

the INDEPENDENT

Volume XXIX Number 7

Manchester Essex Regional High School 36 Lincoln Street Manchester, MA 01944

June 6, 2023

Class of 2023 graduates, reflects on accomplishments

Speeches thank outgoing principal, give future advice

By Charles Lations
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

As 123 members of the class of 2023 graduated on June 2, speeches given by faculty and students focused not only on the future of the class but on principal Patricia Puglisi's impending departure.

The class entered the field accompanied by a group of bagpipers, their class advisers, and other teachers and staff.

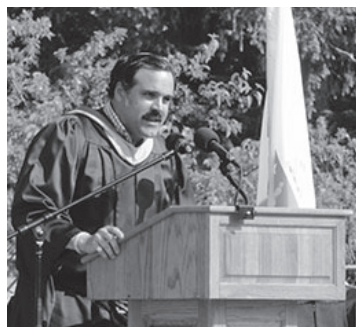
History teacher John Mullady, who gave the faculty address, thanked Puglisi for "taking a chance on [him]" and making him her first hire as principal.

"That decision has had such a positive impact on my life, but also my family's. I am forever grateful to you," he said.

He then asked all faculty members who were hired by Puglisi to stand up and be



COURTESY OF PATRICIA PUGLISI



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTOS

The faculty surround Patricia Puglisi for a picture at her final graduation ceremony as principal. Class valedictorian Kevin Adams leads the class of 2023, followed by salutatorian Charlotte Lawrence, class president Juliana Saunders, and class vice president Owen O'Leary. Social Studies teacher John Mullady gives the faculty address. The class of 2023 throw their caps into the air to celebrate.

recognized.

"We're all part of your legacy here at MERHS, and I want to

say thank you very much on behalf of us. There are hundreds of students who are about to

experience what a dedicated and caring principal you are," Mullady said.

Senior class president Juliana Saunders spoke about the **GRADUATION, page 3**

Administration selects Julie Sgroi for principal position next year

By Phileine de Widt
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Julie Sgroi, an assistant principal from Danvers High School, will be the new principal next year.

The administration began looking for a candidate after Principal Patricia Puglisi announced her departure through an email on Feb. 1.

Throughout the following months, there were selection committees and interview sessions with students, teachers, and other members of the community.

On April 7, Superintendent Pamela Beaudoin sent out the final choice, Sgroi, in an email.

Sgroi's site visit as a finalist was on March 28, where she met with students, teachers, and other members of the school community.

Before that, she met with the principal search committee, which also consisted of all stakeholder groups.

Spanish teacher Robert Bilsbury was part of the committee. Through his experience as well as at Sgroi's site visit, he was impressed with her.

"During the interviews, she wasn't controlling the conversation but really engaged well with everyone," he said.

Junior Diego Sanson, who was also part of the committee, said he thought Sgroi would be a good fit.

"I think people will respond well to her really positive energy, and she seems very excited to get into the classroom, meet the students, and get to know everyone, which I really liked," he said.

With Sgroi's arrival next fall, there will be more opportunities to meet with her, Beaudoin said in her email.

According to Sgroi's resume, posted on the MERHS website, she attended Woburn High School. She then received a Bachelor of Arts from Framingham State College in 2000 with a major in Spanish and a minor in education.

She also received her Master of Education from Salem State College in 2009. Since then, she has been continuing postgraduate coursework with a major in education at the University of LaVerne.

From 2005 to 2020, Sgroi was



COURTESY OF AMY LEJEUNE

Danvers High School assistant principal Julie Sgroi will be joining the school community next year, replacing current principal Patricia Puglisi.

a Spanish language teacher at Lynnfield High School, becoming the department head in 2015.

Since 2020, she has been working as the assistant principal at Danvers High School.

Though Sgroi had less administrative experience than the other candidates, Bilsbury views it as an advantage.

Having worked as a teacher for so long and recently, she will understand the teacher's perspective, he said.

Sgroi believes her experience as an educator has taught her valuable experiences that led her to this position.

NEW PRINCIPAL, page 3

Senior class celebrates end of their high school careers at Baccalaureate

Social Studies teacher gives faculty address

By Hannah Davis
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Seniors and their families gathered for Baccalaureate in the auditorium on Thursday, June 1, to perform and commemorate their high school years.

The ceremony started with the class filing into the auditorium.

After a brief welcome by principal Patricia Puglisi, eight students performed.

Class president Juliana Saunders led the ceremony and introduced each of the student performers.

Jordie Cornfield performed an original poem titled "Bathroom Sink."

Second, Maddie Machain and Owen O'Leary sang "Vienna" by Billy Joel.

Maddy Officer, Luca Capotosto

and Alexander Wolf performed "My Way" by Frank Sinatra. Officer sang with Capotosto on the piano and Wolf on the saxophone.

Next, Martha Davis performed "Prelude from Suite Bergamasque" by Claude Debussy on the piano.

Lila Carpenter finished the student performances by singing "Place We Were Made" by Maisie Peters.

'Be your true self in the next phase of your life because life really is more fun when you just are who you are.'

- JENNIFER COLEMAN

Machain said she was happy to have the opportunity to perform one last time for her class.

"It was a moment where we all get to share either things that we

are excited about or things we like to do with people in our class that might not know we like to do [those things]," Machain said.

After the student performances, history teacher Jennifer Coleman gave the faculty address. The class chose her to speak at the

BACCALAUREATE, page 3

News

Features

Opinion

Sports

Arts

Debra Nolan's retirement
- page 3

Prom pictures
- pages 6-7

Senior farewell
- page 8

Spring sports
- pages 9-11

Art show
- page 12

Students attend DECA international competition in Orlando

Junior Charles Latons receives exam score silver ribbon medallion

By Summer Demeo
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Five students attended the DECA International Career Development Conference in Orlando, Florida, from April 21 to April 26 with DECA adviser Barrett Alston.

Sophomore Gwen Berger, juniors Troy Flood, Charles Latons, Finn O'Hara, and senior Kendall Newton attended the competition. Latons won a silver ribbon medallion for a top 10 exam score.

The competitors arrived on the morning of Friday, April 21, and the opening ceremony took place on Saturday night. The students took their exams on Sunday then did their role plays on Monday.

The awards ceremony was held on Tuesday, and the closing ceremony took place Tuesday night,

Alston said.

Flood said he liked being independent for a week and meeting new people.

"My favorite thing was meeting people from all over the country, being outgoing, making new friends, and going out of my comfort zone a little bit," he said.

Newton said she enjoyed talking to other students from around the country when she was waiting for her tests. She said it was interesting to learn about how DECA is different in other states.

Latons said the level of competition was high and that everyone there was incredibly smart, which meant it was difficult to make the finals. He also said it was nice to be in an environment with so many talented people.

O'Hara said he liked doing the roleplays because he always learns something new. He said he worked on being confident and staying composed.

Newton also said the group was competing at a high level.

"I was very proud of us all for



COURTESY OF BARETT ALSTON

Juniors Charles Latons and Troy Flood, senior Kendall Newton, sophomore Gwen Berger, and junior Finn O'Hara attend the DECA international competition in Orlando, Florida in April.

making it there with thousands of people from around the world, and it shows that we deserve to be there and compete with all these people," she said.

Outside of the competition, the students were also able to do a variety of other activities. They went to Disney World, Universal Studios, Top Golf, and played

mini-golf, Alston said.

"We did a lot of really fun activities. I felt like since we were such a small chapter, we could do more than other schools could," Berger said.

Latons said he enjoyed going to Top Golf because it was an entertaining experience. He also said it was nice to spend time

with everyone else on the trip.

At Disney World, O'Hara said the group went on the rides "It's a Small World" and "Space Mountain." They also spent time in the pool at their hotel, he said.

The students all said they hope to qualify for DECA ICDC again next year and improve upon their performances this year.

Anatomy, mechanical design students collaborate on project to design, test effective centrifuge

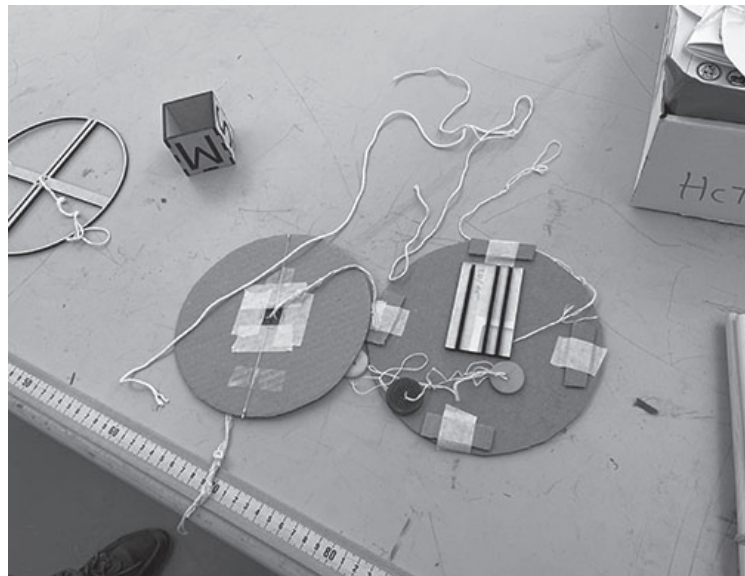
Project based off design used in areas without electricity

By Stella Straub
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After anatomy teacher Maria Burgess' students began studying their unit on blood in March, she and computer science teacher Steve Cogger collaborated with their classes to design and test an effective centrifuge, Burgess said.

