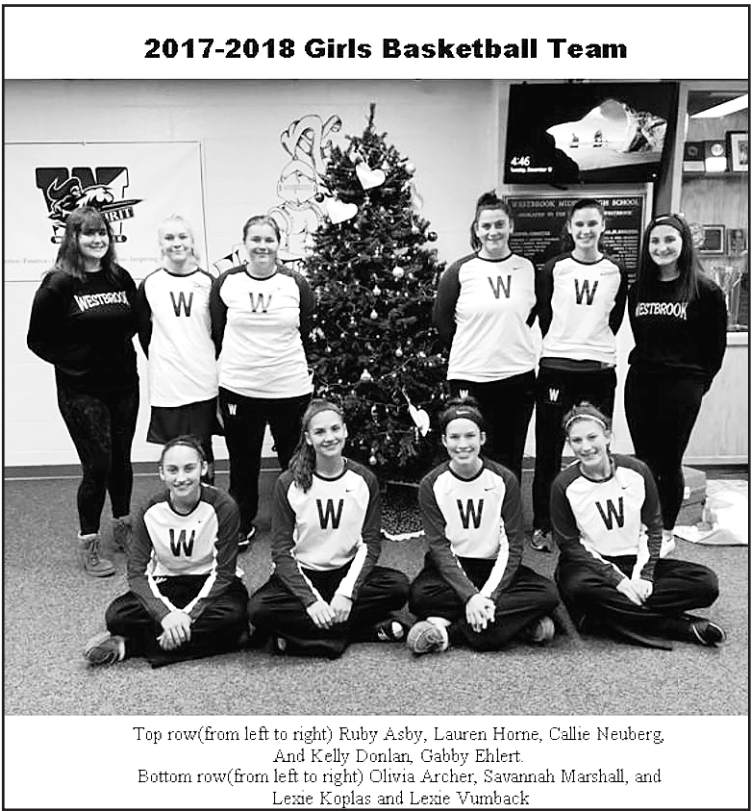
Contributions by Coach Kelly Landino and players

The Westbrook Girls Basketball team learned this season what “Murphy’s Law” really means. The saying goes, “Anything that can go wrong will go wrong,” and it became their phrase; it became their reality. The team suffered so many injuries and low numbers that they had to initially forfeit a game and move the season back three weeks. Coach Landino remarked, “I am proud of the way our girls responded and stayed focused. When we resumed play, we won 5 of 6 games in a row and enjoyed our hard work and sacrifice.”

On January 19, Savannah Marshall, ‘19, reached a milestone, scoring her 1,000th point against Hale Ray. Marshall needed 22 points going into the game and which is the

exact number of points she hit during their 52-37 point victory. Marshall recalled, “It was surreal. I was surprised at how excited EVERYONE [on the team] was for me. At half-time, they kept repeating, ‘You only need four more points! Just four points!’” She went on to say, “It was an unbelievable feeling. I set out to achieve this goal in my high school career, but never thought I’d get there this year. I’m proud of myself for not only attaining this, but a year earlier than I imagined.” In addition, Marshall earned All Shoreline 1st Team and teammate, Erin Metcalf, ‘18, received Honorable Mention. Metcalf, a four year starter and tri-captain, noted, “My coach made me, and the players around me, a better player and person. From the first half

of the season to the second there was a lot of growth. Even though we didn’t make it to states, we still won games we were supposed to win.” Along with the highlights, such as the team’s 2nd Annual Pink Game, at which they raised over \$1200 for Cancer Awareness, came challenges, especially playing eight games in sixteen days down the stretch which proved too much physically for the Westbrook team and they were unable to qualify for the tournament. Although this was disappointing, they realized, according to Landino, that “we were blessed to have a season this year with all the odds stacked against us. It taught character and determination, and that will stay with our girls long after the hardwood.”



Top row(from left to right) Ruby Asby, Lauren Horne, Callie Neuberg, And Kelly Donlan, Gabby Ehler.  
Bottom row(from left to right) Olivia Archer, Savannah Marshall, and Lexie Koplas and Lexie Vumback

photo courtesy of Kelly Landino

Girls team posing during the holiday season.

