



## Hearts Full, Hearts Breaking

### THS Students say Valentine's Day is one of Loving and Longing

By Sadie Deveau & Nancy Arias  
Staff Writers

Valentine's day has always been a day people either hate or love, but what is the history behind this holiday?

Emperor Claudius II executed two men, both of them named Valentine on February 14th. The two were honored by the Catholic Church as martyrs with the celebration of St. Valentine's Day. However, it wasn't a romantic holiday until Shakespeare and other famous writers started romanticizing this holiday. Writer Geoffrey Chaucer was the first to link this day to love-at the time of his writing in the 14th Century. February 14th was once considered the start of spring in Britain because it was the start of the bird's mating season, therefore a perfect day for the show of affection.

For many, Valentine's Day is a celebration of love and connection, while for others it's a reminder of the longing and loneliness they face in the struggle of relationships.

But how is Valentine's Day viewed at Triton? Walking through the school, the *Triton Voice* asked students to share their views. Some do not want to hear about it or participate.

"I don't really see it as important, mostly because I don't have Valentines," said Beckham Zizza, senior. In his view, Valentine's Day is just one day to celebrate couples, but for others it's just "a stupid holiday."

Some say their perspective on the holiday changes as they grow older.

"I think it's a lot less special," said senior Adam White. "When we were younger we would give out cards and play games. It was a lot more special, but now that I'm older and don't have a girlfriend..."

Freshman Michelle Arias had a shifting perspective on the day. "For the younger people, I feel it's more friendship between each other, it's more like 'hey, I appreciate you as a friend,' it's not really romantic yet," she said, adding that it's as if there is a pressure for finding a partner as you grow, taking away the simplicity and joy of the holiday.

Even those who don't have anyone special still feel for the holiday, seeing couples together, gifts being given, and growing hopes.

"I like it for the people who are married and have someone," said Arias. Though she may not exactly like it for herself, she is happy for those who enjoy the day with others and share their love.

Even so, there are people who don't just view it for the "special someone" part of the holiday or as a needed day to love someone, including Desiray Martinez, who



expressed this sentiment.

"I think it's a very positive and expressive holiday to show your love for anybody," said Martinez. "It doesn't have to be specifically a significant other, anyone can show affection to those they care for the most," said Martinez. It's a lovely holiday she has loved and been excited for since being a kid.

"I love Valentine's Day — it's actually one of my favorite holidays" said senior Madison January, who is waiting to spend the day with the people she loves. January expressed her perfect Valentine's Day as spending time with someone she loves, whether it's a significant other or her family around her.

"I don't think you need a specific day to love your partner," added CJ Weisenstein, a junior. Weisenstein spoke carefully about Valentine's, explaining that she neither likes nor hates the holiday. It's definitely a great excuse to go out, and give out gifts, a way to have fun and enjoy one of her favorite colors — pink, she said. However, she also has some a dislike about the holiday: the marketing. "The history behind this holiday was clouded with consumerism and standards when it should just be a day you show your love," she said.

Seeing the holiday from the different aspects, she believes something simple, a small dinner, a small gift, even a flower is more efficient than the large expectations people carry of what to do on the holiday.

"Advertisements hold Valentines to a very specific standard," added Martinez.

Valentine's Day is romantic, and lovey, but also remember it's not just about couples, students said. It's not just about what you can give or having a "special someone." Students say it is also about being with those who you appreciate and even yourself.

## Transformed by AI

### How Teaching and Learning Have Changed Post-COVID with Artificial Intelligence

By Bradyn Lopes  
Staff Writer

The COVID-19 virus and the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) have significantly reshaped education, affecting both how students learn and how teachers approach their work. As classrooms adapt to these changes, a new balance between technology and traditional learning is emerging.

"The focus seems to be more on getting good grades rather than engaging deeply with the material," said Mrs. Jillian Lewis, a Triton High School social studies teacher. She says that she has noticed a shift in student behavior since the pandemic, attributing this trend to the convenience of tools like search engines and AI.

Math teacher Mr. Matthew Haley shares similar concerns, noting that students often avoid taking risks. Instead students "will simply wait for help or try to use photo math, rather than try to think it through on their own," he said. This reluctance, he believes, may be a result of habits formed during remote learning when unsupervised access to technology was common.

AI has also influenced how educators approach teaching. While Mrs. Lewis hasn't made significant changes to her

[See AI on page 2](#)



This image of students in a classroom was created by using artificial intelligence from PopAI.

