

## Triton Tattoos: Students and Staff Getting Inked

*Editors Note: This is the first in a three-part series on the rising popularity of tattoos as well as how "getting inked" is becoming more socially acceptable both in high school and beyond.*

By: Dylan McDougall  
Staff writer

Whether out in the open for others to soak in the story behind their ink or hidden under long-sleeves and uniforms, the tattoo-scene at Triton is a spreading trend that is staining the skin of more students and staff members than one may think.

While spectators raise concerns of the permanency and commitment that comes with deciding on a tattoo, the meaning that is embedded within the ink holds an intimate significance to those who've been under the needle.

Recently recruited Marine Poolee and senior at Triton, Cody Reeves, had his tattoo done when he was 16 years old as a memorial dedicated to his grandfather. His grandfather's impact on the family made his death in early 2012 a difficult time.

Reeves explained that his grandfather's passing made him realize the significance his grandfather had on him.

"When he died, it seemed like I lost the chance to be close to him... So I figured that you couldn't get much closer than permanently on your skin," said Reeves.

Reeves elucidated that though he is not religious, his grandfather's faith was so strong that he "knew [he] wanted a cross right from the beginning."

According to Reeves, he spent several weeks online considering various styles of crosses before "one of the employees at Acute Body Arts in Connecticut contacted tattoo artist Haap Peacock (who usually works as a specialist in Texas) and got him to fly up to do my tattoo."

Fitting Reeves's image to his own style, Peacock adjusted the tribal patterns as well as the color scheme. Often, artists may also suggest things such as the design's background and size depending on the location of the tattoo, though for Reeves, "the location was decided naturally" as he hadn't considered many other places to get tattooed.

"The tattoo is a black and gray cross, to symbolize Christianity and death, and marbled to add the factor of age; as if the stone has been there for a long period of time. The tribal symbol represents the Crown of Thorns and adds sharpness to the death. The black and blue combination of tribal design and the cross represent pain, like a bruise. [My grandfather] died during a full moon, so there is a black circle behind the center of the cross, which represents 'the dark side of the moon,'" said Reeves.

"The tattoo almost cost me my career as a U.S. Marine." Reeves said

"The rule is that the ink cannot be seen more than four-fingers-length from the end of your [provided] shirt. My tattoo is three and a half fingers-length from the end of my sleeve."

The future marine recalled the pain level (at certain points) as being an 8 on a scale of 1-10, while less severe spots "felt like a Sharpie marker."

Having spent \$320 for a tad over two hours of tattooing, Reeves reflected no regrets as the cross "reminds [him] who [he] should strive to be like."

**Officer John Lucy:** Newbury Police and School Resource Officer John Lucy said that similarly to the Marines, the tattoo guidelines in the police force may vary from station-to-station; however, Lucy explained that, "generally, the protocol is [that] we

can't have visible tattoos. They have to be above the shirt line and covered," though in some occasions, officers may be grandfathered in "if they have a tattoo prior to being hired, like from the marines" or something of equal respect.

With this in place, Lucey reported that there are at least three other officers at his station that have easily-hidden tattoos.

*I got one on my calf, once-- and I fell asleep while they were giving it to me -- School Resource Officer John Lucey*

The 2005 graduate of Triton got his first tattoo (of many) when he was 19. After a year of considering designs, Lucey decided on a 6-inch Celtic cross that cost him \$490 (as many artists charge towards \$15/letter) at the "very very expensive" Masterpiece Tattoo Shop. Reflecting on the costs of his first two tattoos (from Masterpiece) in comparison to the

prices of his new tattoo artist located in Derry, New Hampshire, Lucey advocated that "if ... a tattoo artist...sees you don't have a lot of experience, they'll try to get more out of you.

"Pricing tends to vary based on style, size, and color choice, though some artists may make adjustments to the cost based on subject matter and location, or simply due to the fact that they've tattooed the individual numerous times before. Commonly, tattoos are charged per hour (at a ballpark average of about \$100 per sixty minutes).

"For another [tattoo] that took three hours, [it cost] \$350." Lucey said.

While the placement of a tattoo can be a factor in both pricing and job opportunities, "location affects pain" as well, according to Lucey. Though he acknowledges his high tolerance for pain, Lucey admits that the most pain he's experienced during a tattoo session (referring to his most recent visit that took place four days prior to being interviewed) was a "five or six" on the pain scale of 1 to 10.

