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Drama club advances to Dramafest semifinals New members join cast, prepare for upcoming competition

By Kendall McCormick
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Despite losing a few key seniors last year, the drama club still managed to give an effective performance at the preliminary rounds of Dramafest, qualifying for semifinals, which will take place March 15 at Norwood High School.

The group interpreted a script from the British sitcom episode "Fawlty Towers: Communication Problems." Though the storyline is very simple, several miscommunications by characters contribute to the overall farcical humorous effect.

According to director Elizabeth Edgerton, she got the idea to use an episode of the television series from the British literature class she teaches. After finding out the scripts were available online, Edgerton, along with the rest of the drama club, began adapting it to fit the requirements of the competition.

This year, several new mem-



KENDALL MCCORMICK PHOTO

The drama club performed their one act play 'Fawlty Towers: Communication Problems' for the high school on Feb. 28 before the preliminary round of competition where they earned a spot at the semifinals. At left, freshman Isabella Schmidt performs alongside junior Steven Ascolillo. Senior Hannah Parker, sophomore Maddie Shaw, and senior Vanessa Kelley act out a scene early in the play.

bers joined the club. Edgerton said her original goal was to make Dramafest a fun experience for these students.

One new member, freshman Isabella Schmidt, said

"[Dramafest] is really fun... the practices can get long, but they're always really enjoyable."

The process of learning the play began with first understanding what they were reading.

"Before we got on stage, we really tried to understand what the jokes were, where they came from, and what each character was like," Edgerton said. The cast and crew practiced

roughly four times a week, every week, beginning in December, to yield the final result.

According to junior Julia Geswell, all the long

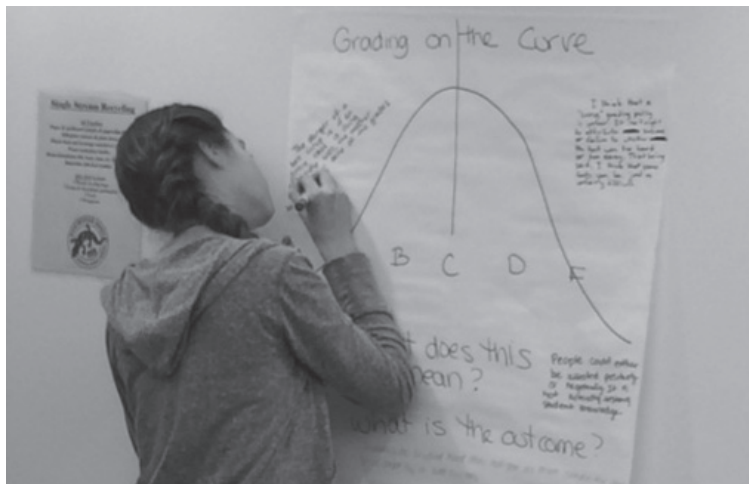
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Students offer input on grading

By Landon Komishane
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With grading at the forefront of issues that the school is addressing, Principal Patricia Puglisi moved to get input from students regarding concerns of grading procedures.

Puglisi formed a committee of students to meet on Feb. 12. Juniors Courtney MacDougall, Chris Noriega, Sam Kane; sophomore Charlie Davis, and freshmen Jillian Furber and Madi Trouble were present to answer Puglisi's questions and give their own opinion on how grading should be conducted.



LANDON KOMISHANE PHOTO

Freshman Jillian Furber writes on a poster about school grading policies during a Feb. 12 meeting with Principal Patricia Puglisi.

Questions included how many valedictorians there should be, what a "0" represents, what

'These answers were very helpful to me, and it's beneficial to get students' input on issues.'

-PATRICIA PUGLISI

should be included in a grade, and what a curve should be. According to Noriega, students had common responses

to these questions. The group agreed that a "0" represents an assignment not done. How-

ever, there was debate on what should be included in a grade.

Furber argued that class participation should not be included in a grade because there are shy kids, and they cannot push themselves to speak up.

Davis countered by saying that these students could find other ways to participate, including going up to talk to the teacher to make sure they know the material.

Puglisi found these responses to be helpful for further action.

"We may bring [these students] back for

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Declining school choice revenue strains budget

By Fiona Davis
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Declining school choice revenue combined with increased enrollment in the district's schools poses challenges to the "carry forward" Fiscal Year 2015 Budget, according to Superintendent Pamela Beaudoin.

"At our high point we had 150 school choice students, and you get reimbursed \$5,000 from the state for each school choice student. We're now down to 60. Our revenue stream is going down," she said.

According to Beaudoin, the student population has increased by 24 percent, or 281 students, in the last six years, with most students entering the district

at the elementary school level.

"Our focus was to transfer some resources to the middle and high school from the bubble classes at the elementary level because we've been trying to follow the enrollment bubble... but we may not be able to do that this year," she said.

According to Beaudoin,

'The past three years we have been able to keep the bill to the town low, but we are at a tipping point.'

-PAMELA BEAUDOIN

these two issues could place more of a strain on the town assessment, an alternative the school district hopes to avoid with this year's budget. In past years, excess school choice money

in reserve accounts has been used to keep assessments low.

"The past three years we've been able to keep the bill to the town low, but we are at a tipping point," she said.

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News Briefs

Girls' basketball continues success in postseason

The girls' basketball team made it to the third round of the state tournament with a record of 13-8 before losing to Winthrop High School. The final score of the game was 25-46. Coach Lauren Dubois said she is proud of the girls and that they are the strongest team she has ever coached.

Boys' basketball performs well in state tournament

With a record of 16-7, the boys' basketball team ended their season with a loss to St. Clement in the third round of the tournament. In the first two rounds, the team defeated Snowden and Georgetown before the loss. "I am extremely proud of the hard work the...team has put in," coach Bryan Shields said.

Swim team does well at championship meet

The swim team placed fourth at the Cape Ann League Championship. Seniors Michael Phelan, Easton Ehlers, and Peter Cottingham, sophomores James Phelan and Nate Rautio, and eighth-graders Coleman Komishane and Annalia Laino all qualified for the State Championships. Coach Shannon Alger was awarded Coach of the Year for the league.

Indoor track team qualifies individuals for All State Meet

The indoor track team finished strong at the Division 5 Indoor Championships and All State Meet. At the Division 5 Meet, junior Olivia Lantz placed 2nd in the mile, qualifying for All States. Senior Fiona Davis placed third in the 2 mile, also qualifying for All States. At All States, Lantz placed third in the mile, while Davis placed 21st in the two mile. Lantz continued on to the New England Championships to place sixth in the mile out of 36 competitors.

Seniors solidify internships for S.C.O.R.E.

By Emily Arntsen
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With S.C.O.R.E., Senior Choice of Research Experience, rapidly approaching on April 9, seniors are preparing to write their outlines and thesis and finalize last-minute details about their internships and research for fourth quarter.

On March 14, seniors should complete and hand in their outlines and thesis to S.C.O.R.E. director and social studies teacher James Walliman.

After last year's S.C.O.R.E. director Daniel Jewett revamped the project guidelines, Walliman said, "The system is set up very well, and the organization of it is tremendous. I haven't changed anything. The overall process is the same as last year."

Seniors are required to choose an internship of interest and organize a schedule with the internship adviser for 30 hours of work a week, minus five hours per AP course they take.

Then seniors must complete a research paper that connects their internship to their research thesis and present their conclusions to their



Seniors Chris Pellegrini and Morgan Fraser have determined what their internships will be for S.C.O.R.E. and are beginning to start preparations for the work they will do during fourth quarter.

S.C.O.R.E. adviser and Walliman. Students are expected to use their internship as one reference for research, but also draw from other sources to support their thesis.

Although S.C.O.R.E. doesn't officially begin until April, senior Chris Pellegrini has already launched his S.C.O.R.E. project, growing hot peppers hydroponically, by purchasing the necessary materials (a solar lamp, PVC pipes, and a pump) and assembling

the hydroponic growing system in his basement under the guidance of chemistry teacher Keith Gray, according to Pellegrini.

Senior Morgan Fraser is working with Andy Gardner from New England Bio Labs in Ipswich.

Her research project consists of "determining properties of Flap Endonuclease (Fen1) which is an important enzyme for DNA replication and lagging strand processing," she said.

There is a vast variety in the types of projects seniors are taking on. Other internships include work in hospitals, restaurants, floral shops, banks, law firms, and publishing company.

"I would like to see some changes in the future, maybe adding site visits by the advisers to check in on students' progress, but the administration just wasn't ready for that this year," Walliman said.

Journalism class wins third runner-up in newspaper competition



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

By Fiona Davis
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

The Independent staff won third runner-up in the news category at the annual Suffolk University Department of Communications and Journalism Greater Boston High School Newspaper Competition, held this year on March 6.

More than 40 schools from across the state participate in the newspaper competition.

Shira Springer, a sports writer for the Boston Globe, was the guest speaker.

Editor-in-chief Kendall McCormick said winning the award was a pleasant surprise due to the fact that many other, larger schools

participate in the competition.

"I was so excited and honored to win this award and have our hard work acknowledged. It is such a fun event to begin with, but to be able to bring home an award to show for it is an awesome feeling," she said.

Sophomore Zack Even, who made his first trip

to the event, was impressed. "I thought the guest speaker was very thought-provoking and winning the award was

the vanilla icing on the delicious, moist chocolatey cake that they served," he said.

Senior Sofia Del Valle said Springer was an eloquent speaker who kept students engaged.

"She interacted well with the audience, and her passion for journalism was

apparent," Del Valle said. Springer, a graduate of Harvard College, began working for the Boston Globe as a beat

writer for the Celtics and recently covered the Sochi Olympics and the 2013 Boston Marathon.

According to sophomore Connor Senay, Springer shared many of her interesting experiences as a journalist.

"It was interesting to hear about all of the hotel deficiencies in Sochi from someone who was actually there. Also, I connected to her story of when she was on lockdown in the press center at the Boston Marathon because I was a volunteer for WBZ News," Senay said.

Adviser Mary Buckley-Harmon said "We often do well in this contest, which is amazing, considering how small our school is. I was very proud."

'I was so excited and honored to win this award and have our hard work acknowledged.'

-KENDALL MCCORMICK



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

The journalism class, which publishes *The Independent*, poses with their award for third runner-up in the news category. At left, editors-in-chief Kendall McCormick and Fiona Davis receive the award from Suffolk University professor Richard Preiss, who runs the competition which consists of 40 schools.

Debate team prepares for national competitions

Several students anticipate challenge, practice with help from coaches

By **Natasha Statz-Geary**
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Nearing the end of regular season competition, the debate team is now celebrating its successes and gearing up for national tournaments.

