

THE SUDBURY TOWN CRIER

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things in society, which was peppered by anti Vietnam protests. There were marches and sit-ins encompassing many changes to society. Care for the environment steamrolled into a very strong movement.

Richard Nixon signed the National Environmental Policy Act, which encouraged man and the environment to live in harmony; to promote acts which will add to the health of man and the environment and

- Most families throw away 88 pounds of plastic a year.
- Each person uses 12,000 gallons of water a year
- The 500 million cars use two gallons of fuel a

use public transportation
• The salt used on roads in winter, chemical fertilizers, septic tank product etc. can leech into streams and taint drinking water

EARTH, PAGE 11

LETTER

Tracing my roots

I am just weeks away from clicking "submit." Then, the *New York Times* will receive my 900-word personal essay, review it, and, most likely, send me a form rejection letter. Better yet, they won't respond. Still, I will have reached a milestone in my writing career, and I will carry around the joy of that silent rejection forever.

Even though I spend my workdays writing and editing for a medical association, I choose to come

home, pull out my laptop, and write some more. I may be tired; I may even complain (okay, I'm quite certain I will), but I still do it. And it's because of the work ethic my L-S teachers and classmates instilled in me.

But our little community didn't just teach me to value drive; it pushed me to have passion. For a writer, this is crucial—especially because the topics I enjoy find connections between people, place and culture. I've written about refugees in upstate New York, the

homeless in Colorado and women's rights in Brazil.

Often, the angles of entry into my stories are a product of my past. Each time someone mentions the war in Iraq, I am reminded of the walkout my classmates staged in 2004. Whenever I hear a debate about race, I think about helping Bill Schechter rehang beautiful murals depicting new hope for civil rights. And when the earthquake hit Haiti in 2010, I immediately remembered hearing Paul Farmer talk in the new L-S

auditorium my senior year.

L-S has taught lots of students the rules of grammar or physics. But for others—what I can only imagine to be *thousands and thousands* of others—its hallways have illuminated the meaning of social justice and compelled us to act (or in my case, to write). I can't begin to express my gratitude for such rich educational opportunities—in and out of the classroom - **Alyssa Martino, L-S Class of 2005, Meadowbrook Circle**

BY THE NUMBERS

\$10,695

WHAT IT IS Average property tax bill in fiscal 2011 for the owner of a single family home in Sudbury. This is based on a tax rate of \$17.03 per \$1,000 valuation, and the average home valued at \$627,988.

WHAT IT WAS LAST YEAR
\$10,460

ONE YEAR INCREASE ? ?

PERCENTAGE CHANGE FROM 2001 38 percent

EXPLANATION Sudbury is ranked 9th in Massachusetts towns with the highest fiscal 2011 tax bill. Weston is number one, followed by Sherborn, Lincoln, Dover, Carlisle, Wayland, Wellesley, and Concord. Bills for the average homeowner declined in 30

(DOR) Division of Local Services. Over the past decade, property taxes in Massachusetts have gotten more expensive in every city and town. A comparison of fiscal 2001 to this budget year shows that average single-family tax bills have spiked anywhere from 25 percent to more than 50 percent in the last 10 years, depending on

"We're at the highest percent of dependence statewide on the property tax since Proposition 2 1/2 was passed 30 years ago. That's really because of the cuts in state aid."

Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation President
Michael Widmer