According to Lucey, because it is "heavily shaded", the pain level rises. However, to show the contrast in pain levels, Lucey recalled another tattoo shop visit as much the opposite to discomfort.

"I got one on my calf, once-- and I fell asleep while they were giving it to me," Lucey said.

Though for his first tattoo, Lucey simply picked a fashionable design, as his interest for tattoos expanded, he began manipulating designs found from the Internet on his own and working until he had a final image that he can "feel good about how it looks."

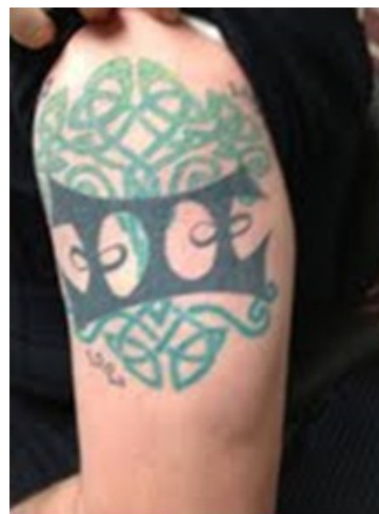
Holding the most significance of all of his tattoos, the Roman-numeral three located on his arm represents his family pride, as Lucey explained that he is the third John Lucey in his family.

"I also have the Celtic tree of life around it with the birth dates of my granddad, my dad, and me; and there's a blank space for if I have a son." Lucey said.

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Lucey's first tattoo (center cross) and his most recent tattoo that surrounds it. (McDougall photo)



The Roman numeral 3 stands out to Lucey as he is the Third in his family. (McDougall photo)



Senior Cody Reeves Tattoo symbolizing his grandfather (McDougall photo)

## Hiding the Anxiety: The Steps to Take to Shake the Ache

By: Dylan McDougall  
Staff writer

*Editors Note: Due to the sensitivity of the subject, names have been changed in this article in order to protect the anonymity of those interviewed.*

With anxiety disorders affecting the lives of more patients than drug and alcohol abusers combined, panic attacks are becoming more prevalent as stress and worry overwhelm students. Though a greater percentage of females than males are affected, both sexes will often experience panic attacks at least once midway through their teenage years, according to *medicinenet.com*.

Sally Jones (not this student's real name) has been weighed down by panic disorder since being diagnosed in sixth grade. Averaging a minimum of five panic attacks each day, she described the sensation as a smothering suffocation that's as constricting as "trying to breathe out of straw".

"I start to feel really claustrophobic like there's someone sitting on my chest and I can't breathe," Jones said.

Commonly mistaken for a heart attack, as many adults experiencing their first panic attack will admit themselves into a hospital in concern for cardiac problems, panic attacks often erupt without reason, though many are triggered by stressful, fear-fostering events, thoughts, or memories. While the duration of a panic attack can last for as little as a few minutes on to a couple of hours, most sufferers will experience panic attacks in 10-minute bursts, which will often reach its peak between 60-seconds to two minutes into the attack, as reported on *medicinenet.com*.

According to Licensed Clinical Social Worker and nineteen-year social worker in the Triton district, Nancy Tsakirgis, "more students struggle with anxiety disorders or panic attacks than we realize. Some studies show there is an average of about 8 percent of teens ages 13-18 have an anxiety disorder."

This means, according to Tsakirgis, that on our campus, "there are about 110 students who deal with the disorder" between grades seven and twelve.

On a wider scale, anxiety disorders affect approximately 2.4 million Americans nationwide. These anxiety disorders are serious mental ailments that create a constant fear and worry that can overwhelm and often mentally handicap those diagnosed, according to *healingwell.com*.

Among the most reported anxiety disorders is **panic disorder**, in which the sufferer submerges into an internal swamp of fear and unexpected attacks of panic. These panic attacks may be triggered by a bouncing fear produced by one's thoughts or situation, or by certain stress-evoking events such as riding on an airplane or driving in aggressive traffic.

While anxiety disorders can target any age group, according to Joan Delahanty, a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner (PNP) at Anna Jacques Hospital, it has become more common amongst teenagers and can be seen in "20 to 25 percent of adolescents because of peer pressure and academic stressors."

The initial sign of a panic disorder is the panic attack. Even during sleep, a panic attack may come on randomly and cause debilitating sensations in a person. From the shortness of breath to excessive sweat, many patients begin feeling weak and dizzy with a sense of impending doom.

