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Professionals share stories of job paths at Career Day

Conference-style event allows students to explore future opportunities

By Avery Shaw
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After planning the event for several months, Principal Patricia Puglisi and the School Council organized a Career Day on March 29 for the sophomore and junior classes.

Puglisi said CEO of the Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce, Ken Riehl, inspired the idea for Career Day at a School Council meeting.

“Back in the fall, we had Ken Riehl come to our meeting... And through talking to him and trying to find ways we could connect the business community to the school, a number of council members thought it would be a really good idea to have a Career



Presenters like Mazda Jalali, a pediatrician from Salem pictured above, gave presentations and answered students' questions about their career paths in three informal 30-minute sessions.

ABIGAIL FITZGIBBON PHOTO

Day,” she said.

Riehl reached out to a number of professionals available to attend the event. A few School

Council members and Puglisi also reached out to be people in the community who would participate.

The registration for presentations followed a first-come-first-serve approach, in which sophomores and juniors signed

up for available slots through an online sign-up form called Constant Contact.

Puglisi said the organization of registration for sessions was flawed, and she aims to address the confusion students felt for the next Career Day.

The event began with a 30-minute keynote speech made by Dave Caruso and was followed by three 30-minute sessions with professionals.

“We ran the event like a conference that a professional would attend: it started with a keynote, and then the students got to choose which sessions they wanted to go to. The professionals said they hadn't been to a Career Day run in that style before,” she said.

Junior Faith Palermo said the conference style made the sessions engaging.

“After the speakers talked about themselves and their careers, they opened it up to questions. You could ask them about their own personal experience

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Final college acceptances released, seniors begin decision process

By Heather Holley
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After many suspenseful months of waiting, most seniors have finally heard from the colleges they have applied to within the past few weeks. Many of these seniors have gotten into and are going to their No. 1 choice college.

Senior Jenny Beardsley has gotten recruited by Assumption College for field hockey. She said Assumption was her No. 1 choice school because it had a small school feel to it and she knew that she wanted to play field hockey in college, and Assumption made it possible for her to do so.

“We can pick our own roommates, and I am rooming with a lacrosse player and a volleyball player from Maine and Mass. We're in a triple because the dorm we want to be in is right next to the field,” Beardsley said.

Another student who got into her No. 1 choice school was senior Bridgett Kiernan who is going to the University of California, Los Angeles.

“I visited in October, and it is so beautiful; the weather is so nice,” Kiernan said.

She said the University of California, Los Angeles also has the No 2. Psych program as well as the Division I sports, the bigger

school feel, and the diversity that Kiernan was looking for in a school.

Senior Zoe Brown has been recently accepted into and will be attending Mount Holyoke, Mass.

“It's an all-girls school, which I like because it's basically this bubble where women are lifting

ACCEPTANCES, page 4

Many...seniors have gotten into and are going to their No.1 choice college.

The Independent places first for editorial writing, 30 schools compete in Suffolk University contest

By Antonio Gillespie
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

The Independent won First Place in Excellence in Editorial Writing at the 47th Annual Greater Boston High School Newspaper Competition at Suffolk University. Thirty Boston area schools submitted work in the contest.

The award includes a scholarship of \$1,500 for a senior staff member of the winning newspaper who would major in journalism at Suffolk University.

Eleven students attended the awards banquet with adviser Mary Buckley-Harmon.

Last year The Independent took home the runner-up award for editorials.

The Independent has been very successful with editorial writing, winning first place in editorials four times since 2002, Buckley-Harmon said.

Editor in chief Amber Paré credits the English department's journaling program for the strength of students' opinion



COURTESY PHOTO

Journalism students Juliette Kelley, Sirine Benali, Austin Paré, Will Heslop, Antonio Gillespie, Maddie Conway (pictured front), Amber Paré, Fritz Spofford, Maura McCormick, and Karlie Angelis along with adviser Mary Buckley-Harmon attended the Suffolk University High School Newspaper Contest banquet.

writing.

“I think that the journaling program really strengthens our opinion writing because when I write an opinion piece, I feel

like I am writing a journal,” Paré said.

Weekly writing develops a student's voice, and commenting

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News Brief

IRace holds workshop for students, teachers

IRace, Founded by Salem High School guidance counselor, Luz Longus, held a workshop at Salem State to teach racial equality. Students from Malden, Lawrence, Manchester Essex and Salem High attended.

Math teacher Dan Lundergan attended the workshop with 11 students on March 18.

The event was a workshop for high school students and their teachers to talk about race and ethnicity.

The group emphasized the concept that race is an artificial construct developed by white Europeans in the 18th century.

During the workshop, the group worked to define race, culture, ethnicity, discrimination, prejudice, power and racism.

The workshop taught that race is currently based off the a person's appearance.

Though race is currently believed to be the color of someone's skin, the workshop taught that regardless of culture and ethnicity, everyone comes from the same race.

During the second part of the day, all students were broken into groups and shared their own cultural experiences with others.

Lundergan said, "We found out that all cultures celebrate holidays with family because family is important value, and everyone has different ways of doing it."

"We are sheltered here; we are one of the whitest schools in the state and don't get to meet a lot of people who are different from us," Lundergan said.

By Holly Fossa

International Week undergoes changes

Number of presentation days shortened, ethnic school lunches end

By Fritz Spofford
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With the goal of exposing students to other cultures, the foreign language department held its annual International Week this March as volunteers presented to both middle and high school students about their experiences in other nations.

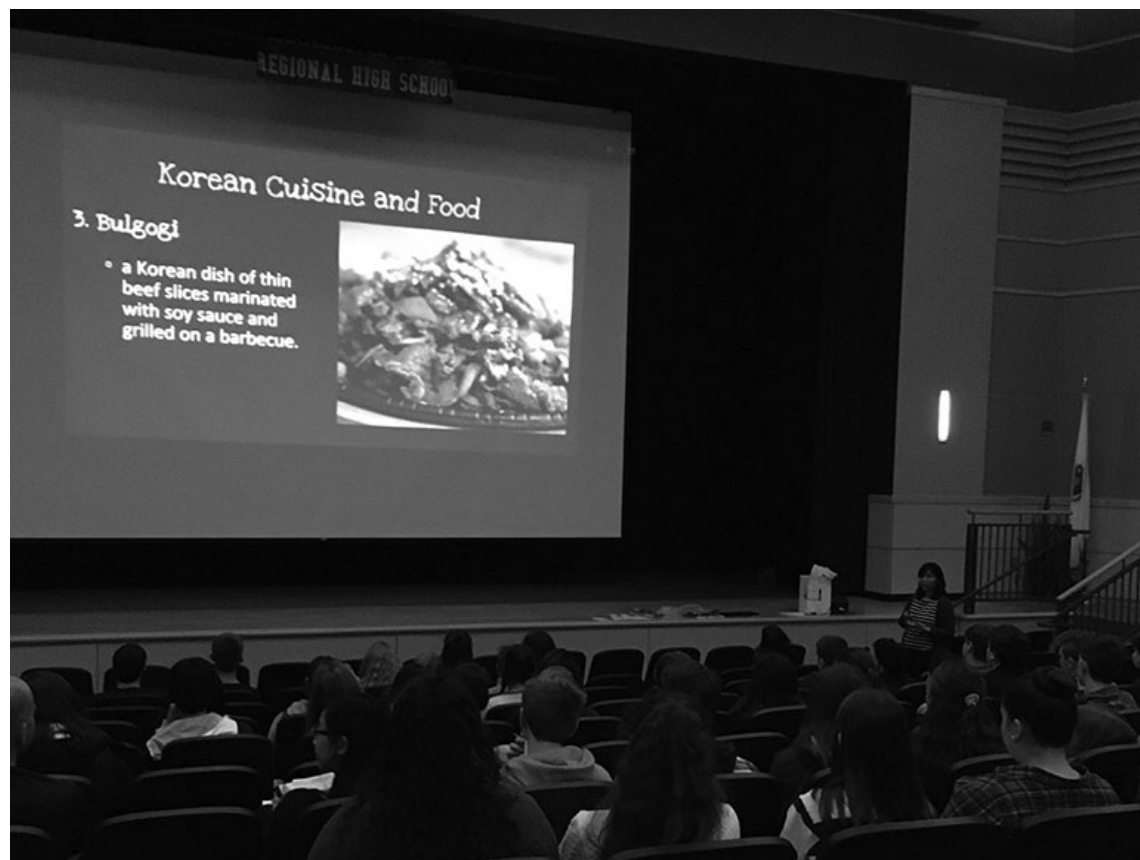
The week consisted of a total of 24 presentations, covering a wide range of places including Europe, Central America, Brazil, New Zealand, and the Caribbean, Asia, foreign language teacher Erin Fortunato said.

"The assortment of people who were willing to volunteer their time to present was just as impressive. We were addressed by students, teachers, parents and community members," she said.

This year's International Week saw multiple changes, including shortening the week from four to three days as a result of this year's schedule's causing classes to meet fewer times each rotation, foreign language department chair Michelle Magaña said.

Also changed was the tradition of the cafeteria staff cooking food from the nation celebrated each day, due to a change in food supplier.

"I wasn't sure if I could expect them to run through all the countries with us and come up with all the recipes, and we had started planning a little bit later than normal, so I didn't want to put the



COURTESY OF MICHELLE MAGAÑA

ELL teacher Michelle Chun describes Bulgogi, a traditional Korean dish, to students during her International Week presentation. This year included presentations on 24 different countries.

pressure on them," Magaña said.

Regardless of changes, the week went extremely well, Fortunato said.

"I always like to ask my students about the presentations in the first class we have afterwards, and students were very positive about them," she said.

"I thought the presentations were great, especially when they were more interactive,"

senior Lily Moore said. "During a presentation I went to on South Korea, the presenter gave us packets to learn how to write in Korean, which was so cool."

Both Magaña and Fortunato expressed the importance of International Week as a promoter of cultural understanding, as did faculty member "For both students and teachers, I think it's nice to take a

break from our traditional foreign language classes and celebrate the similarities and differences between ourselves and the various people who live around the world," Fortunato said.

"It's a way to promote languages, a way to promote travel, a way to promote learning about other cultures, races, people around the world and developing understanding," Magaña said.

Green Team holds 'Green Wars,' attends water forum

Contest between grades intended to raise awareness, decrease waste

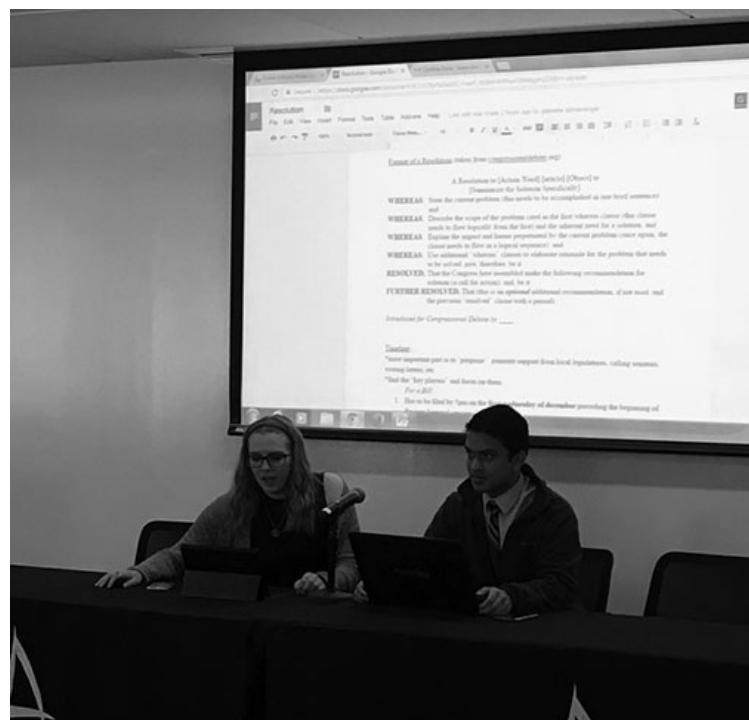
By Will Heslop
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Between attending the fifth annual Massachusetts Water Forum hosted by the Foundation for a Green Future Inc. and holding the "Green Wars" competition, the Green Team has remained active.

