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World of Difference members complete trainings

Anti-Defamation League educates students on prejudice, discrimination, racism

By Charlotte Pick
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After finishing three trainings with the Anti-Defamation League, students and teachers in the World of Difference program will have a chance to integrate what they learned into a classroom setting.

Each of the three trainings was made up of icebreaker activities and discussions; the students and advisers were led by an outside facilitator, Kimm Topping, from the Anti-Defamation League.

“We had very in-depth conversations about various topics such as discrimination, prejudice, and racism, and we openly talked about societal definitions such as what it means to be masculine,” World of Difference adviser and guidance counselor David Conwell said.

The group of students is also

led by high school teachers Lauren DuBois and Jessica Tran, who attended a teacher training with the Anti-Defamation League last summer.

DuBois said the trainings were mostly student-led and gave students an opportunity to break out of their comfort zones.

“They are learning the different tools and strategies that can be used to help people and create a situation when they can be upstanders instead of bystanders,” DuBois said.

Tran said the group has several goals regarding putting what they learned at the trainings into action within the school.

“Right now, groups are going to work with the ninth grade, but I think in the future this can also be a catalyst that will create discussions in the upper grades that are more informal,” she said.

Conwell also said the meetings with freshmen will take place during classes, similar to the Peer Mentor meetings that took place during U Block.

Juniors Olivia Mariotti and Genevieve Young were two of the



LAUREN DUBOIS PHOTOS

Seniors Molly McCarthy and Natalie Koopman, sophomore Domino Morris, junior Elene Karlberg, and senior Atticus Strack discuss stereotypes around sexuality in one of three completed trainings.

28 students who participated in the trainings.

“It was great to get to know new people and be able to express

our own opinions about important issues,” Mariotti said. “I feel like even in just three trainings we became closer as a group.”

Young also said the trainings were helpful in allowing for her **WORLD OF DIFFERENCE,** page 3

Seniors attend annual signing ceremony, commit to sports

By Sophia Larson
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Senior athletes Abigail Lantz, Harry Painter, Luke Leavitt, Christina Calandra, and Eve Feuerbach officially committed to schools for their sports at the annual signing ceremony at the high school, assistant principal Paul Murphy said.

Though not at the ceremony, Jillian Bowen also recently committed to Saint Mary’s College for soccer.

The ceremony took place during U block on Nov. 16, college representatives, coaches, friends, and family were all in attendance for the athletes’ signings.

During the ceremony in the auditorium, Lantz signed to Lafayette College for lacrosse, Painter to University of Massachusetts Amherst for baseball, Leavitt to University of Southern Maine for



COURTESY OF CHRISTINA CALANDRA

Senior Christina Calandra, with her mother, Rebecca Lapham-Calandra, signs to the University of Maryland for field hockey.

baseball, Calandra to University of Maryland for field hockey, and Feuerbach to College of the Holy Cross for indoor track and cross country.

The athletes said they felt the support of both the faculty and their fellow students while signing to their schools.

“It was nice to have Ms. Puglisi there supporting us, and Ms. Polk was there too, and having all of our friends and other students from the school. It was very spe-

cial,” Feuerbach said.

Signing students were also encouraged to bring family members and coaches to support the athletes at the ceremony.

“I [brought] my two goalie coaches, my club director, my grandparents, and my mom. That was really cool to have them there,” Calandra said.

The signing athletes also said what it meant to them to be signed

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Senior directs Drama Club’s production of Charles Mee’s ‘Big Love’ for first time

By Julia Kaper
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Directed by senior Anna Mewkill, stage-managed by senior Lizzy Klebart, and advised by Memorial Elementary teacher Sirkka Natti, the Drama Club will be performing the show “Big Love” by Charles Mee this year.

The play, which is the story of a group of sisters who run away from home to avoid marrying their cousins, focuses on gender and social expectations in modern society, as the cousins come to find the sisters and try to get them back, Natti said.

Senior Jia Mulvey, who has participated in Drama Club for four years, said that the show is something new and exciting. “I feel people will really love this

show. I think I’m mostly excited for all of the twists and turns in this show, and to show that to an audience.”

The group rehearses every week Monday through Thursday and will perform in the Drama Fest on March 2, Mewkill said.

This will be Mewkill’s first time directing a production; however, she has worked on the stage crew for numerous productions before, she said.

Natti, who is returning to advise the show for the second year, said that although they have only had a few rehearsals so far, she can tell there is a lot

of strong talent in the program.

Mewkill said the many incoming members this year add to the program’s talent. “It’s a great group of people who all are very **DRAMAFEST,** page 3

‘I feel people will really love this show. I think I’m mostly excited for all of the twists and turns in this show...’

- JIA MULVEY

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News Brief

Global Issues hosts Power Puff game to raise money for charity

Global Issues organized a power puff game raising \$550, which will benefit a local charity of the class's choice, senior member of Global Issues Luke Leavitt said.

Leavitt, who was one of the organizers of the Powerpuff game, said the Global Issues class is still deciding how to use the money raised at the game.

The game on Nov. 16 included a senior team opposing a junior team. The seniors won 22-18.

Within the grades, the game promoted a sense of community for both participants and fans, senior Drew Charlton said.

"It's a good way to grade build and to raise money," she said.

Junior Lars Arntsen, who coached for the junior team, also said that the game was a good way for each grade to get together and have fun.

"It was super fun, and it was a really good bonding experience for the grade. Everyone came together. I think we raised a lot of money too," he said.

Charlton said that she enjoyed her experience being a member of one of the teams.

"Going into it, I didn't think it was going to be good because it was freezing but then it was fun. There was a big group of us, and none of us knew how to play, so we were kind of just ripping around," she said.

Arntsen said he was impressed with the participants' skills on the field.

"The girls were a lot better than we expected, and they just put in a lot of effort and cared a lot. It was a good atmosphere," he said.

Social studies teacher introduces meditation to classes

Mindfulness activities help students manage daily stresses

By Austin Woodman-Paré
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

In order to teach students the basics of why meditation is beneficial to their emotional health, social studies teacher James Wallimann has been implementing mindfulness practices regularly in his classes.

Wallimann said he wants to implement these strategies in his classes because he notices "an extreme amount" of social and emotional anxiety and stress in the community.

"In this high school specifically, I see a lot of students impacted by this anxiety and stress. I'm trying to teach my students the basics of why it's beneficial and why it's important to give yourself a mental break. I want to show them how it can make a large impact on their lives if they practice mindfulness regularly," he said.

Wallimann said he has students meditate every day for the first five to 10 minutes of class and write journals once a week.

"I think it's important to do a daily practice with meditation, so they can get more and more familiar and comfortable with the process," he said.

Principal Patricia Puglisi said teaching mindfulness is a great opportunity to help kids to find their center in their day before



AUSTIN WOODMAN-PARÉ PHOTO

Senior Luke Leavitt, junior Finn Kiernan, and senior Luke Quine meditate at the beginning of their Conspiracy Theories class, which is taught by social studies teacher James Wallimann.

class.

"Because he is teaching electives, he has a lot of flexibility. It is definitely worth his time to put it into his curriculum. He was able to report out at one of our faculty meetings when we were talking about how providing that opportunity to kids in the day can really help them engage more in their learning," she said.

Senior Dean Campbell said Wallimann gives students the opportunity to assess what meditation is doing for them and gives

students a space to talk about their problems in and out of school.

"Whenever I meditate or journal, I feel like there is a weight lifted off of my shoulders. I can relax through mediation, and then I allow my thoughts to flow in the journal," he said.

Wallimann also said he challenged his students to participate in mindfulness activities over Thanksgiving break for 30 minutes each day.

"I wanted my students to spend some quality time alone without

the distractions of family, friends, computers, and phones," he said.

Senior Emma Cochand said she wanted to challenge herself to practice mindfulness outside, so she said she rode her bike on a golf course in Florida over the break.

"I went at sunset each night, and it was really pretty to look at. I could let go of a lot of my thoughts. I didn't have my phone on me, so I was focusing more on looking up than looking at [it]," she said.

