

the INDEPENDENT

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Seniors receive decisions on early college applications

Acceptances reduce pressure

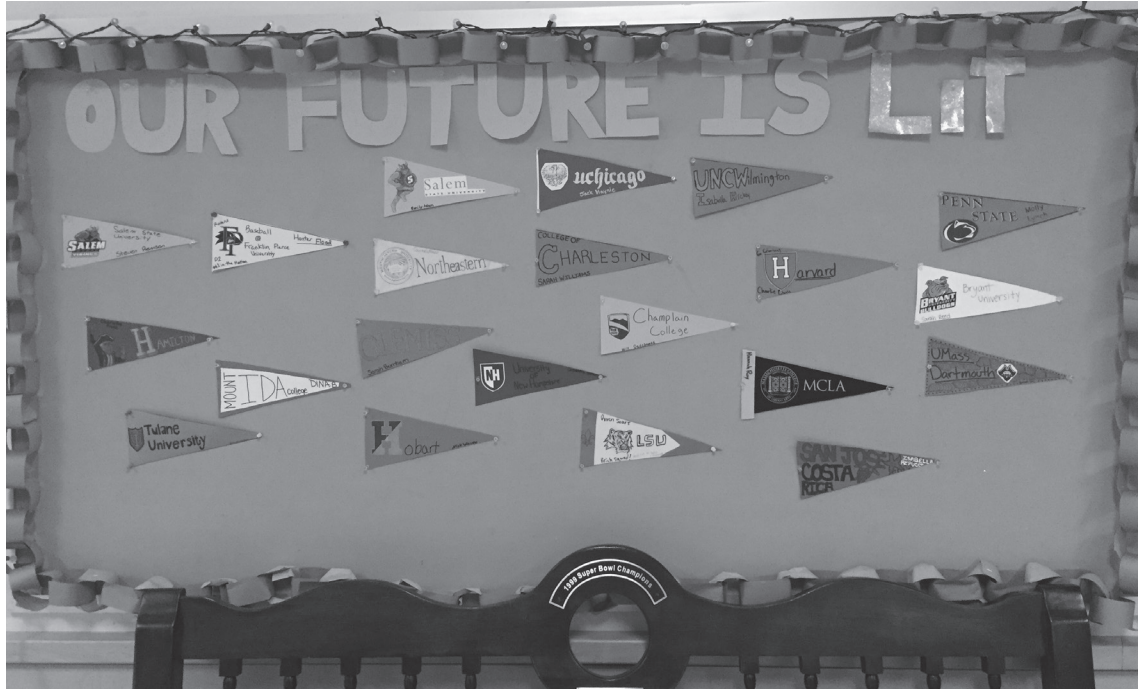
By Emily Clark
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Seniors who applied Early Decision or Early Action to colleges have received their acceptances, deferrals, and rejections, and several have already gotten into their top choices.

Senior Charlie Davis was accepted to his top choice, Harvard University. According to Davis, it is a rewarding feeling to be done with the college process, and his stress is mostly gone.

"I definitely enjoyed applying in the Early Action program; I had a very clear number one choice. Early Action helped me get my application very well-organized, and I was able to edit it and make sure it was exactly what I wanted to put forth to my top choice," he said.

Davis said that a main aspect of his application that helped him



EMILY CLARK PHOTO

The pennant board has already started to fill up with schools to which seniors have been accepted.

get in was his extracurriculars, but he doesn't really know what pieces the college liked about him.

Right now Davis is focused on running, because he might try to walk on to the cross country team in the fall,

and keeping his grades up.

Bella Mastendino was accepted by one of her top choice colleges that she will most likely go to, Tulane University, with a full scholarship with the naval ROTC program, but she also applied to

Notre Dame; she is waiting to see if she gets into Notre Dame to decide where she will go.

"I applied for a scholarship where I will be taking a class each semester for the Navy. The scholarship pays for everything, and

then when I get out, I owe them four years in the Navy," she said.

Senior Charlotte Freed is happy that her "stress levels have decreased significantly," as she was accepted Early Decision to Hamilton College on Dec. 15.

"I love the fact that I already know where I'm going to be living for the next four years of my life. I just love not having to worry as much about any particular bad grade on an assignment," she said.

Although Freed loves knowing where she is going, according to her, Early Decision was a scary experience. "Anyone who knows me is aware I am a pretty indecisive person, so I really had trouble deciding where I should apply Early Decision or Action to," she said.

According to Freed, the process was definitely stressful, but she got through it with her friends' support because they were going through the same difficult choices of where to apply and with the idea that, when the process is over, everyone will end up where they are supposed to be.

Superintendent chooses book for community reading that puts college process into perspective

By Maddie Conway
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

In order to better educate the community about the many pathways to success, a reading of New York Times opinion columnist Frank Bruni's "Where You Go Is Not Who You'll Be: An Antidote to the College Admissions Mania" will be held on March 24, according to Superintendent Pamela Beaudoin.

According to the author's website, www.frankbrunibooks.com, "Where You Go Is Not Who You'll Be" is aimed to give "students and their parents a new per-

spective on [the] brutal, deeply flawed competition [of college acceptances] and a path out of the anxiety that it provokes."

Beaudoin, who is coordinating the reading, said in an email that she first read an article by Bruni previewing his book and that the article "really resonated with [her]," so she read the book. "[It] really speaks to the importance of communicating to students that there are many pathways to success and it's important to find the one that is best suited to you," she said.

Beverly Low, head of guidance counseling and a member of the committee Beaudoin assembled to help organize and to provide input into this reading, agreed. "Students will be defined by how much effort they invest in their chosen path, not by which school they get into," she said.

Beaudoin said she "really wanted to share it with the School Committee members because

'Students will be defined by how much effort the invest... not by which school they get into.'

-BEVERLY LOW

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School hosts puppies to combat midterm stress Cape Ann Animal Aid to soon put all three dogs up for adoption

By Julia Bonaccorso
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With the help of Cape Ann Animal Aid, sophomore Belle Allmendinger was able to bring three puppies to the school during midterm to "improve the overall mentality of taking exams and give kids a break from testing," she said.

During the B block exam period on Jan. 19, students and faculty had the chance to interact with the puppies in the Cardio Room.

She drew inspiration for the event from colleges that had brought puppies to campus during testing weeks to relieve students' stress.

According to Cape Ann Animal Aid volunteer Martine Geary-Souza, who helped with the fundraiser, the shelter held a similar event at Gordon College during finals.

As the sophomore class representative on Student Council, Allmendinger had originally planned to make the event a fundraiser for both her class and Cape Ann Animal Aid by charging students \$5 for un-



JULIA BONACCORSO PHOTO

Sophomore Belle Allmendinger planned the event, raising \$210 for the shelter. She hopes to host the dogs during finals week too.

limited time with the puppies.

However, she recognized that students often forget to bring money to school, and not wanting to turn anyone away, she dropped the fee but encouraged donations.

Allmendinger also decided to give all of the money that had been raised, which was \$210 in total, solely to the animal shelter.

Contributions were made by both faculty and students of all

grades who attended the event.

"I thought that [the puppies] were adorable, and it was a great idea to help take our minds off of the stress of midterms," freshman Kaya Crandall said.

Senior Mariona Franklin expressed a similar sentiment commenting how much the puppies helped in relieving the pressure of testing; however, she found

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News Brief

Tech team

Digital instructional specialist Dalcione Vollink will be leading a tech team devoted to solving the technological problems of both teachers and students this coming semester.

The idea for the team originated after Principal Patricia Puglisi saw a presentation on tech teams at a conference.

“Students presented,” she said. “And whenever you see students present, it’s awesome. They were so excited about the work they were doing in their school.”

According to Puglisi, students simply need to meet with Vollink in the library if they’re interested in joining. It’s currently not an official class, but next year students will receive pass/fail credit, spending a block of their schedule solving any issues that may arise.

The tech team will be available at the old Lucidomatic, which has been set up as a makeshift Genius Bar in the library.

In order to contact members, there will be “some kind of text system or... maybe a hashtag... a phone number if we want to go antiquated or a carrier pigeon,” Vollink said.

She hopes that teachers will be less reluctant to request assistance, knowing that students are standing by ready to help.

Puglisi noted that, with the school’s recent integration of technology like Google Classroom, there will be more issues to solve than ever before.

“[There are] always little glitches. And it’s really the kids who know the most about unscrambling those glitches,” she said.

Schedule committee makes final decision about future schedule
Group chooses temporary schedule to put in place for next school year

By Amber Paré
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Members from each academic department formed a bell schedule committee and created a schedule for next year that will serve as a transition for the schedule that will be adopted in two years.

Principal Patricia Puglisi said the main goals of the new schedule were to decrease student stress and maximize opportunities for student-centered learning.

Next year’s schedule, according to Puglisi, will be a rotating seven-day schedule with five 59-minute blocks per day and two blocks dropped each day.

Puglisi said this will transition into a new schedule the following year, which will be a two-day schedule with four 74-minute blocks per day.

Both schedules include two 30-minute lunches that are apart from the middle school and a 45-minute power block, which will function as a school-wide study hall and a time for chorus and band classes to meet, Puglisi said.

In order to adapt to schedule changes, Spanish teacher and committee member Maggie Sears said the foreign language department partnered with someone who used to be a foreign language teacher at Hamilton-Wenham and is now working on a doctorate in technology integration.

74 MINUTES	7:45 - 8:59
74 MINUTES	9:03 - 10:17
74 MINUTES	10:21 - 11:35
30 MINUTES	11:39 - 12:09
47 MINUTES	12:09 - 12:56
47 MINUTES	
30 MINUTES	
75 Minutes	1:00 - 12:15

Green		White	
A		E	
B		F	
C		G	
LUNCH 1		LUNCH 1	
PB 1		PB 1	
PB 2		PB 2	
LUNCH 2		LUNCH 2	
D		H	

59 MINUTES	7:45 - 8:44
59 MINUTES	8:48 - 9:47
59 MINUTES	9:51 - 10:50
59 MINUTES	10:54 - 11:53
30 MINUTES	11:57 - 12:27
49 MINUTES	12:27 - 1:15
49 MINUTES	11:57 - 12:45
30 MINUTES	12:45 - 1:15
54 MINUTES	1:19 - 2:15
DROP	
DROP	

A	F	D
B	G	E
C	A	F
D	B	G
L 1	L	L
PB 2	PB	PB
PB 2	PB	PB
L 1	L	L
E	C	A
F	D	B
G	E	C

AMBER PARE PHOTO

Top: the permanent schedule that will be put in place after the 2016-17 school year. It features a two day alternating schedule. Bottom: the first three days of the temporary schedule that will be in place for next year only. It has elements of the future, permanent schedule, such as the power block.

“Because students will not be immersed in their target languages each day in the two-day schedule, it will be important for us to integrate technology into the curriculum so students can continue to learn on days they do not have class,” she said.

According to Puglisi, chorus and band members will have the option to take a study hall outside of the power block.

“It’s helpful that kids in band and chorus can still have a study hall. If that wasn’t an option, a lot of people would reconsider taking band or chorus next year,” said sophomore Madison Palmer, a member of band.

The reason that an intermittent schedule will be used, according to Puglisi, is to work out any glitches and give teachers appropriate training to

teach during longer blocks.

“It could take us a little while to work out negotiations with the teachers’ union. We are not sure if they will teach five or six classes, and they will also need to go through training about teaching for longer periods,” she said.

The school committee will hold a meeting on Feb. 10 in order to inform parents about upcoming changes.

Spaulding contributes grant money to purchase new science technology

Science dept. buys three new pieces of equipment to enhance student learning, broaden lab possibilities

By Courtney Fraser
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Grant money from the Spaulding Foundation and Cell Signaling has expanded technological resources in the science department.

AP biology teacher Kristin Umile and honors biology and ASR teacher Maria Burgess applied for the Spaulding Foundation grant. Umile applied for the Cell Signaling grant independently.

With the money, the science department ordered three different pieces of technology to enhance student learning for lab-based activities.

The products that were ordered include spectrometers, a polymerase chain reaction machine, and a vertical electrophoresis chamber.

A spectrometer is an apparatus used to measure the intensity of light; a polymerase chain reaction machine amplifies samples of DNA; and the vertical electrophoresis chamber isolates proteins.