Several students attended the forum, which was chaperoned by math teacher David Alger. The event held at the Boston Society of Architects (BSA) building in Boston, Mass on March 21 and was attended by students from various schools' green programs across the state.

Alger said the event featured presentations throughout the day before the students broke out into groups for a series of rotating workshops.

The first guest speaker of the day was City Soil Principal Bruce Fulford, whose company "encourages people in the greater Boston area to compost, which he then take to their facility, combines with yard waste, and uses to make organic fertilizer to use on-site in a garden



COURTESY OF DANA NUENIGHOFF

Green Team president Belle Allmendinger presents with the Green Schools vice president at an event about sustainability.

they have there," Alger said.

After the guest speaker, students attended workshops.

"One of the presentations was run by [Green Team President Belle Allmendinger] and vice president of Green Schools, whose project was to write a resolution to go before the Massachusetts House of Representatives and Senate. Its intention was to establish a week of water conservation awareness," he said.

The biggest takeaway of the forum for Alger was its focus on empowering young people to enact change. He believes that these are the people whom they should spend the most time educating because the current generation is unlikely to be receptive to change.

"Water is something that many people take for granted. You don't realize how important it is until it's gone," Alger said.

In addition to attending this

forum, the Green Team worked on Green Wars, which ran from March 6 to March 31. According to Allmendinger, the event was held as a part of a competition for the National Green Scholars Society.

Green Wars consisted of a series of waste reduction competitions which measured paper, waste, and energy reduction between the four grades. They submitted the idea of Green Wars to the Green Up New England Challenge, and they received an honorable mention for the concept.

"We mostly held the competition in order to raise awareness. Through a series of smaller competitions, like recycling and carpooling, we aimed to raise awareness about energy consumption and waste," Allmendinger said.

According to Green Team teacher Dana Nuenighoff, Green Wars was moderately successful but did not quite generate "as much enthusiasm as [they] hoped."

As far as the rest of the year is concerned, Nuenighoff has plenty planned for the Green Team, especially since seniors will be leaving for SCORE.

"We are going to work with the Memorial School to help plant their gardens. We also have beach clean-ups planned, as well as a trip to Mass Audubon's Joppa Flats center in order to learn about salt marsh restoration," she said.

Students excel in DECA tournament, three move on to Internationals

Team receives compliments for their 'manners, class, and character' from advisers, officials

By Abigail Fitzgibbon
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After competing in this year's highly competitive State Competition, the DECA team succeeded with three students advancing to Internationals, nine placing top 10 in various categories and six winning individual medals, adviser Dean Martino said.

States took place on March 10 and 11 at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston, a bigger venue than last year's Marriott Copley Hotel due to the increase in participants, junior Isabel del Valle said.

"Despite its usefulness as a large venue, it was a very long walk from our hotel, which made it difficult for students," she said.

Even though the venue was slightly inconvenient for the students, the team triumphed. Juniors Laura Hannafin, Annalia Laino, and J.P. Rouillard all advanced to Internationals in Southern California.

Despite the fact that students did well in competition, Martino cites their behavior as a major source of pride.



COURTESY OF DEAN MARTINO

DECA students, making the DECA symbol, competed at the state tournament at the Hynes Convention Center. Many students received high scores and three are preparing for Internationals.

"[I am most proud of] the compliments our entire team received for their manners, class and character. Many of the individuals -- advisers and state-level officials -- complimented Manchester Essex DECA mem-

bers as the exemplar," he said.

The location of Internationals in Anaheim, Calif., in late April has drawn many students to participate this year, making the States even more competitive, Hannafin said.

"I'm proud of how well our

entire chapter did as a whole, especially considering how competitive it was this year. Everyone wants to do well since the location of Internationals is in California, so even making it to top 10 was a major achievement," she said.

For students like Laino, the

International competition is a thrilling opportunity to further apply marketing skills.

"I'm really excited to get to go to California and represent the school. It's an exciting opportunity to network with colleges and spend time learning more about marketing," she said.

In order to prepare for this higher level of competition at the International tournament in April, the three qualifying students will work on individualized practice in class to be able to target specific areas in which they need improvement to better themselves, Rouillard said.

While students should do all they can to prepare for competition, Martino notes that studying alone does not indicate success in DECA.

"This is not a competition where you can memorize anything. You have to be able to use the knowledge and apply wisdom. You're preparing for the Olympics, but you don't know which event you're going to be in when you get there," he said.

ASR classes plan internships, present findings

By Sirine Benali
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Finishing up projects and moving onto new ones, the ASR program has been busy this past month.

"The ASR I students are looking for their internships. We've had success for many of them, but we still have four that we haven't heard back yet from," ASR adviser Maria Burgess said.

Junior Connor Coale, an ASR I student, is going to be interning at Tufts University.



COURTESY OF MARIA BURGESS

Senior Noah Smith presents his project to one of the judges at the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium at Boston University.

"I'm going to be going to Tufts this summer to work with the human robot interaction lab,

writing code for robots...I'm hoping to gain experience in the real world with the process

of...working together and learning what the situation is like in the lab... [ASR] is a very independent class." Coale said.

Burgess believes the students in independent positions are "the most exciting thing" because she sees "the independence in problem-solving," she said.

"The second most exciting thing for me to see is...they are working on something that is very hard, very different...It is wonderful for me to see them go from a beginning stage to such a maturity, and maturing in the research process," Burgess said.

The ASR II students have finished their projects and presented their research projects to the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium at Boston University, according to Burgess

"We have six posters and one oral presentation, so the students [presented] their re-

search... [senior] Maddie Conway won first place in the poster contest," she said.

Senior Amber Shaw gave an oral presentation at the symposium about her summer internship research.

"It went well I think. I presented on what I did over the summer at Harvard. ... I thought that all of the presentations were really interesting. It was fun and a good experience," Shaw said.

Another ASR II student that presented at the exposition was senior Matt Kenney.

A professor "had created a new way for imaging of Alzheimer's, visualizing the way Alzheimer's was affecting the brain tissue... Our project was basically to...form connections between Alzheimer's proteins and what [the professor] was getting on his imaging device...I thought it was a pretty cool experience," Kenney said.

Robotics team works toward first World Championships

By Emily Clark
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Having competed in two tournaments so far, the robotics team started off a successful season with fifth-grade teacher Joseph McDonough returning as the academic adviser after taking a year's leave, junior Connor Coale said.

After a long building season of daily practices starting on Jan. 6 until Feb. 21, the team finished second at the Granite State District Event in Windham, N.H. and third at the North Shore District Event in Reading, Mass., securing them a spot in the finals. The team has qualified for the District Finals at UNH, and with more success could possibly qualify for the World Championship in St. Louis if more money is raised, Coale said.

In each competition the robots must be able to shoot

whiffle balls accurately into a goal, climb a 5-foot rope, and place 11-inch gears onto a peg.

"We have done better in competitions this year because our robot is simpler, making it more competitive, but we lost a few kids last year that were very helpful," he said.

McDonough agreed with the strength of the team.

"What we try to get out every year is that we are really building a team and a group of people that will hopefully end up going into engineering as a career. By building a robot and going through the process, you really end up building a lot more. I think the kids would say that this year has been very successful because they have been doing so well, but this year has been so successful for me because most of the work on the robot has been

done by the students," he said.

The team has around 10 mentors, generally people from the town who have experience in robotics and attend some of the meetings so the students can bounce ideas off of them and ask questions. However, all of the decisions that are made and all of the details of how the team is run are made by the students, McDonough said.

McDonough said robotics across the nation is a very "mentor-driven" program, which usually leads the robots from other schools to be around 25 percent built by the students and 75 percent built by the adults. However, this team has built around 95 percent of the robot "with very little hands-on work done by the adults."

The students this year were also able to identify someone



COURTESY OF BILL COALE

The robotics team competed at the North Shore District Event and has qualified for the New England District tournament.

that can do water jetting, so the team can get custom metal working done, which McDonough said was a part of the success of the team this year.

Senior Ledyard McFadden was very pleased with how the team has been competing and hopes to go very far.

"The team has had its most

successful season this year in its 11 years of competition. We are all extremely happy with the results, and for the first time ever, we are on track to qualify for the World Championship in St. Louis," he said.

The team is always looking for new members interested in science or business.

Debate team finds success at recent tournaments

By Antonio Gillespie
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

The debate club has performed at two speech and debate tournaments at both the state and national scale in recent history.

At the Massachusetts Speech and Debate League State Final on March 25, senior and president of the debate club Meehan Irose earned a second place finish in the varsity Lincoln-Douglas format.

"I felt really confident in my debate ability, and I think I was more eloquent and technically proficient than in the past which led to this great result," Irose said.

At the Tufts Classic tournament on Feb-



COURTESY OF REBECCA SHAN

Debate member senior Meehan Irose placed second in the varsity Lincoln-Douglas debate at the Massachusetts Speech and Debate League State Final.

February 25, sophomores Sirine Benali and Anna Bonaccorso placed in a four-way tie



COURTESY OF YVONNE ROBBINS

Various members of the debate team supported one another during the Semifinal round of the State Final Competition at Acton-Boxborough Regional High School.

for second place for varsity Public Forum.

"It is amazing to see us perform like this given the down-size to the program," senior vice president of the debate club Will Heslop said.

Irose reiterated this and said the team is performing unexpectedly well considering the inexperience of this year's team, with most of the members being underclassmen.

Members of the debate team were also planning on attending this year's Worldquest event, which is a trivia competition about current news and world affairs.

However, the competition was cancelled on April 1 because of snow.

The team hopes the competition will be rescheduled, especially because the school is sending three teams to compete.

Oberlin a cappella group visits school, performs for students

High school Soundwaves participate in workshop, receive feedback from Obertone members

By Maura McCormick
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Oberlin College and Conservatory's all-male a cappella group, The Obertones, performed for the school on Tuesday, March 21.

The middle school classes all attended and high school teachers were all given the option of bringing students to the auditorium last block so they could watch the a cappella group perform.

Among the group members was Oberlin senior Sam White, who went to Manchester Essex and was a part of the chorus, band, and Soundwaves during his time at the high school.

He contacted chorus director Donna O'Neill and asked if he could bring his group to visit and perform at the school for the students.

O'Neill said, "It was so great to see Sam again, and it's so great to see students who were in the music program out

continuing their musical interests in college. It's really gratifying as a teacher."

The group performed a number of popular songs, including "Use Somebody" by Kings of Leon, "Happy" by Pharrell Williams, "Hello" by Adele, "Let it Go" by James Bay, "What a Wonderful World" by Louis Armstrong, and "Dream

On" by Aerosmith.

White beatboxed in the background for many of the songs and took a few solos as well throughout the various songs.

At one point during "What a Wonderful World" he stepped out to the front of the stage to do

an imitation of a trumpet.

A few of the singers then briefly described how they had first become interested in music and singing.

After the performance, the group met with the Soundwaves for a workshop in order to pass on some of their skills.

'Hearing them sing was great, but I liked just talking with them because we're all very enthusiastic about music.'

- HANNAH SOUCY



COURTESY OF DONNA O'NEILL

After performing for students, a member of the Oberlin a cappella group, the Obertones, discusses his interest in singing with members of the Soundwaves. The Obertones also advised the Soundwaves on how to improve their performances.

O'Neill said the group listened to the Soundwaves perform, provided them with feedback, and then performed "Dock of the Bay."

She said they then taught the Soundwaves a few of their warmups and did a singing activity as a group.

Senior Hannah Soucy said, "Hearing them sing was pretty great, but I liked just talking with them because we're all

very enthusiastic about music. It's nice to share that enthusiasm with other people."

Senior Jenny Duff also said she enjoyed the workshop.

"I thought they were a really talented and very inclusive group. They were able to give us really good critiques on the songs we are working on as well as teaching us new ways to help the group sound unified," she said.

CONTINUATIONS

CAREER DAY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

or just questions about their field, which made it feel more personal," she said.

Sophomore Molly Field said hearing an in-depth explanation of the day-to-day experience of a career was beneficial.

"I have known I wanted to be a police officer for a while, so it was really interesting to hear what the day in the life of being an officer is like," she said.

Maria Nigro Di Stegano, Northeast Regional Director of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and a presenter at the event, said she thought having students broaden their ideas of careers is incredibly important.

"I thought the event was fabulous. It is very important for kids to realize how many opportunities there are out there for careers and how many ways there are to achieve success," she said.