"Usually regular anxiety is over a particular thing that's going on, but with panic attacks, it

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**ANXIETY continued**

could be a perfectly normal day, and I'll find myself having one and have no idea why," Jones explained.

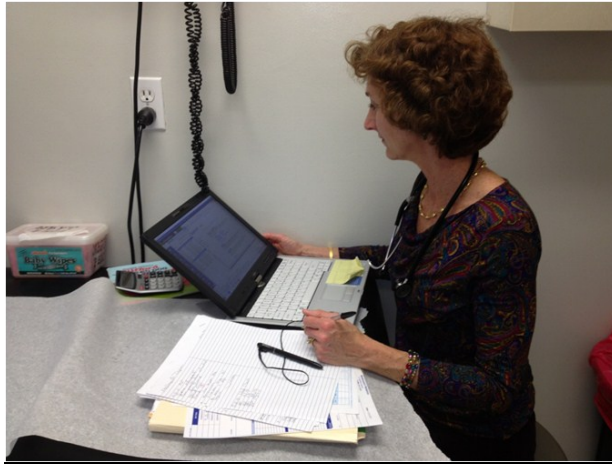
Explaining further, Jones highlighted that in certain cases the severity of a panic attack can affect one beyond their mental well-being, and spill into their physical health as well because of the crater it can create in the sufferer's physiological comfort.

"It's gotten to the point where I won't go to school," she admitted. "I've had to stay home from throwing up from it."

As the condition continues, rapid heart rate and shakiness, along with nausea often take place. In fact, many sufferers experience episodes of demoralization, difficulty breathing, and may even be subject to the development of "*agoraphobia*", the avoidance of certain activities in fear of having a panic attack. As a result, these sufferers get trapped beneath the inability to perform the necessities of everyday living.

"I try my best to react to panic attacks during school and work in a more disguised manner as compared to when I'm at home because it's harder for most people to understand the situation," Jones said, detailing the fact that not being in the comfort of home or around friendly faces during attacks can often create more stress and anxiousness and make the panic attacks much more difficult to handle.

"Before I was prescribed medi-



Pediatric Nurse Practitioner, Joan Delahanty, refers to her documents. (McDougall photo)

cation I struggled in school. I had no motivation to study for any test or quizzes; I didn't care if I had work to be done or if I was even passing. Even though I'm on medication now, I still struggle in school from time to time because of my anxiety and depression," Jones reported, verifying that while the medication helps, the disorder itself can take a lasting toll on the person.

Whereas each case varies based on the sufferer's medical and family history, the paramount remedy is for the individual to find a medication that best suits their specific needs to eradicate the disorder entirely; and because each treatment option is highly effective, the chances of finding the right fit is very probable, since the disorder has become a common but "very treatable" condition, according to The Center for Learning.

Often, a variety of anti-anxiety medications may be required to calm the symptoms. Even so, after a preferred medication is discovered, many individuals may need to experiment with several dosages before finally finding their fit.

"While I am prescribed (one medication) to help with my panic attacks, I also take (another medication) for my anxiety and depression," Jones explained, adding that "after about a solid year of trying different dose amounts, I have finally found a stable level that works for me."

Burdened with routine dizziness, agitation, hyperventilation, and withdrawal, many patients will seek treatment involving two types of therapy for coping skills, or the use of medication.

While cognitive behavioral therapy encourages sufferers to look at their fears realistically, certain individuals may find it more effective to experience their panic attacks in a controlled environment through exposure therapy. However, the National Anxiety Foundation suggests to take advantage of every option by considering a combination of both therapy methods and medication.

In fact, Joan Delahanty (PNP) said that the "*medicine by itself is only a band-aid*." It does not teach the person conflict-resolution, social skills, or the available resources [they can use to] assist them."

The available therapy options, according to Delahanty, can do all the things that the medication cannot, however, the individual may maintain a chemical imbalance that would still need to be addressed.

Despite the odds of overcoming anxiety disorders over a period of time, studies suggest that suicidal actions or the development of deeper illnesses such as depression are more frequent in those diagnosed with panic disorder, according to *Medicinenet.com*.

"Many people, myself included, are embarrassed about having anxiety disorder or panic disorder because of the way these disorders make the mind and body feel physically and emotionally," Jones said, explaining that in order to come to terms with the diagnosis, she allowed herself to reach out to professionals as well as family and friends.

"The new social worker in the high school, Ms. Fish, has been a huge help, just being there for me and to listen to what I have to say," Jones stated, as advice to any student experiencing similar anxiety problems and looking for help.

