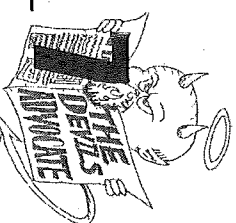


# In Our Opinion



## Question of the Week

What is your favorite sport?

### Staff Editorial: The Perks Of Being an Individual

#### Blue Devil's Advocate

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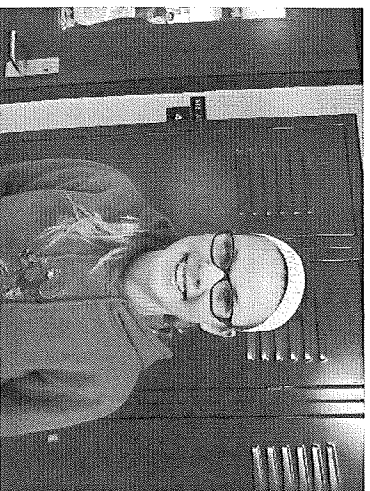
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**Mission Statement**  
Richmond High School's student newspaper, The Blue Devil's Advocate, strives to serve the student body and provide a public forum to make their ideas heard to the school and community. Our goal is to provide both accurate and balanced stories in order to heighten understanding, entertain, and inform.

**Letters**  
We invite readers to share their thoughts with us by writing to the Editor. See the drop off box in the library or you may email us at: mmurphy@richmond.k12.nj.us. Include your name, address, and grade level.

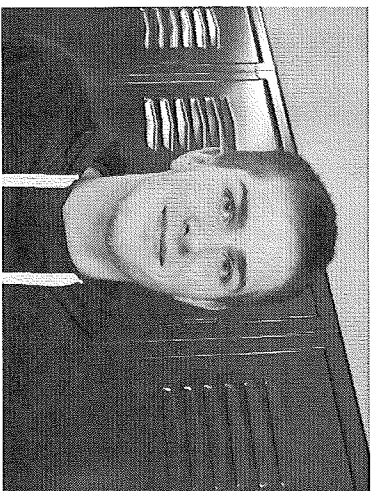
## Senior

"Softball" — Alana Shroeder



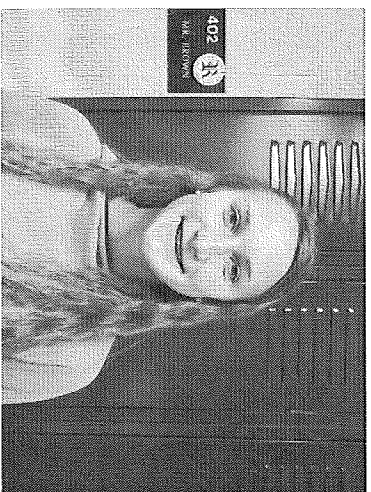
## Junior

"Tennis" — Ethan Yore



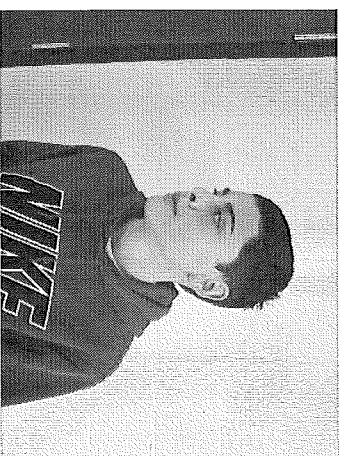
## Sophomore

"Volleyball" — Mikayla Mlot



## Freshman

"Basketball" — Cyle Monty



From the time we entered the doors of our kindergarten classrooms, the countdown had begun. We were on our way, making a mark in the world, discovering what our place may be.

With clocks ticking and faces changing, we met our first friends, had our first relationships, found our place among peers.

But did we find ourselves? Trends come in and out.

Clothes get old and disposed of. Hair styles go from short to long to choppy to curly to straight, but every single one of us encompasses something that will never change-- it is not what is on the outer surface, but what lies within us.

Students get caught up on what is too

'mainstream' or how to dress and act to fit their stereotypes. Whether those stereotypes be country, sporty, indie, hipster, or even scrubby... what really matters is what resides inside.

We should not get caught up on how other people view us and how we can keep this reputation. We should focus on being ourselves.

**Explore.**  
Try a new sport, meet a new person, listen to new music. Find yourself.

Laugh even when no one else thinks it's funny. Wear whatever you want to wear on days you want to wear it. **Live.**

Breathe in air of the present, smile with your friends while you can. While you are together.

**Be happy.**  
Stop worrying about drama and involving yourself in the mistakes of others. This is your life after all. **Relax.**

Take a moment; breathe it

all in. We can only be teenagers once and nothing at this time is ever as bad as it seems.

That is what this time -- this time that is sandwiched between childhood and adulthood -- is for: finding yourself, being an individual.

So why waste it?  
There is a famous quote by Ralph Waldo Emerson that states, "To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment."

We need to stop hiding ourselves behind closed curtains.

We need stop restraining our- selves with our secrets. **Be proud of who you are because you are you and no one can be you quite like you can.**

It is important to remember that our lives at home may be nothing like our lives at school. We have no idea what our peers might be enduring. We have no idea what they have already en-

dured. But I believe that understanding that none of our lives are perfect may be enough to be able to reach out to those who may need us the most.

We find our true friends at the oddest times and the weirdest places. Sometimes they are people that we have judged the hardest and hated the deepest.

So my question is, Do you have the courage to say hi to someone new today?

Do you have the courage to chop off all your hair and dye it purple? Do you have the courage to stand out amongst a society who craves sameness? I hope the answer is yes.