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# Topsfield Times

Topsfield, MA

## Meet Kristen: New Staff at TVA

Our history teacher Chris asked the teacher's aide Kristen a series of questions interviewing her. We wanted to get to know her a little better and try to get a better understanding of her opinions.

We found out she is from Virginia! So we asked what's the coolest thing from there? She told us that there were more cows than people in people in the town.

We asked her how she felt about our school Topsfield Vocational Academy. She responded that it was great! She loves the staff and school community.

We wanted to know what she wanted to be when she was younger and why? She told us she wanted to be a traveling doctor for emergency centers. Also she wanted to be a teacher for English as a second language.

Her favorite show is Game Of Thrones and favorite book is Pride and Prejudice By Jane Austen.



Kristen new instructional aide at Topsfield Vocational Academy.

### Important Dates

**4/24-25**

Grade 6-8 ELA MCAS

**5/8-9**

Grade 8 STE MCAS

**5/8**

Parent Night

**5/11**

Early Release/PD Day

**5/22-24**

Grade 6-8 Math MCAS

**5/23-24**

Grade 10 Math MCAS

**5/28**

Memorial Day/No School

**6/1**

Seniors' Last Day

**6/6-7**

STE MCAS

**6/7**

Graduation

**6/26**

Last Day of School

## From the Desk of Charles LeBuff

Well, we are heading into the home stretch of the school year. There is always a lot of excitement about wrapping things up, especially for our senior class of 11 students. This, coupled with the spring thaw, makes everything a little better.

My job as an administrator is to begin looking forward and planning for the upcoming Fall and the beginning of next year. Before then however, I am really going to enjoy this years' graduation on June 7th. Many of the graduating class have been with us since 8th or 9th grade. It has been bitter-sweet, but looking back

and truly enjoying the privilege of watching these students grow into the adults they have become, has been worth the energy and effort.

Summer program is coming along. It will again run 4 days a week for 6 weeks. This year's program should have about 30 students. Remember to talk to your school system if you're interested so you don't get shut out.

Parent Night is May 8th 4-6 pm, hope to see you all there. I will be working with the staff the rest of the year on our new 'Theme' for next fall: "Be Extraordinary " Stay tuned.

### Meet Denise: New Aide at TVA

Our history teacher Chris asked the teacher's aide, Denise, a series of questions, interviewing her. We wanted to get to know her a little better and try to get a better understanding of whom she is.

Growing up Denise wanted to be a veterinarian. Previously she worked as an assistant director of a residential home. She came back to schools because the residential lost funding. She worked in other programs, but did not get the same "feel", so she came back to working in a school.

Where are you from?

Swampscott, Ma: The beach with the Boston skyline.

How do you like our school?

I love it! The students are great, and I'm impressed how the students love to learn! Also I like how many things happen in our school and how great the electives are.



Favorite TV show –Homeland

Favorite food- seafood

Favorite character from Seinfeld- Kramer

Beatles or stones- Stones

# Poetry Corner

## Vampire Love Soul Or Death

By Jessica Nelson

Your life and soul this is for you say you can not live without me  
I would never leave you so let's keep on going with life and see where it takes us.  
So hold me tight and never let me go this love is too sweet the world is trying to rip us apart and we say no  
we are going to be forever we are going to live forever  
two vampires in love.



*Beautiful tapestry from Africa presented to TVA from our recent fundraising event helping raise money for our former teacher Siza Mtimbiri and his hopes to see his dream come true opening the first ever Hope Academy & Medical Center in Zimbabwe, Africa. Stay tuned as we follow this project ~*

## Untitled

By Holly Pierce

A scatter of green moss lines.  
The frigid walls that lead my existence onward,

The pure blossom of fear now flashes through my vessel of a being; the drumming tells me another life less day.

## Before My Eyes

By Holly Pierce

Before my eyes flutter open, the noise of silence fills me whole.  
I sink into a salute of memories.

My lids to fill express graphic wants of a world only there when my mind clicks to seize.  
I can now tell you the pattern of the ceiling tile above my head and without looking,  
I drove lonesome faces portraying a road less traveled on.

## Interview with Kristen

*(continued from page 1)*

Her favorite foods from places she used to live in the past:

Virginia- barbeque

Boston- fresh seafood

P.J's kitchen – everything-- most of all salmon!

Sushi is her most favorite food

Who is the greatest Seinfeld character? Kramer

Does she prefer Beatles or Stones? Beatles!

# *Thoughts on Creative Writing*

By Chris Peura

Here in Topsfield, when the clock strikes one p.m., it is time for elective. I've always loved this time of day, and for the past six years I have only offered two electives for students to attend. Some quarters I am out there with staff members, Brian or AJ on the basketball court or football field trying to keep up with athletic students like the forever-energetic Dyrece Robinson. We call this elective Crossfit and it is a great way to get outside and enjoy the fresh air while playing our favorite sports. The other quarters have been reserved for hiking through Topsfield's beautiful state park trails in search of the legendary creature known to all of us as Bigfoot. Over the years, Bigfoot elective has evolved into something more than just an elective. It has become a club. For nature loving students like the legend himself Ryan Bashaw. Bigfoot is a chance to get lost in the wilderness and contemplate the major questions of life. While we have yet to find the elusive creature of the woods, we always seem to find ourselves in the most philosophical of senses. That is to say we always feel so much better by the end of each hike. Be it Crossfit or Bigfoot, there is something to say about the positive benefits of sunshine and fresh air.