NEASC committee visits school, meets with department chairs

Evaluators write preliminary report with findings, observe classes

By Hannah Freeman
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Following the school's self-reflection of their adherence to the New England Association of Schools and Colleges' (NEASC) standards for re-accreditation, a committee of three educators from other schools, chosen by the organization to conduct the review, visited the school.

During this visit on Nov. 15 and 16, the committee, which consisted of the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District 6-12 Fine Arts Curriculum Coordinator Kirsten Losee, Beverly High School Principal Elizabeth Taylor, and Alvirne High School Dean of Academics Susan Bureau, came to evaluate the accuracy of the school's self-reflection and offer additional insight into areas of possible improvement.

"When they visited the school, they observed classes and met with department chairs, parents, students, our central office staff, and a group of teachers to help them in writing the analysis of what they saw," math department chair Daniel Lundergan said.

After visiting the school on Nov. 15, the committee worked into the night to complete a preliminary review based on both the school's initial self-reflection and what they saw and heard during their time observing and speaking with members

of the school community, then shared with the school the following day before writing the full report in the following weeks, Principal Patricia Puglisi said.

She said the committee indicated they were very pleased with

NEASC recommendations for school improvement:

- Creation and development of the vision of the graduate
- Incorporate more opportunities for interdisciplinary learning
- Provide increased access to computers for more dependable implementation in classroom activities
- Expand school counseling department's connection to students by increasing outreach in the classroom

the visit to the school overall, citing student engagement in classrooms as an area in which the school excels.

"They didn't see kids simply roaming the halls the way you might at other schools, and they felt as though the faculty did a tremendous job being more student-centered in their classrooms rather than teacher-driven," Puglisi said.

Science department chair Kristin Umile said she believes that the student response in meetings with the committee was also a primary reason they were pleased by what they saw during the visit.

"They loved that the students had really positive things to say about the environment and the teaching that is happening in the classrooms," she said.

One area of improvement that was noted in their prelimi-

nary view was the school's lack of a "vision of a graduate." This standard requires schools to have a broad philosophical statement about what the school thinks students should know and be able to do upon graduation.

The school plans to look at this issue district wide, starting in kindergarten and developing all the way through students' senior year.

The school will use this feedback, particularly on the issue of the vision of a graduate to update the school's improvement plan for the upcoming years in order to make the school a better place for students to learn.

"At this point, we're working on [moving from a transitional school to] a transformative school that breaks down the barriers between disciplines and provides really rich learning for students," she said.

Freshman U blocks strive to increase productivity

New rules limit cellphone usage, monitor students for better preparation

By Mia Cromwell
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

In order to keep U block a productive place for studying and communicating

with teachers, the freshmen teachers imposed a set of rules for the ninth-graders, social studies teacher Jessica Tran said.

The guidelines prohibit students from using their phones, provide seat assignments, and require students to obtain a pass from teachers they want to meet with before U block, science department chair Kristin Umile said.

If a student has to complete a small task, such as printing an assignment, their teach-

ers will give them a "quick pass," Tran said.

Students are allowed to use laptops as long as they are productive, Umile said.

As a way to discuss and create these guidelines, the ninth-grade teachers met periodically last year and during the professional development day in Quarter 1.

Umile said freshmen teachers constantly hear from their ninth-graders that they are unprepared.

From observing freshmen U block behavior and receiving students' feedback given to their peer leaders, teachers devel-

oped the guidelines to help students better manage their time and improve their planning skills, Umile said.

"A lot of the students will often say that they are stressed out because they have a lot of homework or they don't understand how to study ap-

propriately, so that was sort of the driving force [for the U block rules]," she said.

'A lot of the students will often say that they are stressed out because they have a lot of homework...so that was sort of the driving force [for the U block rules].'

- KRISTIN UMILE



MIA CROMWELL PHOTO

Freshmen Haley Altieri, Augusta Taylor and Molly Schlegel work diligently without distractions to complete their assignments under the new U block rules.

The new preparation, resulting from the change, will leave students feeling less stressed and more prepared, Tran said.

Because freshmen undergo a hard transition from middle school, teachers are focusing on assisting them the most, she said.

"It seems to us that ninth-graders kind of could use this guidance the most, which is not to say there aren't upperclassmen who wouldn't also benefit from some more structure... It's not trying to be any kind of punishment. It's about who on the whole could probably use the most assistance and

guidance right now," Tran said.

Umile and Tran have seen improvement in U block productivity after imposing the guidelines, and Umile said she hopes the freshmen will bring their new skills to their U blocks in following years.

Freshman Simon Rubin said the new rules let him enjoy his life after school.

"I think [the new guidelines] are really good, so kids are actually doing their work and not just fooling around... I can just get my work done, and I have nothing to do at home," he said.

Teen Advisory Board collects art supplies for holiday fundraiser

Group promotes library through local community events, aids underfunded school in South Boston

By Sofia Gillespie
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Advisory Board (TAB) is holding a holiday fundraiser.

The TAB is a voluntary group that meets monthly at the Manchester Public Library; it is made up of 18 high school students from the Manchester area.

Librarian Anne Cowman leads the TAB and helps its members organize local events that work to promote the library.

Junior Sophia Pomeroy and senior Eve

Feuerbach are involved in the TAB along with several other high school students of different grade levels.

"It's nice to collaborate with each other; we're from different grades and different schools, so we have a bunch of different perspectives on how to help the community," Pomeroy said.

Feuerbach said they organize events throughout the year, particularly during the holiday season.

This year, they chose to collect art supplies for a class of middle school students with learning disabilities in South Boston.

Cowman said the school is underfunded and lacks necessary supplies for its classrooms.

'It's nice to collaborate with each other; we're from different grades and different schools, so we have...different perspectives on how to help the community.'

- SOPHIA POMEROY

The connection between the TAB and this specific class of students with learning disabilities was made this past summer when the TAB donated used books to the class. Cowman said the students in Boston were very grateful for their generosity.

"They were so overwhelmed and appreciative, and they wrote us these amazing thank-you letters with pictures and drawings; they were very creative," she said.

"They were so overwhelmed and appreciative, and they wrote us these amazing thank-you letters with pictures and drawings; they were very creative," she said.

Cowman said the members of the TAB loved the drawings sent to them, and she said they could see how the students were in need of art supplies. This prompted their idea for the fundraiser.

They will also be sending letters to the students who will receive the donated supplies. Pomeroy said the TAB members will become pen pals with the students they write to.

Donations can be made at the collection boxes outside of the school's main office and in the lobby of the Manchester Public Library up until Dec. 14. They are accepting new, nontoxic art supplies as donations.

"It would be great to get enough supplies to get this one classroom through the year; it would be awesome if the class could share with other special education classrooms," Cowman said.

CONTINUATIONS



SOPHIA LARSON PHOTO

Senior Anna Mewkill and freshman Julian Friends run lines for "Big Love," the 2019 Dramafest production.

DRAMA CLUB

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strong and love doing this," she said.

The cast is passionate about the topics that the play focuses on, Natti said. "I can already see their enthusiasm for their parts and their willingness to yell at each other (in character, of course) about some uncomfortable topics," she said.

Mulvey said she is looking forward not only to rehearsing and performing but also to getting to know the new members and spending time with the entire cast and crew.

"Drama Club turns into your little family. Like any sports team, you are a team, and so on and off the stage, it is really important to have cast and crew bonding for a show to run smoothly," she said.

WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to think more effectively about certain issues such as sexual harassment, discrimination, and preventing prejudice before it arises.

"I want to learn how to deal with issues more effectively in hopes of making more of an impact," she said.

The advisers said the students have grown as individuals and as a group even in just the three trainings.

"It was great to see the students having really good conversations about the issues we are having in school or in the world and wanting to make changes and take action; it is good to know there are people out there who want to do the right thing," DuBois said.

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to a school for their sport.

"I thought it was kind of like a dream come true, because ever since I was younger it was a dream of mine to play the sport I love in college and get a chance to meet new friends on the athletic field, not just the classroom in college," Leavitt said.

Feuerbach also said bonding with teammates in addition to continuing to compete was reasons she was looking forward to being a college athlete.

"I'm really excited because it's another level of competition and I get to meet new people. That's one of the reasons I was attracted to Holy Cross: because the team was really nice and supportive," she said.