According to Umile, “The



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The science department will buy a polymerase chain reaction with the Spaulding grant. It is able to amplify samples of DNA.

technology makes labs more interactive for students. It’s actually what is used in many research labs for both biology and chemistry right now.”

The new equipment will be used in labs for all class levels, including AP biology, chemistry, and physics courses.

“I am absolutely thrilled that we will have more biology equipment so that we will be able to do some high-end labs. Students can get a taste of how different it is to use these technologies,” science department chair Erica Everett said.

“The new tools will be used to open up an influx of inquiry-based questions and ideas that will inspire students to pursue science,” Umile said.

Students will use the technology and apply it to their understanding of various topics in science through lab activities and in-depth discussions.

“We are hoping that the tech-

nology benefits them by showing that you can answer a question with a procedure and with an actual test. These biotechnology machines allow you to test on a very deep level,” Burgess said.

Additionally, the money received from Cell Signaling and the Spaulding Foundation will benefit students planning to study science in college, Everett said.

“Whatever experiences we can expose our students to facilitates how they perform in college. If students use these technologies in high school, then they will be on top of the heap in college. Every advantage you can get is helpful,” Everett said.

The spectrometers, the polymerase chain reaction machine, and the vertical electrophoresis chamber will be delivered to the school near the end of the school year.

“I’m very excited for the science department. We have some

interesting roads to travel down. We are opening up gates that are allowing us to push a little further into sophistication for the students,” Burgess said.

The technology will be available for students to use in the spring of this year and going forward.

‘The new tools will be used to open up an influx of inquiry based questions...’

-KRISTIN UMILE

Teachers face new ELL endorsement requirements

Course provides strategies for teaching English Language Learners

By Charlotte Freed
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Massachusetts has implemented a policy in which all “core academic teachers and those administrators who supervise and evaluate core academic teachers” or those with an English Language Learner in their class are required to obtain a Sheltered English Immersion endorsement in order to be able to more efficiently teach ELLs, according to Massachusetts Executive Office of Education’s website.

In an attempt to better serve ELL students who are often surrounded by native-English speaking students in the classroom, Massachusetts now requires all new teachers to obtain an SEI endorsement by completing the SEI endorsement course, take and pass the SEI MTEL teacher preparation exam, or obtain an SEI license. All other teachers are required to dedicate 15 Professional Development Points towards receiving the endorsement on a licensure.

After the two-year period for a no-cost course provided for teachers with an ELL in his or her class expires, these op-

tions require teachers to pay to obtain an SEI endorsement.

Principal Patricia Puglisi said it is part of a teacher’s professional responsibility to fulfill this requirement.

“There is a high need to learn the strategies that worked to educate all students...whether it be working with ELL students, special education students, or regular education students, teachers are required to continually learn and be life-long learners to meet all of their needs,” Puglisi said.

The initiative is a part of RETELL, or Rethinking Equity in Teaching for English Language Learners, and was introduced by the Department of Justice, according to Jennifer Fitzgerald, an ESL teacher within the school.

“Most English Language Learners are in mainstream classes, and the teachers need to have special certifications in order to meet their needs and lighten the linguistic load in order for the students to acquire the content,” Fitzgerald said.

“The progress of English Language Learners [nationwide] is far below that of mono-English speaking students in content

SEI Endorsement License Impact for Core Academic Teachers		
Preliminary License	Initial License	Professional License
Required to advance to Initial License after July 1, 2014 <i>and</i> Within 1 year of being assigned an ELL after July 1, 2016	Required after August 31 of designated cohort year if currently teaching ELLs <i>or</i> Within 1 year of being assigned an ELL after July 1, 2016	Required after August 31 of designated cohort year if currently teaching ELLs <i>or</i> Within 1 year of being assigned an ELL after July 1, 2016

MASSTEACHER.ORG

Teachers with ELL students must complete a semester long, nighttime course to obtain an SEI license.

and in standardized testing.”

History teacher John Mullady and English teacher Elizabeth Edgerton both took the course last year. Edgerton said that although the program is well intentioned, the organization and practices in the endorsement class are not effective in teaching teacher’s useful skills.

Edgerton and Mullady took a three-hour nighttime course once a week for a semester. They were assigned weekly graded mini-projects and a large

project at the end of the class in order to pass the course.

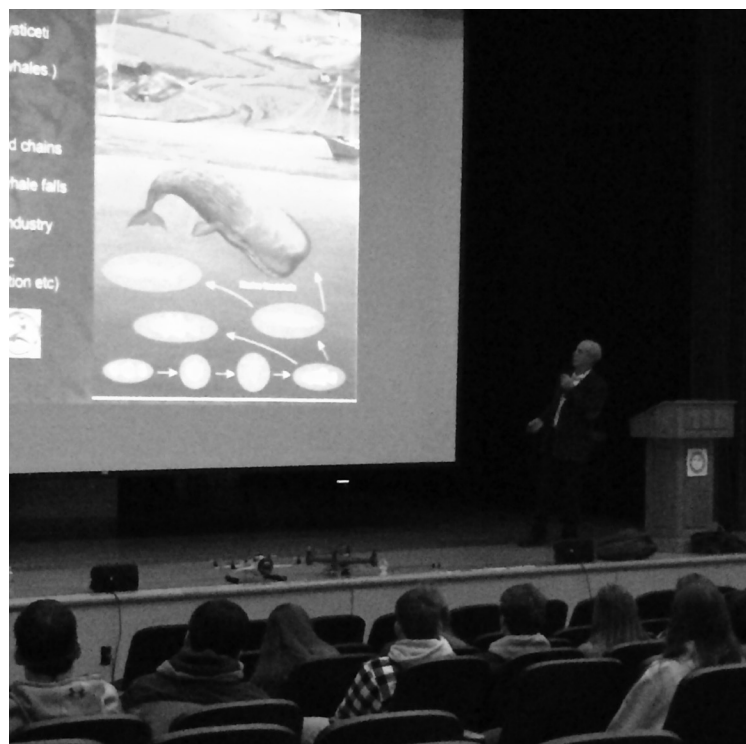
“The reason behind the course is so that teachers can learn strategies to teach ELL students...but the strategies given did not necessarily help me specifically with my ELL students... they were not bad strategies, but they didn’t seem to be targeted towards only English Language Learners,” Edgerton said.

Edgerton said her teacher presented certain strategies as specific towards ELL students, but she

said she thought these strategies could be utilized for all students.

Puglisi said the program is probably geared towards districts with a greater number of ELL students, making the program less effective for our district.

“I think the low-incident districts like Manchester-Essex...it’s been more challenging in many ways because it is true that you need to take the entire course within a year, and often times that student is moving on,” Puglisi said.



ABIGAIL FITZGIBBON PHOTO

Iain Kerr presents to Green Team students on ocean conservation.

Green Team welcomes guest speaker

By Abigail Fitzgibbon
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Ocean Alliance speaker Iain Kerr is coming to talk to Green Team students about his work in Ocean conservation and his work in environmental protection and research.

Junior Becka Hille, Green Team Events Coordinator, is in charge of organizing the event, which will take place on Jan. 26 in the morning.

Green Team director Eric Magers hopes the students will get the chance to see how their work in Green Team as high school students can translate into their careers.

“I think it is wonderful for students to see what profes-

sionals are doing and what opportunities are doing outside our walls,” Magers said.

Students generally react positively, Magers said. He makes sure to “vet” the speakers personally to make sure they know what they are talking about before they set up a presentation for the Green Team.

Ocean Alliance calls itself “an organization recognized as an international leader in whale research and ocean conservation since its founding...in 1970.”

One of the main things Kerr will be discussing in his presentation is the innovative new “SnotBot,” a research drone that is capable of tracking and recording the whales’ movements.

Sophomore Belle All-

mendinger, president of Green Team, appreciates watching the presentations.

“Part of the Green Team program is to have environmental literacy to understand what’s going on the world, so having the presentation is great by having an outside person come.”

Magers were interested in having a speaker talking about ocean conservation because of the Green Team field trip in the fall with the Salem Sound Coast Watch to learn about marine debris, invasive species, eelgrass, and shellfish.

“We always try to find knowledgeable folks that are dealing with climate change issues or environmental issues in our own back yard,” Magers said.

Lack of English midterm reduces stress, indicates possible future changes

By Fritz Spofford
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

By not administering English midterms this year, the English department experimented with the necessity of the exams while also relieving stress for both students and teachers.

The decision to not give English midterms initially arose from a discussion about the necessity of midterms in general, according to Principal Patricia Puglisi.

“We have debated about maybe doing away with midterms and going in a different direction in regards to testing students,” Puglisi said.

“At the same time, the Eng-

lish department is in the middle of writing pretty significant curricular overhaul for grade 12 English, and they’re writing a new curriculum for 15 electives,” Puglisi said. “That’s a tremendous amount of work.”

The amount of work that the members of the English Department currently face in writing the new curriculum was made them a fitting candidate for piloting the possibility of not giving midterms, English Department chair Debra Isensee said.

In addition to making life easier for English teachers, not giving midterms in the subject was also meant to decrease stress for students, according to Puglisi.

“It’s a win for the English department in terms of getting their curriculum under control, and it’s a win for kids in terms of taking one less midterm,” she said.

English midterms are not really necessary compared to classes that have more of a building-block style of learning, Isensee said.

Due to the decrease in the number of exams students are taking, many students are supportive of the idea.

“It was one less thing to study for, and it gave me extra time to study for my other exams, which helped reduce my overall stress during the week,” junior Amber Shaw said.

While the lack of Eng-



FRITZ SPOFFORD PHOTO

The English Department experiments with eliminating midterms.

lish midterms was meant to be a de-stressor for both students and teachers, its key purpose is to experiment with eliminating midterms entirely.

“Any kind of intermediate assessment is useful for just checking in, but I don’t think it has to be in the form of a midterm,” Isensee said.

College homecoming panel offers advice to current students



“I had a club fair in my first week, and it was so enormous that it spilled out of the gym and on to the street.”

-Julia Whitten, freshman
UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER



“Reach out to someone who’s going to the same school before the first day. It’s great to know even one person before.”

-Molly Carlson, sophomore
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA



“If you can find things that you really like to do, and they can be a little weird, you can balance yourself by doing them.”

-Parker Malarkey, freshman
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY



“In the end it is your responsibility to get to class... the information isn’t on the teacher’s website or anything.”

-Neil Henry, sophomore
WHEATON COLLEGE



“I went to the accepted students day and I just loved it. The people were so nice to me and really tried to get to know me.”

-Abbey Martin, freshman
COLLEGE OF WOOSTER



“If there’s a major that you are interested in, really look into that program at the schools on your list.”

-Evanthia Boling, sophomore
GOUCHER COLLEGE

BY CHARLIE DAVIS

DECA students compete at districts; 30 qualify for state competition

By Courtney Fraser
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

DECA students qualified for state competition with half of the team taking first, second, or third place at districts.

Ninety-seven percent of the team finished in the top ten of the competition that was held on Jan. 7. Another 22 percent finished in fourth or fifth place, qualifying them as alternates for state competition.

The students also scored eight of the 10 highest written exam scores as well as 16 of the 22 highest written exam scores at the event.

“I’m very proud of everyone. It’s not an easy thing to do. In many ways, the DECA competition is a great final exam. You take everything you learned and answer specifically the contextual areas of what you learned,” DECA teacher Dean Martino said.

Based on the district competition last year, the top five candidates qualified for States; however, this year, only the top three candidates quali-

fied for States, according to Martino.

After analyzing the data from the competitions of this year and last year, Martino found how many students in 2015 qualified for the top three positions to get a comparison of how successful the team was this January.

According to Martino, 50 percent of students this year scored top three for States, and 53 percent of students scored top three for States last year.

Senior Chelsea Rose, who studies HRM (human resources management) was one of the students who qualified for state competition with a first place win.

“I feel like it was more difficult this year. I got a different type of role-play. I think each year there is always something new coming into the competition,” Rose said.

Senior and DECA officer Sarah Reed, who studies MMS (marketing managing) successfully made it through to States with a third place win.

“I’m really proud of kids that did and didn’t make it. All the kids put in the effort that was needed, and I think everyone

‘It’s an opportunity for students to mature and learn to communicate, analyze information, make decisions, and use teamwork.’