Overall, the team has had "a solid season so far," with students "steadily improving throughout," according to debate travel coordinator Jennifer Coleman. Coleman elaborates saying that, "The Harvard trip February 15-17 was a great example of this. We broke students in Junior Varsity Public Forum and Junior Varsity Lincoln-Douglas and had two teams on the bubble in Varsity PF."

The team has also seen suc-

cess at qualifying tournaments, with sophomores Charlie Davis and Oscar Heanue qualifying in Public Forum for the National Catholic Forensics League Grand National Tournament which will take place Memorial Day weekend in Chicago.

Additionally, juniors Nick Albertazzi and William Kiley qualified as alternates for Lincoln Douglas debate at the same tournament.

'Although preparing for this tournament is going to take some effort, I'm excited to work with Ms. Coleman.'

-OSCAR HEANUE

These accomplishments are considered all the more exceptional by debaters and teachers alike, considering the obstacles the debate team has been through this year.

"Losing Mr. Jewett was a huge loss to the team, and many weren't sure how

the program would do without him. Having Mrs. Tran out on maternity leave has also been tough, but I think the team is doing remarkably well in light of this," junior Lucas Martz said.

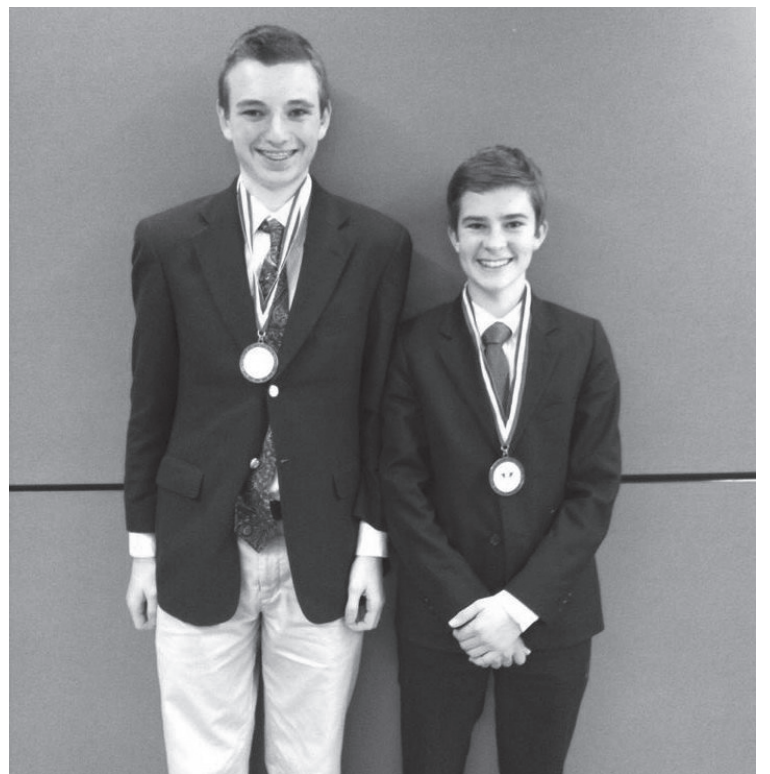
With the regular season winding down, Coleman, Davis and Heanue will begin preparing for the national tournament as soon as the topic comes out next month.

"Preparation for national competition requires a great deal of individual effort since the focus of the class shifts for fourth quarter," she said.

Heanue and Davis look forward to working closely with Coleman in preparation.

They plan on collaborating with other high schools in Massachusetts to prepare by practice debating, brainstorming arguments and sharing helpful evidence.

"Although preparing for this tournament is going to take some effort, I'm excited to work with Ms. Coleman. She has good insight into what the best arguments for a topic are," Heanue said.



COURTESY OF JENNIFER COLEMAN

Sophomore debaters Oscar Heanue and Charlie Davis, above, qualified for the National Catholic Forensics League national tournament during February in the Public Forum debate event.

Guidance department forms advisory committee, improves services

By **Sarah Beckmann**
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With the creation of a new advisory group that consists of students, parents, and college admissions representatives, the guidance department is looking to improve student service.

This guidance advisory includes three student and three parent members, along with admission representatives from both Tufts and Northeastern University. A college admissions testing representative, a clinical counselor from outside the school district and Principal Patricia Puglisi also form part of the board.

Representing the student body are senior Brittany Smith, junior Justin Eichenberger, and sophomore Tyler Quade.

Smith, who has experienced difficulties as any senior applying to college, said that this organization could really help make



SARAH BECKMANN PHOTO

Director of guidance Sherrri Lewis-Sholler, above, works with the new advisory group to create solutions to reoccurring issues.

the college process easier by refining guidance involvement.

According to guidance counselor Karen D'Amour, the purpose of these meetings is to evaluate the guidance de-

partment's techniques of bettering student success leading up to the college search.

Guidance director Sherrri Lewis-Sholler said that, along with better preparing students

for the beginning of their high school careers, creating better programming and making guidance more accessible to both students and parents are also some primary objectives.

"Part of that goes hand-in-hand with some of the course selection that we're doing now where we're encouraging a four-year plan and having students look ahead to find out what they want to do [in the future]," Lewis-Sholler said.

A few more specific areas the group addresses include review-

ing and revising the 9th- and 10th-grade guidance curriculum.

'At our final meeting of the year, we will review all the revisions that we have made, do more adjusting that we need to do, and hopefully have new curriculum posted and ready to go for the fall.'

-SHERRI LEWIS-SHOLLER

Having met only twice this year (the latest meeting on Feb. 25), Lewis-Sholler said the group hopes to meet at least two or three more times before the end of the school year. The next meeting will focus on the 11th- and 12th-grade curriculum.

"We also have worked on the guidance calendar of events," she said. "And at our final meeting of the year, we will review all the revisions that we have made, do more adjusting that we need to do, and hopefully have new curriculum posted and ready to go for the fall."

DECA competes at state tournament, qualifies some to Internationals

By **Isadora Decker-Lucke**
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

DECA states took place March 6-8 at the Marroitt Copley in Boston. Out of 66 students involved in DECA, 38 qualified for States.

At the competition, the team collectively won 81 awards and had 21 students place in the top 10 in their events.

DECA teacher Dean Martino said, "I'm very proud. These are authentic accomplishments that are well beyond the classroom. What students are asked to do can be very challenging...it involves a very wide set of skills to be successful, and many are 21st century skills currently in high demand in postsecondary education and in the business world."

Senior student Alexandra Leventis is a DECA officer who



COURTESY OF TROY CIARAMETARO

Juniors Devon Towle and Troy Ciarametaro qualified for Internationals, which is held in Atlanta during mid/early May. Nine other students qualified.

competed in Apparel and Accessories Marketing and qualified for Internationals, which will be held in Atlanta in May.

In her event, she has 10 minutes of preparation time and 10 minutes of presenting, followed by a five minute period when the judge panel asks questions. Everyone also takes a 100-question test in the cluster of their choice, though Leventis said most Manchester Essex students take the marketing cluster.

During competition, there are two role plays and an exam, each of which counts for a third of the final score. The four highest scores in each section will advance.

To prepare, Leventis "did role plays after school and during school, and did a lot of practice tests," which she felt were good tools for preparation.

Junior Troy Ciarametaro, a

DECA officer who competes in the Sports and Entertainment Team Decision-Making category with junior Devon Towle, qualified for Internationals as well. The team events are similar to the individual events except that they have 30 minutes to prepare instead of 10.

Ciarametaro believes that DECA is a worthwhile extracurricular. "Even though I'm not sure what I want to do yet, [DECA] helps for all careers with decision-making and problem-solving skills because it puts you into real-world situations," he said.

Leventis agreed. "I had two schools that wrote 'Congratulations on thriving at Internationals in DECA last year' on my college letters. It is something colleges are looking at, and you can use it as an achievement with the MCAS scholarship.

STATES RESULTS

DECA Students Who Qualified for Internationals:

- Alexandra Leventis
- Alyssa Reeves
- Alyssa Shepard
- Breanna Arnold
- Courtney Feuerbach
- Kelly Finnerty
- Troy Ciarametaro
- Devon Towle
- James Marshall
- Andy Creighton
- Chris McAuliff

Students begin early preparation for prom in May

By Sofia del Valle
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Junior and senior prom will be held on May 30 at the Black Swan Country Club in Georgetown; currently, there are no reports of a wedding scheduled for that day at Tuck's Point.

Unlike last year, prom will be on a Friday rather than a Saturday. According to Assistant Principal Paul Murphy, students must be in school that day in order to attend. This means students will have less time to prepare for the event.

"Girls have a lot to do to get ready, so we're going to have budget our time," senior Athena Venetsanakos said.

"Because we have school

that day, I plan to start getting ready the day before and get my nails done on Thursday," senior Alexandra Leventis said.

According to senior Alyssa Shepard, because of conflicting schedules, the prom committee has only met once, but senior Kelly Moore said that there was

'Normally I wouldn't have even started thinking about prom, but since girls have already started buying their dresses, I feel like I need to start looking'

-ALEXANDRA VALENTI

a general consensus to make prom more consistent in terms of the decorations and potentially a theme.

Jennifer Coleman, senior class adviser, said that at this point no

theme has been chosen, but that the color scheme will be silver and gold. The food will be served buffet style and will be catered by the country club, she said.

While most students have yet to find dates, the prom dress Facebook group is up and running. Already, more than 20



BLACKSWAN COUNTRY CLUB

The Black Swan Country Club, which is located in Georgetown, will be the venue of this year's prom.

girls have purchased and posted their final decision dresses.

"Normally I wouldn't have even started thinking about prom, but since girls have already started buying their dresses, I feel like I need to start looking," senior Alex Valenti said.

"We have yet to see any drama over who's wearing which dress, and hopefully it will stay that way," senior Sarah Lewiecki said.

"Prom always ends up being a fun night and everyone deserves to look beautiful. If that means wearing the same dress

as someone else, then so be it. You don't see boys fighting over what color tie they get," she said.

Coleman said the ticket price has yet to be determined, but she is confident that they will be less expensive than last year's \$65 tickets, she said.

New graduation requirements affect this year's freshmen and sophomores



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

New graduation requirements will affect this year's freshmen and sophomores. The requirements are in the areas of foreign language, mathematics, and physical education. The classes of 2016 and below will need to conform to these new standards.

By Charlie Davis
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

New graduation requirements have been put into place that will affect the class of 2017 and the class of 2016.

The new requirements will be in three main areas: foreign language, math, and physical education. Under the new requirements, students must take two years of the same foreign language, four total years of math, and four years of gym class, Principal Patricia Puglisi said.