Calandra said that growing as a player was something that she was hoping to do as a college athlete.

"I'm really excited to continue growing my game and to be able to play for the next four years for an amazing program," she said.

*Happy holidays
and best wishes
for 2019
from
The
Independent
staff!*



Holiday expectations cause seasonal depression

By Madeline Lai
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Christmas time and the rest of the holiday season is for some people a period of joy and celebration, but for others, it is a time where many feel financially and emotionally stressed, depressed, and pressured to manage an increased amount of tasks, activities, and social events.

Depression tends to increase during the holiday season due to a need to maintain expectations, handling recurrent familial issues that are brought up, and dealing with the stressful anticipation of such events.

Financial responsibilities come with the sudden surge of gift-buying and shopping, especially during the holidays.

Traveling by car or plane to be with friends and family is another financial burden, as flight prices nearly triple around the holidays.

Another concern that many face during the holidays is the interruption of schedules and routine actions, which can cause

How to manage depression during the holidays

- Set realistic expectations for yourself.
- Exercise boosts endorphins and brightens your mood.
- Open up and talk to others.
- Sleep as much as possible.
- Stick to routine as much as possible to uphold structure and consistency.
- Stick to a budget when shopping for food or gifts.
- Acknowledge and accept your feelings.

stress.

Healthy ways people can deal with that stress, such as a wholesome diet and exercise, are interrupted as well.

Emotional difficulties are also prominent during the holidays as people everywhere seem to be enjoying the season, so if someone doesn't live up to that expectation and feel the supposed joy, he or she may feel even more depressed and left out.

According to Anita Sanz at Forbes online, "When one of the expectations of the holidays is to be 'happy,' there is a 100% chance of failure for the person

with depression."

Those who have experienced loss are also reminded of those hardships around the holiday time, and for those who are already managing depression, this adds to the emotional burden.

Spending time with family brings heightened expectations and a stressful environment that are difficult to manage for some.

Sophomore Eden Mayer said that spending time with family brings anxiety to some people, and this is intensified especially during the holiday season when families are expected to be together constantly

"People want to impress their relatives and have them be proud of you," Mayer said.

Managing depression can be difficult, but exercising, sleeping, and staying positive are three ways to get rid of the holiday blues this winter.

'When one of the expectations of the holidays is to be happy, there is a 100% chance of failure for the depressed person.'

-ANITA SANZ

GUESS WHO?

TEACHER/STAFF EDITION

How long have you been a teacher here?

Nine years

Where did you grow up?

Salisbury, Massachusetts

What is your favorite TV show?

"Parks and Recreation"

What is your favorite ice cream flavor?

Strawberry Oreo from Cherry Farm Creamery

What is your favorite thing to do?

Go to concerts

Are you messy or organized?

Organized

What word describes your personality the best?

"Jovial" like Santa

Dream vacation spot?

Any place warm, with clear water and soft, sandy beaches

What scares you the most?

Falling off of the Tobin Bridge in my car and drowning in the river

What is your biggest pet peeve?

When people violate my natural rights

What is your favorite place you've visited?

The Oregon Trail

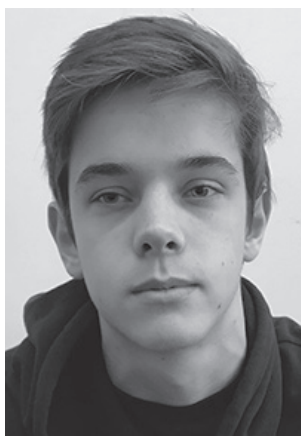
Answer can be found at the bottom of Page 12

Students share techniques to deal with stressors, tips for relaxation



Junior Paige Mandia

"Usually I get everything done as soon as I get home. I like to try as hard as I can not to procrastinate, so later on, I'm less stressed out. I can take time to go to bed early, read, or do something else I enjoy."



Junior William Smith

"I like to drive around... I'll just listen to music in my car and just go for a drive without any destination."



Senior Dean Campbell

"Running often helps me de-stress, even if it's just going on a light jog... I've been running for a long time so it's very securing because I know I can run... some people really don't like running, but for me, it works."



Senior Lizzy Klebart

"I like to hang out with my friends and listen to music. I find music very therapeutic, and I like hanging out with my friends because it allows me to talk things out and calm down."



Sophomore Emily Schuh

"I meditate, which I really think helps me de-stress. Meditation really calms you and clears your mind."



Junior Henry Conway

"I like listening to music and just chilling at home... I also make beats. For me, it's almost therapeutic."

Sophomore lives in Costa Rica, experiences different education, language

Local private school focuses on togetherness, real-world learning

By Domino Morris
INDEPENDENT STAFF

When I was 13 years old, I moved to the small, rural surf town of Montezuma, Costa Rica, with my mother, father, dog and anything I could manage to fit in my suitcase.

We didn't have a specific reason to move. My parents just liked the idea of adventure. They were able to work from home in Costa Rica, so little was holding us back.

One difficulty we had was that none of us knew how to speak Spanish. I didn't even take Spanish classes in school. In preparation, I was tutored before we left for two months, but I still couldn't make basic conversation. My parents' vocabulary was limited to "hola" and "gracias."

As we got immersed into the culture, I was forced to learn the language. My parents, on the other hand, often stayed home to work, so I had to be their translator.

It was an adjustment I was more than willing to make, but I didn't realize the drastic change



COURTESY OF LURAL RAMIREZ

Domino Morris lived in Costa Rica for one year, where she attended local school Futuro Verde with 10 other seventh-grade students.

I had made until my first day of school.

I went to Futuro Verde, a private school in my town, that had a friendlier environment than the public schools. Half of my classes were strictly taught in English, and the others were in Spanish.

Ten students filled my class. The majority were Costa Rican, leaving me as the odd one out. Only about 100 students attended the school, ranging from preschool to senior year.

I was always the only one overheating because there was

no air conditioning which I now know is a luxury in the U.S. The classrooms were built simply with a wooden frame covered by tarps.

A normal Thursday would start off with peace practice. This was similar to an all-school assembly but much more involved and personal.

Peace practice focused on togetherness. It allowed students to speak their minds and enjoy a break from the classroom. During this time, we focused on world issues, practiced mindfulness and simply enjoyed time together as

a school.

The beauty of such a small school is everyone gets to know each other. Grades intertwined often, especially during recesses.

A lot of students enjoyed playing volleyball, but sometimes it was dangerous. One time, we hit a monkey in the tree above us. It got angry and started throwing down leaves and mangos.

Life lessons, such as not messing with monkeys, were a major focus at school. Homework was not as present, but we had many long-term projects that related to the real world. For



DOMINO MORRIS PHOTO

example, I had an English project focused on how to fix the pollution in our local river.

This left us with a lot of free time to spend at the beach or playing sports.

I was in shock again returning home after the one year lease of our home in Costa Rica was up, but at least this time I knew what I was moving towards.

Not much had changed in Manchester. My house, my best friends and even my soccer team was the same. It makes it easy to sometimes forget I even left for a year.

Former First Lady Michelle Obama speaks at TD Garden about memoir 'Becoming'

Discusses messages of new book including spreading hope, inspiration during time in the White House

By Isabella DiPasquale
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Approximately 20,000 people visited TD Garden to see former First Lady Michelle Obama discuss some of the topics in her new memoir "Becoming."

The event, called "Becoming: An Intimate Conversation with Michelle Obama," took place on Nov. 24, and consisted of Obama in conversation with moderator Michele Norris, an American radio journalist and former host of the National Public Radio.

Norris and Obama discussed some of the topics in the book, such as her upbringing in Chicago, her experience in the White House and her inspirational message to embrace one's individual journey.

Obama's Chief of Staff, Melissa Winter, said she believes that everyone can see a part of themselves in the Obama's story.

"I think stories about ordinary people who lead extraordinary lives are worth sharing, and I



Sophomore Isabella DiPasquale, pictured with Melissa Winter, Obama's chief of staff, attended "Becoming: An Intimate Conversation with Michelle Obama," where Obama discussed her book.

hope they remind people that everyone deserves the opportunity to lead their best life," she said.