-DEAN MARTINO



COURTESY OF CAITLIN MALLOY

Seniors Paige Lafferty, Chelsea Rose, Olivia Tyler, Melissa Schuh, and Courtney Feuerbach were among those who competed at the district DECA competition.

learned something from the competition that they will always remember,” Reed said.

According to Reed, DECA and the competition itself is helpful in teaching useful publicspeaking skills, and it enhances the application of 21st-century skills for students.

Martino is very proud of how the students

performed at States, too, and highlights how DECA teaches students lessons they wouldn’t learn in other courses, he said.

“It’s an opportunity for students to mature and learn to communicate, analyze information, make decisions, and use teamwork,” Martino said.

CONTINUATIONS

READING

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we talk a lot about...striking a balance between stressing student achievement and how to help students have balance... a main motivator is the amount of stress and anxiety I see and hear about from students and parents.”

Librarian Sue Krause was also invited to participate on the organizing committee, and said she hopes “people will step back

and not push their son or daughter as hard. If you go around the school, people don’t ask each other where they went to school.”

Beaudoin agreed. She hopes “that as a school community we can take steps to slow down and de-stress our environment and have a balance of focus on both academic achievement and social emotional well-being.”

Beaudoin said she invites everyone in the Manchester-Essex community to participate in the panel reading, which will be held on March 24 at 7 p.m.

PUPPIES

continued from page 1

that “there were very few puppies in comparison to the number of people who wanted to see them, which caused a bit of a problem.”

After approaching Principal Patricia Puglisi with her idea and having it approved by the superintendent, Allmendinger visited Cape Ann Animal Aid to look at the puppies, but up until the morning of the event, she didn’t know the breed

of the dogs nor how many were coming.

Allmendinger said that the shelter brought whatever puppies they could, which turned out to be three dogs whose exact breeds and ages are not known to the shelter.

“I’m pretty sure two of the puppies are lab mixes, and the other might be a boxer mix, but I’m not certain,” Geary-Souza said.

The puppies are not yet up for adoption at Cape Ann Animal Aid, but they will be soon.

Allmendinger hopes to bring the puppies back for final exams.

Voter Turnout

Should the United States have mandatory voting?

Pro Oscar Heanue

While America is often touted as the land of freedom and a pioneer of democracy, the United States holds one of the lowest voter turnout rates of any developed democracy. The lack of enthusiasm for elections in America is problematic, as it leads to under-representation, lack of political education, and reflects poorly on Americans' respect for their civic duties.

Compulsory voting is in place in 22 countries worldwide and has led to increased voting rates in each of those nations. In Australia, a western democracy similar to the United States, the fine for violation of the mandatory voting law is just \$20, far less than the cost of a speeding ticket; despite the minor penalty, Australia saw gains in voter turnout upon the law's implementation.

Requiring citizens to vote incentivizes them to become informed about political issues and candidates, leading to a more representative governing body. When people feel as though they must vote, they tend to do research in preparation for the election.

Moreover, the candidates elected and policies implemented are more representative of the entire constituency. When everyone is made to vote, candidates ideally represent the entirety of the citizenry, rather than just the 50-60 percent who turn out on Election Day.

Opponents of such a law argue that not voting is a fundamental right, and that if one does not support a candidate, he or she should not be forced to choose.

However, even under compulsory voting, citizens may turn in a blank ballot or write in an abstention, giving them the ability to express their opinion.

Finally, voting is a civic duty. Citizens of the United States are already obligated to serve on a jury, pay taxes, and serve as a witness on a court if served with a subpoena. Logically, it only follows that citizens should be mandated to vote in order to help maintain and serve American democracy.

The United States has a major problem with voter turnout. Compulsory voting is a necessary measure in order to encourage fair representation and the spread of political information.

Con Zack Even

Over the past decade, barely more than half of the U.S. population has set aside the time to vote in national elections.

Some citizens may see this as a sign of a failing democracy, but it could actually improve our government. Current voters are more informed than those who refrain, according to the New York Times, and forcing the politically uninvolved to participate won't increase political efficacy: obligatory voters will simply randomly select one of the options, and the willing will grow frustrated by the skewed results.

The problem isn't a lack of diversity at the polls; it's a lack of information. The New York Times notes that people vote with the nation's best interests, not their own, in mind, and if everyone voted, comes would barely change.

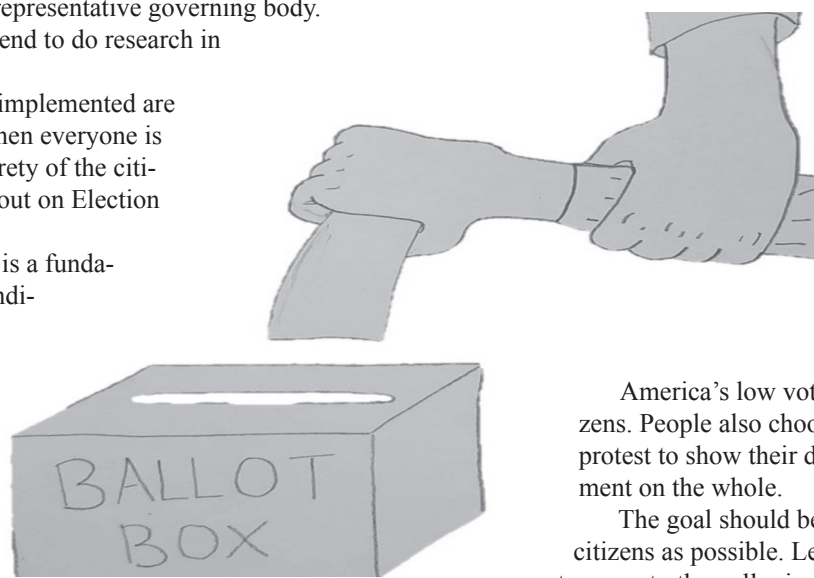
Current voters are not only likely to be more informed but also wealthier, so mandatory voting puts an unfair burden on the poor. Lower class citizens have trouble getting to the polls, finding enough time to vote, and purchasing IDs (which millions currently lack, according to NPR) to satisfy voter ID requirements within 33 states.

Even a seemingly small fine like the one Australia uses to encourage voting (\$20) is significant to many of those who would be forced to pay it.

America's low voter turnout isn't simply a result of disinterested citizens. People also choose not to exercise their right as a means of peaceful protest to show their dissatisfaction with the candidates and the government on the whole.

The goal should be to make voting as easily accessible to interested citizens as possible. Leave disillusioned citizens alone, as forcing them to come to the polls simply to abstain will only foster hatred for the government, especially when their doing so does not improve the nation in any concrete way.

People might not like hearing about America's voting problem, but such an issue should be promoting discussion on how to change the government so more people want to contribute rather than simply ensuring that they all cast their vote. Low voter turnout may be a by-product of a struggling democracy, but it's never the cause.



ETHAN ANDERSEN ILLUSTRATION

Importance of cultural literacy often discounted in modern society

Cultural literacy critical to participate in society, understand works and issues pertinent in the world

By Charlie Davis
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Cultural literacy, or what Merriam-Webster describes as "the ability to understand and participate fluently in a society," is a critical skill that is often overlooked in modern times.

In the age of the Internet and mass quantities of new information, people often forget the value of learning and studying cultural classics across all genres and topic areas.

Even though there is increased accessibility to facts and works, people do not seem to place as much emphasis on studying works and events that can be

deemed necessary to "cultural literacy."

Cultural literacy engulfs many different topics and subtopics: movies, novels, poetry, religious stories and ideas, sports, history and many other categories fall into the broader grouping of cultural knowledge.

However, the point of cultural literacy is not to simply know random facts and understand all topics: it is to be able to use them fluidly in activities like discussion and writing.

Humans often both find and make connections to works and events during everyday life and in personal works. Thus, having a grasp of cultural knowledge is a prerequisite to understanding anything from

simple conversation to the deeper meaning of literature.

Even though a certain fact or focus may not pertain to or interest a person, it may help someone understand an issue or participate in a conversation.

For example, if one is analyzing a story or book, an allusion made by the author may be essential to the message of the work as a whole. Being culturally literate allows a person to gain deeper understanding, which can help to enhance education.

Despite cultural literacy being a vital skill, it is equally imperative to accept that it is impossible to know every reference, allusion, or connection that presents itself; cultural literacy is an ever-changing and evolving concept.

A person can, however, develop habits that increase cultural literacy. Seeking out famous movies, books, stories, works of art, and historical events can help a person have a well-rounded

The point of cultural literacy is not to simply know random facts: it is to be able to use them fluidly in activities like discussion and writing.

The cover of the book "The Dictionary of Cultural Literacy" is shown. The title is at the top in a serif font. Below it, the word "CULTURAL" is written in large, bold, block letters, and "LITERACY" is written below it in a similar but slightly smaller font. At the bottom, the authors' names "E. D. Hirsch, Jr., Joseph F. Kett, James Trefil" are listed. There are also stars and text indicating it is the "2nd Edition, Revised and Updated" and "What Every American Needs to Know".

E.D. HIRSCH, JR./AMAZON.COM

This dictionary is one way of augmenting one's cultural literacy.



Ignorance and conceit: fatal flaws of the older brother

By Connor Senay
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Over the course of this winter basketball season, I have watched three of my brother's basketball games and have not ceased to aggressively voice my opinion at every single one. "Are you blind, ref?! That kid literally just took the ball and ran with it under his arm like a football."

I fully comprehend that I'm attending fourth grade basketball games, yet I can't resist the temptation to call out blatant blunders on the court rather than withholding the obvious truth. This results in me being overly critical of how my brother plays.

"You were once his age, too, you know," says my mom who should at least remember that I was nothing short of a baller in the fourth grade (I was probably more modest back then, too) and that my comments are just to help him improve.

This Saturday, the pressure was mounting for him: four games without a single basket, and I was praying he would break the streak. Having 169 points as a fourth grader (all right, I'll stop), I couldn't even imagine the frustration of not having scored once, but I had faith this would be the game.

He was in the paint. He had just received a pass on a fast break play. The hoop was wide open. He started to get anxious and adjust his hands on the ball for the perfect grip.

"JUST SHOOT IT! YOU'RE WIDE OPEN! COME ON!" I screamed at the top of my lungs.

A clean swish through the net, and I was on my feet cheering and clapping vigorously, loudly enough that the whole elementary school gym stopped to look at me, but I had no shame. That was the moment I realized a change in my attitude for the better.

Pride in my glory days of basketball and my obsession with having my brother play like I did dissipated immediately. Initially, I was disappointed in myself for not being around to train him and thus was upset with his play, but what I learned is that it is more important to be constantly supportive regardless of circumstances.

I guess this is a problem that comes with having such a large age gap between siblings, especially since we're fairly different people. Patience was essential to overcoming my ignorance and conceit, two fatal flaws of my personality as the aggressive sports brother.

STAFF EDITORIAL

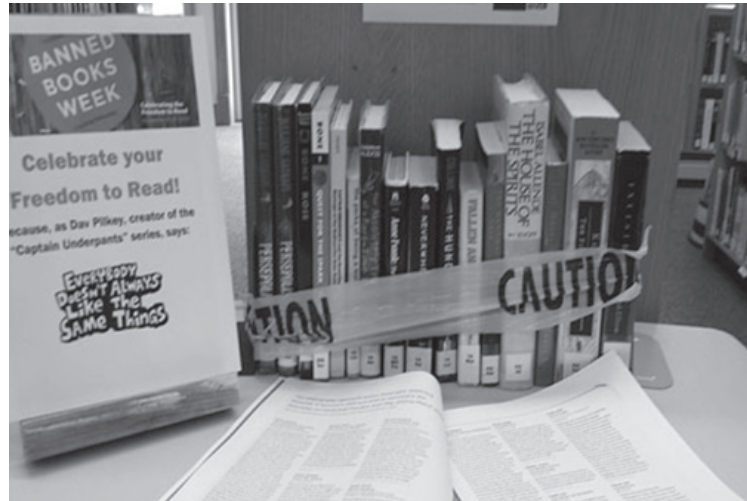
Banned books teach lessons, expose important issues

Books can be banned by governments and schools for many reasons, but often these reasons are because the books' themes center on controversial social issues. Such issues are important for students to understand; therefore, banned books should be taught in schools.