Puglisi said the changes have been made in order to remain in line with the MASS core program of study. The gym class requirement, however, was as a result of MERHS being cited by the state when it failed to meet state standards.

The extra two years the requirements add can be eliminated during junior and senior year if a student participates in

a sport or if he or she participates in another exercise centered extra-curricular like a dance class or the school weight lifting program, Puglisi said.

Sophomore Lydia Parker believes that this exemption will prove beneficial for some, but that it will prove unfair for others.

"The new requirements for graduation will prove to be a problem for students because they're more aimed at students who have time to play sports. Many students are busy with art, drama, or other extra-curricular activities," Parker said.

Although the new requirements are required by the state, some students still feel that they are unfair and could potentially

limit their ability to choose courses.

Freshman Antonio Gillespie says he feels that the new requirements will limit students' ability to choose classes.

"The new requirements will make for a tighter schedule with less opportunities junior and senior year," he said.

Although many students may agree with Gillespie, Puglisi says that students will maintain the same type of course load as with the old system, adding that the requirements may augment a student's profile.

"The new requirements will enhance student's academic profile. They will not detract from students' ability to take a rigorous academic program and/or expand their interest through our elective program," she said.

'The new requirements will enhance student's academic profile'

- PATRICIA PUGLISI

CONTINUATIONS DRAMA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE
practices were worth it, as she became much closer to other drama club members.

"I feel as though my friends in drama have turned into my family in drama," she said.

If there was anything they struggled with, it was the British accents, according to senior Vanessa Kelley.

"I know I, for one, can't do an accent very well," she said.

They performed first for the school on Friday, Feb. 28. Although Edgerton thought they had success in that performance, she said they were even more successful March 1 at the preliminary rounds.

"It looked like a really cohesive picture. They totally

upped their game," she said.

While difficulties such as losing stage practice time to other schools come with hosting the event, it ran smoothly, according to Edgerton, largely due to the vast support from the faculty and parents.

Not only did the group succeed as a whole, but individual actors were singled out for achievement in their roles with All-Star Company awards. Senior Hannah Parker, sophomore Alex Buck, and junior Steven Ascolillo were all awarded this accolade.

Now that the club is on to the next round, they will start to focus on the criticism the judges gave them and how to perfect their performance, Edgerton said.

GRADING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE
other meeting which could involve the faculty," she said

during the meeting. "These answers were very helpful to me, and it's beneficial to get students' input on issues."

There was also discussion on the uses of Aspen and whether parents should be informed of their child's progress.

"We discussed the possibility of not sending out report cards, but I think it is very important for report cards to be sent out," MacDougall said. "In a lot of cases, parents aren't checking Aspen, so sending out report cards makes sure the parents actually do see the final grades."

According to Noriega, there were varying opinions on whether effort should be a separate grade, but she said more meetings will allow issues and opinions to be resolved.

BUDGET

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FAST FACTS

- The flat rate fee model would have an increased standard fee of \$575.
- Another model is a proportional fee, where sports like football would cost \$600 and basketball would cost \$400.
- A further possible change could be discounts on consecutive fees for playing multiple sports

Health Matters

Juicing vegetables enhances health benefits

By Tess Hosman
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Using a juicer to create healthy and all natural juices makes living a healthy lifestyle easier. With a juicer it is possible to get nutrients from a large number of vegetables that aren't possible to easily prepare and eat.

Juicers range from \$20 to \$300 in cost according to consumerreports.org. They can be purchased at stores such as Target, Wal-Mart, or Best Buy.

According to mayoclinic.org on Nutrition and Healthy Eating, "Juicing is better for you than is eating whole fruits and vegetables because your body can absorb the nutrients better."

Other organizations advise consumption of whole fruits and vegetables along with the juice as the safest route.

According to pbs.org, "Drinking green juice can still have healing effects when combined with a regular, healthy diet."

"Juicing is a great way to



TESS HOSMAN PHOTO

Juicing helps the body absorb nutrients in fruits and vegetables.

help you reach your recommended servings of fruits and vegetables, but in some cases, your body misses out on several key nutrients," nutrition blogger Perrin Braun said on The Inside Track.

Juicing fruits and vegetables that wouldn't normally be consumed on a daily basis makes it easier to get nutrients. "These nutrients can help protect against cardiovascular disease, cancer, and various inflammatory diseases," Dr. Oz said on doctoroz.com.

Drinking juice can help increase the intake of potassium,

iron, and vitamins A and C, according to Braun.

The sugar content of juice is often higher than that of whole fruits. According to goodfoodeating.com, a whole orange contains 14 grams of sugar while the juice contains 21 grams.

According to nutrition coach Jedha Dening, a whole orange has 163% of vitamin C and 8% of vitamin A. Orange juice has 207% of vitamin C and 10% of vitamin A.

By juicing kale or other leafy greens with a touch of fruit to mask the taste, children are able to drink a tall glass of vitamins.

Senior girls commit to continue playing sports in college

By Rachel Daley
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Many seniors have already applied and been accepted to schools for next year. On top of that, several of them have committed to playing a sport in college. Five girls will be playing for schools ranging from Div. III to Div. I, from Connecticut to upstate New York.

Senior Michelle Fuca will be attending Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. next year to play on the school's Div. III tennis team.

According to Fuca, who has been playing tennis since she could walk and played varsity tennis for five years, she decided to play in college because she wanted to continue the sport but knew she couldn't go pro.

Fuca said she was attracted to the school for several reasons, ranging from the year-round tennis program to the gorgeous scenery of Saratoga Springs.

"I'm ecstatic about wearing Skidmore's green and yellow colors and being able to continue playing the sport I adore. I'm proud to call myself a Thoroughbred," Fuca said.

Senior Brittany Smith, who just hit the 100-point mark on the Marblehead girls' hockey team, will be playing Div. I ice hockey at Sacred Heart University in Connecticut next year.

Smith was also offered a spot on the school's field hockey team, but ice hockey is a year-round commitment.

According to Smith, Sacred Heart was the first school she really loved after visiting and was interested in its exceptional health science department.

"I've been playing hockey

for more than 13 years, and I've had a dream of playing college hockey since I started. I still can't believe it's coming true," Smith said.

Senior Fiona Davis will be running cross country, indoor track, and outdoor track at Div. I Harvard next fall.

Davis has been on the cross country and indoor track teams since seventh grade and has also run on the outdoor co-op track team with Gloucester for three years.

According to Davis, she chose to run track and cross country in college to enjoy the team aspect of running and to be part of the running community.

However, Davis knows that running Div. I is going to be a challenge. "I know going in that I am not going to be the best on the team, but I want to make a commitment to having long-term success and becoming a contributing team member," she said.

Aside from track and cross country, Davis said she was also attracted to Harvard's location, opportunities, and challenging academic program.

"I am really excited to meet the rest of the team and get started on the next step in my athletic career," Davis said.

Senior Taylor Meek will be continuing her lacrosse career at Tufts University next fall. Tufts participates in the Div. III NES-CAC league.

According to Meek, she knew she wanted to play lacrosse at the collegiate level when she joined her club team, Revolution Lacrosse.

Meek, who has played in 32 tournaments in the past four years for Revolution, said she chose to play a sport in college because she wanted the structure

of practices and games to help build an effective college life routine, and Revolution helped her get recruited.

"I also just love the sport so much that I can't imagine not continuing to play in the coming years," Meek said.

Meek has been playing lacrosse since fifth grade and said she feels honored to play for Tuft's lacrosse program, which just hired new head and assistant coaches.

"As a naturally competitive athlete, I am psyched about the exciting potential surrounding the women's lacrosse program, as it aggressively competes in the NES-CAC League," Meek said.

Aside from lacrosse, Meek said she was also attracted to Tuft's size, location, International Relations program, and study abroad opportunities, which she wouldn't have gotten at a Div. I school.

Lastly, senior Lila Hughes will be playing lacrosse at Div. III Saint Lawrence University in New York next year.

Hughes, who has been playing lacrosse since fifth grade and club lacrosse (Synergy) since eighth grade, said she knew she wanted to play lacrosse in college when she played in a summer tournament at Harvard Stadium her sophomore year.

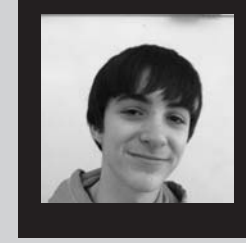
Hughes disregarded Saint Lawrence until her mom, who attended the college herself, and her dad encouraged her to visit.

When she visited, Hughes said she was impressed by the lacrosse coach and the school in general.

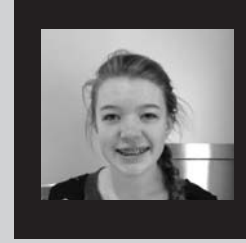
"It had everything I wanted, from awesome school spirit, being a Division III school, and I could play lacrosse there," Hughes said.



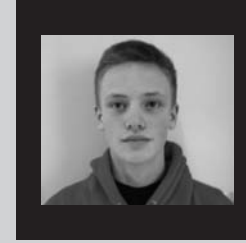
Freshman Evelyn Lantz:
I don't procrastinate like I usually do. I power through homework listening to music and don't slack off.



Freshman Jacob Callahan:
Weekends or sports after school help me get through.



Sophomore Maddy Surette:
I hang out with friends, go to the movies, and hope for warm weather.



Sophomore Quinn Dunbar:
I miraculously get sick a few times during the month.

Student Speak

How do you survive March?

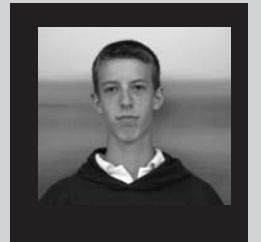
Junior Sam Woodman:

I use this month to recover from my past sports seasons and to get ready for the next.



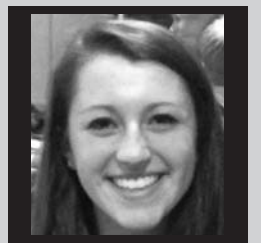
Junior Cam Holley:

I mean it's a battle, but like anything you have to find something you enjoy and use that to keep you alive, whether it is playing a sport, watching March Madness, or getting a good job.



Senior Maya Shnider:

I look forward to the weekends.



Senior Sam Nesbit:

I know that I'm basically done with school with the exception of SCORE after March. I only really have a little bit of April, and then I'm done. Who knows? I might not even survive March.



Ways to prepare for the SAT

By Emily Jaworski
INDEPENDENT STAFF

It is important that students prepare for the Scholastic Aptitude Test because it is known to be a deciding factor when colleges are looking at student applications.