Winter said the tour is an opportunity for Obama to start a conversation with thousands of people around the country who can then go home and have those conversations in their own communities.

"Mrs. Obama wanted to start a conversation. A big conversation.



ISABELLA DIPASQUALE PHOTOS

She firmly believes the more we all get to know each other and let each other in, the more we will realize how much we have in common. As she often says, "It's harder to hate up close," Winter said.

Obama recalled hosting many events for children at the White House, including dances, workshops and a mentorship program. These events gave them the chance to have experiences that they would never otherwise have access to.

"When people go back and look at the pictures of the eight years that the Obama family lived in the White House, I think they will be astonished at how many children were constantly in

the building," Norris said.

Obama said she tried to take advantage of every opportunity to spread her message of hope, and she strove to inspire as many children as possible.

"Every time I could whisper anything into a child's ear, it was always, "You are beautiful. You are smart. I am proud of you. I expect great things of you. Be smart. Go do great things." That was my message, and if I could pour that into as many kids as I could over the eight years, that was my goal," Obama said.

She told the crowd that, as First Lady, she favored appearing on shows such as "Ellen" as opposed to news channels because she was able to reach

more people. She believed that people needed to laugh and feel good, especially when times were tough.

"America needs to know that while we are getting things fixed, there is still joy in the world," Obama said.

Throughout the evening, Obama spoke openly and candidly about the importance of not needing to define one's goals in life. She noted the many instances in her life in which she diverged from her original plan, such as when she decided that she no longer wanted to be a lawyer.

"[People] are not supposed to know what [they] are going to be," Obama said.

Obama said she strives to be a role model for her daughters by showing them the importance of prioritizing self-care. She highlighted that she wants people, particularly women, to give themselves permission to take care of themselves and invest in their own happiness.

"What we as women don't do enough of, is develop a habit of self-care," Obama said.

Obama also made the connection between her belief that people are ever-evolving and the message of perseverance within her book.

"The title [of the book] is so fitting because I know I am not even anywhere close to being who I fully am going to be; I am still on that journey as well," Obama said.

'The title [of the book] is so fitting because I know I am not even anywhere close to being who I fully am going to be; I am still on that journey as well.'

-MICHELLE OBAMA

Junior enjoys practicing yoga, taking classes to become certified instructor

Student hopes to continue the practice throughout her lifetime

By Sofia Gillespie
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Junior Catherine Garlitz is taking classes at the yoga studio Solstice in Lynnfield, Mass., to become a certified yoga instructor.

Catherine Garlitz's mother, Lisa Garlitz, owns the two studios, Solstice and Empower in Beverly, Mass., so Catherine Garlitz was exposed to the experience of practicing yoga from an early age.

A competitive dancer for 10 years, Catherine Garlitz said she feels yoga has helped her fitness and wellbeing.

"Hot yoga has helped me maintain my flexibility and strength; it has been beneficial for my overall health," she said.

She said that becoming an instructor would be the next step for her progression in yoga.

"I've been doing it for so long and have realized what I prefer in class, and I'd like the opportunity to orchestrate my classes accordingly," she said.

The certification process includes 200 hours of training classes that began on Oct. 12 and will end on May 5, 2019,



COURTESY OF CATHERINE GARLITZ

After practicing yoga for years, junior Catherine Garlitz hopes to teach next year and throughout college after gaining certification.

with a graduation ceremony. The classes are held on the weekends, but Garlitz said she is also given weekly homework that includes reading assignments and practicing yoga sequences.

Garlitz is the youngest of the 18 other students that are undergoing the training.

Junior Molly Brady, who has practiced yoga alongside Garlitz for several years, said she has thoroughly enjoyed the practice.

"I like how it's a different form of exercise that incorporates a lot of stretching and mindfulness into it; I like how there's different options for people practicing it," she said.

Brady's mother, Wendy Brady, has been a certified yoga instructor

for four years and teaches regularly at the studios Solstice and Empower.

Wendy Brady said she enjoyed the process of becoming a teacher and that the classes helped her to appreciate elements of yoga she hadn't been exposed to.

"I was immersed in yoga the whole time. I was able to learn about the history, the philosophy, the science, and the nutrition surrounding yoga... It's a beautiful life long practice," she said.

Catherine Garlitz plans on teaching classes next year as well as throughout college.

"I'm excited to have the ability to teach for the rest of my life and become more involved in my mom's studio," she said.

Jobs teach students life lessons, provide real world experience

By Olivia Turner
INDEPENDENT STAFF

When they're not in class or at practice, some students push their textbooks to the side and head off to work, and for most working students, the experience is just as important as the extra cash.

High school students from Manchester or Essex that work said their job helps them to prepare for the life that will follow.

Teenagers who spend their free time behind counters interact with adults. They ring up groceries, check hobbyist athletes into their afternoon cycling sessions, and prepare and sell food to eager beachgoers for minimum wage.

Senior Eve Feuerbach, an employee at the Singing Beach canteen, the Laughing Gull, said four summers of scooping slush, working the canteen's cash register, and running food have taught her how to communicate with customers.

"Sometimes working there can be difficult, especially when the customers are impatient and rude towards you, but overall, it's not that difficult of a job," she said. "I like working there... everyone



OLIVIA TURNER PHOTO

Sophomore Faye Dingle said her working experience at Crosby's Marketplace has helped her to improve time management skills.

is nice, and we have a good time."

Sophomore Audrey Brogna said her winter job as a junior ski instructor at Jay Peak Ski School has taught her better communication skills, with both adults and the children she teaches. She said she often works six-hour shifts on the weekends, teaching young children to ski along with an instructor.

"It's important to know how to work with people, so that later on, you know how to work with people you may not like or get along with... I feel better prepared to have a job in the future," Brogna said.

While interacting with customers during her weekday shifts, sophomore Faye Dingle, a cashier at Crosby's Marketplace, said she is bolstering time management skills that would not otherwise be put to the test.

"If I have a four to seven shift, I try to finish as much homework as I can beforehand," she said. "I have a lot less free time than I used to."

Junior Olivia Ford, who works year-round as a busser and hostess at the Village Restaurant, said six-hour weekend shifts during the school year teach her more than money management.

"I have learned so much about leading a business from my boss. I've learned the reasons behind so many actions that businesses take, and it has helped me in my overall understanding of businesses," said Ford, who aspires to pursue business in the future.

Ford said that even for short stretches of time, earning money, working alongside others, and observing businesses being run have all helped her to understand aspects of the real world.



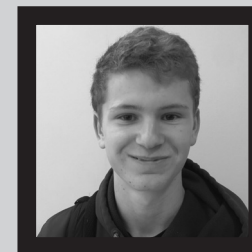
Freshman Molly Schlegel:
"My favorite tradition is going to get the Christmas tree each year."



Freshman Colby Doane:
"I like to eat a lot of pie on holidays, such as apple pie or pumpkin pie."



Sophomore Eva Parker:
"I like secret Santa with all of my friends and decorating the tree with my family."



Sophomore Lars Birkeland:
"I get half of my presents on Christmas Eve instead of Christmas Day because that is what they do in Norway."



What is your favorite holiday tradition?

Junior Alexandria Nunes:
"My favorite tradition is playing card games every year."



Junior Finnbar Kiernan:
"My favorite tradition is watching 'Elf' with the family."



Senior Lena Brzezinski:
"Decorating the tree is my favorite tradition each year."



Senior Jimmy Delisio:
"My favorite tradition is eating cinnamon rolls every Christmas morning."



Sports Awards

Are the end-of-season recognitions beneficial?

Pro

Austin Woodman-Paré

Not only do school sports awards teach each player the importance of commitment, sportsmanship, and teamwork, but they also stimulate an environment of widespread success.

Because school sports are competitive, students need to be motivated to do well during their seasons.

When players are determined to win awards at the end of their season, they play better, resulting in a better overall turnout for the team.

These awards also allow students to feel accomplished after their season. The students who do not receive awards during the banquet have an incentive to try harder next year in order to obtain an award.

Receiving awards encourages students to make an effort in their sport, which enhances the students' personal goals and benefits the team overall.