Because of opposition to those who wish to censor books, they aren't banned by law anymore, but people fight to get some books out of classrooms.

Books that are frequently challenged include American classics such as "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" by Mark Twain, and "The Catcher in the Rye" by J.D. Salinger. The list also includes popular modern young adult fiction such as "Harry Potter" by J.K. Rowling.

Frequent justifications for banning books include profanity, racism, radical political statements, blasphemy, and sexual references.



MADISONLIBRARY/Flickr.COM

Banned books, though they deal with controversial issues, are a key aspect of students' education because they teach vital lessons.

Twain's "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" was banned in Concord, Mass. in 1855, because of its racism, and it was called "trash and suitable only for the slums," according to bannedbooksweek.org. Additionally, "Catch-22" by Joseph Heller was banned by a school

board in Strongsville, Ohio in 1972 because it targeted social problems in the military.

Some schools censor certain words in books; such was the case in Venado Middle school in Irvine, Calif. where all the "hells" and "damns" were blacked out in Ray Bradbury's

"Fahrenheit 451."

Even though these accusations can be true, the books teach lessons and expose issues important enough that their perceived transgressions can be forgiven.

For example, "To Kill a Mockingbird" was banned in some areas when it was published due to its perceived racism. Book reviewer Harding LeMay said that it exposed "the spirit-corroding shame of the civilized white Southerner in the treatment of the Negro."

Although the book contains racial slurs and depicts racism in the American South, the book condemns the racism it is accused of perpetrating and challenges the standard conception of justice as it pertained to race when it was set.

Banned books should still be taught in school even if they deal with controversial issues, as they expose students to those issues as well as teach moral lessons.

Students must understand lockdown procedures, take drills seriously

Awareness of school's procedures maximizes student, teacher safety

By Amber Paré
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With the number of school shootings in the country on the rise, it is becoming increasingly important for students to be aware of lockdown procedures to promote safety.

According to an article written by Meghan Keneally for ABC News, as of October 2015, there had been almost 50 school shootings in the U.S., which totals almost one shooting per week.

CampusSafetyMagazine.com reports there is no one lockdown protocol that suits all schools, and most schools have multiple procedures. The website says schools with multiple procedures

experience higher success rates in the event of a crisis.

Awareness is also important when it comes to one's safety. Because most schools have multiple procedures, students and faculty must be aware of all procedures in order to be safe. This can only prove to be useful in the event of a weather crisis, shooting, or other emergencies.

Principal Patricia Puglisi said our school is currently transitioning between two types of lockdown procedures. The current system is a stay-in-place procedure. The school will take steps towards adopting the A.L.I.C.E system within the next year, yet most students are unaware of this change.

A.L.I.C.E, according to Puglisi, stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate. This is more of an "active system" that allows teachers to

make decisions about student safety during lockdowns.

These decisions regarding student safety will be difficult to make, so teacher training regarding procedures is vital.

Puglisi said she believes it is "extremely important" for students and teachers to be aware of procedures because "being aware gives people a sense of safety and prepares everyone for the unlikely event of an emergency."

With the transition to a new type of procedure, students at the school must partake in practice lockdown drills in order to have an understanding of what to do in the event of an emergency; this knowledge is vital.

A lockdown drill has yet to take place this year. Allowing students and teachers to practice having a lockdown or evacuation drill, especially during this

Our school is currently in transition between two types of lockdown procedures.

crucial time of transition for the school, can only prove to be beneficial for making everyone comfortable with how the procedures function.

Puglisi said there will be more faculty training with the A.L.I.C.E system this winter, and there will be an all-school practice evacuation drill in the spring.

It will be important for all students to take this practice drill seriously and to pay attention to new procedures in order to maximize future safety.

the INDEPENDENT

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

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

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

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

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

School districts should provide free SAT preparation

Expensive SAT courses give affluent students an unfair advantage

By Maura McCormick
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Affluent students consistently do better on the SAT, according to the College Board's profile report data. This is because the ability to afford SAT preparation courses puts wealthier students at an unfair advantage.

According to the College Board's report on the 2015 SAT, the average difference between the score of a student with a family income of under \$20,000 and a student with family income of over \$200,000 was 406 points.

Although the goal of the SAT is to evaluate a student's intelligence, income has clearly become a prominent factor.

Although the College Board provides practice materials, students who don't go to tutoring won't get specialized training on how to approach certain types of

SAT problems in the most effective way.

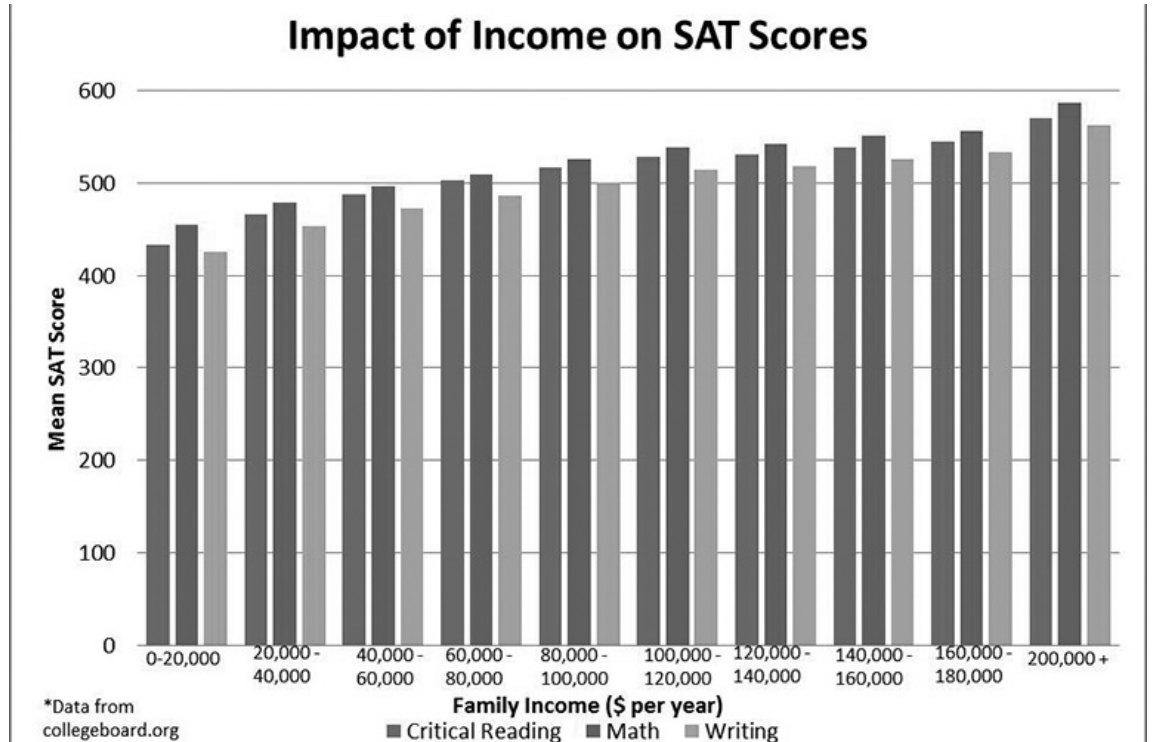
SAT tutor Frank McWilliams wrote in an article for methodtestprep.com, "While many teachers work hard to teach students the content of the SAT, the most important thing to know is the strategy of the test itself."

Tutors have learned tricks of the test and teach strategies to make test taking easier. These strategies come at an expensive price, however.

Many programs such as Sullivan Tutoring in Danvers cost around \$100 or more per hour. Those who can't afford these preparation courses miss out on valuable help.

To combat this disadvantage, schools should provide free SAT preparation classes on the weekends, making them accessible to everyone.

If everyone had access to a free test-preparation program, income would be less of a factor because SAT courses would no longer be accessible to the select



MAURA MCCORMICK GRAPHIC

Only affluent students can afford expensive SAT preparation courses, making their scores higher.

few who can afford them.

McWilliams also argued that schools could benefit from this system because higher scores

lead to "funding and prestige."

Providing these courses wouldn't prevent people from seeking even more tutoring, but

at least all students would have an opportunity to become more familiar with test-taking strategies rather than a select few.



JULIETTE KELLEY PHOTO

Jennifer Coleman's honors US History I class utilizes technology to collaborate on applications such as Google Docs, Google Classroom, and online PowerPoints. Students often use their computers to take quick organized notes on lectures as well.

Technology benefits student learning

By Juliette Kelley
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Technology, an increasingly common asset in today's society, is an extremely beneficial resource for students.

Despite the common belief that communication through technology is a distraction for students, the communication aspect of technology actually helps students.

Electronic communication helps students to collaborate on group projects.

Similarly, Google Apps, such as Google Slides and Google Docs, allow students to share a document with other students or teachers.

History teacher Jessica Tran has found these tools helpful. "[Google Docs] is super helpful for collaborating because students can edit together and do real time editing" she said.

Collaboration is not the only beneficial aspect of technology for students. According to an article by Ashley Wainwright,

a Marketing Coordinator at SecurEdge Networks, it teaches students technological adeptness they need for the real world.

"As our nation becomes increasingly more technology-dependent, it becomes more necessary that to be successful citizens, students must learn to be

tech-savvy," she wrote on the SecurEdge Networks website.

Technology also allows for students to be more organized.

Rather than rifling through a binder to locate a paper, students have all of their work easily accessible. Students are able to keep their assignments organized much more easily through technology.

Technology also organizes students' studying time. According to an article from the EdTech Review by Gabrielle

Roales, "Because of the smart phones, you can also save notes and study reminders in a portable item."

Technology can further [students'] understanding of a subject and provide supplemental teaching.

Tran also finds technology helpful for organization. "I have loved being able to use the Internet and technology available through the school to lesson plan and to

work from either at home or at school," she said.

Finally, technology can further their understanding of a subject and provide supplemental teaching technology through websites like Khan Academy.

It also gives everybody a chance to learn because students can create their own learning schedule, according to the Sanford Brown college website.

Despite its bad reputation, technology creates a positive learning experience for students.

Small schools create more individualized atmosphere than larger colleges

By Charlotte Freed
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Choosing a huge university of 30,000 undergraduates or a small liberal arts college of around 2,000 students depends on the person applying. In the case of colleges, one size does not fit all. However, small colleges are able to better cater to each individual student's learning styles and create a closer sense of community within the college.

Larger universities do have bonuses. Some students love the thrill of watching a football game in a stadium that holds thousands of fans. Other stu-

dents seek the variety of majors or well-funded research facilities found throughout the university.

Yet, students in large universities are often lost among a sea of thousands of other students vying for the same opportunities.

A student in a large university is simply a number. While some students may find the anonymity of this experience to be comforting, it can feel isolated.

Smaller classes foster a greater sense of community, create links between students from all areas of interests, and provide

each student with more attention from his or her teacher and the school itself.

A student in a large university is simply a number.

Middlebury College, a school with around 2,500 students and an endowment of around \$900 million, allocates around \$360,000 as an endowment per student. In contrast, Michigan State University, a school with an endowment of more than \$2.5 billion, only has about a \$41,000 endowment per student.

Small universities also often let students design their own majors to cater to their interests.



KANE5187/COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG

Dartmouth is a small school that caters to differing learning styles.

Small class sizes allow for hands-on learning and an opportunity to get to know the professor of a class. In large universities, teaching assistants often

teach the class, over professors.

While small colleges are not for everyone, their individualized atmosphere promotes a positive learning environment.



Outfit 1 – Aéropostale

This outfit is too eclectic for Ethan’s liking. We paired palm-tree joggers (\$49.50), a red and gray striped t-shirt (\$24.50), a blue tribal-print flannel (\$9.99), and a metallic silver vest (\$40). Ethan does not like the overwhelming mix of patterns and colors that Aéropostale offers.



Outfit 2 – H&M

Ethan sports H&M sweatpant joggers (\$29.99), a camouflage mesh top (17.99), and a black leather hat (\$12.99), but this casual look is not appropriate for a date night out (or a night in). Only in the privacy of his own home would Ethan wear this outfit, and it would definitely not impress any girl that he takes out.