# Indoor Track

*Tiny but Mighty!*

By Tirzah Blomquist, '18  
Competition Reporter



photo courtesy of Tirzah Blomquist

Members of the girls indoor track team

WHS Indoor Track, a team of ten students, finished off the season strong with more than half of the group qualifying for the Class S meet. Led by coaches Timothy Marshall, Heather Pierce, and Sheridan Bauman, the team scored thirty-one points at the Shoreline Championship with only eight students competing.Both the 4x800 meter relay team of Avery Bauman ‘19, Halle Barron ‘18, Cierra Brundage ‘21, and Elizabeth Gallagher ‘21,and the 4x200 meter relay team of Christine Gallagher ‘18, Alex Young ‘19, Elizabeth Gallagher, and Tirzah Blomquist ‘18 scored five points collectively. The group also succeeded in individual events, with Young and Blomquist placing fifth and sixth,

respectively, in the long jump. Bauman flung herself to a third place tie in the pole vault, with a jump of eight feet. In the shot put, Danyelle Engels ‘18, won gold with a throw of thirty-two feet and change.Moving on to the States Class S Championship, Engels, Bauman, Blomquist, Young, and both Gallagher sisters all competed. Engels placed fifth in the shot put, allowing her to advance to the State Open Championship. Although no other Westbrook athletes placed, the 4x200 meter relay team ran almost

two full seconds faster than their previous record. They successfully ended this season by breaking the school record in that event.On Saturday, February 17, Engels traveled to the Floyd Little Athletic Center to compete at State Opens; unfortunately, she sprained her ankle during warm-ups and could not participate. Despite this setback, she looks forward to outdoor track and field, and throwing discus and javelin, in addition to continuing with shot put.

# Teams of One!

Contributions by Amanda Wilderman, '18 and Hannah Schilling, '21

**Boys Swimming:**  
Garrett Smith, '19, competed for WHS as a team-of-one in swimming under the supervision of his coach, Christina, coach of the Daniel Hand’s team in Madison. Smith commented, “Last year was the best year because I came in 4th and 3rd in the 100 Butterfly and 200 Medley, respectively, with the time of 54 seconds and 2:03.” Smith said the best part his sport is that “it’s just really good exercise.” He further explained “It has allowed me to eat as much of whatever I want without worrying about weight.” Not only are there healthy benefits to the swim team, but Smith said, “It was also nice to meet the people from Madison. They’re good friends.” For those students interested in swim, he noted, “It’s not at all a bad experience practicing with another team, especially Hand because they’re very accepting and inclusive.” He did have one piece of advice– “Unless you hate yourself, don’t do butterfly.”

**Girls Gymnastics:**  
Hannah Schilling, '21, completed her first year as a team-of-one for WHS where she practiced 3 after-

noons a week from early Dec to mid-Feb with the Waterford and Fitch gymnastics teams (both teams-of-one) and Old Lyme’s varsity team. Unfortunately, she missed the first 2 meets due to a back injury, but, by mid-Feb had competed in 5 meets, each in 3 events –floor, vault, and beam. Schilling stated, “Initially, it was intimidating to work out with experienced gymnasts from other schools, but from the first day until the end of the season, Old Lyme, Waterford, and Fitch welcomed me, cheering as if I was their own teammate, which helped build my self-confidence and motivated me to have fun!” Schilling looks forward next season where she plans to compete on bars, and in more meets. “A lofty goal by my senior year is to try to qualify at the state level, where aside from participating in at least six meets, a gymnast must also rank individually in the top 40 gymnasts per event or top 20 for the all-around, and there are hundreds of gymnasts in Connecticut!” She added, “For now, I am very proud of putting Westbrook back on the map for high school gymnastics!”

# Boys Basketball

Contributions by Coach Jeff Beeman and players

This year’s boys’ basketball team struggled on the scoreboard for the first 12 games, but was able to finish the season 4-4, for a final record of 4-16. Vincent Dyer, ‘18, commented, “Through perseverance and discipline, our team saved what would’ve been a winless season and built character along the way.” The entire year the team tried to find a consistent group and game formula, after losing eight seniors from last year’s 25-3 team. The combination of inexperience

and youth made that a challenge. The players faced some disappointing moments, like the buzzer beater shot Jack Hayes sank to put the contest vs. Hale Ray into overtime but losing in the end. Ben Schreck ‘19, reflected, “It was a year of steady improvement where many underclassmen were able to step up and show their talents.” Coach Beeman noted, “We showed steady improvement throughout the season and never for a moment did not compete. Our captains Jack Hayes

and Vin Dyer led us every game with toughness and grit and will be missed next year.” Along with Dyer and Hayes, four other seniors will graduate— Binak Cecunjanin, Jason Cordon, Eric Jayne and Jake Marciniac. Next year’s team is already making adjustments and plans to get us back to the post season. Schreck remarked, “The season ended on a positive note and we will build off of that in setting our goals for next year.”