Some students felt as though the career

options for sessions did not reflect their interests, Palermo said.

"A lot of the people I talked to were excited about the event, but said they weren't seeing any professions that they actually want to follow. I think students should have a say in the careers that present," she said.

Puglisi plans on holding the event every other year in the future.

AWARD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

on fellow students' journals develops a level of critical thinking in how to deconstruct arguments, Paré and Buckley-Harmon said.

In particular, Buckley-Harmon is impressed with the achievement this year because of how small the school is compared to the large schools that many of the competitors come from.

Opinion editor Maddie Conway was honored to receive the editorial work

because the group works so hard on the pages and it's nice to be recognized for that work, she said.

"As head opinion editor, I was honored to receive the award on behalf of the entire Independent staff who write the opinion articles and on behalf of my fellow opinion editors who help lay out the pages," she said.

The program also included keynote speaker senior NFL writer for Sports Illustrated Greg Bedard.

Bedard is a former sports writer for The Boston Globe where he covered the New England Patriots, and he spoke about the struggles in his career and how it made him a better writer.

Students found that Bedard's presentation offered insight about a career in journalism and how competitive the industry is.

"He shared his honest story about his struggles, which shows how a combination of hard-work and luck are required to make it as a journalist," senior sports editor Will Heslop said.

ACCEPTANCES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

each other up which I think is very admirable," Brown said.

Brown said she will most likely be studying biology and science, looking to obtain a teaching degree there. Brown said that Mount Holyoke has a "really great biology program."

Many students, such as senior Maddy Stowell, have a variety of colleges they have been accepted to and are still deciding where they want to go and which colleges they think will be the best fit. Stowell said her top two choices are Kenyon College and Gettysburg College.

Guidance counselor Gillian Polk shared her thoughts on how this year's college process went for the seniors.

"The college process went really smoothly, and I highly encourage juniors to start communicating with their guidance counselors now."

Health Matters



New vegan burger by Impossible Foods attracts meat-eaters to sustainable eating

By Avery Shaw
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

While vegan food may be gaining popularity and becoming more trendy, most people feel like they cannot give up the unparalleled taste of meat. Impossible Foods is trying to eliminate that excuse.

Impossible Foods is a Silicon Valley startup with a mission to make the global food system more sustainable.

Their first product is the Impossible Burger, which is a vegan burger but not made for vegans; it is a burger that appeals to meat-lovers.

Made entirely from all-natural ingredients such as wheat, coconut oil, and potatoes, the vegan burger has been made to be indistinguishable from an all-beef burger.

A team of scientists, farmers and chefs have spent the last five years perfecting the methods and ingredients to recreate the full experience of cooking and eating a hamburger.

Food blogger and vegetarian Kim Renfro wrote on Business Insider about how impressively meat-like the patty tasted.

“I got this pang of guilt — as if I was actually about to eat meat. The patty’s texture immediately transported me back to meaty memories,” she said.

While many veggie burgers have come close to resembling a real burger, all have failed to recreate that distinct meaty flavor. Impossible Foods discovered the missing key ingredient: heme.

Heme is a compound found in all living things on Earth, including plants; however, it is uniquely abundant in meat and is what gives meat its smell, sizzle, and bleeding quality.

This meaty meatless burger offers the same



IMPOSSIBLEFOODS.COM

The Impossible Burger’s key ingredient, heme, causes the burger to bleed like an all-beef burger.

amount of protein as an all-beef burger but is 100 percent free of hormones, antibiotics and artificial ingredients.

The largest impact of this burger is the environmental one; the Impossible Burger uses 95 percent less land, 74 percent less water, and creates 87 percent less greenhouse gas emissions.

The Impossible Burger is already being sold in seven different well-respected restaurants in New York City, Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

While the price of one of these burgers varies depending on the restaurant it is being sold at, the company said the impossible burger will cost “about as much as a higher-end ‘better burger,’” in an interview with The New Vegan Times.

Band performs in Philadelphia, visits famous sites

By Juliette Kelley
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Members of the high school band recently took a trip to Philadelphia, where they performed many of their pieces and visited various attractions.

The band left on Friday, March 10 and performed at the Franklin Institute, a science museum, that same day.

“The kids played very well. Everyone was really excited. The hall was pretty cool because the acoustics in it were amazing, and we attracted a little bit of a crowd,” band director Joe Janack said.

Many of the kids also enjoyed performing in a new place, junior Shannon Adam said.

“It sounded really cool be-

cause it was a big space, and it was right in front of the Benjamin Franklin statue,” she said.

In addition to performing, the group also explored

many famous sites in Philadelphia, Janack said.

“We did a tour of Philadelphia, part riding part working, and we had a tour guide that was



JEN COLEMAN PHOTO

After playing at the Franklin Institute, a science museum, band students went on a tour of the city, exploring famous landmarks.

dressed up in traditional gear so that was really fun,” he said.

The band also visited the Adventure Aquarium in Camden, N.J., and later went to the One Liberty Observation Deck in Philadelphia, junior Faith Palermo said.

“It’s like the Empire State

Building of Philadelphia; you could see the entire city,” she said.

Chaperone and history teacher Jennifer Coleman said she enjoyed seeing many of the sites as well.

“Sunday was my personal favorite. We got to see the Liberty Bell and go to Independence Hall and see the location of the House of Representatives and the

Senate from when the capital was in Philadelphia,” she said.

Overall, the experience was very positive for students in the band, junior Sydney Ring said.

“It was really fun, and I felt like even though we didn’t get to see everything, we saw everything that we could, and it was really interesting to go to a new city with the band,” she said.

In addition to experiencing a new city, the trip was also a way for students to practice pieces of music for the upcoming concert.

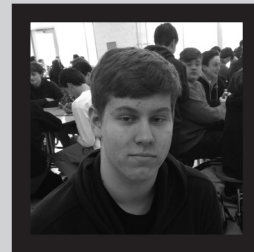
“Some of the pieces we played [on the trip] we played last year, some of them we’re doing in our concert in three weeks on April 6, so it acted as a dress rehearsal for some of those pieces,” Janack said.

Janack also said he may do another trip similar to this one in two years.

“It was a lot of fun, we experienced the culture of the city, the history, and the kids played great,” he said.



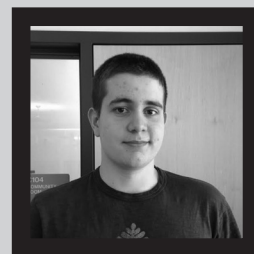
Freshman Maya Baker:
“My mom said it was a snow day when it wasn’t.”



Freshman Tucker Hoff:
“My brother propped a cup of water up on the door, so when I opened the door it fell on me.”



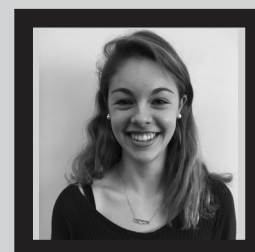
Sophomore Faithe Shatford:
“My mom switched the salt and sugar.”



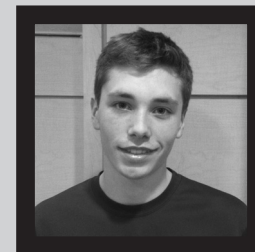
Sophomore Gus Hawley:
“My brother told me a carton of milk was full, but it was actually empty, so when I went to pick it up, I was surprised.”



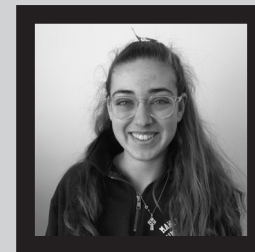
What is an April Fools’ Day prank that has been played on you?



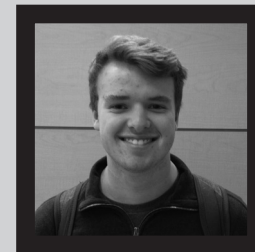
Junior Chanel Bullock:
“Some of my friends threw eggs at my car.”



Junior Liam Falk:
“When I was younger, my bedroom window was close to the ground, so overnight my parents put dog food on my bed and said an animal had come in my room overnight through the window and pooped.”



Senior Santana Tosi:
“My brother put a lizard in my bed.”



Senior Christian Arntsen:
“My friend put toothpaste in Oreos and gave them to me.”



Why do April showers bring May flowers?

By Karlie Angelis
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

The common phrase “April showers bring May flowers” is a rhyme that most everyone is familiar with, but why does it rain more in April than the other months, and is the phrase even correct?

According to George Latimer Apperson’s “Dictionary of Proverbs,” the phrase is traced back to the 1886 saying, “March winds and April showers bring forth May flowers.”

It can be even deeper rooted to a poem from 1610, Carla Correa, a writer for ESPN, said; thus, the phrase has been around for quite some time, but it may not necessarily be factual.

The rain is not the closest reason to when the flowers bloom, Elizabeth R. Ellwood, a writer affiliated with the Department of Biology at Boston University, said.

Flowering times, commonly starting mid-May to April, in the eastern U.S. for “many spring-flowering plants have become earlier as a result of recent climate change, but it is uncertain if flowering times will continue to advance as temperatures rise,” she said.

The phrase is correct in the sense that May is a common month for flowers to bloom, but now flowers are beginning to bloom in early May rather than the middle of the month, she said.

The rain in general does have



Although the phrase “April showers bring May flowers” is commonly known, its origins and factuality remain ambiguous.

an effect on the flowers, David W. Inouye, a biology professor at the University of Maryland, said.

“Some plants flower at the start of a rainy season, and some species might flower a second time in late summer, following a good soaking,” he said.

Chemistry teacher Keith Gray explains why spring is considered the “rainy season” rather than winter, summer, or fall.

“Pacific moisture comes across the country, and when there’s changes in the jet stream, it drops the water and you get rain, but

in the winter there’s not as much moisture—there has to be a lot for snow—in the spring, there doesn’t have to be a lot... [Rain] drops when it gets saturated,” he said.

Chief meteorologist Tom Skilling at WGN-TV goes further into the science of the upper and lower atmospheres that cause the rain.

“Warm, moist air [in the lower atmosphere] is less dense than cold dry air, causing it to rise into the colder upper atmosphere, squeezing out moisture into precipitation...across most of the northern hemisphere,” he said.

Biology students create brackets for mammals, not basketball teams

By Maddie Conway
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Instead of guessing who will become the March Madness champion for college basketball, students in science teacher Kristin Umile’s biology classes create brackets for March Mammal Madness, a simulated battle between non-human mammals that plays out incrementally over Twitter on Mondays.

The history of the competition dates back to 2013 when Harvard evolutionary biology professor Katie Hinde came across an animal-based March Madness bracket on BuzzFeed but, according to NPR.org, was disappointed when she learned the winners were chosen based on cuteness and not any scientific characteristics.

Each year since, Hinde has created her version of the college basketball competition using mammals as the teams but keeping the NCAA’s rules. Like the

basketball tournaments, the outcomes are determined based on the players’ strengths and weaknesses as well as a little luck.

The competition features mythological, extinct, and rare animals as well as some unknown to most people, such as the quokka -- a small marsupial -- and a Pegasus.

Umile first heard about March Mammal Madness from the mother of a former AP biology student at Hamilton-Wenham High School, where she used to teach.

“The original intent was first to raise awareness about mammals but also to introduce students to animals they may not have heard of before,” she said.

Umile originally brought up the idea to only her AP biology classes. “[The former student’s mother] introduced it to me for AP, recognizing that it would be a neat opportunity for students.”

Umile’s AP students reacted to March Mammal Madness with

equal enthusiasm and frustration.

“I love learning about all these mammals I’d never heard of before, but sometimes it was totally unpredictable,” said senior Maya Palmer, who took AP biology last year, Umile’s first year here.

For example, in the 2014 bracket, the pangolin, a small mammal with thick armor-like keratin scales had statistics on its side in the battle against a fossa, a cat-like carnivore. Before the match even began, however, it was picked up and carried away by a poacher, as pangolins are the most trafficked animal on earth.

Senior Santana Tosi, who also participated in the competition as a part of her AP biology class, said she wished she had learned about this sooner.

“I really would have liked to do this when I was in sophomore biology because it’s so much fun,” she said.

Umile, however, has started incorporating the competition into her freshman biology classes as a small research project. She also drew the brackets on large pieces of blue paper posted to the wall outside her third-floor room so others who are not in her classes can see the winners.