One of the ways to observe the different parts of the blood is through centrifugation, which is a process that separates the red blood cells from the plasma and the white blood cells, she said.

Burgess said she saw ideas online that showed people who don't have access to electricity using hand spinners to separate



COURTESY OF MARIA BURGESS

Students in anatomy and mechanical design classes build hand spinners to learn about centrifugation, a process that separates the red blood cells from the plasma and the white blood cells.

blood and to study the hematocrit.

After finding that the online kits for the centrifuges didn't

work as well as they'd planned, Cogger created a new project for his mechanical design class, he said.

Cogger said that it was beneficial for the students in the class to get live feedback about their designs.

"They find out that their designs don't work the first time, and a big part of learning is accepting how to improve from failure. That includes watching how other people have failed and asking yourself how to improve your product," he said.

Sophomore mechanical design student Zubin Pathria said his class was able to either 3D print or laser cut their designs, while trying to keep the constraints in mind.

"We were trying to see how cost would impact these designs, because materials like cardboard are more abundant to people in poorer communities than a 3D printed [plastic] design, but the cardboard ones didn't work as well, so we needed to consider

those things," he said.

Junior anatomy student Amelia Costa said her class was able to experiment with the different designs of the centrifuges and observe how long each one took to separate the blood samples.

They experimented with the plastic designs from the 3D printer and the different wooden designs with various holes in them, she said.

Costa said the collaboration was beneficial.

"For research in college, they normally have two different classes and majors work together, so I thought that it was a cool precursor to that in high school," she said.

Burgess said the designs will be tweaked to get the testing to be as accurate as possible.

"The next step is to test the hematocrit and then look at the American Heart Association's recommendations for the concentration of red blood cells in plasma that we should have," she said.

Freshman, sophomore classes attend semi-formal

By Avabella Mitrano
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After months of preparation, the sophomore class officers hosted a Hollywood red carpet themed freshman and sophomore semi-formal.

The dance was held on May 16 at the American Legion from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., with 80 tickets being sold for the event overall.

Special education aide and sophomore class adviser Drennan Burns said the semi-formal took about two to three months to plan, with sophomore class president Jack Cummins making the event happen. He said students could

walk on a red carpet that was surrounded by star decorations, imitating a night sky. They could also take photos at a photo booth, eat fun food, and dance to music.

"I think it went fantastic. A lot of people showed up, the DJ was great, and it was a great night," Burns said.

Since the venue is next to the water, students could also walk outside and take photos on the back deck by the water, he said.

"I think they really enjoyed it. It was fun to hang out with the class and see people," Burns said.

Freshman Arielle Stafford said her favorite part of the dance was seeing a large cake that was decorated with Hollywood stars.

Along with the cake, there was a table with an abundance of snacks that she enjoyed, such as popcorn and pretzels.

"I really liked the photo booth



COURTESY OF JACK CUMMINS

Sophomores Summer Demeo, Brigid Carovillano, Hannah Davis, Josh Cohen, Henry Stevens, and Fiona Flynn, freshman Cia Donohoe, and sophomores Gwen Berger, Whitney Turner, Stella Straub, Maddie O'Grady, and Hayden Remington attend the freshman and sophomore semi-formal dance.

as well, and I liked how they had a photographer there so it felt like the red carpet. I think it was put together really well. I hope next year will be as fun as this year,"

Stafford said.

Sophomore class president Jack Cummins said he thought the event went well and was glad everyone had fun.

"I was happy to raise \$350 [from] the event, but the main goal wasn't to raise money; it was just to have a fun event for the class," Cummins said.

Science teacher retires after teaching in school for 25 years

Debra Nolan focused on personal relationships

By Avabella Mitrano
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After teaching in the school for 25 years, science teacher Debra Nolan will be retiring this year.

Before working at the school, Nolan earned her undergraduate degree in physics and biology, as well as her graduate degrees from Boston University. She holds a doctorate in science education.

Nolan said she previously worked as a science teacher at Lexington Public High School. She then chose to teach at Manchester Essex because she wanted a smaller community.

"I like the school because ... you can develop very personal relationships with students," Nolan said.

She said she will miss the personal interactions with students, as she grew to value connections

with them over focusing solely on course content.

"I am really more interested in helping students in a way where they want to learn physics versus just passing the test," Nolan said.

Special education paraprofessional Samantha Woodman, who was previously a student of Nolan, said she greatly valued Nolan's focus on relationships and

'I like the school because ... you can develop very personal relationships with students.'

-DEBRA NOLAN

knows she will be missed as a teacher and co-worker.

"One thing that I always loved about her is that she connected with her students and

asked them about their personal lives ... I think that's how she has good rapport with students," Woodman said.

Science and math department chair Kristin Umile said she agrees that Nolan is great at connecting with students while also being reasonable.

"She has been a complete pleasure to work with over the past seven years ... she's very patient,



AVABELLA MITRANO PHOTO

Science teacher Debra Nolan, helping junior Torrinn Kirk in her honors physics class, will retire after teaching in the high school for 25 years. Nolan strived to teach physics in interesting ways.

tolerant, and fair, and I think she always gives students the benefit of the doubt, which is a strong quality," Umile said.

Nolan said she hopes the school will continue to encourage teachers' flexibility in the curriculum, as it allows her to be creative and fun.

"Most people have the perception that physics is boring and hard, so I like to make students feel like physics is learnable and at times fun," she said.

Senior Ella Warnock said No-

lan is inspirational as a woman in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

"She has this understanding of how difficult it is to be a woman in STEM ... I think the school is going to miss her general attitude and the funny Dr. Nolan moments," Warnock said.

Science teacher Keith Hartan said he will miss Nolan's sense of humor and values the practical advice she has given him.

"She was my mentor when I first came here, and it's been

wonderful working with her. She's always been kind to me ... I'm going to really miss working with Dr. Nolan and seeing her every day," Hartan said.

After retirement, Nolan said she plans to continue teaching equestrian lessons. She hopes to maintain some involvement in education but is unsure of what that will entail.

"[Horseback riding] is always something I've been interested in ... so the teaching part of that is great," she said.

Student creates environmental education initiative

By Libby Mulry
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Junior Aiden Brown recently received a Green Difference Award, which honors outstanding environmental education efforts.

Through the Green Team, students work to positively impact their local community, Brown said.

The Green Team, which is headed by science teacher Keith Gray, is a part of the Green Interns and Scholars courses.

The Green Team and Sustainability 101 are the two classes related to sustainability that can be accessed by the entire school,



LIBBY MULRY PHOTO

Junior Aiden Brown created the Walk or Bike Manchester project, which encourages people to use active transportation.

providing accessible education to all about a topic that could save the world, junior Aiden Brown said.

The accessibility of the class inspires students to make a change, senior Sophie Zalosh said.

"The class encourages students to actually make environmental and sustainable change at the school and local level," Za-

losh said.

Green Team initiatives include working to get books to underprivileged people in eastern Massachusetts and reducing the idling of cars on school grounds, Gray said.

"We're trying to get the town of Manchester and the school district to create a zone around the school to have specifically walking and biking if you're

close enough to do that," he said.

Brown has been an integral part of this effort with his Walk or Bike Manchester project, Gray said.

"The Walk or Bike Manchester project seeks to encourage people to walk or bike around town because of the benefits it has on climate change, traffic, and their overall health," Brown said.

With the help of Gray, the town's Bike and Pedestrian Committee, and the Department of Public Works, Brown has implemented signs at the school's rotary and his house to remind passersby to either walk or bike, Brown said.

"I now plan to add one towards the edge of school property facing Lincoln street, another at the elementary school, and a third on

a friend of mine's private property," he said.

The Green Team also participated in a clothing collection drive to bring awareness to their sustainable efforts, Gray said.

"Our primary focus is to take waste clothing out of the trash stream, and if it's usable and functional, bring it to places that need it," he said.

The school collected 2,980 pounds of clothing, making it ranked 4th in the state for the contest, Gray said.

He said he hopes that the efforts of the Green Team

not only bring awareness to other students, but reminds them that they are a part of a much larger world.

"We have to act like a planetary community," Gray said.