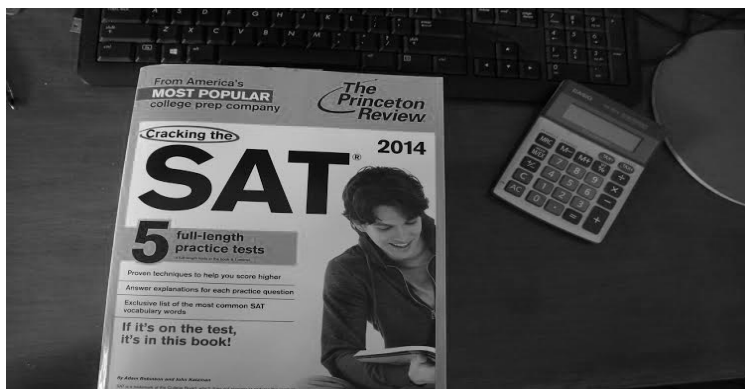
This exam tests students in math, writing, and critical reading. Students also have to write an essay, and test takers have a certain amount of time to complete each section.

The college process starts toward the end of junior year, which is why most students take the SAT in June, but other dates are offered as well.

Some students have already begun to prepare for the SAT that takes place in March.

"I have a SAT book that I do practice questions in, and I'm going to practice online. I usually practice a little on the weekends since it's my first time taking it," said junior Lizzie Ranger, who is taking the test in Beverly in March.

As far as taking the test goes, "Take it as much as you can, the first time is more of a trial run. The second time you usu-



EMILY JAWORSKI PHOTO

A great way to prepare yourself for the SAT's is to buy a practice book filled with helpful test strategies and different practice tests.

ally get a better grade," chemistry teacher Keith Gray said.

Students who have taken the exam feel more familiar with the test's format and know what to expect.

"I have taken the SAT before, and for this upcoming one in March, I like to use the practice tests on the College Board in the blue book mainly for the math section. I know my weakness is math, so I focus on that section a lot," junior Delaney Byrne said.

"I took the SAT last year, but for this year I'm using the SAT practice book, and I'm going to teachers for extra help, specifically math,"

junior Cole O'Brien said.

The school offers classes to prepare for the SAT so that students feel that they have multiple options for studying. Pre-Calculus teacher David Alger and English teacher Daniel Koughan offer an SAT class to help students.

The next SAT prep classes will be held May 10, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.; May 17, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.; May 24, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.; and June 1, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. for the next SAT exam on June 7.

Classes are held in rooms B-308 and B-309 and cost \$500. Application forms are available in guidance.

Green team collaborates with Memorial School, begins installing hydroponic garden towers

By Rachel Daley
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Green Team has added sustainable initiatives to its existing list, including a hydroponics garden and a strengthened collaboration with the Memorial School.

Within the next month, two Green Scholars will be installing a hydroponics garden which will mark the success of their 2013-2014 project for the class.

Juniors Cameron Holley and Justin Eichenberger, who are heading the project, have had the assistance of Green Team director Eric Magers and chemistry teacher Keith Gray throughout the process.

According to Holley, the two boys chose their project in order to create a more effective system for providing produce to the cafeteria.

"A major downside of our current system is that during the winter months the gardens don't grow anything," Holley said. "The hydroponics garden will eliminate this problem

because it can be operated anywhere at any time of the year."

Holley said that the reason for the hydroponics garden's possible year-round usage is because it runs solely on water and minerals and doesn't require soil.



FLICKR.COM

Juniors Cameron Holley and Justin Eichenberger will be constructing a hydroponics garden in the upcoming months.

The first stage of their project, according to Eichenberger, was to raise money to start buying materials. "We just received an \$1,800 grant from Spaulding Education Fund which will allow us to buy all the materials we need for the garden," Eichenberger said.

Holley said they are both buying and building units modeled after the Tower Garden, which is a hydroponic system available in stores.

"Currently, we are buying the materials, and we plan to start building the Tower Garden units in early April," he added.

According to the boys, the new garden, which will be lo-

cated on the third floor hallway, will allow for a more effective way of growing vegetables while also increasing the school's level of sustainability, since it will require less water than the edible schoolyard.

In addition to the success of Holley and Eichenberger, the Green Team has also initiated an environmental collaboration with the Memorial School.

According to Magers, on Wednesdays and Fridays, five Green Team and Green Scholars students walk over to the elementary school to mentor and work with the kindergarten through fifth grade Green Team members.

"The high school representatives help the younger kids recycle and compost, and they answer questions about sustainability," Magers said.

Magers said educating the elementary students is a huge step in making the district a greener community.

STUDENT Maddie McMurry PROFILE



By Charlie Davis
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Favorite movie?

Frozen.

Dream job?

Management consultant.

Favorite celebrity?

Jennifer Lawrence.

Who is your idol?

My mom.

Favorite song?

"Hey Brother" Avicii

Best piece of advice you've ever received?

Don't be afraid.

Biggest pet peeve?

When people are late.

Favorite book?

"The Giver."

Some of your hobbies outside of school?

Track and Soccer.

If you could go out to lunch with any person in history who would it be?

Martin Luther King Junior.

What is something you want the high school to know about you that they don't know already?

Half of my family is dyslexic, so I might be

Favorite superpower?

Flying.

Something weird you know how to do?

Wiggle my ears.

Favorite quote?

"I am not afraid of storms, for I am learning how to sail my ship." -Louisa May Alcott

Dream college and major?

BU, business.

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go?

Paris.

What would your rapper name be?

#Madswag.

New courses and requirements set for next year's curriculum

By Sara Stanton
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Manchester-Essex will have new courses next year along with new or revised requirements to other classes.

In the history department, a sociology class and a Facing History and Ourselves class have been added. The faculty is still deciding on who will be teaching these new classes.

Sociology is a semester elective that will deepen the understanding of perceptions and cultural standards. Facing History and Ourselves is another semester elective that will explore the issues throughout history that students may face on a daily basis.

In the foreign language department, a program will be offered for students coming to Manchester-Essex from other schools. An example of this would be Mandarin.

"This program will allow them to keep up their studies in the other languages they may have been taking," Foreign language department head, Michelle

Magana said.

The course is also open to Manchester-Essex students who are doing well in their Spanish or French classes and would like to take another language. The students must take their required two years of Spanish or French at their school alongside this program. This course will be given online through Middlebury Interactive.

In the mathematics department, AP statistics will be offered. The class is dependent upon numerous factors including the budget and enrollment. The class will be taught by math teacher Richard Brown.

"The course prepares for the AP exam and is for the whole year," Brown said.

The prerequisite is that the students applying complete Algebra II.

"Statistics has a lot of majors and has a lot of usefulness," Brown said.

The faculty is also trying to get some classes that were not offered this year to be offered next year, such as Industrial Design, Robotics, and CAD.

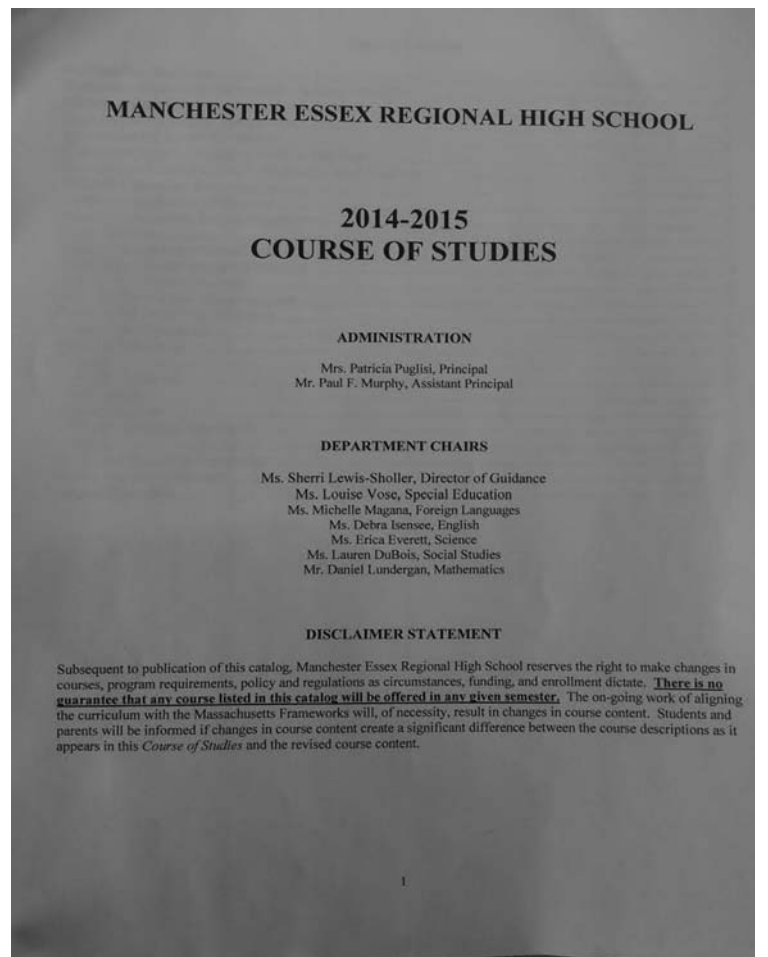
A few of the classes next

year are altering their curriculum, including the new physical education requirements. It is now a requirement to finish four years of physical education as a graduation program. Freshman and sophomores must enroll in gym, but juniors and seniors may find a different way to complete this requirement such as a school sport.

Other changes to the schools curriculum include the removal of the college prep and honors course History and Government. Although it was not run during the 2013-2014 school year, the AP level of this course is still offered.

In mathematics, the calculator policy may be altered. It is still under debate. If the new policy is passed, it allows for teachers to choose if their students use other electronic devices in the place of the more traditional calculators.

In the arts department, all of the beginner or introductory classes, such as Photo I, will be considered a college prep class. Everything above those classes, such as Photo II, will be considered an honors class



SARA STANTON PHOTO

The 2014-2015 course of studies is set to include new classes in the history, mathematics, and foreign language departments.

Students leave trash on tables, floor after lunches, disregard Green Team rules

By Natasha Statz-Geary
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

In the cafeteria, faculty and students alike have noticed a frustrating new trend: students not cleaning up after themselves.

"The amount of trash left on the tables and on the floor seems to have increased significantly after the Green Team implemented their new lunch monitoring system," guidance counselor Gillian Polk said.

The lunch monitoring system, in which Green Team students stand in front of the trash cans to ensure that trash stays out of the recycling and compost bins, has been in place since October, but middle school students seem unaccustomed to the system still.