‘The original intent was first to raise awareness about mammals but also to introduce students to animals they may not have heard of before.’

-KRISTIN UMILE

GUESS WHO?

TEACHER/STAFF EDITION

How long have you worked here?
17 years

Favorite movie?
“The Blind Side”

Favorite book?
“Make Way for Ducklings”

Favorite TV show?
“House of Cards”

What is the biggest problem in the world right now?
Political unrest

Favorite color?
Purple

Favorite sport?
Baseball

Favorite restaurant?
Abbey Lane in Boston

Something that makes you smile?
“Seeing people happy”

Favorite ice cream flavor?
Peppermint stick

What’s your pet peeve?
Dishonesty

Favorite thing to cook?
Seafood

Go-to activity outside school?
Walking my dog

Favorite song?
“Let It Go” from “Frozen”

Answers can be found on Page 16 under Read, Watch, Listen



MADDIE CONWAY PHOTO

Science teacher Kristin Umile mimics the March Madness college basketball brackets using mammals to teach students about biology.

Senior class officers organize prom at Moraine Farm in Beverly

Outside location offers different scenery

By Abigail Fitzgibbon
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

As the date of this year's prom approaches, senior class officers and advisers are working to finalize the event. Prom will take place on the evening of May 26.

The senior class has chosen Moraine Farm in Beverly overlooking Wenham Lake as the venue but is still trying to determine the cost, according to senior class adviser Lauren DuBois.

Besides the scenery at Moraine Farm, there will be games and activities for students to participate in, senior class president Avery Shaw said.

"We chose Moraine Farm because we thought an outdoor venue would be most charming. In stead of forcing everyone into the same room, people are able to venture out," she said.

The suggestion to host at

Moraine Farm came from senior class adviser John Mullady because he had attended a wedding there, and the beautiful scenery and proximity to school of the location made it the obvious choice for the senior class, he said.

After taking busses to the venue, students will be seated under a tent and will have the choice between a chicken and a vegetarian option for dinner, which will be catered by Fireside Catering, Shaw said.

After dinner, students may gather on the dance floor under the tent. DuBois said her brother, Steven DuBois, will be the DJ once again.

What sets this prom apart from past year's is the integration of both dancing and other activities, senior class treasurer Zoe Brown said.

"It's a much more versatile



FRITZ SPOFFORDS PHOTO

At the prom venue, Moraine Farm, a stone wall overlooks a forest of trees and Wenham Lake.

space. In one area there will be a dance floor and tables, and another area will have lawn games... and then another area... will be available for loung-

ing and getting away from the noise," she said.

Even though the weather is a concern since the event will be outside, the tent will cover every-

one if it rains, and the decorations will be stunning.

"With some twinkly lights in combination with the scenery, it should be stunning," Shaw said.

Promposals mark start of prom season



GRACE PORTER PHOTO

Choosing to ask junior Julia Nieberle to prom in art class, junior Liam Kelly used a cootie catcher as a creative way to pose the question, she said. "We were sitting in art class, and on each inside flap of the cootie catcher it spelled out "prom?"... I was super excited. It was so original," she said.



CICI LYNE PHOTO

Junior Chris Brosch said he asked senior Liddy DeConto to prom at school by surprising her in the parking lot after school. "I put a bunch of balloons that said "prom?" on them in her car and waited for her to come and surprised her with the sign in the back of her car, and I asked her to prom," he said.



CAROLINE FRANCOEUR PHOTO

Margaret McFadden, was asked by junior Luke Heffernan with a sign that incorporated of her favorite shows as a pun "I love theater, and he wanted to incorporate that into the sign. 'Pippin' is one of my favorite shows, and I was in it a couple years ago...It was so cute," she said.

Senior helps create Climate Café aimed at discussion on environment, climate change

By Avery Shaw
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After positive feedback and a strong turnout from their self-created program Climate Café, senior Maddie Conway and adviser Shari Melto are looking to spread their message emphasizing the importance of constructive conversations on local climate change issues into school communities.

Climate Cafés are meetings aimed to create "discussion rather than debate" on environmental issues, according to climatecafe.net.

In these meetings, a question about addressing global warming impacts is introduced, and a conversation on the topic is facilitated.

The meetings follow a particular structure. Groups of five people form, and people in the

groups are given a letter from the acronym ALICE. The letters in ALICE stand for the following actions: advocate, listen, inquire, consider, and explore. Each person then must follow suit with the action his/her letter represents. Once each person has done his/her part according to their given letter, the letters are passed on, and another round begins.

Conway said the acronym allows people to fully consider other people's points of views.

"...on divisive topics where people are not always going to agree on something, you spend so much time thinking about your topic and what you're going to say that you don't actually hear the other person's side of the story. [Climate Café] is a way to get people to respect another person's idea," she said.

Melto said her job as a



AVERY SHAW PHOTO

Senior Maddie Conway helped create Climate Café program.

dialogue coach for leaders of organizations inspired her to create the format of the Climate Cafés.

"...[in my job before] I gave advice on communication in businesses, so I then saw the need for that in local communities. I tried to incorporate what I know about discussion in the cor-

porate world to climate change," she said.

Conway met Melto in 2012. The two were both apart of the Gulf of Maine Institute, a group that focuses on teaching the upcoming generation of the importance of bio-diversity.

Melto said she "saw how engaged Maddie [gets] in her work," and knew she would be a helpful partner.

Melto and Conway want to bring the skills that Climate

Café's teach into classrooms. "We are trying to get it away from the café approach... typically only adults will come [to the meetings]. We want to get it into classrooms. We believe...

that if you can get this into the younger generation in a way that motivates them, they will be able to make positive change," Conway said.

'...if you can get this into the younger generation in a way that motivates them, they will be able to make positive change.'

- MADDIE CONWAY

Conway and Melto brought their Climate Café idea to the Massachusetts Environmental Education Society in the 2017 MEES conference on March 8 at the College of Holy Cross in Worcester.

"At the conference, we gave the group of around 25 educa-

tors a test trial of how a Climate Café would work. We suggested techniques to help teachers figure out ways they can incorporate this into their classrooms," Melto said.

Students with Style



Liddy Deconto

"I like this outfit because the sweater is really warm and cozy, which is perfect for these cold days. It is practical because I can look fashionable and stay comfy at the same time," she said.

AJ Rhuda

"I haven't gotten a haircut since August because I just don't like them, and they are kind of awkward. The hairstylist tries to make conversation with me, and I don't want to talk to them. I don't really do it for fashion, but I like how it looks," he said.



Joey Cirone

"I always feel the need to be comfy and have style at the same time," he said.



Ananya Dwivedi

"Everything I'm wearing is from India besides the Converse and the socks. I wear Indian clothes because I want to represent my culture, and it is all very comfortable," she said.



Randall Doane

"It is comfortable without looking lazy-- loose top, pants that are actually jeggings, and comfortable boots," she said.



Chris Brosch

"It's like being in your bed all day-- comfy, cozy, and warm. I enjoy school more when I wear this," he said.

Belle Allmendinger

"I love these pants. They originally had holes, but the holes got bigger. Since I still want to wear the pants, I was like, hey, why not put tights underneath? I wanted to wear the fishnet tights, but I don't have them. It feels a little weird, but I would definitely recommend it to people in the winter when it is cold and you don't want to expose your skin," she said.

Freedom of Expression

Should people be allowed to display the Confederate flag?

Pro Will Heslop

Freedom of expression is a right so integral to American society and should not be restricted unless in the most extreme circumstances, under which displaying a Confederate flag simply does not fall.

While the Confederate flag has come to represent racism as opposed to a mere symbol of the South's rebellious uprising, limiting its display is a direct restriction of an individual's right to free expression, which is afforded to him/her under the First Amendment.

In *Schenck v. United States*, the Supreme Court held that speech could not be suppressed unless it presented a "clear and present danger." Until the case of *Brandenburg v. Ohio*, this had been the standard by which courts have evaluated whether or not an individual's speech could be limited.

The decision in *Brandenburg v. Ohio* changed the standard for evaluating speech and determined that an individual had the right to free speech so long as his/her speech is not "directed to inciting or producing imminent lawless action."

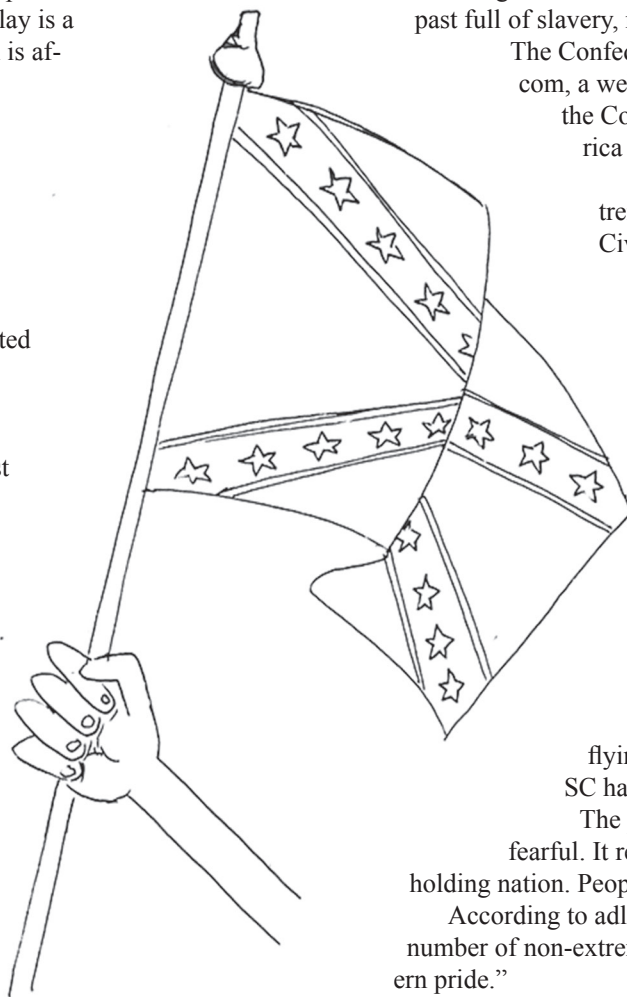
With this decision, the Supreme Court created the so-called "Brandenburg test," which aimed to clearly establish instances in which speech directly incites lawless action. The Brandenburg test addresses three elements of speech in its determination: intent, imminence, and likelihood.

While its image is powerful, the Confederate flag does not fail the Brandenburg test, and thus its display should not be restricted by the state.

Regarding intent, it is clear that some people who display the Confederate flag do so in order to express their negative views of African-Americans and other minorities. These individuals represent the minority, however, and the majority of individuals who display the Confederate flag are more likely taking a political stand in protest of the current state of government or expressing Southern pride.

When it comes to imminence and likelihood, an individual is not likely to immediately resort to violence upon seeing a Confederate flag. While occasionally news stories appear wherein violence is caused due to the presence of a Confederate flag, these instances are few and far between and are contrary to the trend.

Many will argue that displaying the Confederate flag is akin to displaying a swastika, but this statement is exaggerated and untrue. The swastika has come to represent nothing but pure racism and bigotry, whereas the Confederate flag chiefly represents a period in time where people opposed government authority.



EVERY SHAW ILLUSTRATION

Con Austin Paré

Due to what it represents, which is a racist symbol of the past, the Confederate flag should not be flown publicly on campuses or government buildings.

The Confederate flag was a symbol of its ideals: the violent attack of the Union during the American Civil War in 1865. It still represents an oppressive past full of slavery, racism, and brutality against human beings.

The Confederacy fought to retain slavery. According to juancole.com, a website that focuses on informed thoughts about history, the Confederacy wanted the ability to take people from Africa and bring them to America to work for no salary.

Flying the Confederate flag publicly has been an extremely controversial topic ever since the 1860s when the Civil War ended.

It is immoral to fly a flag that represents such an oppressive, discriminatory, and racist movement.

During the 20th and 21st century, the flying of this flag became popular among white supremacists.

According to juancole.com, because the flag has been adopted by multiple white supremacist and KKK movements, flying the Confederate flag outside of state buildings "[made] it look as though the state condones that sort of thing."

Laws cannot forbid the flying of this flag on private buildings because it represents freedom of speech, which the First Amendment protects.