'We have to act like a planetary community.'

-KEITH GRAY

CONTINUATIONS

GRADUATION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
important people in her life who helped her get to her current position.

"I'd like to specifically thank my dad, Mark, who is the kindest person I know. He has taught me to work hard, to treat others with compassion, but most importantly to treat myself with compassion as well," she said.

Salutatorian Charlotte Lawrence's speech focused on the people in the class of 2023.

"I didn't realize how surreal this would all feel until I came to realize the series of lasts that started only a couple of weeks

ago. Our last journal, last test, last class, and last prom passed us by in quick succession," she said.

Valedictorian Kevin Adams began his speech by reading the preamble of the United States Constitution in an impression of Vermont senator Bernie Sanders.

He went on to push through audio-technical issues to talk about what's next for the class.

"After today, we begin our future beyond the Manchester-Essex Regional School District ... the best piece of advice I can give today is also the simplest: try something. Even if you're still unsure of what you want your future to look like, just try something," he said.

The ceremony finished in the traditional manner, with students

turning the tassels on their caps before throwing them into the air and exiting to their class song, "Stumblin' In" by Chris Norman and Suzi Quatro.

NEW PRINCIPAL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"A principal brings out the best in the students and educators in the building. I want to be [that] person. I have been lucky to work with so many different learners and educational professionals, and I try to learn something from everyone," she said in an email conversation.

The school's sense of community and commitment to providing the best educational experience is what drew her in, Sgroi said.

"I know that the school culture is very positive and student-

centered, and that is something I would like to continue," she said.

BACCALAUREATE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

event.
Coleman gave a speech reminiscing about the class's time during remote learning in their sophomore year.

"There are so many funny, kind and hard-working students in this class that by the end of your sophomore year, I was feeling pretty cheated that I didn't get to have a full year of teaching you in person," she said.

Coleman spoke about how she has gotten to know this senior class differently than classes in years past.

"I realized I probably know you in ways that the teachers your

freshman, junior and senior years would never be able to," she said.

Coleman identified many students by name and spoke about the importance of being yourself and paving your own way.

"Don't be like me and wait until you're older. Take this opportunity to be your true self in the next phase of your life because life really is more fun when you just are who you are," she said.

After Coleman's speech, the audience watched a slideshow of the seniors and their baby pictures.

The evening ended with the class lighting candles and filing out to the flagpole. They then blew out their candles signifying the end of their high school careers.



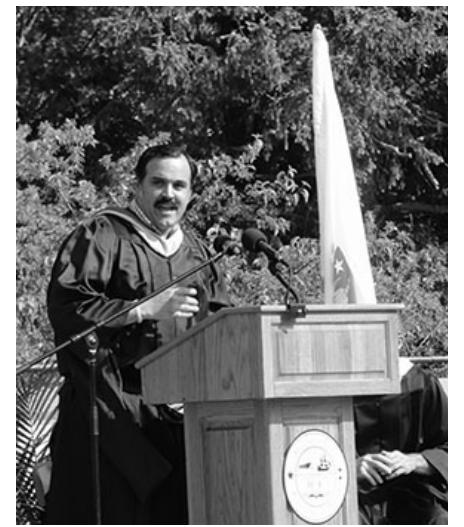
Social studies teacher John Mullady gave Wyatt Riehl and Juliana Saunders sneakers.



Students stand and wait to be called to receive their diplomas.



Class president Juliana Saunders delivers a speech.



Social studies teacher John Mullady recognizes exiting Principal Patricia Puglisi for her impact on the school.



Students walk from School Street to the graduation with white flowers in hand.



Principal Patricia Puglisi.



Twins Jack and Kendall Newton wait in the elementary school gym.



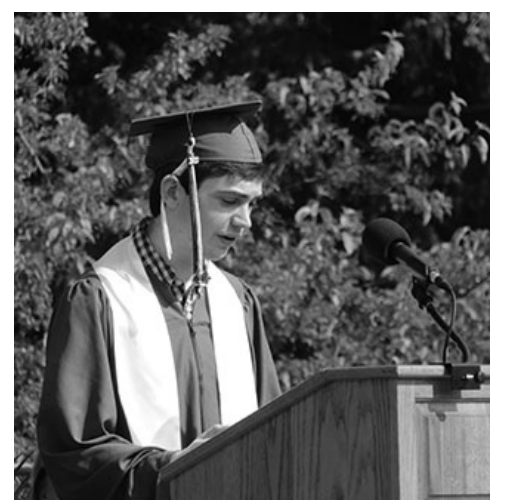
Sophie Zalosh and Izabela Xhalia pose for a photo.



Amy Vytopilova smiles as the graduating class moves their tassels.



Seniors decorated their graduation caps with their future colleges.



Valedictorian Kevin Adams addresses the graduating class.



T.J. Brunner returns to his seat.



Brennan Twombly.



Salutatorian Charlotte Lawrence gives her address.



Bagpipers lead the class of 2023 into the graduation ceremony.



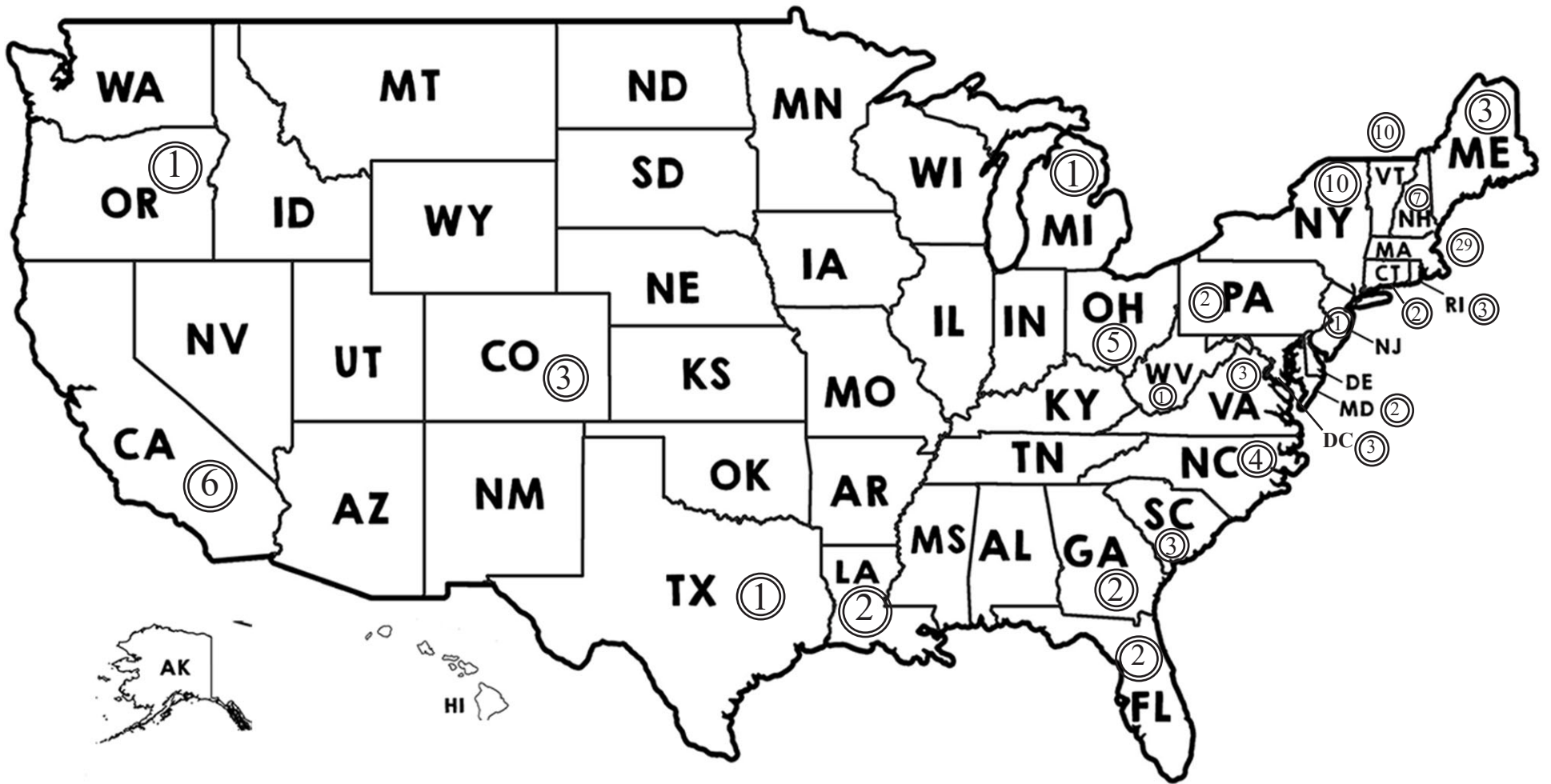
Connor Fitzgerald, Noah Foss, Alex Fraser and Brady Friedrich wait in the elementary school gym before the ceremony.