Outfit 3 – H&M

For a more hipster look, Ethan wears a blue floral button up (\$29.99), khaki pants (\$29.99), and a gray beanie (\$9.99). Ethan said his can be a great outfit for taking your date out to coffee or lunch.



Outfit 4 – Gap

As a dressier option, Ethan wears a blue pinstripe button down (\$49.95) under a navy sweater (\$44.95) with a pair of light khakis (\$59.95). Ethan said untucking the button down shirt creates a more casual and comfortable look if you want to look classy but not too stiff while taking your date out for dinner.

Would Ethan wear it on a date?



Outfit 5 – J.Crew

Although more expensive, this outfit makes for a perfect look to take that special someone on a fancy dinner-date. Wearing a black and white checkered shirt with elbow patches (\$79.99), a dark green overcoat (\$189.99), and a pair of black pants (\$59.99), Ethan creates a classy look that will impress his girl on Valentine’s Day.



Cologne – Abercrombie & Fitch

To attract the ladies, Ethan sprays “Fierce” cologne from Abercrombie and Fitch (\$15) to make sure he smells irresistible this Valentine’s Day. Ethan said this cologne has a sharp, masculine smell and is in no way subtle. It may be overwhelming, but a light dab might win a lady over.

By Ethan Andersen,
Charlotte Freed, Julia Bonaccorso,
and Lydia Parker



Outfit 6 – Abercrombie & Fitch

For a more casual and outdoorsy look, Ethan chose a green flannel (\$58) and a black vest (\$80) to pair with a pair of light-wash, ripped jeans (\$88). Ethan said this outfit is perfect for a casual daytime date, picnic, or walk on the beach.



Math teacher **Kara Brown** said, “A guy asked me out and came to pick me up at my house. I was wearing heels, and I’m 5’10” anyway, so I was taller than him to begin with. I open the door to greet him

and he says, ‘You can’t wear heels!’ I instantly said goodnight, and I closed the door on him and that was the end of it. You shouldn’t tell people what they can wear; it doesn’t work like that!”



Foreign language teacher **Erin Fortunato** said, “It was one of my parents’ friends’ kids, and he never really went out. They begged me to let him take me on a date, and I felt guilty, so I caved in. So he came to pick me up but went to the wrong apartment, so he was late. We didn’t have cellphones,

so there was no way for him to tell me where he was. After we finally got to dinner, it seemed as if it was scripted like a movie because literally everything that could have gone wrong went wrong. He spilled his food all over his shirt, he tripped on his way to the bathroom, and knocked over a table, and I’m sure there’s more, but I tried to block it from my memory. We finished the meal, and he forgot his wallet, so I had to pay. When he dropped me off, he asked if we could go out again, and I had to put him down gently.”

Teacher What was date



Translating social media

It's the day before Valentine's Day, and you're trying to score a date! Not to worry, we have a handy guide to understanding any emoji signals your crush might send.

By Oscar Heanue and Lydia Parker



Oscar: "You're in! Congratulations, you have yourself a date. This girl is clearly interested in you and has probably been looking forward to going out. Keep playing your cards right, and before you know it, you might have a girlfriend on your hands."

Lydia: "Aw that's cute. Get ready to drop some cash on dinner and flowers because you're well on your way to a Valentine's Day date. Underclassmen boys: that doesn't mean showering in Axe and having your mom drive you to Chipotle."



Oscar: "Nice job, idiot. What you said was either weird, or creepy, or just so straight-up embarrassing that she couldn't even express the secondhand shame through words. You're going to be alone on Valentine's Day, and you deserve it. If you say something that prompts this, find someone new to text – or just never text another girl again."

Lydia: "Honestly, it's time to either start looking for a new V-day date, or embrace the reduced price chocolate the next day. He or she is just not that into you, and I'm left wondering what you sent to warrant the most creeped out of the emojis. Consider transferring schools."



Oscar: "You made a tactical error. What you said definitely wasn't as funny or cute as you thought it was going to be. You're not dead in the water yet, but a couple more of these, and you'll be in a hole too deep to dig yourself out of. Tread lightly."

Lydia: "Unless he or she is really into playing hard to get, I recommend looking elsewhere for a Valentine's Day date because this conversation is going nowhere. The eye-roll emoji is a low key way of saying, 'I'm not interested.'"



Oscar: "You dog. I think you already have a pretty good idea what that emoji is smirking about. You have nothing to worry about; she's totally into it. This might not bloom into serious relationship, but you certainly aren't about to be alone on Valentine's Day."

Lydia: "Congratulations, you can consider your Valentine's Day date secured. This is probably the flirtiest emoji on Earth. Happy Valentine's Day."

Speak: your worst ever?



Science teacher **Joshua Wladkowski** said, "It demonstrated the issue with online dating because I basically got 'catfished.' I got one picture of her, and I am pretty sure it was from high school and about 200 lbs earlier. I went on the date anyway, and it was super awkward. I tried to give her some compliments, but the whole situation was weird."



Foreign language teacher **Margaret Sears** said, "I went on this date with this guy and we rode our bikes to Good Harbor Beach. We got there, and he was trying to be chivalrous, I guess and he said 'let's use my bike lock.' So we locked our bikes and went on our date. I didn't

really like him that much to begin with, and at the end of the date, we went to unlock our bikes and he had brought the wrong key... So I was trapped at the beach with him, it was hot, I just wanted to go home, and I couldn't get my bike."



Math teacher **Rick Brown** said, "I got food poisoning after eating mussels and I had to miss three days of school! The moral of the story is probably not to go out to eat on Valentine's Day!"

Health Matters

Apps that will help get one in terrific shape

By Sarah Williams
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

In order to stay fit and healthy, one should focus on eating well and getting exercise.

In recent years, there has been a rise in having an app for everything, including fitness; these are some apps that will help one's health.

Pump Up

The app, Pump Up is great place to start for motivation. The app creates a community of people to encourage one on health routines and goals.

The user can keep a profile up to date with pictures and small entries much like an Instagram for working out and get feedback on the workout.

Tracking one's workout schedule can also help to motivate because it creates a routine.

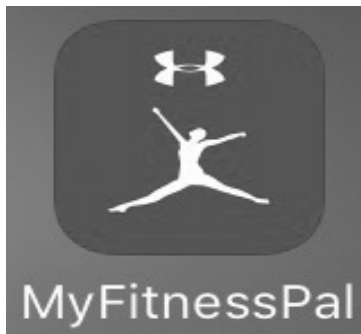
Runtastic

Runtastic is able to tell how long one ran, average speeds, distances, and one's previous runs' information.

My Fitness Pal

Another logging app is My Fitness Pal, which helps track calories and ones workouts to allow them to stay on top of dietary plans.

A great convenience of all these apps is the variety of exercises one can find. Boredom in the same routine is never to be



Workout apps are making getting fit more accessible.

an issue for the healthy minded person again.

Sworkit

Sworkit is a well-designed app that gives the user the ability to

choose length and intensity of their workout and the user does not even need to be a gym member because there is no required equipment.

Along with the main app, there are multiple side apps that focus on certain areas of the body such as glutes, abs, chest, and arms.

7 MWC

7 MWC is another exercise app that condenses a well-rounded workout into seven minutes for those who have little time and need a quick fix.

By doing quick intervals of jumping jacks, wall sits, push-ups and many more in extreme intensity, the user is able to feel the burn and then be done with the 7 MWC.

Zombies Run

Zombies, Run is a fun running app that incorporates running with a zombie apocalypse. By simulating a game setting the runner pretends he/she is running away from zombies or to supplies and speeds up or slows down accordingly in order to survive by listening to the app.

When the weather warms up, this app also connects to the GPS and running to certain destinations will get the runner further along in the game.

Students either stress out or relax on their sick days

By Karlie Angelis
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Being absent from school can either be stressful or relaxing, high school students said.

A sick day can cause students anxiety because of notes that they missed and makeup work piling up on them, according to freshman Lena Brzezinski.

"I get really stressed out because I know that I am missing important notes that will be hard for me to learn on my own, and then I have to go find the notes from someone else and do all of the homework when I don't know how to do it," Brzezinski said.

Without a teacher to teach students the information, they feel that it is hard to catch up to their peers. "I get scared because I don't want to

fall behind in the class. Missing one day can really make a difference, especially for your hardest classes," freshman Rebecca Shan said.

Students have a hard time coping, especially when they are sick in bed and dealing with the stress at the same time, according to junior Phoebe Savje.



KARLIE ANGELIS PHOTO

Taking a sick day can cause stress in a time of rest for students.

Teachers such as Debra Isensee and Lauren DuBois enforce the rule that if absent, it is the student's responsibility to get the homework or get the notes. Most students don't mind this rule since they feel productive when they are home sick, according to Savje.

"For me to cope with everything, I just try and text people when they are still in class for all of the notes and the homework so I can get my homework done instead of just sitting home doing nothing and watching Netflix," Savje said.

Some students believe that the pressure that teachers put

on students is too harsh and the source of the stress. According to Shan, she has to get the homework from her friends and do it that night when she doesn't know the material. "If teachers would stop putting pressure on all of their students [to finish their makeup work], then maybe staying home from school would not be that bad," Shan said.

Math teacher Richard Brown attempts to alleviate some of his students' stress with his makeup work policy. If a student is absent, then he has one day to make up the missed work, learn the new material, and ask him questions.

Other students consider a sick day to be stress-free. "I like to enjoy my sick days. It gives me a day to relax and catch up on past work that I might have missed," senior Chris Milne said.



AVERY SHAW PHOTO

Digital instruction specialist Dalcione Vollink helps middle school special education teacher Melissa Ulrich. Teachers and students can approach Vollink with technology problems and questions.

'Appy Hour' offers opportunity to answer technology questions

By Avery Shaw
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

To give faculty an opportunity to have a casual but informative conversation answering any technology-related questions that they had, Dalcione Vollink, digital instruction specialist, hosted the first "Appy Hour" in November Vollink said.

"Appy Hour" takes place in the back of the library during lunch time, Vollink said.

"It lasts through all three lunches. I put out some snacks and we sit around the old Lucidomatic in the back of the library, which becomes the "bar" for our "Appy Hour," she said.

"Back at my previous school, the teachers used to go out after work for happy hour. And being the technician the lady, my coworkers would often bring up questions about the technology in their classrooms. This inspired me to try and recreate that casual atmosphere

where people feel comfortable asking questions," she said.

Vollink said she is making it a monthly event

because it offers valuable insight and solutions for

technology-related questions that the staff needs.

"We casually talk about their questions. Depending on what they have for questions, I'll produce documents, or I will sit and talk with them after and continue the conversation. It's just a great way for me learn what faculty has the most questions about and how to address that," she said.

According to science teacher Erica Everett, Vollink put more effort into the event than expected.

"When she advertised the "Appy Hour," I thought she might have maybe a little plate of cookies to share or something. Instead, she had this huge buffet that could have fed every teacher

in the school! I couldn't believe that she had gone through so much work and expense to provide a little treat," Everett said.

While being an instructive and educational event, "Appy Hour" maintained a social and relaxed atmosphere, Vollink said.

"At "Appy Hour," we talk like how you would talk to friends going out. Except we would just talk about things that are technology-related," she said.

Vollink answered questions about different programs and websites, according to Everett.

"I asked a lot of questions on Google classroom. Other people were asking about different instructional technologies to use or different softwares that help organize our materials and our time. She has ideas for everything under the sun," Everett said.

Everett said that the social aspect of the "Appy Hour" has

benefits. "It was helpful to see the types of questions other teachers were asking. When other people ask their questions, it helps me think of other things I want to ask. Overall, it was worth its weight in gold,"

Everett said.

Vollink approachable attitude makes it easy for staff to ask her questions, according to Principal Patricia Puglisi.

"She just has a great personality that is very non-threatening and non-judgmental. So if someone asks a basic question, she never shows any signs of judgment. She just goes ahead in teaching them how to do it," she said.

Puglisi said the event was well received and will bring more awareness of Vollink role to the rest of the school.

"The feedback I heard from teachers was really good. It gave an opportunity for teachers to interface with her," she said.

'We casually talk about their questions. I'll produce documents, or I will sit and talk with them after and continue the conversation.'