Coaches have the opportunity to award younger players, who may not be as skilled or talented as older players, by giving students the "sportsmanship" or "coach's" award.

Senior Eve Feuerbach said the awards give every player an equal and fair opportunity to be recognized.

"Every award can be interpreted in a different way, so the best players do not always win the awards. It is fair and gives players the confidence to continue to try during their next season," she said.

Boys' soccer and tennis coach Robert Bilsbury said the awards banquet allows coaches to recognize each player as a team member, rather than recognizing them by their skills.

"These awards give the coach the opportunity to talk about their program's values. Even if players don't receive any awards, they have to recognize that having sportsmanship and committing to a team is important," he said.

Some students may argue that players who do not receive awards feel disappointed, but every team member still receives a participation certification, which recognizes that the player put in an effort to stay committed to the team.

Athletic director Paul Murphy said the various awards given to players allow any season to end on a positive note.

"Student athletes' accomplishments are recognized with these awards, and the banquet allows the team as a whole to step back and look at individual successes and the successes of the team," he said.

These awards also provide students who are stronger athletically than academically a means of showing their talent to colleges.

School sport awards foster a sense of pride in players, thus enforcing the values that serve as the framework of sports teams.

Con

Mia Cromwell

Awards given to a select number of students during the seasonal sports banquets should be removed in order to improve a team's cohesion by implementing achievements for all athletes.

As a member of a team, each player prioritizes the group over his or her own wishes. Throughout an entire season, the team with the most players with this mindset will be more united and successful than other groups with self-prioritizing players.

The post-season awards, given out at the sports banquets, single out individual players for their successes and abilities, rather than congratulating each member for his or her contributions to the team.

While the select students who receive the trophies feel a sense of pride and accomplishment, student-athletes who don't obtain awards for their hard work feel disappointed.

For instance, students who don't win the sportsmanship award but strive to spread positivity and be a helpful teammate might feel discouraged when they aren't recognized for their efforts to uplift the team.

Athletes who don't receive the player of the year award similarly feel less important and worthy to the team because they aren't recognized for their strong work ethic and countless efforts to improve their skill throughout the season.

Pareto optimum, which is the state where no one can be made better off by making someone worse off, according to Business Dictionary, can also be implemented in this situation.

When applying this theory to a team, prioritizing a few individuals will leave others discouraged.

To maximize the team spirit of the group, the awards should be removed because certain players won't benefit over others and in turn, won't cause any athletes to feel left out.

Even though the current trophies recognize exemplary student-athletes for their skills and positive contributions to the team, having brief, verbal acknowledgements for each player instead will lead to a more cohesive, stronger performing group.

These recognitions would identify one way the player helped the team, versus a few trophies highlighting the accomplishments of only a couple of athletes.

During these acknowledgments, leaders and prominent contributors to the team may receive more appreciation than others, but a less impactful player will still receive a small contribution, leaving all players satisfied.

These new acknowledgements will recognize one asset each player added to the team, and in turn, will fortify and increase the combined happiness of the team.



SOPHIA LARSON ILLUSTRATION

Restrictions on single-use plastics will reduce ocean pollution

By **Julia Kaper**
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

By banning or placing fines on single-use plastics, the U.S. government would help reduce the amount of plastic pollution in the ocean.

Single-use plastics, which include items such as plastic bags, bottles and straws, are less likely to be recycled than more durable plastics and are the highest percentage of plastics that are polluting the oceans.

Plastics are not biodegradable, so over time, large plastics will degrade into small particles called microplastics. According to the Vox article "Why Starbucks, Disney, and the EU are all shunning plastic straws" by Radhika Viswanathan, not only are these microplastics potentially carcinogenic on their own, but they also attract harmful pollutants.

Plastic that has not degraded

into microplastics also poses problems in the ocean because marine life can get caught in it and suffocate.

A study published in Science in 2015 found that 275 million metric tons of plastic waste were generated in one year, of which between 4.8 million and 12.7 million metric tons were found in the ocean.

If this trend of waste continues, scientists predict there will be more plastic than fish in the ocean by 2050, according to the same Vox article by Viswanathan.

While restricting single-use plastics will not fix the entire problem, it will significantly reduce the amount of plastic that ends up in the oceans.

Plastic straw bans have been the most popular so far, even

though plastic straws only account for three percent of the total trash in the ocean, according to the Ocean Conservancy's 2017 Coastal Cleanup Report. However, these bans are just the first step; activists hope the restrictions will raise awareness and encourage people to forgo other plastics as well.

If this trend of waste continues, scientists predict there will be more plastic than fish in the ocean by 2050.

Restriction of single-use plastics has worked in other countries, which means it can work in the U.S. as well. In 2002, Ireland imposed a tax on plastic bags, which

was followed by a 94 percent decrease in the use of plastic bags, according to the New York Times.

Additionally, several states and cities have banned plastic bags or straws independently,



MAXPIXEL/COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG

Single-use plastics contribute to pollution that contaminates the ocean and beaches. Pictured above is the trash on Maya Bay Beach in Koh Phi Phi, Thailand.

so a national movement to ban all single-use plastics would not be too far-fetched. In Massachusetts alone over 85 towns or cities have banned single-use plastics, including Manchester, Gloucester, Ipswich, Hamilton

and Beverly.

In the meantime, everyone should be working to decrease their own plastic-use by utilizing reusable bags, cups, straws, and other utensils in place of plastics whenever possible.

STAFF EDITORIAL

More sexual violence education should be provided in class

Students must be better informed about harrassment

After an increase in levels of sexual violence reported in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, the school should work to educate students on sexual assault.

Principal Patricia Puglisi said the school does offer some education about date rape and will soon offer students the opportunity to learn about about sexuality, but the curriculum is not as in depth as it should be.

Junior Penelope Rodier said the school hasn't done enough in their efforts to educate students about sexual violence.

"I wouldn't really say that the school has taught me much [about sexual assault]... my relatives are kind of the people who taught me about that," she said.

Not all students have conversations about sexual violence at home, though, so many of them may likely not know what constitutes sexual assault and will not know what to do if they experience it.

Beverly Low, director of

guidance and college counseling, said she wishes there was more education around sexual violence, especially for seniors who will soon be leaving high school.

"I do worry about launching a bunch of seniors into the world

at graduation without having had a frank conversation about it," she said. Low said students should know what their resources are in case of a sexual assault.

The lack of education surrounding sexual violence in the

school has proven itself to be a problem in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, as 8.6% of students in the school have reported that they have been forced to perform sexual acts without consent. This is higher than the state

average, which is only 5.8%.

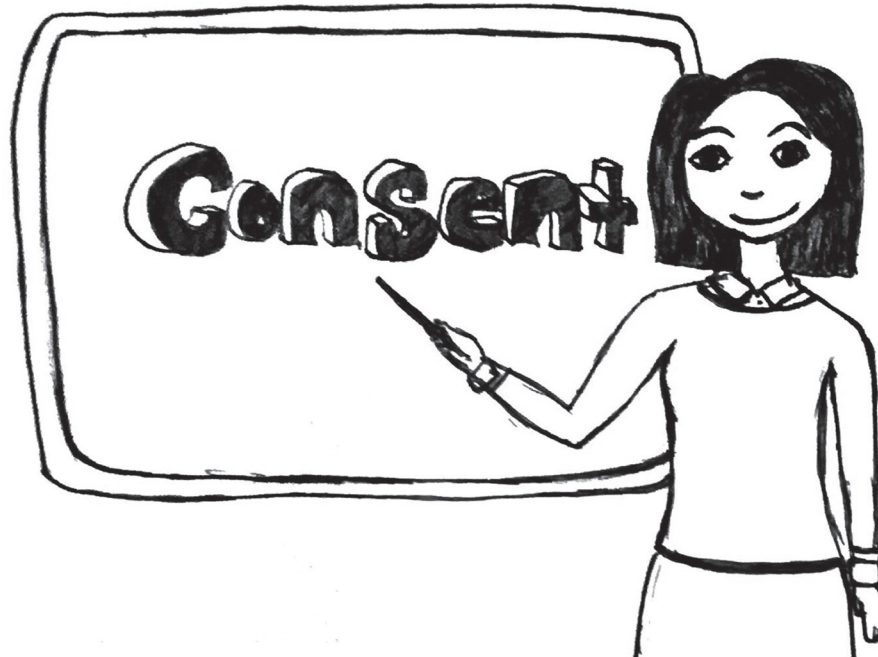
Puglisi said her concern is mainly with the current junior class, as 20% of students in the class reported they had been forced to engage in sexual acts without consent. This is 8.9% higher than the sexual assault reported in the current senior class.