"I'm guessing middle schoolers are leaving their trash on the table more now because they're intimidated by the new lunch



TASHA STATZ-GEARY PHOTO

Trash is often left unaccounted for in the cafeteria as students are still unaccustomed to the disposal and recycling system.

monitoring system. Whenever middle schoolers come up to the trash bins, they're never really sure on where to put things, and they often seem nervous," junior Green Team member Katie Glidden said.

Noticing middle schoolers'

apprehension with the system, Green Team director Eric Magers bought stickers for lunch monitors to give out to students who correctly throw out their waste.

"We've been making an effort to warm students up to the system. Lunch monitors politely

correct them if they put something in the wrong bin, and stickers are awarded to anyone who at least makes an effort to put waste where it belongs," he said.

Despite these efforts, much of the middle school avoids throwing out their lunches, instead opting to leave them either on the table or on the floor.

When asked to pick up after themselves, middle schoolers often resist doing so.

"I've had middle schoolers refuse to clean up their waste on multiple occasions.

They either claim that it's not their's or just don't listen to me at all," Glidden said.

Lunch monitors and faculty agree that students need to take more responsibility and throw

out their trash.

"It's disappointing to see that kids can't even throw out their own garbage. We take our composting system very seriously because it's what makes us the greenest school in the state, and seeing these students not even attempt to use the system at all is just very frustrating,"

Magers said.

Magers believes that all students will eventually become completely comfortable with using the system.

"We are going to keep on handing out stickers and training students where to put their trash, and hopefully by the end of the year we won't be facing this problem anymore," he said.

'The amount of trash left on the floor seems to have increased significantly.'

-GILLIAN POLK

Past and future class fundraisers help student officers to reach financial goals

By Tess Hosman
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Students in each class are holding upcoming fundraisers to reach their financial goals.

The freshman class has earned money through bake sales after school, selling homemade baked goods.

"We have earned a couple hundred dollars from bake sales so far, but the second half of the year has many fundraising plans," freshman class president Avery Shaw said.

Along with bake sales, they collected money by attempting to "sell food at the Halloween dance," Shaw said.

Upcoming fundraisers include a bakeoff and a 3v3 Basketball

tournament after school. A Lucky Leprechaun raffle will be held in March.

"We have been told that the Lucky Leprechaun can earn lots of money, so we will be focusing most of our attention on that," Shaw said.

Finance goals for the freshman class include raising \$6,000 by the end of the year. "A large amount of that money will come from student dues," Shaw said. They currently have a couple hundred dollars in total.

In order to raise money, the sophomore class has an upcoming student talent show in May.

The goal for the end of the year is \$10,000. "Senior year we need \$40,000," sophomore class president Chelsea Rose said.

Junior class officers share



COURTESY OF SUSIE BUCK

Assistant Principal Paul Murphy allows sophomore Chris Milne to shave his beard on stage as part of a fundraiser to help the sophomore class raise money.

co-presidency between Meghan Conway, Devon Musgrave Johnson, and Andy Creighton.

They have \$14,000 so far from fundraising.

"We have been doing restau-

rant nights, selling raffle tickets, and we have upcoming sports tickets," Creighton said.

They will be hosting a Casino Night and silent art auction for parents to raise money for the junior class.

The senior class has had many fundraising opportunities over the years.

"We've done a lot of bake sales and a lucky leprechaun raffle. Our parents helped us do a silent auction last year, which was really successful. We hosted the cappella night last year," senior class adviser Jennifer Coleman said.

Seniors have "just about \$25,000 at this point," Coleman said. They need to raise another \$5,000 by the end of the school year

Where are they
now ?

Piper
Browne

By Isadora Decker-Lucke
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Piper Browne, class of 2011, is currently a junior at Tulane University in New Orleans. She was a member of the Soundwaves in high school and has continued to be passionate about singing while in college.

Donna O'Neill runs the Soundwaves, the a cappella group that Browne helped start. In O'Neill's second year as a teacher here, she worked with Browne and several other students to start a small a cappella group, which eventually became the Soundwaves.

"Piper was a big part of the Soundwaves. She had an incredibly positive attitude that encouraged other students," she said.

English teacher Daniel Koughan taught Browne and remembers performing with her in a school production of "West Side Story," where Browne played the part of Maria as an underclassman.

"It was very clear why she got the role so young. She was a powerful performer with a beautiful voice who threw herself into the play as energetically and enthusiastically as she did

in the classroom. She definitely upstaged me," he said.

Currently, Browne is a member of an a cappella group on campus called Green Envy, whom she describes as her "best friends and [her] family."

The group is recording a CD in Loyola New Orleans' recording studio, and they often perform at events both on and off campus. Browne plans to run for president of the group for her senior year.

She also sings in a funk cover band that is beginning to write original songs.

"I absolutely love singing with a band, let alone a funk band. It is the most fun thing ever," she said.

She is a double major in music and sociology with a minor in French.

Browne also sings outside of

her many groups and classes, and often learns songs she likes on the guitar or collaborates with friends that are musical as well.

O'Neill said that she and Browne still keep in touch. "I think she has always been mature, and when I see her now, she looks so happy and content and full of life. She's just boundless," she said.

Browne spent the first semester of her junior year studying abroad in Senegal. "I

'[New Orleans] is too amazing to only live here for four years. Too much to do and see and experience.'

-PIPER BROWNE

Graduate travels to Senegal, pursues music



COURTESY OF PIPER BROWNE

Piper Browne, on the right, performs with a friend in Senegal, where she studied for a semester.

cannot wait for the time when I get to go back, whenever that is. I met some of the most amazing people I have ever met in my life there and saw some of the most challenging but also awesome things," she said.

Browne performed in Senegal as well as a part of a research project that took place during the last month of the program.

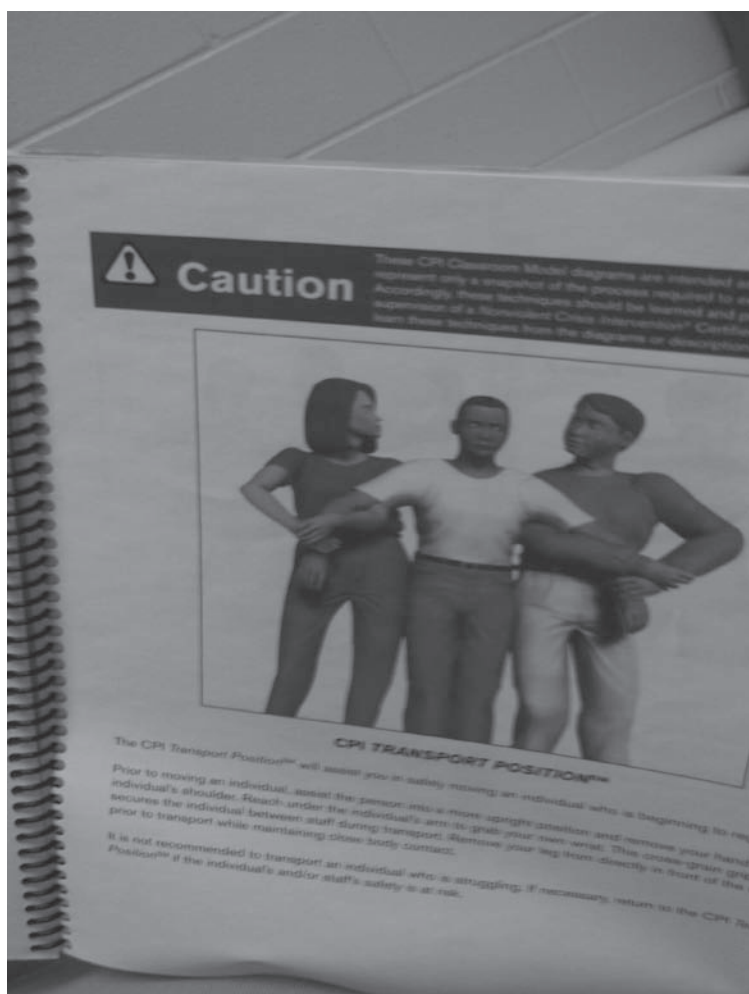
"For the last month of our program we did a research project and for mine I took voice lessons with a Senegalese musician and also studied a caste of people there basically dedicated to the performing arts," she said.

As for after college, Browne has "no idea" but hopes to find a career that is "fun and lucrative enough so that I can live hap-

pily, interesting, involving lots of different people, and something that allows me to help people who need it. I know that's pretty broad, but that's all I've got at the moment," she said.

She also plans on staying in New Orleans. "This city is too amazing to only live here for four years. Too much to do and see and experience!" she said.

Teachers learn restraint training to ensure security



ETHAN ANDERSON PHOTO

The Crisis Prevention Institute provides a handbook, above, to assist instructors teaching the course. Instructor Janda Ricci-Munn used the handbook and other resources to put together a PowerPoint presentation and a quiz on the material for teachers.

By Ethan Anderson
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Making school a safer place is a priority in the eyes of faculty. That is the reason behind the Crisis Prevention Institute's restraint training.

According to Janda Ricci-Munn, instructor of the course,

'We practiced some role play activities and practiced restraints and holds. I think it is pretty important, especially in elementary school settings.'

- BRIAN CARLSON

"Nonviolent Crisis Intervention" program teaches staff how to safely handle situations that could turn violent.

According to Brian Carlson, a math teacher, the class takes an entire school day to complete. "Mr. Ricci-Munn gave us a PowerPoint presentation on the different aspects and then we had to pass a quiz," he said.

The course is offered to district staff to prepare in case a child loses composure in the classroom or hallways and is a threat to others.

"It's not just for controlling students but also adults," Ricci-

Munn said. The course instructs how to nonviolently access and control the environment.

"We don't teach how to wrestle or kick box; it's better not resort to violence and sort it out before it gets out of hand," he said.

The Nonviolent Crisis Intervention guide encourages communication between individuals.

"An attempt to calm someone down can be more effective if you act as a friend rather than an authority figure," Ricci-Munn said.

According to the course, holds and other methods of self-defense should be used as a last

resort. The holds taught cause no harm to the aggressor.

"We practiced some role play activities and practiced restraints and holds. I think it is pretty important, especially in elementary school settings where children do not have good self-control," Carlson said.

"The priority is that no one is injured, especially the students

in the proximity," Ricci-Munn said. "It's helpful to train to do something safely without hurting people," Carlson said.

Eventually, all of the faculty from the elementary, middle, and high schools will take the restraint training, ensuring the entire district is prepared.

The Nonviolent Crisis Intervention program aims to make the school community a better place. The website states it promotes "care, welfare, safety, and security."