-DALCIONE VOLLINK



Futuristic technology to soon enter the market for consumers

By Sarah Williams
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

It seems that all of a sudden, there is a plethora of new inventions that will come to fruition in the next 30 years.

The Arca Board is one of those inventions. The Arca Board is a hover board that is able to fly across any terrain, like water, snow, or mud. This invention will give humans the ability to fly by using their phone as the control or simply one's body like the popular Hover Board 360 seen under many Christmas trees this year.

For right now, however, the Arca Board costs \$19,900, so as prices go down, the mass availability of them will most likely increase.

These next two products are not in circulation as of yet, but in the next few decades, advances in technology may allow people to begin purchasing them:

The Triton is a futuristic scuba diving gear that allows people to swim underwater and breathe by putting a small mouthpiece in.

By mimicking fish gills, the Triton will supposedly compress the oxygen out of the water around the swimmer and him/her to breathe without all of the oxygen tanks and typical scuba gear.



ARCABOARD.COM

Futuristic technology like the Arca Board, Triton, and human-to-robot brain transplants are becoming available on the market.

The Triton has been said to be based off of the James Bond movies' Thunderbolt Rebreather, which Bond uses to escape sharks in one scene of "Never Say Never Again."

The main focus the company has right now on creating the Triton is to be able to make the compressor small enough to fit into the desired mouth piece.

The basic idea of this last invention is that it will give people the ability to live forever:

By doing a brain transplant out of a living human, scientists have

been working to transfer living brains into robots so that a person would hypothetically never die.

This transplant would be performed just before the person's death. The research group in University of Southern California already has a donated brain from a woman who was going to die from pancreatic cancer within that week. Her brain will be frozen until it is ready to be used in the prosthesis.

For today, however, research is only being done on rats and many questions are still unanswered. But the fact that scientists are predicting they may have the first prototype by 2050 says a lot about where human life is headed.

The Arca Board is a hover board that is able to fly across any terrain, like water, snow, or mud.

Meatless Mondays provide healthier lunches

By Juliette Kelley
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Meatless Mondays have been implemented at the school to encourage students to eat healthier and help save the environment, according to senior and Green Team Scholar Paige Lafferty and school nutrition director Sheila Parisien

Lafferty and Parisien worked together to launch this new initiative.

"It's my job to write the menu and check to make sure there's nutritional," Parisien said.

According to Parisien, there was some objection to the new program, such as posters being ripped down. Because of the resistance, she and Lafferty decided to run a slightly altered program for a month.

"We decided that we weren't going to do complete Meatless Mondays. We would have a meatless option at each station and see how it went," Parisien said.

Students are intrigued. "I think it's an interesting idea," sophomore Randall Doane said.

Cyndi Aldrich, school nurse, is also enthusiastic about the initiative. "I think it's a good idea...It's still a well-balanced meal. It's just bringing an awareness," she said.

Sophomore Garrett Lamothe supports Meatless Mondays as well. "There should be meatless options every day," he said.



JULIETTE KELLEY PHOTO

Green Team Scholars and school nutrition director Sheila Parisien create nutritious lunch options with Meatless Mondays.

In fact, there actually are meatless options available in the cafeteria for lunch every day, such as pasta without meat sauce or cheese pizza. However, many students, such as Lamothe, are unaware of these options. Meatless Mondays are bringing attention to the fact that the school does have vegetarian options and that cutting back on meat can be very healthy, according to Parisien.

In fact, meatless meals may have even more nutritional value than other meals that consist solely of meat, Parisien said.

"Fruit and vegetables are going to give you most of your good nutrition," she said. "It doesn't mean meat is bad; it's

not, but no matter what studies you look at, you'll see that we should be eating more fruits and vegetables than we are meat."

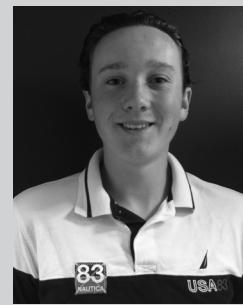
Lafferty, a vegan herself, was inspired to start this program to help the environment.

According to her, cows are a very big contributor to greenhouse gas production because of their manure. "The emissions from [cows] are worse than all transportation combined...it clearly is a huge problem that no one really knows about," Lafferty said.

She and Parisien believe that Meatless Mondays can help to cultivate a healthy diet and a healthy environment for students and faculty.

STUDENT PROFILE

Emmett Strack



By Avery Shaw
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

If you were an animal, what would you be and why?

Probably an eagle because of their ability to fly and because they are like top dog.

If you could go anywhere in the world right now where would it be?

Florence, Italy

Describe your perfect date.

First, we would take the train into Boston and get lunch somewhere. Then we would go to the MFA, get dinner, and finish with a concert at Paradise Rock Club.

What is the best advice you've ever received?

Don't be cliché.

What's your favorite thing about high school?

Figuring out who you are.

If you had to get a tattoo, what would it be?

Either the number 8 somewhere really small or maybe my brother's name on my arm.

How would you spend \$1 million?

First I would put away what I need for college and my brother's college, and then I would start a business, owning my own music production company. With what I have left over, I would buy a Maserati and ticket to go watch Chelsea, my favorite soccer team, play.

Who would play you in the movie version of your life?

Leonardo DiCaprio.

If you could trade places with anyone for a day, who would it be?

Donald Glover.

If you could have any superpower, what would it be?

To read people's minds.

Which decade is your favorite and why?

1990s because of all the great music.

What is your biggest pet peeve?

When I'm in car and don't have control of the aux cord.

Promising start for swimming and diving team continues

Important win against league rivals Hamilton-Wenham helps propel the team forward

By Maura McCormick
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After beating Hamilton-Wenham for the first time in 15

years, the swimming and diving team is looking to have one of the most successful seasons in the team's history, according to senior captain James Phelan.

Last year the team had its first winning record in 18 years, according to coach Shannon Alger, and they have

continued that run this year with a record of 4-1.

Alger attributes the team's

success to their ability to consistently have scorers in the top five.

"We have a lot of superstars on our team, but we also have

other swimmers that round out the depth and really make the team what it is," she said.

Alger said the Hamilton-Wenham meet was close right up until the end.

"We were losing for a good part of the meet, but we ended up winning. Our 3rd, 4th, and 5th places really added up to help us win," she said.

'We have a lot of superstars on our team, but we also have other swimmers that round out the depth and really make the team what it is.'

-SHANNON ALGER



Senior Erin Carlson



Junior Amber Shaw



Senior James Phelan



MAURA MCCORMICK PHOTO

Junior Becka Hille swims against Hamilton-Wenham.

said athletes' abilities to swim multiple events helps the team win.

"I think a big factor in our success is how versatile each swimmer is. Everyone is willing to swim any event, so that really helps us to have the best lineup possible no matter who we are racing," she said.

Sophomore Coleman Komishane, senior James Phelan, 8th-grader Maddie Carvalho,

and freshman Elizabeth Athenus have also qualified for sectionals individually; two relay teams have also qualified for the sectional competition later this year.

Alger said swim team is a unique sport in that athletes can have individual achievements, such as qualifying for sectionals or performing well at States, along with the achievements of the entire team.

Boys' basketball hopes to find more success in Baker Division

By Charlotte Freed
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Bryan Shields, coach of the boys' varsity basketball team, said he still hopes that the team

can make it to the state tournament this year, despite their 3-13 losing record.

Senior captains George Lantz and Alex Beckmann both said the team has had a tough season so far, but its ultimate goal of reaching the tournament is not yet out of reach.

"My goals have not changed. I would still love to see us make the tournament and go from there, but it has definitely been

a rough season up to this point," Beckmann said.

Lantz also said he still hopes to get to the playoff games and said neither he nor the team has given up on working hard for

the spot they deserve in the tournament.

He said a part of the team's challenge is the youth of many players but that does not stop his teammates from playing with intensity in every game and practice.

Beckmann agreed, saying he is "happy with the underclassmen stepping up and doing their best to help us win."

Shields also said the team's

difficulty with scoring was another unexpected setback, but he is "happy with everyone's effort and the way they are committed to the team."

In addition to games against larger schools such as Pentucket, in which the boys' team lost by five points, the captains and coach said they had a well-played game against Masconomet, winning 70-63.

Shields said Lantz and Beckmann are standout players along with freshman Will Janowicz and have contributed greatly to the success of the team, despite what its record may reveal.

"The youth of the team is definitely a factor, but we have had a lot of growth... we have played our best basketball in the earlier season, probably against Pentucket, and have played some really competitive games," Shields said.

'We have played our best basketball earlier in the season and have played some really competitive games.'

-BRYAN SHIELDS



COURTESY OF KARA HERSEY

Senior Alex Beckmann contests tip off against rival Georgetown.

Christopher scores 1,000 points; girls' basketball aims to make tournament run

By Ethan Andersen
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Still striving for the state tournament, girls' basketball needs four more wins in the next seven games.

The girls have currently have a record of 6-8 and look on track to meeting their goal of qualifying for playoffs, according to coach Lauren DuBois.

"Our goal is always to qualify for the tournament, but now that we have been promoted to Division 3, it's a little bit more of a challenge for us," she said.

Senior captain Sabrina Pallazola said she thinks her team will not have difficulty qualifying for the tournament and set her sights on playing at the Garden.

"I think we will make a



ETHAN ANDERSEN PHOTO

Senior captain Sydney Christopher takes a free throw against Triton. Christopher recently scored 1,000 points for the Hornets.

strong tournament run; we'll definitely be the underdog team, but if we keep improving at the rate we are, I know we will be able to compete with any team in Division 3," she said.

Key wins against rivals Georgetown and Ipswich at the start of the season have helped launch the team into a successful season.

Kara Hersey, a senior

captain, thinks that the team's biggest strength is their ability to score.

"Everyone on the floor is looking to be a scorer, and we know how to focus on defense because the offense will come. We've got an amazingly talented group of girls this year that have stepped it up on all grade levels," she said.

DuBois said the team's ability to quickly transition to offense on the counter is their strength. She also identified some key players so far.

"Our seniors are doing great,

Sydney and Sabrina are scoring a lot while Kara is playing great defense, but Bella Pomeroy, a freshman, has really stepped up as well," DuBois said.

In a league game against Rockport, senior captain Sydney Christopher scored her 1,000th point, joining a

shortlist of past athletes.

Pallazola attributed the team's success to the chemistry that has developed.

"We have improved a great deal since the season has begun and we have finally started to gel and work together as a whole," she said.

'We have improved a great deal since the season has begun. We started to work together as a whole.'

-SABRINA PALLAZOLA

Track team ends season strong in all events

Coaches, captains cite potential of young team, look forward to next year

By Will Heslop
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Both the boys' and girls' track teams finished their regular seasons strong with records just shy of the .500 mark, and athletes begin to shift their focus to individual state meets in the coming weeks.

According to senior captain Charlie Davis, the boys' team finished 3-4, which places them third in the Cape Ann League small, also known as the Baker Division. While the team was unsuccessful in repeating as champions of the Baker Division, head coach Mark Dawson felt that the season was "much more successful than [their] record indicates."

In addition, girls senior captain Charlotte Freed said the girls finished 3-5. This is an improvement over last year, as the girls team only had one win in their nine meets. Dawson reiterates that there were a "number of strong individual performances,"

and that athletes have a lot to be proud of.

Junior Evelyn Lantz was among those happy about the team's improvement. "It was a season of ups and downs, but we are happy with how we finished the season," she said.

This season was primarily focused on building up youth. First year shot-put coach John Mullady was especially encouraged by the new athletes in the program. "We have a very young team, and there is a lot of potential to improve if the athletes stick with it," Mullady said.

Given the smaller size of the team compared to some of the offerings from bigger schools in the area, it can definitely be a challenge to stick with some of the larger programs, Dawson said.

Despite the overall numbers being down, Davis was encouraged by the team's ability to field a "strong core of runners that were successful in achieving



CHARLIE DAVIS PHOTO

Junior Maura McCormick and sophomore Holly Fossa compete in the two-mile race. Coaches Mark Dawson and John Mullady said that in addition to strong individual performances, the team has a lot of potential because most of its members are underclassmen. They are looking forward to next year.

individual accomplishments and qualifications for the divisional meet."