She said sexual violence directed towards girls is another one of her concerns, as 12.5% of girls in the school have reported instances of sexual assault, as opposed to 1.1% of boys.

To solve this problem, Low said a student-to-student sexual assault education program could work effectively in teaching students. She suggested leading conversations about sexual violence.

"In my experience, the way a message gets through to students is when students present the facts to them, rather than being taught by an authority figure," she said.

To prevent instances of sexual assault among students while and after they attend the school, and in order to educate them about their choice of resources, the school must emphasize education on sexual assault.



SOPHIA LARSON ILLUSTRATION

Harvard lawsuit threatens diversity, strengths of universities

By Anton Kozyrev
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Harvard University is the subject of a recent lawsuit – one that should not proceed because it aims to cripple the diversity in American universities and remove protections for less-privileged groups.

The organization behind the case, Students for Fair Admissions, alleges that Harvard practices racial discrimination against Asian applicants in its admissions processes.

It urges a rollback of affirmative action programs – programs that have been in place for decades – in order to accept applicants solely based on academic merit.

According to Nick Anderson of the Washington Post, under such a hypothetical, “academics-only” model, Asian-American students “would constitute nearly 43 percent of the admit-

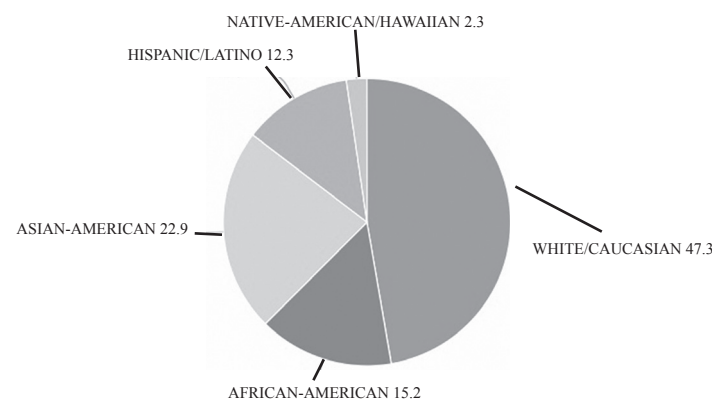
ted class” – just under half.

However, while this scenario might seem to eliminate any allegations of racism, it would end up weakening a key strength of large universities such as Harvard – the diversity of their student body. It would be crippled because of the lack of opportunity for African-American and Hispanic students to compete in non-academic criteria.

Diversity is essential for the strength of a group or unit.

Ray Mabus, secretary of the Navy during the Obama administration, wrote in an op-ed for USA Today that “[w]e learn from difference” and that this is akin to the military and its cohesion.

He details the numerous steps taken to advance diversity in the military, such as a repeal of the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy and making ground combat roles open to women -- explaining that “having people from varied



ANTON KOZYREV GRAPHIC

The diversity found at many universities in the United States is a key strength in the development of students' perspectives.

backgrounds and experiences ... with many different viewpoints” can only be beneficial.

While the potential lack of diversity is a definite reason for concern, another cause for unease lies in Students for Fair Admissions' actual intentions.

According to CNN, the organization was founded by conservative activist and former congressional candidate Edward Blum,

who has expressed a desire to remove laws and policies that benefit minorities.

As such, it becomes increasingly clear that this lawsuit is not being waged on behalf of Asian-Americans, but rather on behalf of a conservative agenda – no matter how much its proponents try to maintain that affirmative action is an attack on white and Asian-American students.

According to Jerome Karabel of the Huffington Post, supporters of the case argue that “Asian-Americans are the new Jewish students,” referring to the implementation of a Jewish quota in the 19th and 20th centuries intended to curtail numbers of Jewish students accepted to top universities.

However, this is a deeply flawed and inaccurate analogy. The Jewish quotas of the early 20th century were indeed deliberately intended to harm a particular group's admissions chances; however, the affirmative action programs of today are intended to actually help African-American and Hispanic applicants' chances.

It is imperative that Americans begin to understand that helping the less-privileged does not translate to an attack on those who tend to have more advantages. Once this is understood, the diversity of large universities will be safe and will continue to broaden students' horizons and understanding of the world.

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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' BASKETBALL



Bella Pomeroy



Grace Brennan

Coach: Lauren DuBois

Captains: seniors Grace Brennan and Bella Pomeroy

Record last year: 12-8-0

Rival: Amesbury

Goals: Win the league, perform well in the tournament, and beat rival Amesbury

Impact players: captains, Suzy Morton, Ava Glass, Emma Cochand, Bridget Twombly, Emily Jacobsen, Claire Gendron, and Lily Athanas

Coach's quote: "This year we have all returning players and the same captains, since there weren't any seniors on the team last year. This will definitely allow us to be competitive against not only Cape Ann small teams but larger teams as well."

- Lauren DuBois

Captain's quotes: "We're usually a second half and second quarter team. I feel like we usually play to the level of the other team in the beginning of games so I think it will be important for us to set the tempo in every game this year if we want to do well."

- Grace Brennan

BOYS' BASKETBALL



Kellen Furse



Will Janowicz

Coach: Tim St. Laurent

Captains: junior Kellen Furse and senior Will Janowicz

Record last year: 7-12-0

Rival: Hamilton-Wenham

Goals: To make it to the state tournament and win the CAL Championship

Impact Players: captains, Frank Wood, Lars Arnsten, and Dylan Wilson

Coach's quote: "We have a very good, talented basketball team and we are going to have a great season."

Captain's quote: "We have a realistic goal of winning the CAL Championship. Last year, the team struggled at the end of the season to bring in some wins. This year, our team's chemistry is really strong, and we're all hoping to close out the season." - Kellen Furse

GYMNASTICS



Senior Rose Wosepka, sophomore Tess Richard, senior Rachel Lee, sophomore Avari Litka, senior Annika Dahlin, and junior Ellie Pitkin

Coach: Chris Way

Assistant coach: Lizzie Ranger

Captains: Manchester Essex senior Annika Dahlin and Hamilton-Wenham senior Rose Wosepka

Record last year: 4-2-0

Impact Players: Tess Richard, Avari Litka, and Annika Dahlin

Goals: Win the league title again and qualify for States.

Assistant coach's quote: "The most challenging aspect of working with such a small team is that we sometimes struggle to come up with a line up for each event. Each team is allowed to have six girls compete on every event, and it proves to be challenging to fill the line up."

Captain's quote: "We consistently don't have a ton of players. Last year, we only had six people on the team, but we actually won the Cape Ann League for the first time, which was awesome. This year, we have a lot more people coming in from Hamilton-Wenham, so we're very excited."

- Annika Dahlin

INDOOR TRACK

Coach: Nelson Desilvestre and Mark Dawson

Captains: seniors Eve Feuerbach, Jillian Bowen, Austin Woodman-Paré, Matt Carter, Dean Campbell, and sophomore Josef Vytopil

Record last year: 1-3-0 for boys' track and 1-2-1 for girls' track

Rivals: Lynnfield and North Reading

Goals: Get as many runners to qualify for Divisionals and CALS as possible

Impact players: captains, Clara Davis, Brianna Pappas, Olivia Turner, Elizabeth Loring, Molly Brady, and Mia Cromwell

Coach's quote: "Our main goals are to have as many divisional qualifiers as possible, whether it's as individuals or relay teams. With a smaller school and smaller team it's more difficult to win some meets, but being that it's track, there can be a lot more of a focus on individual performances."