Government buildings, still, should not support the flying of it on their buildings; the statehouse in Columbia, SC has displayed the Confederate flag ever since the 1960s.

The presence of this flag makes individuals feel unsafe and fearful. It represents an oppressive party that supported a slaveholding nation. People should not feel this way in their own country.

According to adl.org, an antidiscrimination website, there are also a number of non-extremists that use the flag to symbolize their own "Southern pride."

Yes, the Confederate flag can represent one's "Southern pride" and heritage, but it is not worth flying a flag that represents slavery and violence.

There are less historically controversial ways to represent where individuals come from, and flying the Confederate flag publicly should not be one of them.

Instead of flying the Confederate flag, everydayfeminism.com suggests flying the Gadsden flag to support state's rights or using a "Southern and proud" sticker to represent one's pride in living in the South, as the Confederate flag is a symbol of hatred, terror, and violence. The flying of this flag should be left in the past.

Student athletes who do not drink should not be punished like those who do

Current regulations make students guilty by association

By Maura McCormick
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Student athletes who are not drinking at parties where alcohol is present should not be penalized.

Currently, Manchester Essex students who are at a party where alcohol is present are subject to the same punishment, regardless of whether or not they are intoxicated.

Principal Patricia Puglisi said this is due to the fact that the Manchester police do not have the time or resources to issue a Breathalyzer to every person at the party.

Any captain will lose his or her captainship, and athletes lose a quarter of their seasons.

The MIAA rule, however, is phrased in such a way that "is not intended to render 'guilt by association', [so] many student

athletes might be present at a party where only a few violate this standard."

Punishing students who are not drinking alcohol at a party actually leads to more dangerous situations.

The majority of students who choose not to drink at parties where alcohol is present serve as designated drivers.

Without those students, many people would likely end up driving under the influence, endangering their own safety as well as the safety of others.

Students who are not under the influence are also the most capable of making logical deci-

sions and dealing with dangerous situations.

Intoxicated people are also less likely to think to call the police or get medical help when a situation gets out of hand.

Those who choose not to drink also serve as role models for other students at the party.

Additionally, if the issue is related to limited resources, a

Breathalyzer test only takes approximately 20 seconds, according to breathalyzeralcoholtester.com.

Other towns, such as Reading, already have a policy of administering Breathalyzers to determine which students should be

Students who choose not to drink at parties where alcohol is present serve as designated drivers.



KELLY/COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG

Even if high school student athletes pass a Breathalyzer test when they have not been drinking at a party, they can still be punished for attending, with consequences including loss of captainship.

punished for underage drinking, so instituting this policy should not be too difficult.

Puglisi said if she were

presented with evidence of a Breathalyzer proving a student's sobriety, she would not punish that student.



Learning real science with ASR

By Maddie Conway
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Biology has always been my favorite subject by far; for some reason, learning rational explanations for what could only seem to be described as the magic of the natural world never ceases to amaze and inspire me in turns.

So when, during the course of taking the Authentic Science Research class run by biology teacher Maria Burgess, I was presented with the opportunity to complete an internship at a laboratory at Boston University Medical School that dealt with a fascinating evolutionary trait in humans, I jumped at it.

For six weeks, I studied a phenomenon called ocular immune privilege, which is a trait in humans and most other mammals that seeks to prevent damaging inflammation by suppressing the eye's immune system.

The most interesting thing out of this whole experience, however, was something the lab's leader said to me as I was leaving on my very last day.

I had remarked about wanting to look up other papers to see if their data corroborated my work. To this he replied, "I mean, you could do that, but I don't think you'd find anything, because right now, you're the one writing the literature."

And it was this comment, more than any protocol I followed, that made me realize what the internship meant to me. Coming from a high school setting where I had to learn almost everything about a true research laboratory, I was programmed to think the opposite of how a researcher questions.

Whenever I finished a lab in school, I along with everyone else, rushed to the packet or to the teacher, asking, "Is this right? Is my result the right answer?"

In school, the questions had already been answered, but in a research lab, they haven't, so we are the ones answering them. In a research lab, whatever we get is correct until someone else provides evidence to the contrary, although we make sure to repeat our research more than in high school.

To think that not one single other person in the world of more than 7 billion people has answered the exact question I was tasked with is unthinkable to someone for whom science was always a matter of repeating someone else's work and hoping mine matched with theirs, and I am so grateful to everyone involved who allowed me to have this experience.

STAFF EDITORIAL

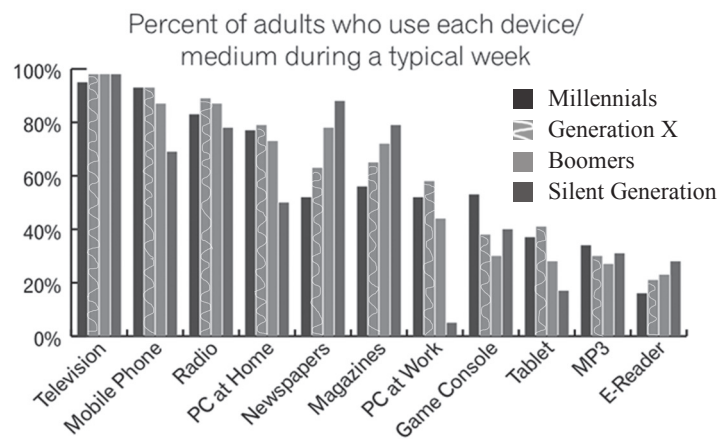
Millennials receive unwarranted hate from older generations

Every new generation gets a generous amount of teasing from the generations above, but there seems to be a hot new trend to hate on millennials (born 1977-1995) that just does not make sense.

Generation X (born 1965-1976) and the baby boom generation (born 1946-1964) are known for growing up working hard, being sociable and charismatic, and living through the roughest of times, which are not false statements.

Millennials, however, are known for being less intelligent and glued to technology, with everything handed to them by their parents. A common image built around millennials is a college dropout living in his parents' basement playing video games.

While millennials, like all generations, do have a fair share of lazy and dependent people, it is wrong to characterize the group as a whole that way.



WIKICOMMONS.COM

Millennials use electronics at similar rates to other generations which is contrary to popular belief about technology usage rates.

Generation X prides itself on growing up in the outdoors with a hands-on sort of experience, while millennials grew up playing "Candy Crush" on their iPads. Does that make them any less intelligent? No.

One could say that technology at an early age can even help young minds grow through interactive learning games and

that millennials often get heavily prepared for the real world in high school and internships.

Despite all the negative effects technology surely can have, it is not millennials' fault that technology is becoming a defining feature in the world today.

They are simply adapting to the times, the same way people used the telephone rather than

insisting to send letters. It is not like generation X is refusing to get the iPhone 7 or giving up on posting cat pictures on Facebook.

Something gen-X and the baby boomers so often forget is that they raised the millennials. If they didn't want their kids so invested in technology, then they shouldn't have let them become that way.

Older generations poke fun at millennials for not even knowing how to be personable since the preferred mode of communication these days is texting, hindering their interviewing skills or just personality in general.

The claim would be correct if millennials didn't go to school or work or any place that demands human interaction. A generous majority of millennials are actually friendly and charismatic.

It is no secret that there are some problems with the millennial generation, but the hate they get isn't entirely their fault.

March Madness unites America on an unpredictable sports journey

By Antonio Gillespie
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

It is that time of year again where Cinderella stories emerge, brackets get busted, and madness ensues.

The NCAA March Madness tournament to find a national champion is the greatest sporting event in the United States because it demonstrates the pinnacle of American values and ideals.

The tournament starts off with 68 total teams from all across the nation with all Division I conferences represented by one or more teams.

Part of the beauty of March Madness is that as a result of the massive quantity of teams, almost all people have an allegiance. Being a graduate of a school, knowing people who attend the school, or being located near a school all give reasons for

people to follow the tournament in some extent which brings people together.

When it comes to professional sporting events like the Super Bowl or the NBA Finals, there is a portion of the population that does not care for the teams or sport. However, when it comes to college sports and March Madness in particular, all Americans have some connection to a school in some degree which adds interest to the event.

Furthermore, filling out brackets and attempting the impossible bracket challenge of having a perfect bracket is intriguing to all people since even NCAA experts cannot properly predict the tournament.

Another reason that the tournament is an American classic is the Cinderella stories and the bracket-busting upsets which highlight aspects of the American



NEWSDAY.COM

The intense drama of the NCAA tournament, such as Luke Maye's shot for UNC versus Kentucky, creates a unique event.

Dream and how a smaller team like South Carolina can rise up to the occasion.

Battles between one-and-done programs and programs where players stick around for at least three years such as this year's No. 2 ranked Kentucky vs. No. 10 Wichita State even create an ideological battle between teams which makes it even more interesting for the fans.

This year's championship battle sets the stage between a perennial favorite in UNC against a first timer in the Final Four in Gonzaga.

The idea that any team can pull off its best performance on any given day and upset storied programs like Duke and UCLA reinforces the American Dream and how working hard and playing as a team can lead to success.

the INDEPENDENT

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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.

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Students should enjoy prom, not succumb to societal pressures

By Amber Paré
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

When everyone in my friend group except for me had dates to prom last year, I found myself moping around the halls and feeling bitter as I looked at “promposals” on my Instagram feed. These feelings of devastation and bitterness, I now realize, were unwarranted; prom is an experience that all high school students should enjoy, regardless of whether someone has a date.

My unrealistic expectations about prom, in hindsight, were what caused me to feel disappointed about my experience.

From its over-the-top portrayal in films like “High School Musical 3” to its constant documentation in Facebook groups where girls can share photos of their dresses, prom is a milestone that is glorified by everyone. This

glorification, however, results in unrealistic expectations.

My unrealistic expectations about prom, in hindsight, were what caused me to feel disappointed about my experience.

Spending \$150 on a dress, obsessing over my hair and makeup, and panicking about my lack of a date all caused my prom experience to be more stressful

than it was exciting. Had I been more relaxed about the event and comfortable with going by myself, I could have

saved myself great amounts of time and energy.

If there was not so much pressure surrounding prom societally (i.e. the public nature of “promposals” and the pressure for it to be “the best night” of one’s high school career), it

is likely that all teenagers, males and females alike, would be able to actually enjoy it.

The pressures surrounding prom, however, are not all societal; some of them are self-created as well. It is ultimately one’s own choice how he or she feels about prom and how much he or she values the event. By making conscious efforts to not let this overwhelming pressure ruin their experiences, students can actually enjoy prom.

Additionally, people only get the chance to attend prom a few times in their lives, so why not take advantage of this opportunity?

Although prom may not be the most memorable part of someone’s high school experience, it is still a great opportunity for students to spend time with their friends and enjoy themselves, regardless of whether or not they have dates or spent large amounts of money on their outfits.

So as students prepare for the



COURTESY OF KRISTEN WOODMAN

Seniors Annabelle Haskell, Amber Paré, and Melanie Carter pose together for prom pictures at Masconomo Park before prom.

bombardment of “promposals” and societal pressures surrounding prom, it is important to remember that the event can be stressful and cause feelings of

resentment or be a fun, memorable experience; it is up to each individual to make the experience as meaningful as possible on his/her own.

Standardized tests do not completely measure students’ college readiness

By Juliette Kelley
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Although taking standardized tests such as the SAT and ACT has become standard procedure for students in the college process, these tests are ineffective and do not measure the true value of a student.

According to a 2014 study cited by PBS News in which 33 test optional

colleges were surveyed, SAT test scores do not correlate with how well a student will do in college once they arrive.

The study said that the difference in GPAs for students

who submitted scores and those who did not was five-one-hundredths of a GPA point, and the graduation rate difference was six-tenths of a percent.