FAST FACTS

- The program is run through the Crisis Prevention Institute.
- Physical education and health teacher Janda Ricci-Munn is the instructor.
- Eventually administrators hope that all the teachers in the district will be trained.

Politics

Do individual votes make an impact?

Pro

Rebecca Even

As we grow older, democracy becomes a bigger and more important part of our lives. In first grade, we raise our hands to express whether or not we want to go outside and play. In middle school, we vote to decide if the math test should be on Tuesday or Wednesday. In high school, we pencil in our choice for class officers.

Voting is not only a method of contributing to a larger decision-making process, but also a way for us, as humans and as Americans, to be a part of something more important than any individual person.

I am turning 18 in a few weeks, and I'm excited to stand in the booth like I did when I was little, as I watched my mother deliberate over her decisions. At the next election, I will be in the booth alone, making a decision that impacts, no matter how insignificantly, another person's future.

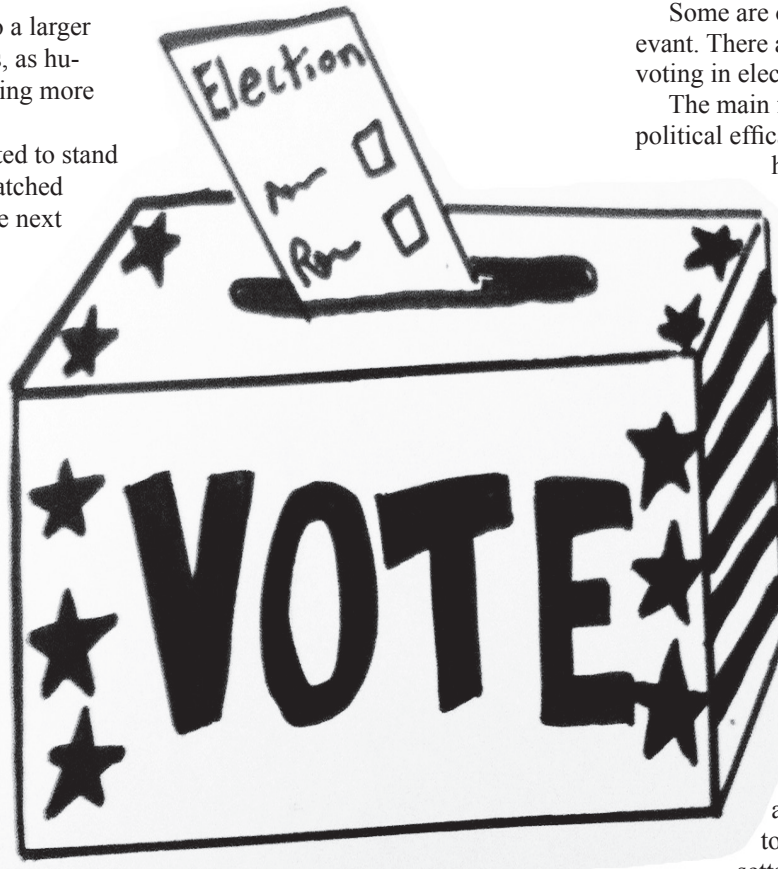
Of course, many believe that one voice in a crowd isn't important, that one small act gets lost in a sea of indifference and noise. A big argument against voting is the Electoral College system. People claim it devalues the individual vote by giving a candidate the votes of an entire state, even if he or she wins only wins the state by a narrow margin.

The Electoral College was created to give small states a voice, not to silence those who vote that are the very basis of American society. The college is only the inherent nature of voting in America: majority wins.

Yes, there are approximately 313 million people in America, but if voting is useless, then that leaves us with a foundationless nation and meaningless values. We say we support free speech and equality and send troops abroad to defend those very rights and then slouch on our couches at home and don't end up to going to vote.

Giving up your right to vote is a statement of indifference. You don't care enough about your country and those who live in it to contribute in this one small way. Voting is a privilege, and one you don't deserve if you have better things to do on Election Day.

People say that voting is a waste of time, and maybe America's system isn't perfect. At least we have a voice. At least our government listens. If you'd rather live in a country where the government makes every decision and the citizens are too afraid to speak out, be my guest.



ETHAN ANDERSEN ILLUSTRATION

Con

Landon Komishane

Thirty-six gubernatorial races, 33 senatorial races, and 435 House of Representatives races will be decided on Nov. 4, 2014. Next to presidential elections, midterm elections are the most important. However, only 58% of the country will vote.

Some are outraged over this number, and some don't think it's relevant. There are cases for both sides of the argument, but on the whole, voting in elections is not worth it.

The main factor in determining whether or not to vote is the idea of political efficacy. Anyone over the age of 18 must ask the question: Can he or she have influence on the government? Specifically in terms of voting, it's whether his or her vote actually counts.

Usually the difference in votes between the candidates in presidential elections is in the thousands. But the Electoral College makes the final election a clear difference in terms of votes between the two candidates.

On the state level, though, there are nine swing states. Therefore, there are 41 states where a political party has the clear majority. It is thus pointless to vote in those 41 states when candidates are elected before the election has even started. A state's political leanings are well-known, so it is usually easy to predict the outcomes of elections.

That is the main problem with politics. Partisanship is so evident in these states that the minority party rarely wins.

Massachusetts is a prime example. It clearly has a Democratic majority, and that is evident in the past election. Governor Patrick, Senators Warren and Markey, and all nine representatives are Democrats. It's rare for there to be a Republican majority among Congress in Massachusetts.

This reality creates less incentive to vote because people in these clear majority states will have their vote not matter because the public already knows the state's general political party identification.

While voting is a clear sign for democracy and freedom, it does not have the influence it intends to have, and people are justified with this low voter turnout. The main solution to voter turnout is to make the process of voting easier. That includes moving primary days, establishing no excuse absentee ballots, and reforming Election Day registration. This will make voting more convenient, but the government still must create political efficacy among the people in order to gain legitimacy.

Woman makes social statement standing topless in New York City

By Emily Arntsen
INDEPENDENT STAFF

You've got nipples, I've got nipples, we've all got nipples, so what's the difference between a shirtless man and a shirtless woman? I don't have a good answer.

Some people argue it's different because women generally have larger breasts than men, but what about women with androgynous chests or men with unfortunately large "pecks?" What's the difference in those situations?

If it's a matter of breast size, shouldn't a flat-chested woman be allowed to be topless in public since there's no outward

difference between her boobs and a man's?

New York law makers share this philosophy, kind of.

In May 2013, the NYPD issued a police memo reminding New Yorkers of their right to be topless in New York City, regardless of gender.

So in Aug. 2013, photographer Allen Henson decided to exercise this right by taking pictures of a topless female model at the top of the Empire State building.

Although no one was arrested, the New York City police officers were not pleased. Henson and the model were pursued throughout Central Park, and now Henson faces a \$1.1 million lawsuit from the Empire State Building who claims the photographs damage the reputation of the national tourist attraction as a "safe, secure, family-friendly environment."

What's the difference between a shirtless man and woman?



ALLEN HENSON PHOTO

A topless model poses on the Empire State Building. The state's laws say that all people have the right to be topless, regardless of their gender. The original photo has been censored for this paper.

As if boobs could ever possibly infringe on the safety or security of others.

Henson's social experiment proved that although the law technically states women have the right to be topless in New York City, society won't allow it, ironically enough, considering

our culture puts such an emphasis on the correlation between breast size and beauty.

This American double standard that women are expected to keep their breasts covered yet on display behind a pushup bra and a plunging neckline blows my mind – we can't uphold outdated

Puritan ideals while simultaneously exploiting female sexuality.

All this being said, it's not so much a matter of wanting to walk around Manchester topless as it is a matter of principle – the fact that if I desired to expose myself in such a way I would be allowed to, just like any man.



Music changes drastically from Beatles to beats

By Sofia del Valle
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Watching the tribute special hosted by CBS “The Night That Changed America: A Grammy Salute to the Beatles” made me realize how drastically music has changed over the last 50 years.

On Feb. 9, 1964, the Beatles truly kicked off their career when they performed live on the Ed Sullivan Show in front of hundreds of screaming fans and millions watching on TV.

As I watched the old video footage, I couldn’t help but smile. Their dark bowl cuts, simple melodies and happy lyrics seem almost obsolete compared to today’s popular genres.

Music seems to have become less about the music and more about innovation. Many popular genres now such as trap and EDM barely even have lyrics; it’s all about the beat and the drop.

Remixes of songs that tweak the phrasing of lyrics, repeating certain words or lines to cre-

Music seems to have become less about the music and more about innovation.

ate more rhythm have become incredibly popular in recent years. Another new style consists of combining two contrasting songs such as “Can I Get Wit Ya,” a mix of “Can I Get Wit Ya” by Notorious B.I.G. with “Por Ti Volare,” by Andrea Bocelli.

Were the Beatles to be an up and coming band today, it’s hard to see them being nearly as successful as they were when they emerged in the ‘60s. They would most likely fall under a more “indie” genre rather than become the legends that they did.

Ironically though, the Beatles have written some of the most brilliant lyrics in music’s history. They are poetic and effortless, words that people wished they had come up with themselves.

Nowadays, lyrics to popular songs are trite and predictable, and while Carly Rae Jepsen’s “Call Me Maybe” was catchy and fun for the first month, it’s hard to believe that such a juvenile song achieved so much attention.

I can’t even begin to imagine what music will sound like another 50 years from now. Could it possibly stray further from its instrumental roots? For all I know, kids will be jamming to a series of “beeps” that are comparable to the sounds of a robot.

STAFF EDITORIAL

Unfair athletic budget is unable to provide necessities

As rumors of raised athletic fees spread, the question presents itself as to how the already seemingly high fees are spent.

Although students pay seemingly high athletic fees, teams are no longer being given benefits that should come with them.

Over the course of the year, there have been events that show that teams are not receiving the same benefits and rewards as in past years.

For example, this year the budget no longer covers school-sponsored apparel as a reward for teams winning a significant competition. Only last spring, the sailing team was given money towards team jackets after winning the state championships.

This year, the field hockey team and the cross-country teams were denied this same reward and were told there was no longer room in the budget.

The athletic fee to play one or more sports is currently \$450, no matter the sport or season.

The flat fee is disproportionate as athletes who play sports that require more equipment and school funding are paying the same as athletes who play sports that require little to no equipment and school funding.

Schools such as nearby



CHARLIE DAVIS PHOTO

The limited athletic budget has denied multiple teams the ability to buy celebratory jackets after having successful seasons despite the fact that the athletic fee is high even for one season of sports.