- Mark Dawson

Captains' quote: "Our goal is just to have as many runners as possible make it to the divisional meet; my personal goal is to qualify for the state meet." - Eve Feuerbach



Eve Feuerbach



Austin Woodman-Paré



Jillian Bowen



Matt Carter



Josef Vytopil



Dean Campbell

GIRLS' HOCKEY



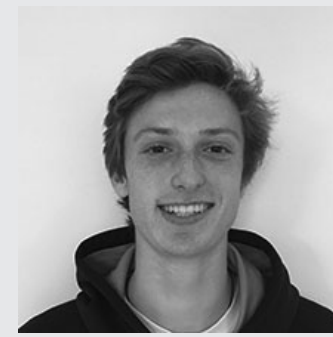
Annika Smith

Coach: Marisa Maccario
Captains: Caroline Kinne and Syd Cresta (from Swampscott)
Record last year: 10-7-1
Record this year: 0-1-1
Rival: Winthrop
Manchester-Essex players: Junior Annika Smith and middle schooler, Amy Vytopilova
Coach's quote: "They have been amazing with asking questions and building on becoming better players and a team as a whole."
Player quote: "I personally like the dynamic a lot. You would think that there was not a lot of chemistry, but it is the opposite. We all come from different schools and our lives are different, but as soon as we get there it's not about what is going on at school, we are ready to play hockey and there is no drama"
 -Annika Smith

SKI TEAM



Claire O'Brien



Max Hahn

Coach: Tim Wonson
Captains: Claire O'Brien and Max Hahn
Record last year: Boys': 4-8; Girls': 7-7
Goals: Improve skills, prepare skiers, have fun
Players to watch: Max Hahn, Claire O'Brien, Emma Wonson, Bonnie Gerhardt, Charlie Gendron, Ryan Clark
Coach's quote: "I'd like to think that the goals this season are the same as they are every year. I want everyone who comes out with the team is having fun, and I want...everyone to ski to their best ability but also to improve."
Captain's quote: "It's a nice growing year... Claire and I will be able to help grow the team and have the racers gain experience. I think a goal for the team would be to get everyone improving and have them ready for years to come, because this is more of a build year." - Max Hahn

BOYS' HOCKEY



Anthony Cucuru



Max Kivekas



Nick Fonzi

Coach: Patrick McIntosh
Captain: Senior Nick Fonzi
Assistant Captains: Junior Anthony Cucuru and senior Max Kivekas
Record last year: 2-10-2
Goals: Win more games, make it to the playoffs and be a positive team.
Players to watch: Captains, Kyle Khani and John Andrew
Coach's quote: "I think our attitude and our output could be a little different to make the team stronger."
Captain's quote: "It's going to be a rebuilding year..there are a lot of incoming freshmen and we need to get them ready for this new level of playing."- Anthony Cucuru

SWIMMING

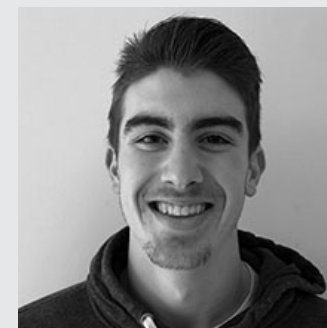
Coach: Caitlin Donoghue
Captains: Senior Drew Charlton, Jake Athanas, Per Hostage, Amelie Mittermaier, and junior Elizabeth Athanas.
Record last year: 4-2-0
Goals: Motivate each other to swim faster, win the CAL championship again, teach the new swimmers new techniques and skills, and improve from last season.
Players to watch: Jake Athanas, Elizabeth Athanas, Maddie Carvalho
Coach's quote: "We are really trying to emphasize our team spirit, and motivate each other to swim better and faster."
Captain's quote: "We have a lot of good swimmers on the team this year. There are a lot of returning players, who can help the team as the season progresses"
 - Drew Charlton



Drew Charlton



Per Hostage



Jake Athanas



Amelie Mittermaier



Elizabeth Athanas

Chorus joins Cape Ann Symphony at Holiday Pops Concert

35 students perform with professional orchestra

By Katherine Fitzgibbon
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Cape Ann Symphony's annual Holiday Pops Concert kicked off the holiday season. The performance featured both the Cape Ann Symphony Chorus and Orchestra, as well as members from the high school chorus.

On Sunday, November 25, the sold-out performance was held in the high school auditorium, which seats 495 people. The high school's select chorus of 35 students, which included some alumni and faculty, performed the songs "Do You Hear What I Hear" and "E Pluribus Unum," which is Latin for "out of many, one," before joining the Cape Ann Symphony Chorus and Orchestra to perform a medley of six holiday songs, called "Christmas Bells Are Ringing," before concluding the program with the popular holiday sing-along with the audience.

In addition to working on the

pieces in class, the chorus held extra rehearsals on Halloween and one after school to prepare for the symphony. The students also had a dress rehearsal with the Cape Ann Symphony Chorus and Orchestra.

The Cape Ann Symphony features 63 musicians in the orchestra and 67 voices in the adult chorus. Led by Cape Ann Symphony conductor and music director Yoichi Udagawa, the performance featured the return of the Cape Ann Symphony Chorus under the direction of Rockport's Wendy Betts.

Chorus teacher Donna O'Neill said the Cape Ann Symphony wanted to invite talented youth groups in an effort to re-energize their audience, program, and symphony.

"It was incredibly exciting to hear the students performing with a professional orchestra and chorus," she said. "It was an experience they may never get again in their lifetimes."

Senior Lizzy Klebart said that



KATHERINE FITZGIBBON PHOTO

The high school chorus, with alumni and faculty, performed an assortment of pieces with members of the Cape Ann Symphony orchestra and chorus on Nov. 25; the performance was sold out.

the chorus thoroughly enjoyed this opportunity to perform with an accomplished chorus and orchestra.

"It's their Holiday Pops Concert, so it gets a lot of publicity and a huge audience," she said. "I think it was a great experience for the kids to get some exposure

to this professional setting of an orchestra and get that performing experience."

Senior Jia Mulvey, who has been a member of chorus since she was a freshman, said she hopes the chorus will be invited to perform with the Cape Ann Symphony Chorus and

Orchestra again next year.

"It would definitely be a great opportunity for incoming freshmen next year to be involved in it," she said. "I think it really motivated a lot of students, especially students who were new to chorus this year."

Photography presentation shows 10 years of work

Slideshow displays culmination of student pictures

By Isabella DiPasquale
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Photography teacher Caroline Epp created a slideshow showing "10 Years of Photography" from students' work.

The slideshow is available online via Twitter and was on display in the learning commons for students and faculty to view.

In 2008, Epp put together a book called "Seeing the World in a New Way" with photos students took from 2007 to 2008. At the time, she thought she would make a book every year but found that it was too expensive.

Epp said she realized that she had not done a display of work aside from the art shows. After selecting the photos, she decided that a slideshow would be the best way to present her vision.

"We are such an online culture now, with our phones and everything else; I wanted something that could be shared widely and freely," Epp said.

The final slideshow include over 450 photographs from the years 2008 to 2018.

Junior Maya Baker, the teaching assistant for the Photo I class, helped make the presentation. She organized the images and make sure that all of the corresponding photographers' names were included.

"It was cool to see 10 years of photos...and I think it turned out



ISABELLA DIPASQUALE PHOTO

Photography teacher Caroline Epp's slideshow, which showed 10 years of photography, was displayed in the Learning Commons.

really well," Baker said.

Epp said it felt strange to look back on her students' work.

"It was like flipping through an old yearbook.... It made me look back and think about the students I've had in the past and wonder what they are doing now," Epp said.

Epp said she could see the

effort each student put into their work; the presentation captured the individual voices of the students.

"I think that it's really nice that the kids all have individual voices...and there is a lot of variety in the types of work," Epp said.

Epp said it is nice that teachers at other schools and other com-

munities have access to the presentation through Twitter.

"It's a nice document that shows what we do and what we value in the photography program here," Epp said.

Sophomore Charlie Gendron's work was featured in the presentation. He has taken both the Photo I and Photo II classes and thinks that the idea of compiling work from a decade is very interesting.

"It's cool to see how the art has changed over 10 years because students from 10 years ago had some different perspectives than students today," Gendron said.