Dawson is also quite satisfied with the strong group of runners this year. "I am very pleased with

the potent core that we have been able to develop, but it would be nice to see some more depth in the team next year," he said.

The next step for runners is the divisional and All-State

meets, which take place on Feb. 13 and Feb. 20, respectively. Both Dawson and Davis hope to achieve success at these meets and end the season on a high note.

Ski team looks to States, hopes to have several qualifiers

Despite lack of adequate snow, team reports improvement

By James Riordan
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Due to the lack snow so far this winter, the boys' and girls' ski teams have not had the opportunity to compete in all of their scheduled matchups. Even with the limited sample size, multiple members of the team said that a number of competitors will qualify for the state tournament yet again.

Head coach Tim Wonson said he "fully expects to bring a full team of girl racers to States this year," which must consist of three or more skiers. Those expectations have proven true to



COURTESY OF ALEX HASE

Sophomore Tucker Hase competes at Ski Bradford. Despite a relatively warm winter that has reduced the amount of time the team gets to spend skiing, head coach Tim Wonson said that he expects the team to have several members who qualify for States.

this point, as sophomore captain Emily Clark and freshmen Claire O'Brien, Jillian Bowen, and Drew Charlton are already near-

ing qualification.

Clark believes in the team and said, "I am really excited about how well the girls' team is do-

ing this year. I cannot wait to see what the rest of the season brings."

Wonson also said the boys' team has a few racers with the potential to qualify, and it is just a matter of executing during the rest of the season.

Senior captain Brad Graves estimates that the boys' team will have at least two skiers in the state tournament.

Both junior Wolf Hahn and freshman Max Hahn are on track to make the tournament, and if a third skier qualifies for the boys, they could have a full team too.

The girls' season will actually

be able to end at the previously scheduled time as none of their matches have been postponed yet, while the boys' team has already had to postpone one of

their matches and will end later than usual.

"There has not been much snow yet at Bradford, but we are making the most of what we have. We are still having fun and still skiing fast," Graves said about the unfortunate weather.

The season is less than halfway over for both teams, and if they continue on their current path, they will most likely make multiple appearances in the state tournament according to their respective leaders.

'There has not been much snow yet at Bradford, but we are making the most of what we have. We are still having fun and skiing fast.'

-BRAD GRAVES

Boys' hockey attempts to overcome injuries, stay competitive



COURTESY OF DANIEL ROLLINS

Senior Anthony Lange was an impact player at the beginning of the season, but now he, like several other players, is sidelined with an injury.

By Connor Senay
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With impact players Christian Fabri from Ipswich and Anthony Lange from Manchester out for the hockey season, coach Patrick McIntosh says the dynamic of the team has changed drastically, creating a tough adjustment to be made.

"At 1-8-1, I believe that the boys aren't playing up to their own standards, and I'm sure they would agree. Disregarding the record, the team is very young, played competitively, and been in every game as a solid unit," he said.

Senior captain Lange said he's proud of the team but still feels like there is much room for

improvement.

"The goalie has been...performing extremely well. As far as improvements, I think we need to tune up basic skills like passing and shooting," Lange said.

Ipswich senior captain Kyle Rollins said the team's record is definitely not reflective of their playing abilities.

"Even though our record makes us look like a losing team, I think we can definitely compete with any of our opponents. Our biggest strength is that we're at the same level as upper level teams in our division," Rollins said.

Rollins added that he is most proud of the team's 2-2 tie away against Shawsheen because the boys had previously lost 5-0,

and he believes this showed their potential. While confident in the team's ability, he noted that there are certain areas in need of strengthening to become even better as a team.

Rockport junior captain Jameson Kamm said that despite the team battling many injuries, the whole squad is improving and making progress.

"One of our biggest strengths is that we are a young team who will be with each other for a while; however, we could improve our play by limiting our penalties and by drawing more penalties," he said.

Like Rollins, Kamm said the game against Shawsheen was critical in proving their competitiveness to the league and added

that he is looking forward to the game against Gloucester.

The team lost to Gloucester 6-0, but according to Lange, the team fought a hard battle regardless of score.

McIntosh believes that the boys can close out the season with increased success and come together as a unit, especially looking forward to the rest of the season and beyond.

"Losing two key players, our young impact player Jackson Rice is growing and constantly improving as a player. With his growth and work with the rest of the team, more wins are attainable, come the 2016-17 season... I believe the team will have a strong, cooperative bond when we're older," he said.

A&J King provides freshly made baked goods, uses local ingredients

By Maura McCormick
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

A&J King Artisan Bakery in Salem is always bustling with customers, and for good reason. Their pastries, breads, and desserts never disappoint.

The bakery has a quaint, casual atmosphere. The room is small, the walls are lined with artwork, and soft indie music plays in the background.

The menu offers a variety of croissants including plain (\$2.25), pain au chocolat (\$2.35), and almond (2.50). They are soft on the inside and crisp and flakey on the outside.

Other options for breakfast pastries include scones (\$2.50), and muffins (\$2.65). The blueberry muffin tastes fresh and not too sweet.

The best options on the menu are definitely the breads. The baguette (\$3) is light and fluffy.

On certain days of the week, the bakery offers different breads. For example, on

Saturdays they offer an oatmeal cinnamon raisin loaf (\$4.35).

For dessert, the bakery has delicious options such as chocolate chunk cookies (\$2), brownies (\$2.30) and almond biscotti (\$1).

To keep ingredients local, some menu options change seasonally. For example, strawberry pastries are only available through the summer and early fall.

A&J King is open from 7a.m. to 6p.m. on Monday through Friday and 7a.m. to 4p.m. on the weekend. Baked goods run out quickly though, so it is best to arrive early.

To guarantee that a certain baked good will be available, the bakery does allow people to make orders two or more days in advance. The phone number is (978)-744-4881.

The bakery offers a special menu for those who order ahead for the holidays. One holiday specialty is the pear ginger pound cake (\$25).



MAURA MCCORMICK PHOTO

A&J King, a bakery in Salem, offers a homey, welcoming atmosphere as well as freshly baked breads and pastries. It makes an effort to use local ingredients to ensure that the food is fresh.

A&J King has won many awards for its exceptional bakery, including the Best Bakery North for the Best of Boston Awards in 2012 and 2009 as well as the

Best of the North Shore award every year from 2008 to 2009.

It was even named one of the best 50 bakeries in America by the Daily Meal in 2013.

Critics and customers alike are absolutely raving about this fantastic new bakery, and rightfully so; it is definitely worth a visit.

New Kanye West single 'Facts' comes up short, disappoints listeners

By James Riordan
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Kanye West released his new single, "Facts," on New Year's Eve, and many of his loyal fans rushed onto SoundCloud to listen to it immediately. Even his most faithful supporters, however, were thoroughly disappointed.

The song begins with a promising sampling of "Dirt and Grime" by Father's Children for the first 25 seconds. Kanye is known for seamlessly incorporating older songs into his modernized works, but it did not work out this time around.

He transitions into the main verse by simply stuttering the sampled content and moving directly into the central beat, and it does not flow well by any means. Another trademark aspect of most of Yeezy's songs is the spectacularly produced background beat, but this song sorely



COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG

"Facts," Kanye West's new single, leaves his fans disappointed with senseless lyrics and a generically-produced backing track.

lacks one.

The beat consists of a mainstream drum machine loop and an atonal synthesizer effect, both

of which lack his usual inspiring, catchy feel.

To make matters worse, the individual bars certainly

are not anything special either. He received criticism for basing the lyrics mainly around dissing Nike and while that theme has the potential to work, it led to mostly boring lyrics in the end.

Although no rapper can be expected to stay directly on topic for an entire song, the lyrics seem to often stray far from the theme for one bar just to return to the original topic directly afterwards. For example, he randomly mentions Bill Cosby and Steve Harvey in the middle of the song just because they have been in the headlines lately.

For all of these reasons, almost everyone, famous or not, responded negatively to the song in the hours following its release. Michael Jordan's son, Marcus Jordan, tweeted a day later, "Yeezy

just jumped over @Jumpman23??' LOL I needed a good laugh to start my #2016."

Kanye has redeemed himself, however, with "Real Friends," a new track released on Jan. 8, and "No More Parties in LA," which was released on Jan. 18 and features fellow

Almost everyone, famous or not, responded negatively to the song in the hours following its release.

rapper Kendrick Lamar. Both new songs received much more positive reactions from fans and critics alike.

Kanye is scheduled to release his new album called "Swish" on Feb. 11, and "Facts" is one song that could possibly make it onto the album. Considering the fanatics' reactions, though, it should probably be left off of Kanye's long-awaited upcoming LP.

De Niro, Hathaway give heartwarming performances in film 'The Intern'

By Lydia Parker
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Combining light-hearted humor with insightful messages about life and how to get the most out of it, "The Intern" is an uplifting, family friendly film that every age group can enjoy.

Directed by Nancy Meyers, known for her films, "The Parent Trap," "Something's Gotta Give," and "Private Benjamin," "The Intern" portrays Robert De Niro as Ben Whitaker, a wise and seasoned widower who seizes a second chance to feel a sense of purpose and accomplishment as a comically old intern at a start-up online clothing company, About the Fit.

Whitaker is impossible not

to love as the father figure who finds a way to help each person he meets at the company. Clearly from a generation very different from that of the young employees in the movie, he becomes a mentor and imparts his wisdom on the employees, improving the lives of everyone he encounters.

Comical examples of the generation gap include Whitaker's insistence on wearing a suit to the office every day, while the younger male employees at the company wear casual, sloppy clothing. As the movie pro-

gresses and Whitaker's influence grows, the younger generation of men at the office begin to emulate Whitaker's style.

Not only does the younger generation take Whitaker's advice to dress to impress, he also imparts wisdom regarding love, family, and being a responsible adult.

Anne Hathaway convincingly plays the role of Jules Ostin, the entrepreneur and owner of About the Fit. Ostin is a highly motivated and eternally busy working mother and wife, who rarely has time to devote to her child

or marriage. When Whitaker becomes her personal intern, Ostin gains perspective, confidence, and greater happiness thanks to his wisdom and positive influence.

The film has plot twists that help provide conflict and self-realization as well as unusually good chemistry between the two lead characters. Cast additions like Adam DeVine, known for his roles in "Workaholics," and "Pitch Perfect" add great comedic relief when the plot threatens to become too sappy.

"The Intern" is not an Academy Award worthy film by any means, it is a well-written, fantastically cast, and uplifting film with a great message. "The Intern" was rated PG-13, though there are few scenes inappropriate for children.

[The film] is... well-written, fantastically cast, and uplifting... with a great message.



THEINTERNMOVIE.COM

"The Intern," a new film starring Anne Hathaway and Robert De Niro, offers both laughs and a feel-good message.

Gulu Gulu Café adds quirky atmosphere to downtown Salem

Bohemian restaurant attracts customers with array of menu options

By Karlie Angelis
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Gulu Gulu Café is a trendy bohemian restaurant and pub right in the heart of Salem with eclectic food choices and weekly live music.

The coffeehouse has a cozy feel with comfy sofas and Christmas lights lining the large windows. Creative artwork with everything from wide-eyed cartoon animals to scenic portraits of the city covers the light blue walls.

The bathrooms are no exception, either. Colorful decorations of robots and strange creatures are painted on the walls to create an eccentric atmosphere.

Gulu's menu offers a global

variety of entrees and appetizers, such as a Curried Spartichoke Dip (\$8.75) or Roast Beef and Boursin Wrap (\$11), all at an affordable price. The menu is vegan and gluten-free friendly, allowing all of its customers to

enjoy their favorite cuisine.

Customers with a sweet tooth can also order mouth-watering crepes to either share or hoard for themselves.

The variety of crepes ranges from Nutella, bananas, and walnuts (\$10) to honey and berries (\$8.75). There are even savory crepes with meat available (\$11).

The servers are friendly and quirky, fitting perfectly into the café's atmosphere. Often they will be relaxing between shifts

The coffeehouse has a cozy feel with comfy sofas and... lights lining the windows.



KARLIE ANGELIS PHOTO

The Gulu Gulu Café, a Bohemian restaurant and pub in the heart of downtown Salem, gives customers a variety of food choices and offers a unique and quirky atmosphere until 1 a.m. nightly.

sitting back sipping a cup of Gulu's locally brewed coffee (\$2) or hot tea (\$3.75).