photo courtesy of Tirzah Blomquist

Asset 33 /40 Interpersonal Competence-Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills.



## An Annual Tradition: WHS Combined Concert with OSHS

By Amanda Wilderman, '18  
Knightly Entertainment Reporter

On February 8th, choir students participated in the annual Old Saybrook and Westbrook concert. A thriving group of students with the passion for music collaborated and practiced for hours under the supervision and direction of Mr. Milton, Old Saybrook's choir teacher, and our very own choir teacher, Ms. Allen. The event culminated in a magnificent exhibition of talent, "It was a cool experience that allowed our smaller choir to work on a masterpiece that we otherwise would not have been able to do," said junior, Marie Bavely. The concerto performed was written by Antonio Vivaldi. It had a total of eight movements, each sung in various lengths and in Latin text. Thanks to research and group discussion, the students became well-versed in the time periods and meaning of the language. In preparation, students worked diligently in their sections and self-assessed their strengths and weakness to ensure that every note was heard. It was an

impeccable night for all who witnessed these choirs come together and share their love of music. The audience roared with delight and the students concurred that it was the best concert since the inception five years ago. From the onset, the entire choir kept the audience mesmerized with their talent. Emily Vallee, a senior and choir member since her freshman year, remarked that "after four years, we've learned to come together to create something even bigger than ourselves." A lovely orchestra accompaniment enhanced the evening. In addition, WHS' very own Kina Mama contributed to this concert with two amazing songs that brought the audience on its feet. The piece "Dusty Trails", by Lucius, was a wonderful start to this concert. Kina ended with a "Letter from a Girl to the World" in which each member of the choir offered her own personal and inspirational message. Old Saybrook's chamber choir also flawlessly performed three pieces. Overall, it was another successful year for both choirs and an annual tradition that our communities look forward to.



photo courtesy of Ms. Allen

Old Saybrook and Westbrook students rehearsing for the concert

## Alforno Ristorante: A Slice of Italy

By Christine Banks, '18  
Knightly Entertainment Reporter

Driving down Route 1 in Old Saybrook towards Westbrook, tucked in the corner of the plaza which houses the ghost of what was once Benny's sits Alforno Ristorante and Brick Oven Pizzeria. The Shoreline has no shortage of Italian eateries and pizzerias. What makes Alforno different? When my friend suggested we go there to eat, I was a little tentative about the idea. The first thing that popped in my mind was the empty shell of Benny's that dominates the plaza where Alforno resides. In addition, I thought about the fluorescent lights and booths that characterize most strip mall pizza joints. That night, I was in the mood for something a bit fancier, but I went with it anyway because I trusted

my friend's judgement. The only thing I have to say is thank goodness. We walked in and all of my preconceived notions flew out the window. From the ceilings hung orange drapes, resembling waves, and on the floors were orange tiles that brought you to the streets of Italy. The low lighting and art that stretched across the wall created a unique and sophisticated atmosphere I hadn't expected. The hostess brought us to a booth in the back, and we watched as the restaurant filled with hungry patrons that soon became happy and satisfied customers. We ordered a standard cheese pizza, and were very pleased with the outcome. The pizza was not too greasy and easy to eat. I am definitely looking forward to going back and getting more adventurous with the extensive menu.