## 'No I In Team'

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This is the second of a two-part series on how our sports teams are doing at the mid-season. This week we cover track, swimming, and basketball. Last week we covered wrestling, hockey, and cheer.

By Gennes Packer & Cassidy Beebe, Staff Writers

The Triton boys and girls swim teams dominated this season in the pool. And their work this week secured a CAL championship for both teams.

The girls own a perfect 5-0 record, and the boys are 4-1 after defeating Lynnfield in their most recent meet — a team that previously represented their only loss.

The team has 14 Triton swimmers and is a co-op with Georgetown, Pentucket and Newburyport High Schools. From Triton, girls captain Isabella Morgese, who co-captains with Triton's Leah Smullin along with captains from the other two schools, said the girl's delivered on a big goal.

"The girls also won the CAL on Sunday for the fourth year in a row," said Morgese. "Our goals now are to hopefully place top-10 at sectionals and states in February."

"Our biggest accomplishment has been winning the CAL overall. Also, Captain Sam Whitaker and Captain Josh Adler (both of Pentucket) won Swimmers of the Year and diver Ava Connelly won Diver of the Year."

[See TEAMS on page 2](#)

## Boys and Girls Swim are CAL Champs! Basketball, Track are Making Strides



The Triton Co-Op team celebrates Cape Ann League Championships for both the boys and girls after dominating to a win. The team is made up of 14 swimmers from Triton as well as athletes from Georgetown, Newburyport and Pentucket (courtesy photo).

# Opinion: Climate Change Need Not Be Politicized

By Matthew Mollica, Staff Writer

Climate change shouldn't be a political issue and needs to be addressed by everyone. The climate issue has divided people into alarmists and deniers, with alarmists typically being left-leaning and deniers right-leaning. Despite the undeniable changes to the environment, the left and the right spend most of their time trying to prove and disprove climate change and pointing fingers. The bottom line is there is an undeniable change in our climate due to our utilization of many natural resources for energy, transportation, production, industry, and more. We must put aside our egos and work together on protecting our environment, as doing so benefits the people on both sides, whether they see it or not.

The right-leaning conservative party sees actions and regulations to protect the environment as attacks on their freedom. Those on the left have the right idea, but they utilize an "all or nothing" mentality, and don't look that far into their proposed "solutions." For example: electric cars. There has been a huge industry push for going all electric, with the belief that doing so will reduce carbon emissions that are polluting our atmosphere. Many on the right say that this is a threat to their freedom of transportation. What many on the left don't realize is that the environmental damage that goes into mining for the raw materials used for batteries, and the fossil fuels used to power electrical stations that charge the vehicles doesn't make much of a difference when compared to the environmental damage from driving gas cars.



Television shows such as Family Guy poke fun at the gas-sipping Toyota Prius. Electric cars aren't always the best option when attempting to reverse climate change (Fox Image)

The issue here is that more effort has been devoted to debating whether or not we should do something about the climate instead of worrying about who will benefit more from the changes that should be made. The belief that climate change is a hoax is more popular for those on the right; they believe there is a hidden motive behind any changes to the way we live our lives. Those on the left are more likely to blindly follow and believe anything that is advertised to be good for the environment (such as EVs) even though the majority of these solutions don't make a difference. The biggest cause for pollution is from large industrial operations all over the world. Factory cities, large scale mining operations, trash burning, and fossil fuel power plants. There needs to be an effort from all people dedicated to researching patterns in our climate, where we go wrong with industrialization, and come to the realization that we will need to make compromises on a larger scale in order to protect our planet.

Some may argue (mostly on the right) that the climate question IS inherently political because it theoretically restricts personal freedoms, such as taking away the ability to drive what cars you want, the fear of utilizing nuclear energy, and even the lack of profit for the United States from ditching the utilization of fossil fuels.

However, if we work together, compromise, and recognize the benefits for humanity while going about the climate question properly, there will be little restriction of freedom and more benefit to our environment.

# Opinion: Time for a Change Triton's Meals Should Consider Athletes

By Anthony Navaroli, Staff Writer

Imagine walking into the cafeteria after a grueling morning of classes, only to find lunch options limited to small portioned, minimum meals. For many students at Triton Regional High School, this is the norm. Triton's current meal plan sometimes falls short of providing filling and appealing options, especially for student-athletes with higher caloric and nutritional needs. Triton needs an overhaul of its lunch program to better serve its diverse student population.