Izabela Xhalia, Danny Wood, Alexander Wolf and Jackson Williams.



Declan Kirk, Denis Kuca, Calista Lai and Finn Lawler.



California: 6

Martha Davis - Occidental College, Los Angeles, CA
 Calista Lai - Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA
 Madelyn Officer - University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA
 Ava Ricci - University of San Diego, San Diego, CA
 Lokys Saffo - University of San Diego, San Diego, CA
 Sophia Zalosh - University of San Diego, San Diego, CA

Colorado: 3

Michael DeOreo - University of Denver, Denver, CO
 Helen Swerdloff - University of Colorado Boulder, Boulder, CO
 Alexander Wolf - Colorado School of Mines, Golden, CO

Connecticut: 2

Hadley Levendusky - Connecticut College, New London, CT
 Lucas Rodi - Connecticut College, New London, CT

Florida: 2

Charles Mann - Rollins College, Winter Park, FL
 Allison Reeve - Palm Beach Atlantic University, West Palm Beach, FL

Georgia: 2

Arabella Cox-Starvos - Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah, GA
 Olivia Royle - Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah, GA

Louisiana: 2

Paige Garlitz - Tulane University, New Orleans, LA
 Daniel Wood - Tulane University, New Orleans, LA

Maine: 3

Kyra Levasseur - Husson University, Bangor, ME
 Joshua Varghese - University of Maine, Orono, ME
 Mason Moruzzi - Maine College of Art and Design, Portland, ME

Maryland: 2

Mary Callahan - University of Maryland, College Park, MD
 Helaina Davis - University of Maryland, College Park, MD

Massachusetts: 29

Ava Argento - University of Massachusetts Lowell, Lowell, MA
 Samuel Athanas - Bentley University, Waltham, MA
 Lila Carpenter - Lasell University, Newton, MA
 Jacoby Catanzaro - Gordon College, Wenham, MA
 Jack Crompton - Salem State University, Salem, MA and Army National Guard
 Patrick Cronin - Wentworth Institute of Technology, Boston, MA
 Tyler Cronin - Bentley University, Waltham, MA
 Daniel Duncan - Salem State University, Salem, MA
 Sean Dunlap - Salem State University, Salem, MA
 Connor Fitzgerald - University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA
 Alex Fraser - Suffolk University, Boston, MA
 Brady Friedrich - Merrimack College, Andover, MA
 Brady Gagnon - Endicott College, Beverly, MA
 Christina Garfield - Regis College, Weston, MA
 Matthew Gargano - Merrimack College, Andover, MA
 Ashlynn Girton - University of Massachusetts Boston, Boston, MA
 Gavin Kempkie - College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA
 Declan Kirk - University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, MA
 Zachary Lee - Salem State University, Salem, MA
 Jack Newton - Wentworth Institute of Technology, Boston, MA
 Kendall Newton - Emmanuel College, Boston, MA

Isaac Porat - Northeastern University, Boston, MA

Jackson Ring - University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Amherst, MA

Cameron Roundy - Bentley University, Waltham, MA

Matthew Russo - University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA

Peter Shaw - Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

Giuseppe Tra - University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, MA

Elizabeth Wendell - North Shore Community College, Danvers, MA

Izabela Xhalia - Emmanuel College, Boston, MA

Michigan: 1

Gwen Hannafin - Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

New Hampshire: 7

Cynthia Haight - Plymouth State University, Plymouth, NH

Finnegan Lawler - University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH and Air National Guard

Madeline Machain - Plymouth State University, Plymouth, NH

Katherine O'Neill - Saint Anselm College, Manchester, NH

Mark Pollock - University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH

Abigail Taron - University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH

Jude Tomaiolo - University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH

New Jersey: 1

Ella Warnock - Stevens Institute of Technology, Hoboken, NJ

New York: 10

Kevin Adams - Rennsalaer Polytechnic, Troy, NY

Zachary Brown - Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

Luca Capotosto - Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY

Jack Dipasquale - Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

Caroline MacKinnon - New York University, New York, NY

Wyatt Riehl - Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, NY

Juliana Saunders - Saint Lawrence University, Canton, NY

Finnegan Straub - Union College, Schenectady, NY

Brennan Twombly - Saint Lawrence University, Canton, NY

Amalie Vytopilova - Union College, Schenectady, NY

North Carolina: 4

Sadie Mello - University of North Carolina Wilmington, Wilmington, NC

Douglas Pratt - University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC

Ava Ross - University of North Carolina Wilmington, Wilmington NC

Becket Spencer - Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC

Ohio: 5

Thomas Brunner - Ohio State University, Columbus, OH

Jordan Cornfield - Kenyon College, Gambier, OH

Chase Dickson - Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH

Cole Olivier - Meehan - Bowling Green State, Bowling Green, OH

Wyeth Takayesu - Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH

Abygayle Whittemore - Coastal Carolina University, Conway, SC

Texas: 1

Charlotte Lawrence - Rice University, Houston, TX

Vermont: 10

Cole Bourgeois - University of Vermont, Burlington, VT

Mary Chrzanowski - Landmark College, Putney, VT

Julia Dobson - University of Vermont, Burlington, VT

Faith Ellis - University of Vermont, Burlington, VT

Noah Foss - Champlain College, Burlington, VT

Grace Gerhardt - University of Vermont, Burlington, VT

Alexis Hano - University of Vermont, Burlington, VT

Owen O'Leary - University of Vermont, Burlington, VT

Cooper Oldeman - St. Michael's College, Colchester, VT

Lydia Schwartz - University of Vermont, Burlington, VT

Virginia: 3

Nicholas Brunning - Roanoke College, Salem, VA

James Colbert - James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA

Jesse Oliver - James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA

West Virginia: 1

Logan Cooper - West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV

Washington D.C.: 3

Anna Brzezinski - Georgetown University, Washington DC

Ari Brzezinski - Georgetown University, Washington DC

Isak Gustafson - American University, Washington DC

Other: 17

Anthony Altieri - Undecided

Connor Bell - Employment as Emergency Medical Technician before entering the Army

Jonathan Craigen - Employment

Wyatt Doyle - Undecided

Vanessa Gregory - The University of Chemistry and Technology in Prague, Czechia

Kaitlen Harding - Undecided

Becca Keenan - Undecided

Sara King - Queens University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada

Denis Kuca - Employment

Ava Magnuson - Gap year

William McGahan - Undecided

Connor Morgan - Undecided

Alexander Norchi - Undecided

Annabel Smith - University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada

Lucia Wendell - Gap year

Maxwell Wendell - Gap year

Jackson Williams - Employment - Chris Williams Sculpture

Seniors, juniors, attend prom at Tupper Manor

Beverly venue offers dance floor, fountain, photo opportunities

By Mechi O'Neil
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

This year's junior and senior prom took place at Tupper Manor in Beverly Farms with an attendance of 217 guests.

On May 25, students rode buses to the event at 6 p.m. and returned at 10 p.m.

DJ CASE provided a variety of music, such as "22" by Taylor Swift and "Dancing Queen" by ABBA. There was also a photo booth where students could take pictures.

Senior class adviser Barrett Alston said the event couldn't have gone better.

"Everybody behaved, and it seemed like everyone had fun," he said.

Dean of students Dan Richards agreed and said he thought the venue was perfect.

"Students could go outside and hang out by the fountain. Those who wanted to get away and get a break, were able to get a break," he said.

Richards said the teacher chaperones were helpful in overseeing the students at the event.

"The teachers were fantastic. They really stepped up and helped out, and that is what made [prom] go so smoothly," he

said.

Junior Caroline Doucette said her favorite part of the night was the entertainment.

"I think the music was overall really good. The DJ played lots of songs that were recent and trendy, as well as songs that everybody knows," she said.

Doucette also said the buffet was a highlight of the night. The buffet included barbecue steak, pasta, salad, bread rolls, and steamed vegetables.

"The students did a really nice job being respectful and having fun at the same time, so it was nice to chaperone such a successful prom."

-COURTNEY BROWN

"There was a bit of something for everyone. The dessert was definitely the best," she said.

Senior class president Juliana Saunders said her favorite part of prom was walking in and seeing the venue full of people and seeing their

plans come to life.

"It was very gratifying to see all of our hard work turn into such a positive experience for so many students," she said.

Math teacher Courtney Brown said she loved the details all of the class officers put in as well as how all of the students behaved.

"The students did a really nice job being respectful and having fun at the same time, so it was nice to chaperone such a successful prom," she said.



COURTESY OF LOGAN COOPER

The journalism class with teacher Mary Buckley-Harmon.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

Chaperones Courtney Brown, Steve Padovani, and Cami Molinare.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

Seniors Ben Hurd and Calista Lai.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

Juniors Greta Gado, Liv Cahill, and Lucy O'Flynn.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

Juniors Torrin Kirk, Ella Aieta, and Chloé Lilly.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

Seniors Henry Otterbein and Paige Garlitz pose for the photo booth.