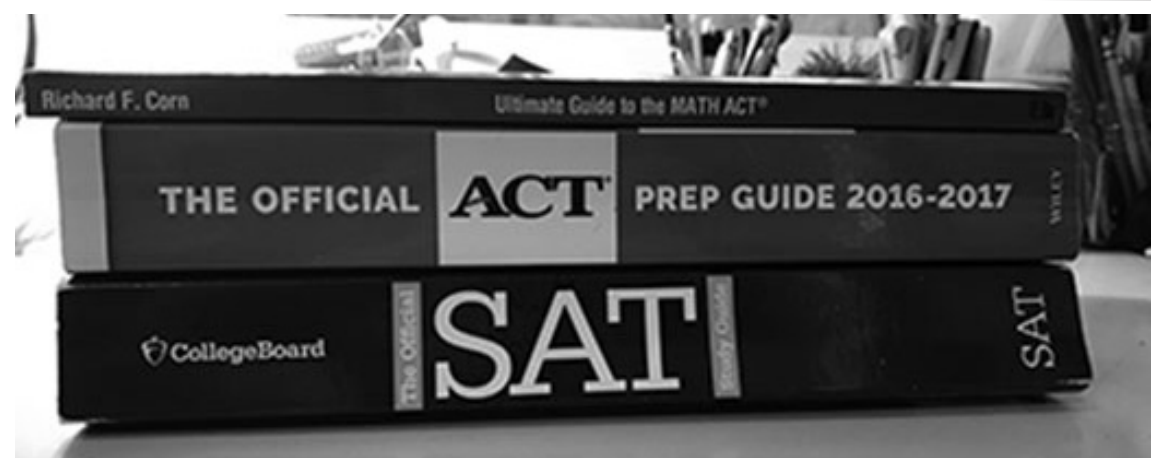
Because scores on these tests do not give any indication on

how students will perform at a school once they are accepted, the scores are irrelevant and should not be considered as much as things like high school

transcript and extracurriculars during the application process.

Additionally, the origins of tests such as the SAT demonstrate that they are a poor measure of students’ overall knowl-

The SAT cannot measure the full acquisition of a students’ knowledge and is therefore based more on [test taking].



JULIETTE KELLEY PHOTO

Taking the ACTs and SATs is not beneficial for students as it does not reflect their college readiness.

edge. According to Frontline from PBS, the SAT is actually an adaptation of a United States Army test used to test recruits during World War I.

Although the test has been modified in past years, the test was not specifically designed to test students’ knowledge and abilities and therefore is less relevant than the specific efforts, such as internships, that students put in during high school in order to get into colleges.

Even though tests such as the SAT and ACT are supposed to

measure aptitude, or the acquired capacity for something, public education director of the National Center for Fair & Open Testing Bob Schaeffer writes that because school performance is not based on a single factor, the SAT cannot measure the full acquisition of a students’ knowledge and is therefore based more on a student’s ability to take a test.

Instead, Schaeffer argues, high school grades should be considered heavily during the admissions process because these

grades are a better indication of how students will perform in college.

Schools that are test optional provide a chance for all students to have an even playing field during the college admissions process because they allow students who do not test well to show off their talents in other areas than testing. For this reason, even schools that are not test optional should place far more weight on students’ grades and extracurriculars during the admissions process than their test scores.

Adding immersive study class about other cultures would be beneficial

By Sirine Benali
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Global studies classes should be more prevalent in the curriculum. Currently, AP Comparative Government and Politics is the closest class to a global studies class, but it focuses on what its title indicates while world studies classes focus on culture, history, and society.

Some schools already have a global studies class in their curriculum.

For example, The Windsor School in Boston has a wide variety of global studies classes: Indian History, Modern China, African History, History of the Middle East, and Politics and Philosophy of Power.

According to The Windsor School’s electives website regarding the Indian History class, “Students are asked not only to use a variety of disciplinary perspectives—including literary

criticism, political science, social anthropology, and religious studies—but also to engage on a critical level with the history and historiography of the Indian subcontinent.”

“[For my research paper,] I wrote about the stigma surround-

ing menstruation in India, its origins, and its effect on the health of India’s women, their social status, and the Indian economy... I loved it though. [It is] one of the best classes I’ve taken,” said

Madeline Montagner, a junior at The Windsor School.

The AP Comparative Government and Politics

class at our school, however, mainly focuses on government rather than culture, history, and society.

The AP Comparative Government and Politics class focuses on government rather than culture, history, and society.

According to the 2016-2017 MERHS Program of Studies regarding AP Comparative Government and Politics, “In addition to covering the major concepts that are used to organize and interpret

what we know about political phenomena and relationships, the course will cover specific countries and their governments.”

Making up for the lack of the aspect of culture and society in the closest global studies class in our curriculum, a full global

studies class would cover this essential aspect and be beneficial in the long-term.

José Picardo of the Guardian writes, “Global awareness and international collaboration dur-

‘Global awareness and international collaboration... results in more rounded individuals.

ing the formative years [of high school] results in more rounded individuals...

helping them to make informed decisions [and acquire] transferable skills that will be useful to them and will remain with them for life.”

Girls' tennis team aims to repeat last season's success, make tournament

Bullock sisters lead the line as the team's No. 1 and No. 2 singles players

By Abigail Fitzgibbon
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With the season just around the corner, the girls' tennis team is off to a rigorous but successful start to their morning indoor practices, coach Ken Rawson said.

For the first couple of weeks until the outside temperature is about over 40 degrees, the team practices either at the Manchester Athletic Club before school at 5:30 a.m. or after school in the gym, and the

girls have shown commitment even with the tough practice schedule, Rawson said.

"I think it's remarkable that we get everyone to show up, and we do. Everybody's there, everybody's on time, and to me, that communicates that everybody is focused and... they want to do this," he said.

Besides the girls' commitment to a demanding practice schedule, Rawson also cites their maturity and level of fitness as qualities that help them on the court.

The main focus of this season is finding strong doubles, especially first doubles to go along with the team's strength in singles matches, junior captain

Chanel Bullock said.

"I think we really need to improve on our doubles game, and we need to strengthen on our first doubles be-

cause that's the key. Our singles are pretty strong, but we need to mature more as a team since we have mostly young players," she said.

As the only upperclassman on the team, Bullock leads the girls as the first singles player alongside her sister, freshman Christina, Rawson said.

'Everybody's there, everybody's on time, and to me, that communicates that everybody is focused.'

-KEN RAWSON



COURTESY OF REBECCA SHAN

Freshman Christina Bullock, sister of junior captain Chanel Bullock, is playing No.2 singles.

Besides the Bullock sisters, however, there are not any regular positions for the players, said Rawson, because there are about 10 players who could possibly fill third singles and first and second doubles.

Determining who will fill these positions will be a main portion of the early season, sophomore August Kahle said.

"I think it will be interesting figuring out our doubles team. Last year we didn't have

a second doubles team that was consistently the same people, so it'll be interesting to see who that is this year," she said.

Rawson said he will be looking for aggression and smarts in doubles players in order to beat their rival Lynnfield, which the team has never earned a point against in doubles, and other teams in the playoffs.

"I want doubles players who are smart and aggressive. That's what we need in order to

progress. When you get to Lynnfield and the later rounds of the tournament, you've got to take some of those doubles, and the only way you're going to do it is by being aggressive," he said.

According to Rawson, the team lost its first match against Burlington High School on April 3. The final score was 3-2, with both Bullock sisters winning their individual matches. Their first match against a CAL opponent is on April 21.

Boys' tennis team prepares for matches in early season

By Juliette Kelley
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Although the boys' tennis season has just recently begun, the team has been busy figuring out their line-up and preparing for the season, coach Robert Bilsbury said.

In order to decide the varsity players, the team has been engaging in challenge matches where they compete against one another, Bilsbury said.

"A lot of practice right now is playing a lot of challenge matches to figure out what our lineup is. We have a lot of players who are around the same level, so the challenge matches allow people to separate themselves from the pack," senior captain Dewey Komishane said.

The team has to fill positions for both singles and doubles, and while the singles players have almost been decided, deciding the doubles team is slightly more complicated because the team needs to figure out which combination will work best, Bilsbury said.

"It looks like between Red [Pulver], Garrett [Lamothe], and Dewey [Komishane] is where we're going to get our first, second, and third singles...Doubles teams and doubles combination and double varsity line up is a little more up in the air because there's more variables involved in that," he said.

Although many of the players are of similar skill levels, senior captains Pulver and Komishane



COURTESY OF GARRETT LAMOTHE

Senior captain Dewey Komishane has worked to motivate players.

are very valuable to the team, players junior James Riordan and senior Will Heslop said.

"[Pulver and Komishane] really get it. They understand how we want to play. They understand how we have to set a certain tone in practice to go after each other and make each other better," Bilsbury said.

He also said Komishane and Pulver act as role models for the new players.

"They're hard workers themselves, and they're kids that other kids can emulate... There's a lot of freshmen on the team and it's awesome to have two guys that totally get it," Bilsbury said.

Additionally, having new

players on the team may change how the season will go in general, junior Garrett Lamothe said.

"It's going to be interesting to see how this season plays out because we have a bunch of new players to the team," he said.

The team has also been working on improving basic skills so they can excel later in the season, Komishane said.

"We've done some fitness and some basic ground strokes and volley stuff in order to get everyone on the same page," he said.

Bilsbury also said the team has been focusing on training to prepare for their first match of the season.

"We've had a really good start, working hard in the training sessions that we've had in the morning at the Manchester Athletic Club, and step by step we're taking it a day at a time and shaking the rust off early in the season," he said.

Track team expects a successful season led by runners Feuerbach, Zellman

By Heather Holley
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Starting off the season strong, sophomore Eve Feuerbach and freshman Luke Zellman prove to be "honorable and hardworking teammates of the Manchester-Essex and Gloucester track team," assistant coach Dylan Genovese said.

According to assistant coach Austin Sousa, both athletes "haven't missed a single practice, have shown up, and worked hard. As a coach, that is exactly what you want from your athletes."

Feuerbach is a key runner in both cross country and track and will continue her reputation as an impact runner this spring.

"I hope to qualify for States in either the one or two mile. Last year I made it to New Balance



COURTESY OF LINDA FEUERBACH

Sophomore Eve Feuerbach is among the runners who received praise from assistant coach Austin Sousa for their strong work ethics.

Nationals with my 4-by-800 team, so I would love to qualify for it again," Feuerbach said.

Feuerbach usually prepares for her meets with the team's usual workout on Mondays and Fri-

days with a meet in between. She explains that the team's "recovery day" after the race is about a 4 to 5 mile run, which is important to do the day after a race.

Both Feuerbach and Zellman

have set their sights on several concrete goals this season.

"For the girls' team, last year we won the NEC championship meet, so it would be awesome if we could win again this year," Feuerbach said.

Zellman also explained his goals.

"My personal goal is to break a 5-minute mile in my freshman year. I'm excited to see how the season goes and excited to see everyone work hard and get better," he said.

To prepare for meets, Zellman

pushes himself to train and focus on the end of the race.

"Also, I like to get everyone hyped for the meet," he said.

'For the girls' team, last year we won the NEC championship meet, so it would be awesome if we could win again this year.'

-EVE FEUERBACH

As a distance coach, Sousa said, "Techniques we use for a distance running program is strength building. There are multiple ways to do this,

but this season we have started a push up and abnormal workout regimen."

The team has also been focusing on running endurance, so that they will "build a solid base for the rest of the season," he said.

Girls' lacrosse team practices skills for new season

Returning seniors help lead, motivate teammates for upcoming games

By Holly Fossa
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Though no games have been played yet, the girls' lacrosse team is using their high energy players and on field skills to prepare for a successful season., according to coach Rebecca Smith.

The team is currently focusing on certain skills during practice that will help them once games begin.

Coach Smith said their current practice technique is to isolate certain parts of the game to start habit-building.

"I am looking beyond the drills and skills and trying to look at the things that plagued us last season; we are starting to focus on those early," she said.

Smith said the team's high energy is what fuels their practices and creates a competitive spirit among teammates. "Even though the girls aren't competing against other teams right now, they're

always competing with each other," she said.

Senior captain Jenny Beardsley said she is looking forward to the middle of the season when the team will be more comfortable with each other.

"[The season] is off to a great start and there is even more to come," she said.

Smith said that though Beardsley is injured, she is a high energy player on the team.

"I feel like she has gotten louder and more encouraging since being injured, which I didn't know was possible," Smith said.

Though early in the season, returning players have already begun to show leadership. Smith said senior captain Liddy Deconto shows leadership both on and off the field.

"I look to Liddy to ground the team and bring focus," she said.