**TATTOO continued**

Lucey, being in favor of maintaining a professional appearance, shared his rule to tattoos as "being simple".

"[They must] all be easily hidden, which is important to me. I have tattoos on my arms and legs, and I might get one on my back eventually," Lucey explained.

Clear of regret, Officer Lucey described the process of choosing a tattoo as something that should take "plenty of time and planning" and not be done on impulse.

**Ms. Jenn Carnevale:**

As "addictive" as tattoos can be, when it comes to quantity, any student that has had class with Mr. Colbert's English-intern could acquaint that Ms. Jenn Carnevale, a graduate of the Triton class of 2003, has the rest of the school beat.

Likely having more tattoos than the entire school combined, Carnevale said she has "always found [tattoos] fascinating," though she articulated that "it was really my life-experiences that pushed me to get them."

Explaining that different artists specialize in certain styles, Carnevale said she has been to multiple tattoo shops since getting her first tattoo when she was 22 years old. With various styles that range from "old school" to traditional, the artistic potential of a tattoo artist can be best measured by the quality of their portfolio (a collection of completed works).

In fact, according to Carnevale, she had to have one artist do one "sleeve," (a full arms-length of tattoo) and another tattooist do her second sleeve.

"It really just depends on their specialty," Carnevale said

While the art often speaks for

itself, deciding a tattoo's location on the body is more of a challenge for some than it is for others. For Carnevale, however, her placement "just felt right". Being naturally drawn to her chosen locations, Carnevale claims to have "felt that [where they are] is where they were



Ms. Jenn Carnevale, a student teacher in Mr. Joe Colbert's English class this year displays some of her many tattoos (McDougall photos).

supposed to be."

With her first sleeve costing over \$3,000, and taking more than 35 hours of tattooing, Carnevale's collection of body art took a total of four years to complete.

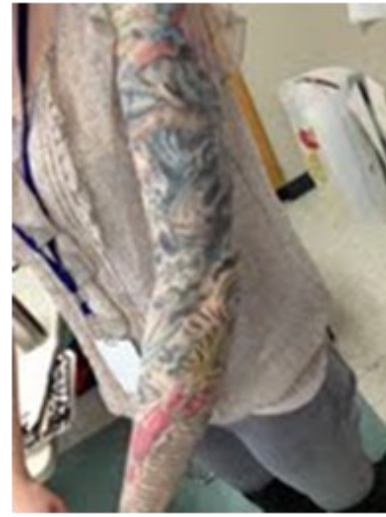
Detailing the severity of pain that a tattoo can cause, Carnevale explained that pain will depend on the chosen spot.

"The worst and most unbearable spots [for tattoos] would be the elbow and the inner arm near the armpit," Carnevale reported.

In referring her first sleeve, Carnevale described her elbow tattoo session for her "key-hole with an eye looking through" as being the "worst sitting" out of all of her tattoo experiences. Even so, Carneva-

le suggested that "for the majority of the time, tattoos are a constant four-or-five out of ten."

Arriving at the tattoo parlor with only a general concept, the process of creating the image itself is in the hands of the tattoo artist as Carnevale allows her artists to translate



her ideas into their own artistic style.

Coated in color, Carnevale considered the inspiration of her tattoos as being essential parts to who she has become.

"I've had some rough life-experiences and my tattoos are [drawn from] those experiences. They tell my story," Carnevale said.

From the simplicity of her first tattoo of the Aquarius symbol on her wrist, to the deeper meaning behind her more complex tattoos, Carnevale holds pride in the

significance of each piece. Such as her tattoo that references to the German philosopher Nietzsche (*nee-ch-aaa*), who wrote the book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

According to Carnevale, this literary tattoo represented "the first piece of literature that gave me a language to express what I was feeling when I was younger."

Unfortunately, some tattoos may cost an individual more than cash. Though she reported to have never been questioned about her tattoos as a teacher, it was because of her tattoos that Carnevale had lost a job in retail as a visual marketer.

"A higher-up, who hadn't liked them, came in one day, and I was fired," Carnevale admitted.

Despite this negative, Carnevale shows "no regrets", though she said that getting older has allowed time to think of different ideas that could have been done.

"But that just pushes me to get more tattoos!" Carnevale said.



On Wednesday, May 8, the *Triton Voice* staff visited the memorials at Boylston Street in Boston, site of the Marathon bombings. Look for the article about the visit in an upcoming edition of the *Voice* (Anastasia Small photo).