Seniors Cam Roundy, Br



LISA CHAFE PHOTO

Juniors Gabbi D'Andrea and Greta Gado



MARY BU

Junior Chloé Lilly and sen



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

Juniors Lilly Brigham, Joanna Shan, and Anneliese Camp.



LISA CHAFE PHOTO

Juniors Henry Thurlow and Pippa Spingler



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

Senior Julia Dobson, chaperone Jennifer Coleman, and senior Lydia Schwartz.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

Chaperones Robert Bilsbury and Dan Richards.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

Juniors Gady Friedrich, Tyler Cronin, and Josh Varghese.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

Juniors Andrew Rodriguez and Eddie Chareas.



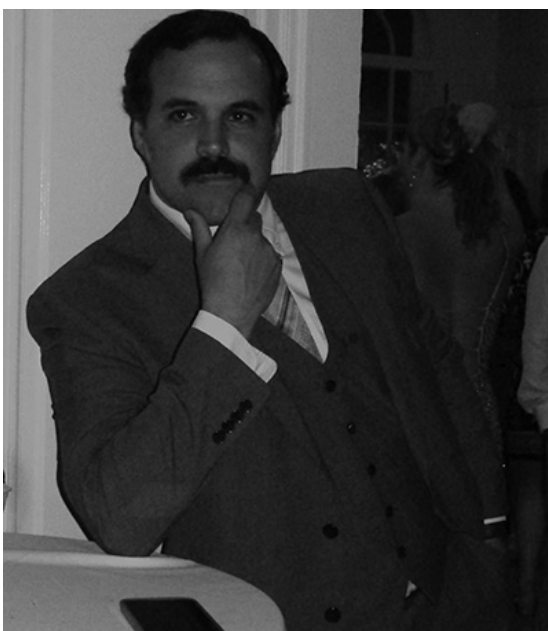
COURTESY OF LUCY O'FLYNN

Junior Lucy O'Flynn and sophomore Maggie Light



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

Chaperone Finn Straub.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

Chaperone John Mullady.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

Seniors Gwen Hannafin, Helaina Davis, Kyra Levasseur, and Caroline MacKinnon.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

Senior Brian Kelly, junior Jack McDonald, and seniors Will McGahan and Alex Norchi.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

Seniors Helaina Davis, Paige Garlitz, Grace Gerhardt, and Ceece Carvalho.

STAFF EDITORIAL

Seniors appreciate valuable experiences in journalism

Reflecting on the past three years in journalism allowed for the senior editors to appreciate the time spent with the Independent.

All four of us seniors started journalism the first year in quarantine, a time of confusion and anxiety. Taking all of our first classes through Zoom, we did not have a traditional introduction to journalism.

With Ms. Buckley-Harmon's guidance and the appreciated help of our older classmates, we eventually developed skills that we will carry with us throughout our lives.

The seniors are grateful for the experiences we have had writing articles, interviewing a countless number of people, laying out pages, and most importantly creating special relationships.

Wyeth Takayesu said he has never learned more in a high school class than he has in journalism.

"Working together in such a tightly knit group to create some-

thing real and meaningful made me excited to improve. I feel ready to move on because of the skills I've learned even though I'm sad to go and leave behind such an amazing staff," he said.

Amy Vytopilova said being in journalism helped her to be a better student overall.

"I have learned how to think outside of the box, prioritize deadlines, and double check my work. In addition, Ms. Buckley-Harmon made us all better writers and students as a whole. Without Ms. Buckley-Harmon, I would not have been able to survive high school," she said.

Hadley Levendusky said journalism allowed her to step out of her comfort zone.

"Journalism allowed me to talk to many different people in the school community. I was able to learn to become confident in my writing. I learned the importance of reliability and how beneficial it is to be surrounded by a team of hardworking students," she said.



COURTESY OF MERHS YEARBOOK

Senior Independent editors Wyeth Takayesu, Hadley Levendusky, Caroline MacKinnon, Amy Vytopilova, and Jordie Cornfield reflected on the skills and lessons journalism has taught them.

Caroline MacKinnon said she will take what she learned working with the Independent in her future career path.

"Through all of the hardships, I am so thankful for all that I have learned in Ms. Buckley-Harmon's class. I was also able to become more confident by talking to people I would never interact with otherwise. Despite

some tears and self-doubt, I am excited to continue my journalism career at NYU next year with a strong foundation," she said.

Jordie Cornfield said journalism bettered her writing skills and allowed her to understand the importance of non-fiction writing.

"I was given the freedom to

write about things that interested me and make commentary on our school community," she said.

We are immensely thankful for the staff at The Independent for all of the work they do, and we are excited to see what the younger students accomplish. We are sad to leave MERHS behind, but we will remember the amazing opportunities it gave us.

New Snapchat artificial intelligence causes harm

By Ella Chafe
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Snapchat recently released its My AI Chatbot, but it's scaring people and is unhealthy for students.

The new Snapchat AI is powered by ChatGPT. Users can customize its name, design a Bitmoji for it, and bring it into conversations with friends.

Users cannot remove the chatbot from Snapchat unless they pay for a premium subscription, leaving them stuck with this creepy feature.

According to CNN Business, users have been vocal about their concerns. One user said his chatbot lied about not knowing his location, but later it accurately

revealed he lived in Colorado.

While the Snapchat chatbot is extremely terrifying, it also poses a threat to students' academic integrity.

Snapchat is very popular among students, so now that a chatbot is easily accessible, students are urged to cheat on assignments. Using the chatbot is faster than searching on the internet, making it appealing and a quicker tool for information.

Junior Gabbi D'Andrea said the chatbot makes her uncomfortable and scares her.

When the Snapchat chatbot was released, she had a short conversation with it, but quickly un-pinned it, she said.

D'Andrea said the chatbot will continue to have a negative

impact on students.

"Making people have to have the chatbot will make cheating increase and make people lazier," she said.

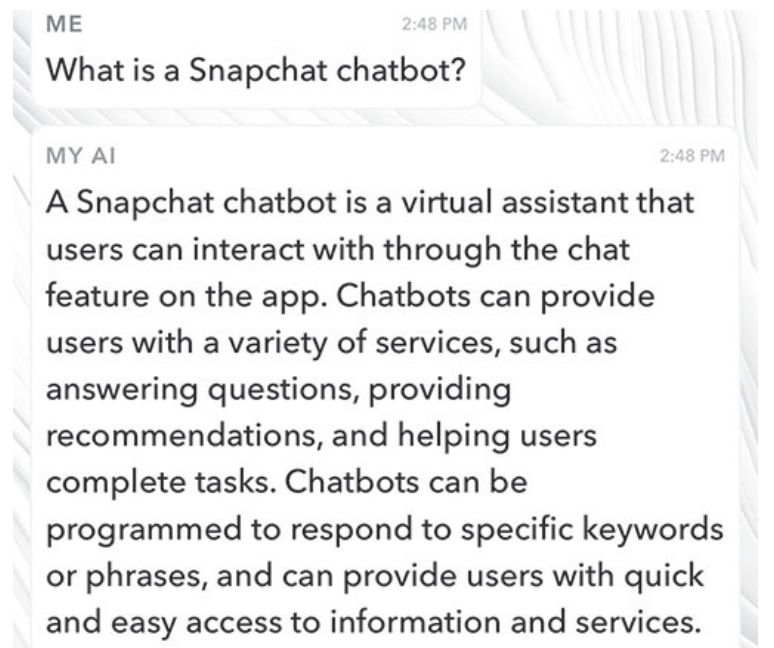
AP U.S. Government and Politics teacher Jennifer Coleman said she has seen the effects of the chatbot, as her students are cheating on practice questions for the AP exam.

When reading practice essays, Coleman said there were clear signs of artificial intelligence, since she knows her students' writing.

"When you use artificial intelligence, you are not building the skills that you need to be successful on the tasks that you need to be successful on," she said.

The Snapchat chatbot harms a student's ability to learn because information is readily available, making it easy to cheat.

Younger students will be especially affected by the Snapchat



ELLA CHAFE PHOTO

Students' interactions with the Snapchat AI chatbot pose risks.

chatbot, as using the AI creates bad habits and entices them to only be cheating themselves.

It's necessary to pressure

Snapchat to remove the chatbot to ensure academic integrity and hold students accountable for their own work.