Gloucester High School, pay a proportional fee per sport.

Another main difference between our athletic budget and many other schools is that there aren’t any boosters clubs for specific sports at MERHS. Boosters are able to raise money for team

clothing and team events, but with only one booster for all of

Manchester’s lack of a boosters system restricts what a team can do.

sports, the format is not nearly as effective.

Although the athletic budget situation is frustrating, the budget is different from any other department or program, according to athletic director Kelly

Porcaro.

“[The budget] varies because part of it is driven by income that we bring in like gate fees and user fees... versus academic budgets where you are given a set amount to start with and you don’t necessarily have to come up with your own money,” Porcaro said.

Boosters clubs for individual sports allow teams to access benefits that they currently lack.

Euthanasia enables suicide, tragedy, should not be legalized

By Fiona Davis
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Euthanasia on the surface seems to suggest a peaceful end

to a life of illness and strife; however, it has another side in its harsher synonym, Physician Assisted Suicide.

Massachusetts voted “no” on the issue in 2012 when it appeared on the ballot, but the margin of victory for those who opposed euthanasia was slim at 51 to 49 percent.

Passing a law to allow eu-

thanasia is complicated because taking away someone’s life requires strict, clear guidelines and careful regulation. Often these guidelines prove too difficult to provide, as lawmakers must decide whether family should

Lawmakers must decide whether family should be consulted before someone chooses to end his or her life.

be consulted before someone chooses to end his or her life, or if an individual should undergo a psychological evaluation before making the decision, or even what the doctor’s role ought to be.

With such a contentious issue that has so many variables, laws will ultimately be unable to

sufficiently guard against people taking advantage of legalized suicide.

Furthermore, if the law were to pass, other laws and moral codes would have to be drastically altered. Doctors swear to a code of ethics, one that prohibits them from harming a patient or neglecting their duty to put forth their best effort to heal the person.

The idea of “doing no harm” is rooted in the Hippocratic Oath that doctors have professed since ancient times. Ending someone’s life is inherently harmful, so doctors who issue drugs to allow euthanasia violate this oath.

Doctors prefer end of life care to euthanasia, according to the American Medical Associa-

tion, because it allows them to fulfill their duties and provides the opportunity for recovery even when it is unlikely.

Terminal illness is sometimes not a permanent diagnosis. Misdiagnosis or changes in treatment options mean that miraculous recoveries can occur, but choosing suicide based on a present condition or the opinion of one doctor ends all possibility for future developments.

Many view euthanasia as a way out or a reprieve from suffering. On the contrary, suicide by people suffering from psychological illnesses is considered a tragedy. All suicide should remain a tragedy, not a way out, and instead of perpetuating it, laws should seek to prevent it.

the INDEPENDENT

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The Independent is published monthly throughout the school year. It is a product of the Manchester-Essex Regional High School Journalism class. Editorial space is available to all MERHS students, faculty, and community members.

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

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

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

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

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

Apparel and lingerie brand Aerie markets natural photos

By Hannah Riordan
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Since the commercialization of Photoshop in 1989, the digital photo editing tool has permeated the entire marketing and modeling industry, setting an impossibly high standard for female appearance.

Several decades later, Photoshop technology is impressively advanced. Magazine photos are glossed perfection, unwrinkled both figuratively and literally.

Finally calling attention to the unfair standards that commercial industries present, lingerie brand Aerie recently released an ad campaign featuring un-retouched models. Aerie has used the same models as in past campaigns, but the newest images are refreshingly authentic.

The brand has also pledged to stop featuring supermodels in their campaigns, meaning that moguls like Nina Agdal, who has modeled both for Aerie and

the notoriously unrealistic Victoria's Secret brand in the past, will no longer be representatives for the American Eagle subsidiary.

The models in the campaign don't have completely flat stomachs when they're sitting down, just like everybody else on the planet. Some of them have bony hips, birthmarks, and folds of skin in places that most girls have come to think of as wrong or unacceptable.

Despite a lack of digital editing, the models still look completely beautiful. They benefit from professional hair, makeup, and styling, good lighting, and flattering angles.

Some critics of the campaign have mused that the brand claims to promote realness while still using unusually attractive models. Nonetheless, Aerie took a significant step in the right direction, practically setting an ultimatum for other brands



AERIE.COM

A new ad from Aerie's "real beauty" campaign features a model with the birthmarks, freckles, folds of skin, and other imperfections that are photoshopped out of most modelling ad campaigns.

to embrace real beauty and empower their customers.

Aerie deserves praise for being the brave first retailer to abandon Photoshop. The slogan of the campaign, "The Real You Is Sexy," is placed on dress-

ing room mirrors as a decal at in-store locations, reminding shoppers to love their bodies as they truly are.

If Aerie's actions spark a trend throughout the industry, epidemic eating disorders

and self-esteem issues could decrease dramatically. Without faux perfection taunting them at every turn, young girls in Aerie's target market can expect further empowerment and body positivity from the brand.

Zimmerman fight is a tasteless exploitation of teen's death



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Protesters of George Zimmerman's acquittal show that there is still sympathy for the victim in a country that rewards killers.

By Oscar Heanue
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Pop culture has always had an infatuation with murderers. From Bonnie & Clyde to O.J. Simpson, some of the biggest and most popular news stories of the past century have been tales of grizzly death.

This obsession on its own is not a problem. Who can blame people for getting sucked into an interesting piece of news?

The problem lies in the fact that our culture essentially rewards killers by turning them into pseudo-celebrities. Murdering someone has become a free ticket to being a household name. The latest example of this

is George Zimmerman, the Florida man who killed unarmed teenager Trayvon Martin. This incident resulted in a highly publicized trial and helped briefly bring about a national discussion on modern race relations.

Murderers become celebrities in our culture

However, unlike many of his fellow famed killers, Zimmerman was acquitted due to Florida's "Stand Your Ground" law. One would think that after gaining so much notoriety for taking the life of a child, Zimmerman would hope to fade back into obscurity.

This has not been the case. Zimmerman has been in the news since for multiple run-ins with the law. He has also actively kept up a public Twitter account with over 5,000 followers, @TheRealGeorgeZ, which he uses to get into arguments legitimate

celebrities like Piers Morgan. The latest cry for attention came when Zimmerman offered to enter a celebrity boxing match for charity. Zimmerman even talked it up on Twitter, although often failing to mention the charity aspect.

Many challengers stepped forward, and in the end the fight promoters chose rapper DMX, who vowed to "knock him out." While I don't blame DMX, who clearly only wanted to give an angry public what they wanted by beating Zimmerman up, he is part of the problem. He is only aiding a culture that allows killers to become famous simply for ending another human's life.

Zimmerman just represents part of an unsettling trend. Americans shouldn't reward killers for their actions but rather should shun them and allow them to fade away.

In the age of the Internet, privacy is harder than ever to obtain

By Kendall McCormick
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Only 20 years ago, the Internet became useable to the public—a strange thought for people of my generation, who don't know life without it. This era of increasing interconnectedness, which proves to be a double-edged sword. While it is easy for people to share information via the Internet, it is just as easy for others to view information that is not meant for their eyes.

In other words, true privacy and the Internet cannot and will never coexist. As the trend toward technology gains momentum, and we move toward an age in which everything is online, this can become quite problematic.

From movies and books to personal information like credit card numbers and emails,

almost all practical aspects of life have already been transferred to the World Wide Web. While this transition may seem beneficial, as everything anyone could ever want or need is easily accessible, privacy becomes a critical concern.

It's something everyone takes for granted. They secure their Facebook settings to private, set their email passwords to a word no one would guess, and go on believing that no one will ever see the information they leak online besides who it's intended for.

While it may seem safe, locked by passcodes and other security measures, nothing online can be deemed completely secure. Therein lies the problem; everything an individual does online leaves virtual, permanent tracks for those who are tech-savvy enough to find them.

Moreover, technology isn't just changing how we live our everyday lives but how govern-

ments and important businesses function as well. Important documents and confidential information are no longer stored in locked file cabinets but rather on computers.

What does this mean for policy-makers today? Not a more transparent government like WikiLeaks creator Julian Assange would like to believe, but rather a more vulnerable government. If people from other countries could hack into government accounts and emails, the effects would be detrimental.

Let's remember that the Internet is only 20 years old. It has, and still will, completely shift the game-plan for intelligence agencies not only in the United States, but in other countries as well.

Conflicts between countries are no longer resolved by simple head-to-head combat, and there will undoubtedly be more of a shift away from that in the future.



THEDAILYSHEEPLE.COM PHOTO

With the increasing popularity of the Internet, people are giving up personal and private information without a second thought.

A war of intelligence is already underway, meaning security is of the utmost importance.

The risk of insecurity does not only affect high-profile agencies; it affects everyone who has any kind of a technological device that connects to the Internet. Many YouTube videos and articles online demonstrate how

simple it is for some to intercept emails and hack into important accounts; it's quite frightening.

That's not to say that the shift toward technology is bad or that everyone should immediately boycott the Internet, but individuals must pay much more attention to the information that they so readily share online.

BOYS' TENNIS

Coach: Robert Bilsbury

Captains: Seniors Jeff Durkin and Seth Cohen and junior Michael Fuca

Record last year: 16-1

Goals: Take it one match at a time and play our best tennis. Another goal is to go far in the tournament.

Impact players: Seniors Jeff Durkin and Seth Cohen, and juniors Michael Fuca, Justin Eichenberger, and Winston Feuerbach, and eighth-grader Garrett Lamothe

Coach's quote: "Durkin and Cohen make a great first doubles team. Mike Fuca makes a great first singles, who has been playing the position since seventh grade."

Captain's quote: "We've got a really young, talented team this year and are in a great position to win CAL's this season."-Senior Jeff Durkin



Jeff Durkin



Seth Cohen



Michael Fuca

GIRLS' TENNIS



Kendall McCormick

Coach: Philip Logsdon

Captain: Senior Kendall McCormick

Record last year: 22-0

Goals: Win the state tournament

Impact players: Seniors Kendall McCormick, Rachel Daley, and Molly Carlson, junior Avery St. Sauveur, freshman Maura McCormick, and eighth-grader Chanel Bullock

Coach's quote: "Seniors are going to have to come through for us very strongly. We do have some very strong seniors such as Rachel Daley, Kendall McCormick, and Molly Carlson."

Captain's quote: "We have always had a very close team, which has definitely contributed to our success. I'm really excited for all of the newcomers to join us."

BOYS' LACROSSE

Coaches: John McCavanagh

Captains: Seniors Chris Dumont and Austin Keating

Record last year: 2-16

Goals: Develop the team and improve. The team would love to make the state tournament.