## The Problem: Small Portions, Hungry Students

Picture this: pizza with a side of seven fries or a chicken finger sub between two wheat bread slices. These meals hardly satisfy the hunger of an athlete burning through calories during daily practices. Tim Clark, a junior at Triton, acknowledges the pizza is decent, however.

"I think the pizza's pretty good, like the cheese and crust... big fan of the crust." But Clark admits that he would have to double up on portions to feel full. They are simply too small for many student athletes to make it through the day.

## The Bigger Picture: Nutrition Content

The issue goes beyond portion sizes. Most of the meals offered seem only to meet USDA-recommended standards for balanced nutrition, which for some students is the minimum. While students can grab a salad or side dish, these options are rarely enough to sustain athletes' energy levels. Athletes, in particular, require meals rich in protein and complex carbohydrates to fuel their bodies.

## Athletes Need More

For students training hard, whether in football, wrestling, or any other sport, the current meal plan isn't enough. Boxed lunches or salads might be available, but they're not designed to meet an athlete's caloric or nutritional needs. These students often bring food from home or spend extra money to supplement their diets. That's not just inconvenient, it's unfair.

## The Reviews Are In

Here's the Triton lunches and how they fared during a review of meals from the week of December 19, 2024:

- Day 1: Pizza or a small burger with a minimal portion of fries.
- Day 2: Tacos, by far the best option of the week, with decent portions of meat and toppings.
- Day 3: Chicken finger subs, underwhelming in flavor but adequate in chicken quantity.
- Day 4: Breakfast favorites, including too small of a portion of eggs for the typical athlete, nutritionally insufficient for a midday meal.

The recurring theme is inconsistent and portions inadequate for the average athlete or students with a higher caloric intake plan, leaving the only way to achieve this goal to pack a home lunch or spend more for added portions.

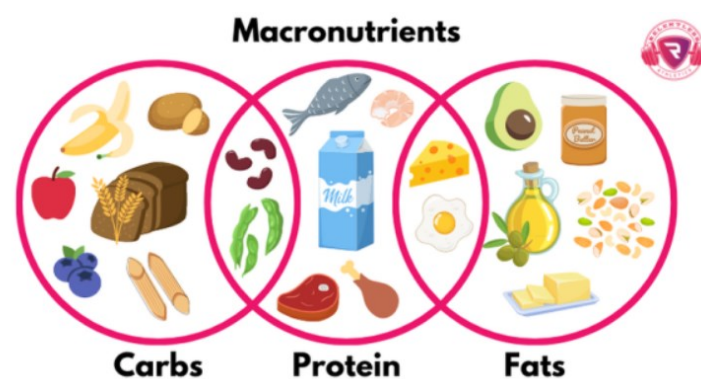
## Addressing Counterarguments

Some argue that Triton's lunch is usually enough and offers a variety of options, including salads and gluten-free meals. Technically, this is true. But as Jackson Mace, a senior, puts it: "Sometimes I'd rather starve than eat school lunch." Fellow senior Gennes Packer agrees: "A lot of the time I don't enjoy the lunches; I usually don't eat lunch at all." Neither of these students are planning on eating a high-calorie meal and still, they can't find a way to be satisfied by Triton lunch without a price. While there may be technical compliance with dietary guidelines, the reality is that students are unsatisfied, and athletes are under-fueled.

## A Better Path Forward

Triton can take inspiration from schools like North Reading, which have partnered with professional food service companies such as Chartwells. These programs offer nutritious, filling meals designed to meet the needs of all students, especially their athletes. Triton should consider adding:

- Athlete-specific meal options with



A balanced meal plan for athletes should include the above (Cedars-Sinai Medical Centers image).

- higher caloric density.
- Larger portion sizes to satisfy hunger.
- Higher-quality ingredients to improve overall meal satisfaction.

Let's make Triton a school where students look forward to lunch, not dread it. With a revamped meal plan, we can ensure every student is fueled for success, both in and out of the classroom.

## TEAMS from page 1

### Track

Track is a year-round sport that many students at Triton participate in. Both boys and girls track are coached by Mr. Joseph Colbert, Tyler Colbert, Graham Eaton, and Laurretta Bailin. The boys team has four senior captains: Bradyn Lopes, Jack Lyman, Will Hight, and Jonah Reminganti. The girls track captains are Ava Burl and Alexa Bonasera, as well as junior captains Sarah Ewell and London Cole.