Faculty Adviser
Mary Buckley-Harmon

Editors-in-chief
Phileine de Widt
Charles Lations

News Editors
Avabella Mitrano
Mechi O'Neil

Features Editors
Ella Chafe
Libby Mulry
Stella Straub

the
INDEPENDENT

Manchester-Essex Regional High School
36 Lincoln St, Manchester MA 01944
978-526-4412 newspaper@mersd.org
online at <http://www.merhs.mersd.org/domain/702>

Opinion Editor
Whitney Turner

Sports Editors
Gwen Berger
Summer Demeo
Sam Heanue
Alessia Omari

Arts Editors
Hannah Davis
Isabelle Donnellan Valade

The Independent is published monthly throughout the school year. It is a product of the Manchester-Essex Regional High School Journalism class.

Editorial space is available to all MERHS students, faculty, and community members.

All submissions must be signed and put in the newspaper mailbox in the front office of MERHS.

The Independent reserves the right not to print letters and to edit the content for clarity and length. While letters can be critical of an individual's actions, they cannot slander or libel.

The staff editorial may be considered the opinion of the staff of The Independent.

By-line opinions are written by individual staff members and should not be considered representative of the entire staff.

The Independent staff hopes that all Manchester and Essex citizens will take advantage of this forum. The paper is meant to serve the school community, and we are open to suggestions to help it better serve its purposes.

Girls' lacrosse looks to continue Division IV state tournament run

Starts off with 13-1 win in round of 32

By Summer Demeo
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Girls' lacrosse started off the Division IV state tournament as the No. 5 seed, defeating Stoneham 13-1 in the round of 32. At the time of the newspaper's deadline, the team was scheduled to host Tahanto in the round of 16 on June 7.

Their current record this season is 12-7. In the Cape Ann League, their record is 6-5.

Head coach Nan Gorton said the team has continued to focus on working hard in practice, being selfless on the field, playing together as a team and being disciplined.

Sophomore goalie Brigid Carovillano said the game

against Stoneham was a good way to start off the tournament season because they were able to put in a lot of different players and everyone got touches on the ball.

It also helped the team pinpoint what they need to work on before their next game, she said.

"It was a good confidence booster game because we were in control the entire time and we were able to move the ball around a lot," Carovillano said.

Junior Captain Ella Chafe said she was happy with Monday's win and that the

midfield line did well with draw control, something the team has wanted to improve on.

She said she hopes to bring a lot of intensity into Wednesday's game against Tahanto and that

'I want to make sure that they're more excited than nervous to play and they're not inside their own heads.'

- ELLA CHAFE



COURTESY OF ABBY LEVENDUSKY

Sophomore Sylvie McCavanagh runs the ball upfield, away from defenders, in a game against Georgetown on May 15. The Hornets won the game 13-3 to contribute to their CAL record of 6-5.

she wants to help everyone calm their nerves and play confidently.

"I want to make sure that they're more excited than nervous to play and they're not inside their own heads," Chafe said.

Senior captain Paige Garlitz said that everyone on the team is incredibly versatile and plays

selflessly, which has been a big help to the team this season because the players are able to play any position.

Senior captain Hadley Levendusky said the team has been working on new plays on offense, which have been successful.

The team environment is very

supportive. Everyone is able to find the best in each other and make each other feel good, Gorton said.

"From both programs, from freshmen through seniors, parents, coaches and kids, everyone is just supporting one another. It's a very unique feeling for the team," she said.

Boys' lacrosse ties for CAL Baker Title, wins 17-5 in first playoff game

By Ella Chafe
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Boys' varsity lacrosse tied for the CAL Baker title with Ipswich and started off the Division IV state tournament as the No. 10 seed, defeating Bourne 17-6 in the round of 32.

At the time of the newspaper's deadline, the team was scheduled to play Lynnfield in the round of 16 on June 7.

Senior captain Jack DiPasquale said he was very happy with the win against Bourne, and they were able to increase the intensity after starting the game slowly.

For their next game, DiPasquale said he hopes to bring a lot of energy, and encourage the team to play their best lacrosse.

"For all of our seniors there is always the potential that this



COURTESY OF MARK DIPASQUALE

Senior captain Jack DiPasquale takes the ball in a game against Hamilton-Wenham on April 18. The Hornets won the game 13-7.

could be our last game, so selling out on every single play will help us get a win," he said.

DiPasquale said defense is the team's biggest strength, as they

know how to work well as a unit and are all very close.

This season's record is better than ones in the past, so he said they will continue to play with

the mentality that they still have more to prove.

"We play like we are the team circled on other team's calendars because people see our record now and know that things have changed," DiPasquale said.

Coach Jon Siderewicz said the team is trying to improve on staying positive, as many players get inside of their own heads and play mentally down to other teams.

"Especially at big times during

a game, having that strength mentally and physically goes a long way," he said.

'We play like we are the team circled on other team's calendars because people see our record now and know that things have changed.'

- JACK DIPASQUALE

Siderewicz said they are a tight-knit group, and the 15 seniors help bring everyone together and lead the entire team.

Junior captain Quinn Brady said senior Jesse Oliver stands out for his play, as he is currently the leading goal scorer.

He said his favorite part of the season has been coming together as a group.

"We're having a lot of team bonding and just being a good group of guys," Brady said.

Outdoor track athletes compete in divisional meet, Meet of Champions

With winning records, girls', boys' teams win NEC Lynch Division Title

By Hannah Davis
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Four members of the boys' team and eight members of the girls' team attended the MIAA D4 Outdoor Track State Championship meet on May 26.

From there, senior captain Jack Newton, junior Nate Gardner, junior Finn O'Hara and sophomore Megan Hurd qualified for the Meet of Champions.

Newton placed fifth in the boys pentathlon event and Gardner placed eighth in the boys 400m hurdles at the Meet of Champions.

O'Hara said both teams did well at the divisional meet. He said he believes the strength of the boys team came from their comradery and team spirit.

"Team spirit is another thing I'm proud of. Our team is super close even though we're repre-

senting four towns. Everyone gets along as one town, one team," O'Hara said.

Senior captain Caroline MacKinnon and freshman Cia Donohoe competed in the heptathlon event, over two days, Monday June 5 and Tuesday June 6. Donohoe placed 22nd.

Newton also competed in the decathlon on the same days.

A heptathlon consists of seven different track and field events and a decathlon consists of 10 events

Coach David Coleman said he is very proud of both the girls'

and boys' teams for winning the Lynch Division this year.

O'Hara also said he is proud of the team for having won the Northeast Conference, something they were competing for last year.

The boys' team ended the regular season with a record of 3-1. The girls' team finished with a record of 4-0.

Coleman said having a bigger team was vital to their success this season.

"Having the increased numbers has certainly helped us in terms of winning dual meets, [and] being more competitive," he said.

MacKinnon said she is proud of the number of athletes who were able to set personal records

during the dual meet season.

"I'm really proud of everyone for accomplishing what they did during the dual meet season," she said.

O'Hara, MacKinnon and Hurd were all standout athletes on the team this year, Coleman said.

O'Hara said Newton and Gardner have improved this year and have been vital to the team's success.

With a mostly young team, Coleman said he hoped to encourage the younger athletes to compete at a higher level and improve this season.

"We also [had] a lot of young kids which is nice for kind of bringing up the development of the team and learning from the older kids," he said.

Boys' tennis team wins Division IV round of 16

Reaches MIAA state tournament, advances to Round of 8 vs. Weston

By Stella Straub
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After winning the MIAA Division IV Round of 16, the boys' tennis team advances to the Round of 8, where, as of newspaper layout, they were scheduled to play against Weston on June 8. The team has a season record of 14-7 overall and 9-3 in the Cape Ann League.

Senior captain Finnegan Straub said the team played well during the match.

"Everyone played phenomenally. Jack Cummins had a difficult opponent but powered through and played to his own strengths... Charlie Langendorf definitely stepped up to a varsity position today, and I was really impressed with his skill level and improvement while watching his win," he said.

Head coach Robert Bilsbury

said that for the Round of 32, the team was missing one player and had another injured, but that the second doubles team of sophomores Finn Birkeland and Jack Lawler stepped up to first singles.

Second doubles were played by junior Erik Bischoff and sophomore Charlie Langendorf, he said.

"We started off controlling our matches pretty well... You can coast through a match or you can

be productive with it, and we were really productive with it," Bilsbury said.

He said the team tries to stay present and not focus on things that can't

be controlled as they advance in the state tournament.

"Play loose, play aggressive, stay in the present tense, and concentrate on that next point. Oftentimes, that's the recipe to playing your best tennis, and when we do that we play our best," he said.

'People are very willing to play, and they want to win.'

- SANDER BREUKER



COURTESY OF ERIK BISCHOFF

Junior captain Charlie Virden, the No. 2 singles player for the boys' varsity tennis team, serves in a match against the Pentucket Panthers on May 5. The afternoon meet's overall score was 5-0.

No. 2 singles player Charlie Virden said the team as a whole has been having a good season.

He said several athletes have been doing very well, including sophomore captain and No. 1 singles player Jack Cummins, junior captain Sander Breuker, and

junior Jan Vytopil.