Epp said she was proud of the final product and would like to periodically create new slideshows so she can continue to display her students work.

"It is really great to be able to feature the work of all of these students that I'm really proud of," she said.

'Middle Ground' facilitates controversial conversations, widens perspectives

By Julia Kaper
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

"Middle Ground," a YouTube series by the account Jubilee, educates viewers and widens their perspectives by opening up respectful discussions between opposing sides on divisive topics.

The series currently has three seasons, with a total of 22 episodes.

Topics of the episodes range from heavily political topics such as gun rights and abortion to other



JUBILEE/YOUTUBE.COM

"Middle Ground" gives viewers an opportunity to broaden their perspectives through respectful discussions and conversations.

subjects like veganism.

During the episodes, the "Middle Ground" creators read a series of statements to three people from each side of the topic.

For each statement, the participants say whether they

agree with it or not, and then they discuss why they agreed or not, ultimately trying to find the middle ground between opposing viewpoints.

Rather than letting the conversation get heated, the statements are created specifically to

facilitate respectful conversation in which each side can try to understand the other side's perspective.

As a society, we don't often look at opposing viewpoints enough because we are so focused on our own opinion, and it ends up being easier to just view people that are on the opposite side as being enemies.

However, "Middle Ground" opens up our minds to the notion that those "enemies" on the other side are people who also have morals, values and beliefs that should be respected and attempted to be understood whether or not they coincide with our own.

In the episode "Liberals and Conservatives Fight Labels and Stereotypes," the statement, "I think that people of the opposite party are misinformed or don't

know better" was particularly effective in opening up discussion.

The conversation led to the realization that oftentimes, both groups are wrongly represented by the extreme sides of both parties, and therefore, to demonize all conservatives or all liberals is extremely reductive.

The series is becoming increasingly popular as the Jubilee account has over 2 million subscribers.

The most popular episode, "Can Trump Supporters and Immigrants See Eye to Eye," currently has 5.2 million views.

This series not only educates viewers on a range of topics, but it also opens their minds to more perspectives, making viewers more informed.

Senior hopes to start career in videography

Maker of 'Summer by the Sea' pursues passion for creating videos

By Austin Woodman-Paré
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After attending a workshop at Montserrat College of Art and taking the art department's video and graphic design class, senior Ava Glass said she hopes to pursue a career in videography.

Glass said she became interested in taking videos ever since her family bought a Mac computer.

"My friends and I would create skits, and we would film them. I would spend hours using iMovie to edit and manipulate each video. We would upload the finished product to YouTube. That's what really grabbed my interest at first," she said.

Glass said she has created commercials for Nest Real Estate



COURTESY OF AVA GLASS

"Summer by the Sea" is an episodic video series instilled by Ava Glass every summer for 10 years.

and Coldwell Banker, but she enjoys creating travel documentary videos and adventure videos.

"When I was in seventh grade, I started my first video series called 'Summer by the Sea.' I've created a video every summer since. Right now, I'm on episode 10," she said.

Glass said her videos take weeks to finish, depending on how much footage she has.

Video and graphic design teacher Caroline Epp, who has taught Glass ever since sixth grade, said she has always gone "above and beyond" class expectations.

"Her work has always been very high caliber. It was very evident that she spent a tremendous amount of time and effort working on her videos. She took a lot of time to plan each video, took time perfecting each shot, and she was thoughtful with her editing," she said.

Glass said she hopes to go to film school to pursue a career in commercial videos, advertisement, and social media.

"Social media has had such a big impact on so many things, so I want to be able to show a wide variety of people my videos and talent. I'm also really interested in documentary filmmaking," she said.

Glass said her favorite part about filmmaking is filming each shot.

"Filming allows me to be able to see the world in a new perspective. I get to travel around to new places and capture exactly what I'm experiencing. Then I am able to share my experiences with the community through Instagram, Vimeo, and YouTube," she said.

Senior Olivia Rodier said she is happy for Glass.

"She has such a drive [and passion] for taking videos. She always has her camera or Go-Pro on her when she's traveling or doing something interesting, so it's obvious that she cares about making films," she said.

Bancroft & Co. offers customers upscale dining with authentic decor

By Anton Kozyrev
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Serving customers old-fashioned, largely meat-based cuisine since April 2018, Bancroft & Co. has offered its patrons the opportunity to dine in an upscale surrounding with courteous service.

Conveniently located among the numerous restaurants at the Northshore Mall in Peabody, Bancroft & Co. is easily accessible – although parking can prove difficult on busy nights.

Bancroft serves from 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. on weekdays. On Saturdays, however, it extends its hours to 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. and shortens them on Sundays to

11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

The well-lit restaurant offers patrons a feel of old-fashioned upscale charm with an air of sophistication, with various touches such as Andy Warhol prints on the walls and authentic telephone booths by the bathrooms.

The telephone booths, in fact, while not functional, carry quite a history.

They were purchased at auction by the owners from the historic Roseland Ballroom in New York City primarily for the purpose of adding some authenticity to Bancroft's dining experience.

The menu of the family-



ANTON KOZYREV PHOTO

High-end steakhouse, Bancroft & Co., in Peabody, provides a variety of quality, family friendly meals and artistic furnishings.

friendly destination includes a diverse array of foods, ranging from thoroughly elaborately-prepared dishes such as the Black Angus Filet Mignon (\$39) to the simpler, yet still sumptuous Petite Lettuce Salad (\$10), all in an

effort to adhere to their belief that quality dining "should never be stuffy or overly-formal."

Bancroft's soup options capitalize on the restaurant's desire to provide a memorable dining experience, bringing the bowls

to the customer and pouring the soup into them out of teapots.

Customers can also enjoy a taste of Bancroft's well-regarded signature Bancroft & Co. Burger – a choice that has attracted considerable acclaim and praise. The eight-ounce burger consists of delectable aged cheddar atop prime beef with a bun served with a side of golden french fries.

However, for those customers seeking something more unusual, they can order the Steak Au Poivre (\$47), which comes with a side of bone marrow – an uncommon dish for the uncommon customer.

While Bancroft does focus on more traditionally meat-based meals such as burgers and steaks, customers can choose to order a more local dish such as the Local Iced Oysters (\$3 each), Wellfleet Countneck Clams (\$12), or Tuna Crudo (\$16).

Senior Districts accepts two students

By Olivia Turner
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Junior Kiley McGroder and sophomore Jack Morgan were accepted into the Northeastern Senior District Music Festival this year.

McGroder, who was accepted as a soprano, and Morgan, who was accepted into the percussion ensemble, auditioned along with six other chorus students on Sat., Nov. 17.

"The competition was very high this year with a lot of students auditioning from across the

district," chorus teacher Donna O'Neill said.

She said choral students were assigned a solo piece to learn and perfect before singing it at the auditions. They were also expected to sight-sing eight to 10 measures of a new piece of music given to them at the auditions.

"This is the most prepared and dedicated group of students I have ever taken to Senior Districts," she said.

Band teacher Joe Janack said Morgan's percussion audition required the preparation of a solo on a snare drum as well as auxiliary percussion

instruments such as the triangle, crash cymbals, and tambourine. He said band auditions also included a sight-reading portion.

"Jack and Kiley both worked very hard, as well as everyone else who auditioned," Janack said.

McGroder, a member of the chorus, Sound-Waves, band, and jazz band, has been singing for five years. This was her first Senior Districts audition.

Morgan, who plays percussion instruments in both the band and jazz band, said he was

accepted into All-Districts and All-Region Band Festivals representing his previous Texas middle

'This is the most prepared and dedicated group of students I have ever taken to Senior Districts.'

- DONNA O'NEILL



Sophomore Jack Morgan and junior Kiley McGroder were accepted to participate in Senior Districts for band and chorus.



OLIVIA TURNER PHOTOS

school. He also went to All-Districts as a freshman representing Manchester Essex.

"It's really good being able to play in front of a judge and have the experience of playing a solo," he said.

The students will attend the three-day festival in January. After two rehearsals, McGroder and Morgan will perform in the 1 p.m. concert at Galvin Middle School in Wakefield, Mass.

Guess Who: Jennifer Coleman