This year the winter struck Topsfield with an even colder vengeance than typical, and I found myself in the peculiar situation of needing to offer something new for elective. It would be the first time spending the elective period indoors. I sat back and thought hard. I thought about the things I enjoy doing inside. The three things that stood out were eating, reading and watching television. I got excited imagining an elective where students could retreat to my room and indulge in Netflix, novels and comfort food. Somehow that idea just seemed a bit lacking in academic flavor.

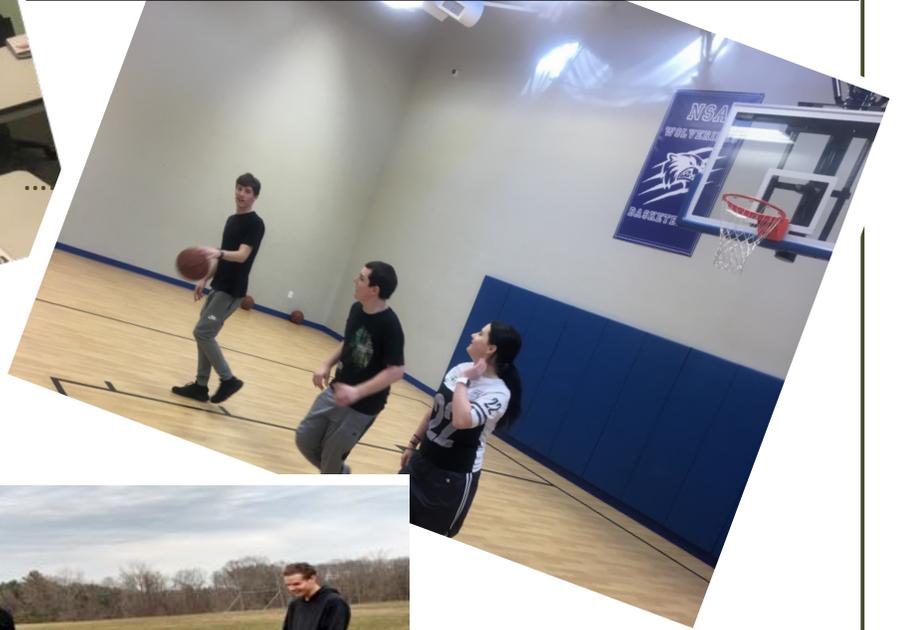
Then it came to me, since fall I have been working on a creative writing piece. Over the months it evolved into a full-fledged writing project that has become a novel in the works. I have no business writing a novel, I have never written anything over fifty pages. Cassie my fellow teacher can attest that my English skills are about as scarce as my vertical jump on the basketball court. But still I must write this novel. It started over the summer when I read a book by famed author Cormac McCarthy. It is called *Blood Meridian* and it changed my life forever. That's the power of literature. When I finished the book, I didn't just want to read another book, I wanted to be a writer. Cormac McCarthy has inspired me to write, and while I'll never come close to producing anything even remotely close to the level of Mr. McCarthy's writing, it doesn't matter. What matters is how great I feel when I write something. The best way I can describe it is comparing it to the very first time I watched Michael Jordan fly through the air on television. After watching MJ, I knew I had to be a basketball player. It doesn't matter that I can't dunk like Mike because all that matters is how I feel when playing the game. I love basketball, and thanks to Cormac McCarthy, I love writing.

I started thinking what a cool idea it would be to have a creative writing elective at Topsfield Vocational Academy. I wondered if there were any students who shared the same love for literature and creative writing. What I found were a few students who have shown an incredible passion for creative expression. Like Bigfoot, the Creative Writing elective became a club, a writer's club. My room became a place where students could relax and write whatever was on their minds. The writing that was produced over the third quarter was nice, but it was not the best feature of the elective. The best feature was atmosphere these three students generated every day for one shining hour. These students supported and encouraged each other to open up and discuss how they felt each day. When someone felt like sharing, we listened. We did not just wait for our turn to talk; we really listened and offered positive feedback and support. Yes, the writing these students completed was special, but the bond we shared as writers over this quarter is sacred.

I want to thank Anthony F, Jessica N, and Holly P for creating the very first TVA writing club! For anyone who's ever tried writing something personal is extremely difficult. It takes a mountain of courage to put your feelings on paper for someone else to read. I marvel their courage and cherish the kindness they shared with each other this past quarter. I used to think Cormac McCarthy was my inspiration to write; now that honor goes to three students at TVA. If that is not EXTRAORDINARY, then I do not know what is. Thank you and all the best, Chris, TVA teacher



*Fun times at  
TVA*





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