Other players have shown great team spirit, Virden said.

"Second doubles, Jack Lawler and Finn Birkeland, are always out there, getting rowdy, cheering a lot, and once they're done, they cheer on the rest of the team," he

said.

Virden said the younger players have grown a lot throughout the season.

He said the team has come together, and their performances have really improved throughout this season.

Girls' tennis begins postseason, moves ahead in state tournament

By Whitney Turner
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With a No. 2 seed ranking, the girls' tennis team has begun their postseason matches in the state tournament and hopes to advance to the finals, head coach Barrett Alston said.

The team finished the regular season with a record of 12-5. On June 3, they won their first match of the tournament against Quabbin Regional High School with a score of 5-0.

As of newspaper layout, the team was scheduled to play against Wareham High School next, at a home game at Endicott College on June 7, according to

Alston.

"They're the team that beat us in the state semis last year," he said.

Alston said the team has goals of being very competitive among other teams.

"Last year they made the final four; I'm not saying we expect to get there, but it's certainly a goal of ours to get back there and push for the final for sure," he said.

Alston said he thinks the team's seed is very well earned, based on the team's record.

Senior captain and first doubles player Emery Weber-Provost said the team has improved a lot individually throughout the



COURTESY OF O'CONNOR STUDIOS

Senior captain and No. 1 doubles player Sophie Zalosh plays in a match against the Newburyport Clipper Ships. The team lost 4-1.

season.

"When usually we might lose pretty badly, we've definitely held our own, and I think we've just gotten stronger and been able to do better against people we might not have thought we

would do well against," she said.

Alston said senior captain and first singles player Vanessa Gregory has been a standout player and has held her own against experienced players.

Other players with a positive

impact have been the second doubles team of junior Sienna Crocker and freshman Grace Scarbrough, Weber-Provost said.

"They are a pretty consistent team for us, which has been really good, and I think that they're both really good at what they do—playing doubles," she said.

Senior captain and first doubles player Sophie Zalosh said the team has also been helped by their strong team spirit.

"I would say we have great team spirit, which has been fun, and we're always cheering each other on, which is good," she said.

Junior and doubles player Natalie Brunner said that despite the range of grades, the team has created a good environment to be in.

"The team bonding this year is 10 times better than last year... we're all very good friends," she said.

Sailing team works on competitiveness despite many new athletes

By Gwendolyn Berger
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Sailing team members achieved their goal of being competitive in their division this season and honing their skills despite the low number of high schoolers on the team, junior captain Ian Carlin said.

The team ended 4-3 overall this season, which is an increase in races and wins when com-



COURTESY OF ANTHONY LEGGETT

The team sails against Concord Academy's Chameleons at Tuck's Point, the team lost the regatta 3-2.

pared to their 2-2 overall record last season.

The team traveled to MIT for the 2023 Mass State High School Fleet Racing Championship. On

May 24, the A Division sailors, Ian Carlin and sophomore Cole Coté, finished 10th out of the 18 boat fleet. On May 25, the B Division middle school sailors, James Donohoe, Max Deery, Thaddeus Bardsley, Gus Hall, Giulia Bussone and Beckett Gibbons also competed.

Coach Anthony Leggett said the goals he set at the start of the season have been accomplished.

He said he wanted to encourage team bonding and teach the younger athletes how to sail. Not only has everyone improved their sailing skills and tactics, but they also formed a strong team bond, he said.

"The group is having a great time together... and the kids are all really eager to get out onto the boats," Leggett said midseason.

Carlin said he's done the best sailing in his athletic career this season. He said he still has a lot to work on, but the season went very well, and he learned more sailing rules and techniques.

Carlin said he had been working one-on-one with the younger athletes and saw great progress. He said he thinks the team has done exceedingly well despite the lack of experienced sailors, and he hopes the younger sailors will return next season.

"I want to focus on instilling a competitive spirit that will foster a love of sailing and a [desire] to improve and come back next year," Carlin said.

He said they've had great races and success; however, they did have an issue with leaks and minor damages to the boats.

"No team's boats are perfect... it's part of the sport as anything can happen on the water because it's an inhospitable environment," he said.

Coté said about half of the boats had leaks, among other small issues, but they had great sails.

They said that despite the problems with the boats, the team improved rapidly at competition along with learning sailing rules.

Coté will be a sailing instructor over the summer, and they said the opportunity to coach the younger athletes improved their own sailing and communication skills.

The younger athletes' enthusiasm for learning helped the season go well, they said.

Athletic Director becomes Certified NIAAA Administrator

By Isabelle Donnellan Valade
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Athletic Director Cameron Molinare has been recognized by the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) as a Certified Athletic Administrator.

Molinare worked for two years in order to attain this certification.

She said she had to take five courses through the NIAAA, had to be employed as an athletic director, and had to take a comprehensive exam in order to be eligible for the credential.

Molinare also had to complete a data form that highlighted her professional development and her educational experiences.

She said she is looking forward to bringing her new knowledge back to the athletic department.

"I was very excited, honored, and humbled by the whole experience," Molinare said.

The next step in Molinare's

professional growth and development will be becoming a Certified Masters Athletic Administrator.

"It's similar to a dissertation you'd do for a doctoral program, but it's specifically for athletic administration," Molinare said.

She said there are two more courses and additional experiences she'd have to complete as well.

"I am a lifelong learner, and I will always aspire to continue to grow myself within my profession," Molinare said.

'I am a lifelong learner.'

- CAMERON MOLINARE

Operations administrative assistant Sean Kucharski said Molinare's

behind-the-scenes work should be acknowledged.

"[Molinare] puts in 150 percent for student-athletes, for coaches, and for the towns of Manchester and Essex," Kucharski said.

He said Molinare deserves this certification due to her experience and adaptability in the position.

"She is someone who has



ISABELLE DONNELLAN VALADE PHOTO

Athletic director Cameron Molinare works at her desk shortly following her recent certification as an official administrator by the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association.

worked at many different levels. She is well-versed in many different things, and she will be successful in the long run because she is so willing to adjust and make things work," Kucharski said.

Sophomore Tori Moulton, Molinare's teaching assistant, agreed with Kucharski.

"[Molinare] has a very admi-

nable work ethic. She comes in early, leaves late, [and] tries her best to help everyone with anything they may need," Moulton said.

She said Molinare is always there for students.

"She's a professional person who a student-athlete can go to if they need anything, from day-to-day life, to things connected

to athletics, or even things in school," Moulton said.

Kucharski said that he believes Molinare will become one of the best athletic directors in the state later on in her career.

"If every town in Massachusetts had a Ms. Molinare, I believe that it would be the best athletic state in the country," he said.

Softball team falls to Clinton in round of 32 in tournament

Team ends with record of 8-13, 5-10 in the CAL

By Isabelle Donnellan Valade
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Seeded 30 out of 35 in the tournament, the softball team lost in the round of 32.

The team won their preliminary game against Rising Tide Charter, seeded 35. Clinton, placed third, defeated them.

"I am proud of us for making it this far and staying positive and together as a team," Levasseur said.

'I feel like we're at the point where we're just trying to improve and get better every day.'

- FRANK SARRO

Head coach Frank Sarro said over the season, the team got better defensively and kept their focus during their final games.

"We improved so much. I feel like we [were] just trying to improve and get better every day," Sarro said.

Levasseur said she completed her goal of bridging the gap between age groups on the team. Senior captain

Abby Taron agreed.

"I've gotten close with a lot



COURTESY OF MORGAN LASPESA

Freshman Anna Gardner steps up to bat in a regular season game against Georgetown at Sweeney Park. The Hornets lost 18-4.

of them and they're really great. It's just starting to feel more like a team and not divided," Taron said.

Levasseur said she completed many of her initial goals set for the team.

"Our communication in the field [got] a lot better throughout the season ... [and] we have

gotten better at going into games with a competitive attitude," Levasseur said.

Sarro said they got off to a strong start, but had a tough schedule. They ended their regular season with a 5-10 record in the CAL, with an overall record of 8-13.

Senior captain Abby Taron

said they worked on staying composed in their innings.

She said they increased their confidence and played more aggressively.

Throughout the season, freshmen Anna Gardner, Abby Aiello, and Penelope Riggs were good hitters, Sarro said. He also said Levasseur and Taron were strong players.

Taron said freshman Sydney Hemme was vocal in the outfield, and Levasseur brought a good vibe to the team.

Levasseur said one positive is the loss of only two seniors.

"The fact that most of the team is going to stay the same means they're going to gel even more next year," Levasseur said.

Sarro said future years will continue to look good.

"We're expecting good growth next year, and I feel like it's only going to go up," Sarro said.

Baseball team finishes 7-14, reaches state tournament

By Sam Heanue
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After reaching the round of 32, the baseball team was defeated 8-0 by Seekonk and eliminated from the state tournament.