Deconto said the team has a lot to work on. "With more practice and hard work, we will



HOLLY FOSSA PHOTO
The girls' lacrosse team begins season with drills led by assistant coach Linda Moore. Junior Emily Clark and freshman Bridget Twombly pass the ball between instruction while the rest of the team waits to begin new drill. Coach Rebecca Smith focuses on drills to pinpoint certain strengths.

be ready for our first game."

Coach Smith said another great leader on the team is senior Lily Calandra.

"[She] has great anticipation when it comes to interceptions

and blocks, which is a style of defense I hope my younger players catch on to," Smith said.

In order to play a more competitive schedule this year, "A player has to try to be better than

she was the day before," Smith said.

The team's record last year was 20-3, and the team continues to work hard in order to hold another strong record this season.

Captains, upperclassmen impress early in season for boys' lacrosse

Pennoyer, Brosch help team gain confidence, chemistry

By James Riordan
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Although the season has not yet begun, the early practices for the boys' lacrosse team have been encouraging while the group gains chemistry and confidence according to the captains. If they are to succeed, the captains said they will need to lead the team in performance and energy along with junior Chris Brosch.

Senior captain Evan Pennoyer emphasized, "We have a lot of kids coming back who played on varsity last year. Even though we don't have the same number of



JAMES RIORDAN PHOTO
The boys' lacrosse team practices and fuels their work with the energy of junior teammate Chris Brosch. Team captains claim that, on top of Brosch's energy, the tight-knit community within the team will lead them to big successes in upcoming games.

seniors we had last year, there is a solid core group of players that can perform."

Along the same lines, junior

captain Jackson Rice said, "We have a lot of potential this year. No denying we lost some talent, but we have a good group of

guys who I love playing with. If we can learn to work as a team, we will find a lot of success." Rice highlighted Pennoyer as one of the most impactful players on the team, saying he is a great asset to have.

"Evan can just shut down the best player on every team we play. I'm glad he's on our team because I'd be scared to have to go up against him," he said.

Concerning spirit, both Rice and fellow junior captain Patrick

Guinee pointed to Brosch for his intensity and work ethic.

"I would say he would be the spirit leader of our team because he is always pumping the team

up," Guinee said.

Rice added, "Chris is definitely our spiritual leader. The team feeds off his energy and just multiplies it to get to our best."

If they are to meet their goal and make the playoffs, the captains said everybody will need to

get involved along with the leaders to create a cohesive, dangerous team.

All three captains stressed that they are an incredibly tight-knit group, and chemistry

will be key to their success. They said most importantly everyone will need to work together and believe in their teammates.

'Even though we don't have the same number of seniors we had last year, there is a solid core group of players that can perform.'

-EVAN PENNOYER

Sailing endures harsh conditions during preseason

By Emily Clark
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Even with two practice cancellations as well as a regatta cancelation that was scheduled for April 1 due to weather, the sailing team is showing a lot of perseverance, coach Joe Ahearn said.

Ahearn is very impressed with the team so far because the kids are motivated and ready to get on the water. They are just waiting to get a break in the

weather. He is also looking forward to sailing with the assistant coach Connor Winn because he knows "almost everything there is to know about sailing" as well as most of the kids from coaching them during the summer.

"We had to work in 28 degree weather to get the boats off the blocks and get the masses and booms rigged. It was very unpleasant, but everyone showed up and got the work done. If they can perform on the water like they have done in the freezing temperatures on the land, then they are going to be fine," he said.

Captain junior Anika Martz

agreed with the skill present in the team so far, even though they have just been practicing on land, and said the on-land drills are beneficial to progress the talent of the team.

"The practices so far have consisted of a lot of team-building exercises such as arm linking and shuffling, which help teach the fundamental parts of sailing," she said.

Ahearn was surprised with the number of sailors this year that have attended these practices, and saw a lot more commitment and knowledge of the sport than he expected.

"It looks like we are going to have a pretty good team.



COURTESY OF JOE AHEARN
The sailing team practices for regatta by rigging boats in practice.

There actually seems to be a lot of depth. Twelve kids right now are on the team, and that number may grow when kids start showing up that have had hockey practice. There are some really talented freshmen coming up that will most likely take part in the varsity team. These kids know as much about sailing as anybody, so by the first regatta we should be ready to go," he said.

Fellow captain senior Cole Charlton said he has seen this talent yet recognized it is still a building year and that the team needs to grow more for future years.

"We don't have much of a foundation because of the new coaches and new team, so as of now we are rebuilding the team and trying to engage the younger kids," he said.

'As of now we are rebuilding the team and trying to engage the younger kids.'

-COLE CHARLTON

Carter, Graves lead softball team in promising preliminary practices

By Sirine Benali
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Starting the season off strong, the softball team will be “pretty good all the way around,” said Frank Sarro, head coach of the girls’ softball team.

This year, the team’s lineup is “going to hit the ball extremely well...going to pitch better, and play better defense,” Sarro said.

The team has been able to

get a couple of practices in and has already scrimmaged against Danvers.

“Danvers has a really strong team...overall, we made the plays that we should make, and hitting was nice; we looked pretty good up there for the first time out. I really liked the way we played,” Sarro said.

The middle of the lineup “should be pretty solid... We have a small group, but they play many positions which is great,” Sarro said.

Sarro said that he has high hopes for the most promising player of the season, Melanie Carter.

“Her leadership [makes her a key player]; she hits for power, she plays great defense, and she

does everything on the field. We had a scrimmage with Danvers... and the coaches kept commenting on how impressed they were with her,” Sarro said.

Carter has been with the team for a while and has “gained knowledge from every coach which basically comes together at the end,” she said.

“Freshman year, I was able to play with and watch other MVPs. Being one now this year, it’s a great accomplishment and I’m happy to be one and proud of

myself,” Carter said.

Another key player on the team is Belle Graves.

“Belle Graves...is completely an unsung hero. There were times last year where she didn’t

‘Freshman year, I was able to play with and watch other MVPs. Being one now this year, it’s a great accomplishment.’

- MELANIE CARTER



COURTESY OF MOLLY FIELD

Coach Frank Sarro is proud of how the team has prepared so far.

feel her best but went back there and caught and did her thing. We didn’t even have a lineup at that point, [but] she went back and caught every game,” Sarro said.

Graves, who played catcher last year, said she was thrown “into the worst position as a

catcher, and someone had to do it and stand up, so I did. I worked my hardest...I’m super excited...I know for a fact we will be better this year, we just need to work hard; hopefully we will look good while doing it!” Graves said.

Baseball team prepares with guidance from Coyne, Otterbein

Senior captains provide useful veteran insight for less experienced teammates

By Austin Woodman-Paré
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With the help of senior captains Charlie Otterbein and Peter Coyne, the baseball team has been preparing for this year’s season by learning the basics of fielding and hitting.

Coach James Weed said Otterbein is an important leader on the team.

“Charlie Otterbein has done a good job of organizing things like group chats for the team and making sure kids are on the same page with practice time,” Weed said.

Weed also mentioned that Coyne is an important player on

the team because of his kindness and sportsmanship.

“Peter Coyne treats everybody the same on the team. He has taken the younger kids under his wing and doesn’t treat them like freshmen or sophomores,” Weed said.

According to Otterbein, practices have been up in tempo and are pretty standard. Since they have been at the Sportsplex in Danvers, the players have been constantly working on fielding and hitting.

“At practices, our coaches expect us to do our best. When we make a mistake in the field or make an error batting, they are pretty hard on us, but they



Peter Coyne

always help us get better,” he said.

The team has been concentrating on the basics of baseball as well as getting in plenty of defensive plays and offensive hitting.

Coyne said now that they have made decisions between junior varsity and varsity teams, the team has started to work on

‘Coyne treats everybody the same on the team. He has taken the younger kids under his wing.’

- JAMES WEED



Charlie Otterbein

‘Otterbein has done a good job of organizing things...and making sure kids are on the same page.’

- JAMES WEED

harder drills as they begin to ramp up the season.

Weed said their pitching is one of the teams’ strengths because of starting pitchers junior Cosmo Pallazola and sophomores Harry Painter and Liam Buttrick.

Along with working on their pitching, the team has also been reviewing their signs for stealing and their bunting plays, accord-

ing to Otterbein.

Coyne and Otterbein both said the team has to work on certain plays in the field because their defense needs improvement.

“Working on specific plays is always important for the improvement of our team, but we also need to get into the right mindset before any of our games.” Coyne said.

Celtics gear up for deep playoff push with top draft pick to look forward to

By James Riordan
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With the NBA regular season coming quickly to a close, the Boston Celtics look poised for a deep playoff run. Unlike most top teams in history, however, they will also have the best odds for receiving the No. 1 pick in the NBA Draft Lottery. It truly is an exciting time to be a Celtics fan.

In the first round of the post-season, the most likely opponents would be the Chicago Bulls, Indiana Pacers, Miami Heat, or Milwaukee Bucks, assuming Boston is able to hold onto either the first, second, or third seed in the conference.

As of April 3, they had done quite well against these potential matchups, going 10-3 with one game against those teams remaining.

The second round is where it becomes much more difficult, as they would almost certainly face the Washington Wizards or Toronto Raptors. With both of



HEAVY.COM

Isaiah Thomas put up the best numbers of his career this season.

those grueling season series finalized, the Celtics went a disappointing 3-5.

That being said, most of those games came down to a few points, and Isaiah Thomas would be the most explosive individual player in either series.

If Boston is able to prevail once again, the Cleveland Cavaliers would be waiting for them, barring unforeseen injuries. It seems exceedingly unlikely that the Celtics would be able to defeat the defending champions, but a trip to the finals is not out

of the question.

Considering the depth of the Eastern Conference and the few perennial powerhouses in the West, it is doubtful that the Celtics will come out on top in the

end. The best part about this season though, is that there is another huge factor to look forward to.

Through the 2013 Garnett-Pierce trade to the Brooklyn Nets, General Manager Danny Ainge was able to acquire four first-round draft picks

that have turned out better than he possibly could have imagined.

The Nets have been at the bottom of the league for the past three years, setting Boston up with a great chance to make

the first overall selection in this year’s draft.

This incoming class is stacked with talent from the University of Washington’s Markelle Fultz to the University of California,

Los Angeles’s phenom Lonzo Ball.

The Celtics are already filled with talented guards, but it will be tough to pass on these once-in-a-generation players.

Whether or not they make a splash in the playoffs, the draft will provide even more hope and

talent for next year.

The other perennially strong franchises will still be there, but the Celtics will join them at the top of the league soon no matter what.

The Boston Celtics look poised for a deep playoff run. Unlike most top teams in history, however, they will also have the best odds for receiving the No. 1 pick...It truly is an exciting time to be a Celtics fan.

Juniors earn recognition in local art competitions

Students win awards for mixed media drawing, artwork of artist trading cards

By Amber Paré
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Art teacher Tamera Burns recently finished sending in submissions for art contests across the state, resulting in two students winning awards.

Burns said junior Madison Palmer earned an award from Endicott College's competition for high schools, while junior Nell McKeon's piece was named the best from the school in the Mass. Sixth Congressional District High School Art Competition.

Palmer's piece was a series of 12 ATCs, artist trading cards, which were inspired by one main theme.

She said her inspiration for the cards' theme came to her when she was watching "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory."

"In the movie, Willy Wonka quotes a famous poem by Arthur O'Shaughnessy. I chose 12 quotes from the poem that I



COURTESY OF NELL MCKEON

Endicott College and Mass. Sixth Congressional District High School awarded juniors Nell McKeon and Madison Palmer for their artwork, and the two hope to submit more of their artwork in the future.

thought represented transitioning from the old world to the new, modern world," she said.

Palmer said she used a combination of picture and color

symbolism in her cards.

Additionally, Palmer attended a reception at Endicott College that featured a gallery of student work—an experience she said

allowed her to appreciate her own artwork more.

"Even though I didn't think the cards were my best work, it was so nice to see that others were able to

find meaning in them," she said.

McKeon's piece was a mixed-media drawing of actor Will Smith titled "Fresh" and was mostly done in charcoal and watercolor.

Although she did not attend the awards ceremony this year, McKeon has attended it in the past and said it is typically "an interesting way to see work from other students" and called it "a great honor" to be invited.

Burns said both of the awards were a great way for her to redirect her teaching style and encourage healthy competition among students.

"Competitions like these are informative for everyone involved. It's great for students to get their work out into the world and share it with others," she said.