Although service is not very quick, there is plenty to keep customers busy in the meantime.

People waiting for their food can play board games, bring

their laptop and do work, or even listen to live music.

Every Wednesday night is open mic night, and during the rest of the weeknights, musicians play a show for their Gulu audience.

Customers can even bring

their dogs inside and relax with a cup of hot chocolate after taking their pups for a walk on a cold winter day.

Open until 1 a.m. every night, the café attracts many local night owls due to its wide variety of beer, wine, and spirits.

'Spotlight' brings strong cast, direction for one of year's best films

By Oscar Heanue
INDEPENDENT EDITOR



SPOTLIGHTTHEFILM.COM

Amidst a wide array of highly lauded, acclaimed films being rolled out for awards season, 'Spotlight' has made a name for itself by boasting a strong cast and a powerful, emotional topic.

Winter is film season. With the Oscars fast approaching and prestige pictures being rolled out in droves, it seems movies are on everyone's minds. This year, however, one film captured the attention of moviegoers like no other.

"Spotlight," writer/director Tom McCarthy's account of the Boston Globe's groundbreaking coverage of the molestation scandal within the Catholic Church, turned heads not only due to its sensitive subject matter. The tastefulness and tact with which McCarthy and the star-studded cast of the film handle the tricky topic has made the film a favorite across audi-

ences.

The film begins and focuses on the Globe's undercover investigation team, Spotlight. Over the first half hour of the film, McCarthy lays out what seems like a typical, tired underdog story: a new editor comes to town, the Globe is making cuts, and higher-ups begin to question the necessity of the Spotlight team.

However, the film evolves into something more as it begins to address the scandal surrounding the Catholic Church. Like the Globe's original coverage, McCarthy seeks to capture the human, emotional element of the story.

Scenes centered on victims and priests who served as sources for the Globe prove especially

powerful, detailing explicit elements of the molestations and how they were perpetrated.

Strong performances across the board allow the film to hold its emotional depth and gravity. Both Michael Keaton and Mark Ruffalo shine as members of the spotlight team, while Michael Cyril Creighton delivers a heartwrenching performance in a smaller role as a victim who shares his experiences with the Globe.

McCarthy's direction also adds to the overall weight of the film, as beautiful panorama shots of the Boston skyline incorporate ominous, overpowering images of religious buildings and symbols, perfectly representing the stranglehold of the Boston Archdiocese on the city.

Overall, McCarthy delivers a powerful, ominous picture. "Spotlight" is one of the year's most beautiful and tactful films.

Like the Globe's original coverage, McCarthy seeks to capture the human element of the story.

'In Colour' experiments with unique samples, unusual instrumentation

By Avery Shaw
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

London-based music producer Jamie xx released an impressive accumulation of five years of work in the dance album "In Colour," receiving high critical acclaim and a nomination for the best Dance/Electronic Album for the 2016 Grammy Awards.

The album is rich with unique and diverse sounds. Because of the depth of each song, each track grows richer each time it is listened to.

"In Colour"'s album cover reflects the simplistic yet artistic sound of the album with an image of an aesthetically pleasing color wheel and slanted white rectangle placed in a corner as

contrast.

Jamie xx plays with volumes and tones of instruments, experiments with vocal samples borrowed from British media sources, and fluctuates the clarity of sounds on each one of his tracks.

While still maintaining his style, each song is distinctly different from one another.

"Gosh," the first track on the album, maintains an omnipresent electronic clap while vocal audio clips and psychedelic melodies emerge in and regress out of the song.

The mesmerizing fluidity of tones and sounds in the track creates an out-of-this-world experience, which the music video visualizes by presenting video

clips of the planet Mars.

Furthermore, the music video of the track "Sleep Sound" displays the principles that Jamie xx's music production respects. Featuring 13 members of the Manchester Deaf Centre, the video explores how "music can be created by only having silence and creating sound with the use of imagination," which articulates the experimentation of silence and noise seen in his album.

Using a sample of The Persuasions' 1971 song "Good Times," rapper Young Thug and musician Popcaan differentiate this track from the rest of the album. With very little vocals in the rest of the album, this track brings life with Young Thugs en-



MRPK3/FLICKR.COM

Alternative musician and producer Jamie xx delivered one of the most widely acclaimed projects of 2015 with his album 'In Colour.'

ergetic and confident verses such as his first one: "I don't waste time, I don't waste time/

I don't have patience, baby/... We gon' ball, Walter Payton."

The five years of effort put into this album is clearly seen in the complexity of each track. The artfulness of this album was well worth the wait.

'The Revenant' tops 'Hateful Eight' in battle of wintry westerns

Director Quentin Tarantino's ambitious scenic shots in 'Hateful Eight' fail to surpass compelling performances, clipping pace of 'The Revenant'

By Zack Even
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

For the past few weeks, two blood-crazed, revenge-fueled, star-studded westerns have been competing for box office sales: "The Revenant" and "The Hateful Eight."

Already, "The Revenant" has grossed more than twice as much as "Hateful Eight," a result of Oscar buzz and overall superior quality.

In "The Revenant," Leonardo DiCaprio stars as the real-life frontiersman Hugh Glass who was left for dead by his companions following a vicious grizzly bear attack. Glass miraculously survives and attempts a 200-mile trek to retaliate against his disloyal partners.

The story is sparse, effectively propped up by compelling performances from Tom Hardy as John Fitzgerald, a trapper adamant about leaving Glass behind, and Domhnall Gleeson as Captain Andrew Henry, the leader of their hunting party.

Much has been made of DiCaprio's performance, and rightfully so; even with a limited amount of dialogue, he has no problems conveying Glass's physical and emotional anguish.

However, the film's visuals are its most impressive feature. Director Alejandro Iñárritu ("Birdman") insisted on using only natural light to make the movie, a decision that bloated the budget (\$135 million) but nonetheless paid off.

Cinematographer Emmanuel Lubezki, who's worked on many of the most visually astonishing films of the last decade, including "The Tree of Life," "Gravity," and "Birdman," also deserves a large portion of the credit, creating stunning shots with minimal cuts.

During the opening fight scene, for example, the camera maneuvers in seemingly impossible ways throughout the action as wayward arrows fly past and injured men dart in and out of frame.



THEHATEFULEIGHT.COM



FOXMOVIES.COM

While both films contain memorable performances, Leonardo DiCaprio shines in "The Revenant" by achieving an emotional performance through minimal dialogue.

"Hateful Eight" is also visually ambitious. Director Quentin Tarantino has always refused to shoot digitally, and his tendency toward film goes a step further in this movie, shot in the abandoned 70 mm gauge.

The wide, high-resolution gauge makes scenic shots more expansive and, at least according to Tarantino, close-ups more intimate. The film looks great, but the impact of the 70 mm film is difficult to pick out.

Other than a stirring title sequence and a few astonishing shots of the snowy scape, the film is visually impressive but barely more so than Tarantino's last few.

Even with recognizable faces to Tarantino fans (Samuel L. Jackson, Kurt Russell, Michael Madsen) and a few newcomers to his films (Jennifer Jason Leigh, Walton Goggins), almost all of whom give memorable performances, "Hateful Eight" struggles to match up with the rest of

Tarantino's filmography.

In order to justify its nearly three hour long run-time, the pacing had to be perfect, but unfortunately, the movie drags at multiple points. Even Tarantino's famous dialogue can't save a deliriously slow first act.

Other minor issues, such as a few inconsistencies in the plot, an uninspired twist, and misused narration done by Tarantino himself, plague the film, but, had Tarantino nailed the pacing, "Hateful Eight" may have stood a chance against "The Revenant."

Director Alejandro Iñárritu insisted on using only natural light to make "The Revenant," a decision that paid off.

WEBsurfer

By Connor Senay
INDEPENDENT EDITOR



This Is Sand

This Is Sand is literally just sand as the name suggests, but figuratively, it's an artistic experience that allows the user to create unique waves of sand by a single press-and-hold of the mouse. If the mouse pad prevents your artistic light from shining at its brightest, This Is Sand is also available on the App Store for iOS devices and Google Play for Android devices. One major benefit of using this site over another painting or drawing website is the ability to take a screenshot of each work and save it to a device...or you can share it with friends through Facebook or email if you desperately need that boost of your ego. From a majestic sunset to a blurry yet immensely impressive white Bengal tiger, there is truly no limit to what can be created.

Dear Blank: Please Blank

Dear Blank: Please Blank contains thousands of user-submitted letters following the exact format used in the title of the website. With categories of letters ranging from "How Dare They" to "Hilarious" and even questionable ones filed under "Umm, WTF?!" the site has short blurbs on any subject matter or for any mood. These short letters can dig into the real problems of society such as how J.K. Rowling's books are completely unrealistic because they feature "a ginger kid with two friends." If the site's vast array of content isn't entertaining enough, their tweets about new material are displayed in a sidebar to the right of the homepage; the most recent comments are in a sidebar right above their Twitter and are occasionally more humorous than the letters themselves.

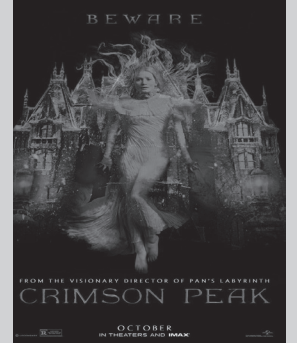
typedrummer

typedrummer is the easiest beat maker that exists, but that is no guarantee that the beats will be absolutely superb. More for experimentation purposes, this site allows the user to type any combination of letters, whether they are real words or not, into the text box, and the software has a distinct sound programmed for each letter. One suggestion is to use one with an even amount of letters (including spaces), like four, eight, or 16 letters in order for the beat to have a loop that is pleasant to the ear. Anyone can be the next great producer; just grab your keyboard and get to type-drumming.

What to...

Watch: Movie "Crimson Peak"

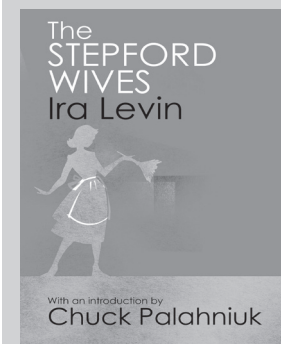
Horror fanatic Guillermo del Toro's opulent 2015 Gothic romance film follows Edith (Mia Wasikowska), an early 20th-century writer who, traumatized by a sudden death in her family, marries an English baronet (Tom Hiddleston) and moves with him and his sister (Jessica Chastain, who delivers a magnificently chilling performance) to Allerdale Hall, a crumbling English manor that sits atop a red clay mine that stains the snow scarlet. The trailer plays up the chilling specters that roam the mansion's eerie halls, but as the deliciously outrageous plot plays out, it is revealed that the living, clad in their lavish Victorian costumes, are the true monsters.



CRIMSONPEAK.COM

Read: Book

"The Stepford Wives" by Ina Levin



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Levin's 1972 thriller is a caustic satire of suburban life that tells the story of Joanna Eberhart, a savvy photographer who moves with her family from the hustle and bustle of New York City to Stepford, an unnervingly saccharine town in the Elysian

suburbs of Connecticut. Over time, Eberhart becomes increasingly concerned by the women of the town, who recall the Eisenhower era with their homemaker lifestyle and all have the same vapid, insipid personalities (or lack thereof). The strange occurrences that go on in Stepford get weirder and weirder as the page-turning plot builds up to a twist that will shock readers with its glorious absurdity.

Listen To: Album

"E-MO-TION" by Carly Rae Jepsen

2015 could have, and should have, been the year of Carly Rae Jepsen. In August, she shed her one-hit-wonder stigma by dropping this glittering mirror ball of '80s synthpop that some critics



COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG

consider the best pop album of the year. Recalling "She's So Unusual"-era Cyndi Lauper and the early years of Madonna, the album's entire duration is pure candy-coated euphoria. The album virtually has no lows, but stand-outs include "Your Type," an impassioned ballad that packs a juggernaut of a chorus, and lead single "I Really Like You," the kind of shimmering confection that can only be described as a pop masterpiece.

By Courtney Fraser, Independent Editor