The team defeated the No. 35 seed, New Mission, in a two-day game that was postponed due to rain to secure a spot in the tournament, sophomore Nick Brown said.

They ended the season with a record of 7-14 overall, and 6-9 in the Cape Ann League, which placed them as the 30 seed.



COURTESY OF SACHEL RUBIN

Sophomore Satchel Rubin pitches in a regular season game against Rockport at Evans Field that the Hornets won 6-1.

Despite defeating Seekonk in the finals last season to win the state championship, the Hornets couldn't compete with Seekonk's strong performance this year,

Brown said.

"They had a pitcher that was throwing really well, all their hitters were really good, their defense was solid ... they were just

a very good team," he said.

Brown said this season was affected by the loss of leadership they faced early in the year, but the players were motivated by their coaches and senior players.

"Coach Weed was a really good motivator, and the seniors were awesome this year. It was great to have them as leaders," he said.

The captains, Zak Porat, Michael DeOreo, and Henry Otterbein, are all seniors who led the team in energy and performance, head coach BJ Weed said.

Along with the seniors, junior captain Troy Flood and several other players have made a significant impact on the team this year, Weed said.

"[Juniors] Matteo Sarmanian and Matt McKenna ... along with [sophomores] Satchel Rubin and Nick Brown ... and Troy

Flood, who was named captain as a junior, who's hitting .375, have helped [the team] out a lot," he said.

Junior Kevin McKenna said towards the end of the regular season the team had been playing better and enjoying themselves more than they were early on in the season.

The team's success coincided with the recovery of their coach, Charlie Bilton, following a stroke, McKenna said.

He said the team devoted itself to playing for their coach, dedicating the latter half of their season to him during his recovery and praying for his condition to improve quickly.

"Our one goal is to make our beloved Charlie proud and to play our hearts out for him in hopes he'll get better," McKenna said.

Art exhibit displays multiple pieces by seniors, AP students

Students convey emotions in their artwork

By Whitney Turner
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

High school seniors, AP Art and Design All Media, and 2-D Art and Design Digital/Photo students have been exhibiting their pieces in the art show over the past month.

The displayed work is an assortment of digital media, painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, and graphic design, art teacher Tamera Burns said.

Burns said the art is accompanied by a QR code that viewers can scan, which allows them to view a

chosen student's entire AP portfolio and their written responses.

"It's not that you start and it's over and finished in mid-April and have pre-determined where it's going to go. Just like for any artist, it's a discovery. That can be detailed in [the written responses], which is really cool," she said.

Junior Ava Rizzico said they chose their favorite pieces from their portfolio to include in the show, which focuses on how one's queerness can affect their identity.

"I wanted to show that I am capable of a variety of media, while still keeping on theme ... the ones that are displayed are pretty much every piece that I like," they said.

One of Rizzico's pieces depicts the back of a person with a triangle of strings



Junior Ava Rizzico aims to send a message about chest binding through their artwork.

that appear to be cutting into their skin, they said.

"I want people to be unsettled by that. It's an experience; it's related to chest binding, and I want people to see that it is painful, and I want people to try to understand that," they said.

Junior Mackay Brooks said her featured AP Photography portfolio focuses on the idea of



Junior Ava Rizzico's personal messages about identity are displayed as part of the show.

teenagers and the stress they have in life.

"I want to relate to people because this is something that I often go through, so I feel like this idea is good to be shown in our school, because it shows that stress happens and the different ways people feel it," she said.

Burns said her students worked very hard to create their pieces,



HANNAH DAVIS PHOTOS
Junior Mackay Brooks demonstrates teenage stress through her photography.

juggling multiple other commitments while also exploring their chosen themes.

"This year, coming out of COVID, I think was particularly interesting, and it seemed like it was very, very fruitful. It was a very good year; people really explored a lot of topics that were of personal interest to them," she said.

Open-mic event provides musical opportunities

By Alessia Omari
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

An open-mic event planned by the National Music Honor Society (NMHS) brought students together to celebrate their passion for music, senior Martha Davis said.

The event on May 19 in the high school cafeteria was planned as a way to garner support for the school's music department as well as bring together any students who are passionate about music, senior and NMHS president Maddie Machain said.

"A lot of people were interested, even those who weren't in the music department. We got a good amount of people involved in just coming to see the event night-of," she said.



COURTESY OF MARTHA DAVIS

Senior Maddie Machain and junior Chloe Lilly announce the performers at the National Music Honors Society open-mic night.

The event gave opportunities to musically-inclined students of all ages, Davis said.

"The event was truly amazing. In my opinion, the highlights were listening to the incredible performances of middle and even

elementary schoolers who stood up to sing and play," she said.

The planning of the open-mic event was the first step for the new organization to find ways to showcase the school community's love for music, band teacher

Joseph Janack said.

"The creation of the Music Honors Society was to put on events like this to spread awareness about music and what we do here. It was a good way to showcase talent around the school in ways other than formal concerts," he said.

The club hoped to plan an event that was more student-driven, middle school chorus teacher Ben Icenogle said.

"We hoped to create a space that didn't feel like there was that much pressure involved. Just kind of like a community-building opportunity for these kids," he said.

Members of the school's NMHS chapter plan events in order for the importance of music within the school community to be recognized.

"Now more than ever, it's so important for us to demonstrate

the importance and power that music holds in our community. In NMHS, we strive to demonstrate that music isn't going anywhere in our community," Davis said.

The club is looking forward to planning similar events down the line.

"Hopefully more open mics,

and then other kinds of fundraisers. There's community service opportunities, and a lot of it is driven by student imagination and what the

people in NMHS want to put on," Icenogle said.

Members of the club plan for such events to uplift the school's musical community.

"The musical talent of students at MERHS is not to be ignored. I hope this event will be the first of many," Davis said.

Summerstage plans to perform 'School of Rock'

By Gwendolyn Berger
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Manchester Summerstage, a youth theater program, is performing the musical "School Of Rock" during the last week of July.

Wendy Sullivan, the president of the board of directors for Summerstage, said the board started meeting around November to begin planning the show. She said they have to apply for shows to a group of companies that own the rights.

Sullivan said once the companies reply, they rent the rights to a show, and the company will send them the copyright information, scripts, musical scores and advertising in a package.

Auditions were held May 22 through 24 from 3:30 to 5 p.m. at First Parish Church. Sullivan said in the weeks leading up to the show, actors will rehearse around 12 to 15 hours a week. She said her goal was to encourage and support students.

"We want to give them a positive experience and help them learn more about theater," Sullivan said.

Senior and stage director Owen O'Leary said he also plans to help actors grow. He has worked in past productions before and said he is excited to work on the opposite side of the curtain.

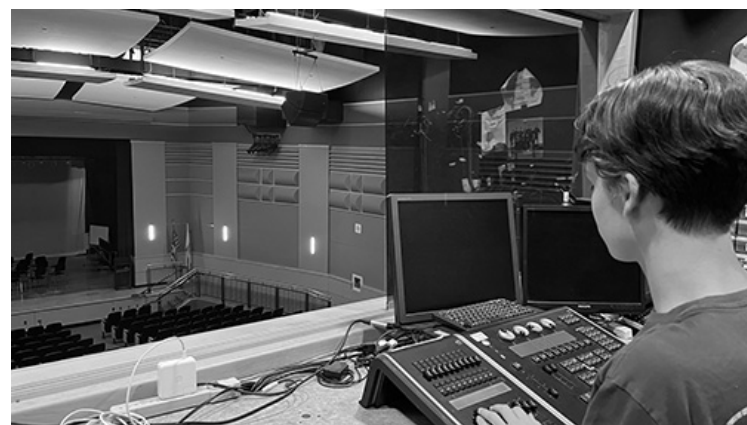
O'Leary said he will work backstage and help put together sets. He said he will take notes and help the actors.

Senior Maddie Machain said she will be assisting with sound production, designing props and ensuring all the actors and instruments are properly fitted with microphones. Machain said they plan on having actors work with real instruments and play pieces on stage.

"I'm excited to see kids learning how to play instruments for the show because that's incredible," she said.

Sophomore and lighting director Nicholas Haley said he is also eager to see the production come together. He said Summerstage has a great environment.

"I've made a lot of friendships working in the booth and have gotten to be creative and use a part of my brain that I don't use a



GWENDOLYN BERGER PHOTO

Sophomore Nicholas Haley practices the lights for the musical.

lot in school," Haley said.

He said he is in charge of doing lighting cues and designing the lighting (with input from the director of the show, Eric Vendt).

The cast list came out May 26, and many of the roles are filled by younger actors and actresses.

Sophomore Josh Cohen said

he will be acting in the show as Dewey Finn, who is the lead in the show. He said he's looking forward to it.

"I'm excited because Summerstage has usually done more traditional shows ... I think this will breathe new life into Summerstage," Cohen said.