Both Palmer and McKeon hope to continue with their artwork as their high school careers progress, submitting work to different competitions.

R&B artist DJ Khalid's 'American Teen' impresses audience with powerful vocals

By Will Heslop
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

R&B singer-songwriter Khalid's freshman album "American Teen" is a strong start for the promising 19-year-old artist, who is primed to burst on to the scene and become one of the biggest breakout stars of the year.

After teasing the album by releasing several singles for months, Khalid officially released his debut album on March 3. Met with immediate critical acclaim, the 15-track album, released by Right Hand Music Group and RCA Records, is a mesmerizing collection of songs that portray the experience of a teenager growing up in America.

The lyrics and overall message of "American Teen" are more likely to appeal to younger audience, but the mesmerizing synth-heavy tracks will elicit

nostalgic memories of the past for older listeners as well. While the lyrics themselves are a bit generic, Khalid's performance is incredibly genuine and authentic of a true American teenager.

His song "8TEEN," for example, focuses heavily on the life of a teenager: "Because I'm eighteen/ And I still live with my parents/ Yeah they're not like yours/ Well yours are more understanding/ I've never fell in love/ I saved those feelings for you/ So let's do all the stupid s--t that young kids do."

Many have criticized the album for being too cookie-cutter and bereft of any risk-taking, but it is perfectly understandable that a debut artist would take a more cautious approach to his/her first album.

Rather than focusing on popular R&B topics of race and

struggle, Khalid largely focuses on glorifying the life of a typical American teenager living in El Paso, Khalid's hometown.

Much of the album's success was prompted by the popular single "Location," which Khalid released months before the rest of the album. In contrast to modern society's focus on digital connectedness, it expresses Khalid's desire to build a relationship based on real-life interactions, wherein he asks only for a girl's location in order to meet her in person and connect on a personal level.

This message is clear and present throughout the track: "I don't wanna fall in love off of subtweets so/ Let's keep personal/ I got a lot of cool spots that we can go/ Tell me what's the move and I got you."

Aside from its lyrics, the



WIKIMEDIA.ORG

DJ Khalid's album "American Teen" delivers a strong message.

album impresses with high production value and strong vocals. Khalid, despite being only 19-years-old, has strong vocals throughout, and his command over the track is quite evident. The focus of each song is always on Khalid, himself, unlike many songs that distract the listener with excessive electronic mixing and

auto tuning.

The sheer authenticity is one of the most appealing aspects of "American Teen." It highlights the real experiences of a teenager growing up in a middle class American family and will surely be a regular on many teens' playlists when summer rolls around.

Freshman receives perfect score during Northeast Junior District audition

By Austin Woodman-Paré
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Freshman Whitney Johnson was accepted to the Northeast Junior District Festival Chorus with a perfect score of 60/60.

The Junior District festival, which is open from grades 7-9, took place from Wed., March 15 until Sat., March 18.

The director of the girls' chorus for Districts was the director of Arts from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Doctor Ott, Choral director Donna O'Neil said.

O'Neil said the performance given under Doctor Ott's direction was outstanding, and she loves to watch her students grow throughout the years.

"I have had Whitney in chorus since sixth grade, and her



AUSTIN WOODMAN-PARÉ PHOTO
Freshman Whitney Johnson, who has been singing ever since she was young, performed at the Junior Districts festival last March.

growth in musicianship and musicality is such a beautiful thing to see," O'Neil said.

Johnson, who has been singing ever since she could talk, auditioned for Junior Districts

in hopes of having the experience and also to be able to teach and help other students, who also got in, to improve.

Johnson said she was given five different songs, and she had to prepare mostly by herself a month beforehand with a little bit of help from high school choral director Donna O'Neil

and her personal choral teacher Gillian Hurst.

"It was difficult to learn five different songs that all had a different and complicated rhythm," Johnson said.

O'Neil said she helps prepare her students for Junior Districts by working with them separately but also allowing them to learn

the pieces on their own.

"Whitney prepared herself beautifully. She along with one other girl received a perfect score,

which is a rare and tremendous accomplishment," she said.

Freshman Paige Mandia, who has been accepted into Districts three times, said Johnson is very talented at singing and piano.

"I am really excited for her because I know that it is extremely hard to get a perfect score in districts. I have only heard of someone getting a perfect score twice," Mandia said.

Johnson said she does not see herself pursuing a singing career because she hopes to study abroad to help people in developing countries.

"I will definitely continue to sing and play the piano as a hobby throughout high school and throughout college," she said.

Live-action 'Beauty and the Beast' proves worthy retelling of 1991 animated classic

By Karlie Angelis
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

There is some difficulty to adapting a classic film and translating it to the big screen, but as Disney has shown with "Maleficent" and "The Jungle Book," is that it can be wonderfully done, and "Beauty and the Beast" is no different.

Belle (Emma Watson) perfectly maintains the spirit of 1991's Beauty, as does comedic foil Gaston (Luke Evans) and the servants of the castle. The flashy, lavish musical numbers also match the original's; "Be Our Guest" comes to mind, and the show-stopping opening song "Belle" is nearly a shot-for-shot remake.

Of course, some things are different than the first movie, but mostly for the better. One of the major changes is the inclusion of a backstory that delves into Belle's family life.

Disney fans often joke about Disney's obvious neglect of mothers, but this film puts the jokes to rest as the audience learns why Belle is without a mother and gives her importance in the plot.



MOVIES.DISNEY.COM

Emma Watson is the perfect fairy tale heroine in Disney's latest live-action update.

Another likeable feature is the addition of a conscience and independence given to Gaston's pomp sidekick LeFou, who does not always serve Gaston with blind loyalty.

Likewise, to add to her intelligent and charismatic nature, Belle adopts the skill of inventing, an identifying trait her father had

Is it better than the original? No. Is it beautifully adapted? Absolutely.

in the original that was downplayed for him in the new film.

There are few issues with the triumphant

remake, but they are still hard to overlook. First, there is noticeable and so-so autotune in songs like "Belle" and "Days in the Sun."

The Beast's (Dan Stevens) dark and hot-headed temper is also downplayed, ridding the new film of some of the dark story that makes the original stand out. One new scene toward the end, however, is particularly dark and heart-wrenching that could arguably make up for the loss of sorrow throughout.

However, the film's positives heavily outweigh the negatives; gorgeous CGI and cinematography, fur-

ther developed side-characters with extra scenes for Gaston and Maurice, and spot-on casting all add to the success of "Beauty and the Beast."

Is it better than the original? No. Is it beautifully adapted? Absolutely. Watson and Stevens function as wonderful centerpieces, the musical numbers are still catchy and extravagant, and whimsical imagery all help make the remake a magical, worthy rendition of the original.

"Beauty and the Beast" is rated PG by the MPAA for some action violence, peril and frightening images.

Charli XCX cements pop star status with ear-candy mixtape 'Number 1 Angel'

By Fritz Spofford
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Slippery pop princess Charli XCX has taken another turn in her career, releasing a whole slew of new confections on "Number 1 Angel," a sharp and shimmering "mixtape" of icy, effervescent bliss.

The 24-year-old Brit has been the "one to watch" in the pop world for years. In 2012, she wrote and featured on the Icona Pop smash "I Love It" and has since broken into pop consciousness sporadically, be it on the hook for Iggy Azalea's "Fancy," through the songs she's written for other artists (Selena Gomez's "Same Old Love," among others), or through her own solo hit "Boom Clap."

She's also spent the past four years testing pop's confines. She dropped her critically-acclaimed techno-goth debut "True Romance" in 2013, while 2014 gave way to the

sneering pop-punk of "Sucker." In early 2016, a few months after citing Paris Hilton as inspiration, she released the avant-garde "Vroom Vroom" EP, a meticulously vacuous and abrasive-sounding experiment in shiny cars and vodka on an empty stomach.

Now fully committing to the electro-party-pop she aspired to make as a 14-year-old local rave performer, the road to Charli XCX's third studio LP has been long and unpredictable. Much of it was completed in 2015, though there was nothing to show for it until the release of lead single "After the Afterparty" last October, a sugary party anthem that already sounds like an after-hours karaoke classic.

Since then, the album has been put off to May of this year, then September. Thus, "Number 1 Angel" is meant to tide fans over until the album's release.

In contrast to the sticky-



PRESS.ATLANTICRECORDS.COM

Charli XCX's new mixtape is yet another sonic shift.

sweet drunken slurs of "After the Afterparty," "Angel" is frosty and futuristic, a hybrid of the single's sappy warmth and the cold indifference of "Vroom Vroom," which took most of its production cues from UK label PC Music – an enigmatic group of producers and artists that seems part experimental performance art, part cyber pop factory.

Earworms writhe and wriggle through each of the mixtape's 10 tracks, from the staccato, SOPHIE-produced "Roll With

Me" to the cheeky refrain of "Lipgloss," whose grinding techno synths sound like the greatest pop song of 2027.

Rich lyrical content is not particularly apparent, but Charli makes up for it with the monster hooks that have made her lucrative as a songwriter. Filled to the brim with sugar, spice, and vodka on ice, "Number 1 Angel" finds a satisfying balance between buoyant bubblegum and cold, soulless electronica and is sure to hold fans over until the next album.

What to...

Listen To (Single): Lorde, "Green Light"

Almost four years after the release of debut album "Pure Heroine," a sonic rumination on suburban adolescence, Lorde's new single for the upcoming sophomore LP "Melodrama" sees a significant change of production for the artist. The verses of "Green Light" more or less abide by the stark minimalism that appears throughout "Heroine," but with the pre-chorus comes a striking chord change as house piano riffs fade into the foreground, building up to a cathartic chorus: "Honey, I'll come get my things, but I can't let go," she sings, morphing into the disco queen embodied by Robyn in "Dancing On My Own," which contains a similar

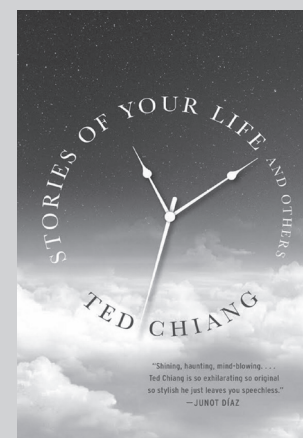


LORDE.CO.NZ

dancing-through-tears premise. With rich songwriting and a new sound, "Green Light" proves hopeful that "Melodrama" can match the artistry of "Pure Heroine."

Read (Short Story): "Story of Your Life"

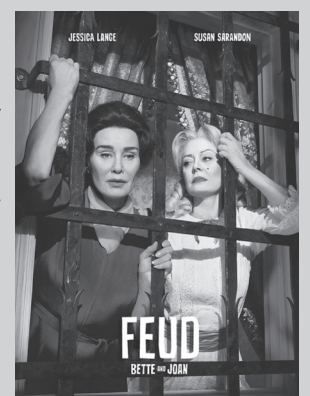
Ted Chiang's 1998 science fiction piece served as the basis for the 2016 film "Arrival," telling the story of a linguist recruited by the government in an attempt to discern the language of the alien organisms who have landed in massive spacecraft all over the world. When compared to most other first contact stories, "Story of Your Life" feels refreshingly nonviolent. There are no lasers, no bombs, and the Empire State Building is not blown up. With such brutality stripped away, what's left is a moving story about the power of language and the parameters of free will. The language cleverly shifts between tenses in accordance with the plot's jumpy timeline, and the emotional resonance of the story will sneak up on the reader. Be sure to have tissues handy.



COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG

Watch (T.V. Show): "Feud: Bette and Joan"

"Feud" is the newest venture from TV powerhouse Ryan Murphy, yet another anthology series on FX that will explore famous rivalries throughout history. The first season focuses on the relationship between two iconic actresses of Hollywood's golden age: Bette Davis (Susan Sarandon) and Joan Crawford (Jessica Lange, Murphy's frequent collaborator). Originally predicted to be a catty, campy romp about two aging actresses duking it out on the set of "Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?," the series actually proves to be a potent discussion of Hollywood sexism, as the beef between the two was actually perpetuated by the studio to boost publicity. Masterfully acted by both Sarandon and Lange, and not without a dose of humor, "Feud: Bette and Joan" finds just the right balance between camp and commentary.



FXNETWORKS.COM

BY KARLIE ANGELIS, INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Guess Who? Answer: Muffin Driscoll