## "Lip, Dip, Paint"

By Christine Banks, '18  
Knightly Entertainment Reporter

This year, Westbrook's theatre department is performing the play "Radium Girls", the true story of young women who fight for their compensation from a company that greatly wrongs them. The play takes place in Orange, New Jersey during the 1920s, and follows the stories of Grace Fryer (Christine Banks), a young dial painter, and Arthur Roeder (Finn McGannon), the U.S. Radium Corporation company president. The radium company produces watches that glow in the dark for the soldiers fighting in World War I. To create the glow, the company uses a paint mixed with radium. Unbeknownst to them, the radium is highly toxic. By requiring the dial painters to

point the brushes with their lips, the girls ingest large quantities of the poisonous chemical. Consequently, many of the girls get sick and die from necrosis of the jaw. To cover up the deaths, the company uses unethical measures. As one of the dial painters facing death, Grace and her friend Kathryn Schaub (Merry Farrell) seek help from the head of the Consumer's League, Miss Wiley (Tirzah Blomquist). Together, these women bring to the public's attention the corruption in the U.S. Radium Corporation. This play will take the audience on a rollercoaster of emotions as it unveils the company's lies and the heart-breaking tragedy of the Radium Girls. The show premieres on Friday, March 23rd, at 7:30. You will not want to miss the chance to witness this hidden piece of American History.

## Ethan's Music Review

By Ethan Hamm, '18  
Knightly Entertainment Reporter

Massachusetts natives, old soul, released their debut album on February 9, 2018. The quartet from Lowell has been around since 2015, and yes, old soul is one word, all lowercase, according to their Bandcamp. After dropping the EP "Loverboy" in 2015 that was very dream pop driven, and a split EP with fellow rock band Speirs, which was blasted with shoegaze and math rock influence, they decided to take their already mature sound further. They took a break in 2017 to focus on writing, demoing, and eventually come out with this third ambitious project. "Why You Go" perfectly sets up for the album's vibe—desperate and confused. The track after, "Anything But Lovely", additionally exemplifies their dreaminess and needed catharsis. This continues on "Good Girl" which only brings

out more struggle in Jess's lead vocals and each blaring. The song is melodic dream pop, sad, but upbeat that breaks out into a math rock jam and finishes with a reversion back into its gentle and dreamy sound. Two tracks from the

split appear anew on "Coy", redone, re-recorded, re-mixed, and re-mastered. One is titled "Slow Down, Senpai" and the other "Eyeless". Eyeless strikes as a bit calmer, a bit softer to which it is gives off an almost heavy

feeling with a lower sound to the guitars, careful to bring back the tempo as it almost escapes when Jess hits the higher notes. This causes her to hold back and better compliment the guitars at a more even level in the mix. Moreover, "Easy Without Me" brings a new element of the piano and follows more of a narrative, supplementing the song with male vocals not seen since their first EP. The final track is called "The Sun, the Sun, the Sun", a stylistic song that shows off inner angst that it really holds from the start, and is detectable in the entirety of the album's drive, bitterness, and sharp tastes. Overall, the band uses reverb to create a clearer sound, but also exploits this for a distorted edge. Their math rock influence is not unnecessarily complicated, keeping to their poppy side to blend into a shoegaze-esque, psychedelic finish. Undoubtedly, they have more to give in their unique balance of rhythm and melody.

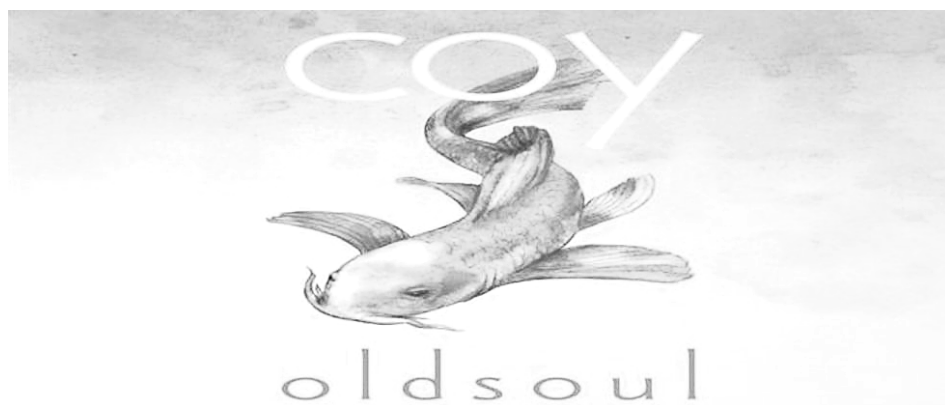


photo courtesy of Ethan Hamm

Old Soul's newest album "Coy"