For the boys, this year their record is 3-1. Their first meet against Pentucket ended in a 51-49 win, their second meet against North Reading ended in a 53-47 loss, and finally their meet in Newburyport where they beat the Clipper 54-46. At the start of the year captain Lopes had both team and personal goals. However, after seeing their performances at meets, his expectations have slightly changed.

"We are most likely not going to win the CAL anymore, so its to just win the CAL meet outside of our record," states Lopes. "But, I think we are exceeding expectations as individuals."

Hight shared his own goals as well, agreeing with Lopes, on wanting to win the CAL meet. Additionally he hopes to have more athletes compete in the state relays and set a school record for the 4x200. Personally, he hopes to become a better captain for his team.

"We are exceeding expectations in a lot of events and have a promising season ahead of us," said Hight.

The girls share the same record as the boys, 3-1, having beat Pentucket 57-43, North Reading 53-47, but losing to Newburyport, 20-70. Burl said a goal is to improve as an athlete and better the team as a whole. In past seasons, she says they have struggled with keeping the team motivated, especially after a tough loss, and she wants to work on keeping a more positive attitude.

"We focused on celebrating the small victories, like personal and season bests," says Burl. "These moments

help boost confidence and motivate the team to keep pushing forward."

Since the start, Burl has been passionate about running. A big personal goal for her is to end her senior year sharing that passion with the younger athletes, while also preparing herself for the collegiate level.

"I want to pass down the excitement and love for track to the next generation of runners and help inspire them to enjoy the sport as much as I have," said Burl.

Cole also shared the goals she has for the team. Cole wants a season where each person on the team feels they are a part of a family, always setting new personal records and trying their hardest.

### Basketball

The boys and girls basketball teams both have 13 varsity players, and are led by amazing senior captains. For the boys team, there is Charlie Mollineaux, Jason Holscher, and Liam Friis; for the girls, Ashley Jones and Margaret Welch.

The boys basketball team has three coaches: Mike Trovato, Danielle Perkins, and Mark Price. As of this writing, they are 7-7. As captain, Mollineaux has set goals for his team to win 10 season games, and make it into the playoffs. Since the beginning of the season, those goals have remained the same and they are doing better than he thought. Mollineaux keeps his hopes high for the team and supports them through the season.

The girls are coached by Gregg Dollas, Jack McCarthy, and Papa D. They have a current record of four wins and seven losses. Jones, shares how, as a captain, she helps the team by always being aware of what everyone around her is capable of and providing motivation in order to keep morale high.

"When it comes to being a captain, I just want make sure everyone feels included and they have a purpose on the team," said Jones.

In past years, Jones has felt as though some of the younger players have been excluded which puts the team in a bad mindset. She tries her hardest to always reach

out to others and create close relationships with everyone. In order to support the team, Jones has been putting in work to better her offense and becoming a stronger team asset.

## AI from page 1

teaching style, she remains cautious about the overuse of AI, noting that curiosity and problem-solving are critical life skills, and using AI more often presents the risk of dampening these sort of skills.

Mr. Haley has, however, started to change his teaching styles due to AI.

"I am finding myself changing my lesson delivery and the types of assignments we work on," he said. He does this to try and avoid the use of AI on his assignments and try to get the students to learn to do their own work.

He also says that AI can be used as a helpful tool, noting that he uses the AI feature on his assignments on Edia - an online AI math platform for teachers - to give feedback to his students while they are doing them.

Students are also finding ways to navigate this new educational landscape.

"AI is helpful for understanding and checking my problems, but I try to solve problems on my own first," Tihan Khan, Triton High School senior, said. "I use it as a guide, not a crutch."

Triton has repeatedly stated that the use of AI to complete assignments is against school policy, and Mrs. Lewis mentions that when students do use AI, it is obvious. However, using AI as Khan does is something that he thinks is a fair use of the tool and is something he suggests everyone should do.

As education continues to evolve, the challenge, students and teachers say, lies in integrating technology thoughtfully while preserving creativity, curiosity, and resilience in both teaching and learning.

"Curiosity, problem solving, creativity, etc. are life skills," Mrs. Lewis said, "and the overuse of AI will definitely have an impact on what we are capable of."