Impact players: Seniors Chris Dumont, Austin Keating, and Chris Pellegrini

Coach's quote: "This is my second season as coach, and coming off my inaugural season I think that we're really going to be developing and improving."

Captain's quote: "This year I feel good about our season. We have a better schedule with a lot less out of conference games, which should increase our chances of making the state tournament."-Senior Chris Dumont



Chris Dumont



Austin Keating

GIRLS' LACROSSE



Taylor Meek



Brittany Smith

Coach: Sarah Holch

Captains: Seniors Taylor Meek and Brittany Smith

Record last year: 14-3

Goals: Play as a team and win the Cape Ann League

Impact players: Seniors Taylor Meek, Brittany Smith, Lila Hughes, and Sophia Guerriero, and junior Katie Furber and Maya Heath

Coach's quote: "We can only get better than last year. I think our biggest goal is to play as a team, united. I think that is the most important thing we can do to be the strongest we can be."

Captain's quote: "Based on our indoor league [at Danvers Indoor Sports], our team will have great chemistry this season. We have a lot of senior leadership, not necessarily within the captains."-Senior Taylor Meek

BASEBALL

Coach: Robert Garrett

Captains: To be determined

Record last year: 3-15

Goals: To make the state tournament and to be more aggressive on the bases and offensively.

Impact players: Seniors Kevin Carter, Liam Logue, junior Domenic Cirone, and sophomore Brandon Bartlett

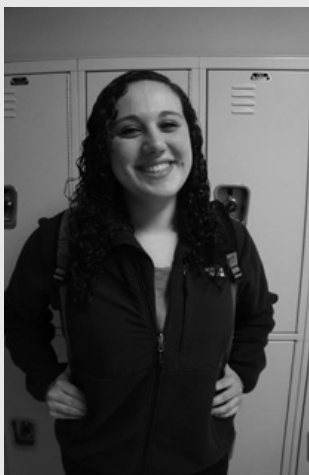
Coach's quote: "We have to play much better than we did last year. We weren't out of a lot of the games last year, we [just] didn't make big hits when we needed them."

Captain's quote: "[We want] to have a winning season, make it to the state tournament and be a strong contender. We also want to beat Rockport in their annual tournament."-Senior Kevin Carter



Coach Robert Garrett

SOFTBALL



Sam Taylor



Rachael Gallagher



Paige Zaval

Coach: To be determined

Captains: Seniors Sam Taylor, Paige Zaval, and Rachael Gallagher

Record last year: 1-17

Goals: To improve the record, raise overall batting averages, and become a more solid team.

Impact players: Seniors Sam Taylor, Rachael Gallagher, Paige Zaval, juniors Samantha Woodman and Nina Manzo

Captain's quote: "We want to try to win more games because we want to improve our record. We also want to make progress with the [new] coach and set the program up for the future."-Senior Sam Taylor

SPRING TRACK

Coaches: Jeff Destino, Carrie and Joe Brancalone

Captains: To be determined

Record last year: Boys: 5-2 Girls: 4-3

Goals: To win the Northeast Conference for both boys' and girls' teams, as well as beat larger schools like Peabody.

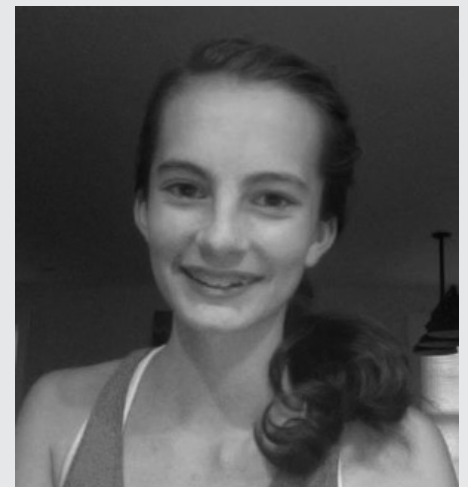
Impact players: Seniors Anna Heffernan, Fiona Davis, junior Olivia Lantz, sophomore Nathan Evans

Coach's quote: "We hope to fill some voids with the throwers and the sprinters for the girls. It seems like [the new Manchester Essex athletes] are a very diverse group."-Jeff Destino

Captain's quote: "We definitely have much greater goals this year than the several previous."-Senior Anna Heffernan



Anna Heffernan



Fiona Davis

SAILING

Coach: Kevin Dooley

Captains: Senior Quinn Andersen and junior Cameron Holley

Record last year: 14-3

Goals: To defend last year's win of the state championship and qualify for a national berth.

Impact players: Seniors Quinn and Luke Andersen, juniors Will Kiley and Andy Creighton, sophomore Ethan Andersen

Coach's quote: "For the past three years, we've been sixth overall, and we want to break into that final four [of the New England rankings]."

Captain's quote: "This season, since only one A-team member has graduated, we hope to improve our finish at both the New England Team Race and Fleet Race championship."-Junior Cameron Holley

FRISBEE

Coach: Eric Magers

Captains: Seniors Sam Nesbit and Neil Henry

Record last year: Not recorded

Goals: Getting more members to join the sport and to have fun while playing.

Impact players: Seniors Sam Nesbit, Mike Davis, and freshman David LaForge

Coach's quote: "I want these boys and girls to love the sport, to find it a wonderfully enjoyable pastime. Most of the kids that come out of this program go on to play in pick-up leagues and in club sports in college."

Captain's quote: "My goal is really just to have a lot of people come to play from every grade."-Senior Sam Nesbit

You Know You Love YouTube

The Creators Project incorporates technology, art in one YouTube page

By Lila Hughes
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Impressing YouTube viewers and subscribers, The Creators Project established itself as a channel four years ago, focusing on artists who use and create technology in new and innovative ways, but more generally, focusing on engineers who want to better the future.

Since the creation of the channel on April 8, 2010, it has received 425,465 subscriptions and 7.9 million views. The Creators Project is a channel that was founded by a partnership between Intel and VICE, which is an international magazine that focuses on the arts, culture, and news topics.

The channel was intended

to inspire new and emerging artists or engineers by showcasing their work in modern technology; the channel has showcased more than 500 artists from all around the world.

The Creators Project shows original artwork commissions, a music video series, and tech tutorials.

For example, a mini series of episodes called "Make It Wearable" features engineers who have been working on new technology that are more or less wearable in order to make all aspects of life easier.

Furthermore, the goal is to support human connection rather than hindering interaction, which is talked about extensively in the video Episode 1, "Human Communication."

In another episode of "Make



THECREATORSPROJECT.VICE.COM/

The Creators Project features Jorge-Ayala, famous for his collaboration of fashion and technology.

it Wearable," they talk about how wearable technology will allow doctors to help their patients live healthier lives by taking data from the patient and using it to make recommendations in their daily lives.

Featured in another video,

artist Ryoichi Kurokawa shows how he has generated an artistic performance of synesthetic sensory stimulation, which is when one sensory stimulation results in the sensation of another, such as hearing color or seeing sound. Rather, one sys-

tem outputs sound and the other synchs with it, creating graphics.

With a growing global network, the Creators Project is rapidly becoming the premier arts, technology, and culture channel highlighting artworks and innovations that are sought after.

Two portfolios, numerous pieces recognized for Scholastic Art Awards



EMILY MOORE PHOTO

Junior Emily Moore received a silver key for her black and white photograph of her sister Molly, a common subject for Moore's art.

By Sofia Del Valle
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Twelve high school artists received praise and recognition for various pieces submitted to the annual Scholastic Art Awards that took place in January.

This year, the competition was sponsored by the School of Museum of Fine Arts rather than the Boston Globe as in previous years. According to high school art teacher Marion Powers, only pieces that won gold keys, the highest possible achievement, will be displayed at City Hall in Boston.

However, there will be an award ceremony for all pieces that receive a gold or silver key or an honorable mention, she said.

"We have always been one of the top schools in the state, despite our size," Powers said.

Junior Hannah Thorne received a gold key for her piece called Thought Process,

a dress she made out of pencil shavings and lined paper.

"I was sketching ideas for a dress and kept sharpening my pencil, and that's what inspired me to use them for my dress," Thorne said.

Her second piece, a portrait of Malala also made from pencil shavings, won a silver key.

Senior Mina Hostage also won a silver key for her piece called Tiger in a Box. This was her first time submitting her art into the competition.

"The assignment was to think of an object and decorate a box based on that object," Hostage said.

Her design incorporates bold graphics and graffiti style text, which she said reflects her style of art, something that originated from her love of rap music.

While most students only submitted individual entries, seniors Julia Paccone and Liz Warren submitted portfolios comprised of eight different pieces.

Paccone's portfolio contained pieces ranging from a tissue paper self-portrait to a realistic pen drawing of a skull, while Warren's

was a series of black and white photos of hands holding items found in nature. Both received honorable mentions.

"The purpose of my portfolio was to demonstrate my ability to work with different mediums," Paccone said.

According to Powers, she was happy with overall the outcome of this year's competition but was surprised that Paccone's portfolio did not receive a higher award.

'We have always been one of the top schools in the state, despite our size.'

-MARION POWERS

Two chorus members accepted to the All-State Championship

By Zack Even
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Of the six chorus members who were accepted into the Northeast Senior District Chorus, which includes sophomores, juniors, and seniors, three received All-State recommendations, based on their score in their Senior District audition.

Of these three singers who auditioned again for All-States, senior Lindsey Duff and junior Tucker Evans were accepted into All-States.

The audition for Senior Districts and All-State Chorus consists of a prepared piece as well as sight-reading.

"[Sight-reading] is difficult because it is the curveball of the audition process," Duff said.

"They worked very hard

and went very well-prepared to auditions," said chorus teacher Donna O'Neill.

Evans and Duff have both been accepted into the All-State Chorus before and describe the event as an honor and a challenge.

"They are able to quiz you when you get there, and if you haven't prepared well enough,

they can kick you out," Duff said.

The All-State Chorus, which consists of around 200 singers, will perform on March 22

at Boston Symphony Hall after staying at the Seaport Hotel for three days and rehearsing at the World Trade Center.

The concert consists of an or-

chestra, concert band, and jazz band in addition to the chorus; anyone can buy tickets to the performance, which cost \$21, and the show will run from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

"It's a chance to meet with a lot of people who like to do many of the same things... they're all really devoted," Evans said.

In addition to the six students accepted into the Senior District Chorus, nine students were accepted into the Northeast Junior Districts, which includes students from grades six through

nine. One seventh-grader, Jake D'Ambrosio, received a perfect score in his audition.

"These are very talented and busy singers," O'Neill said.

'Sight-reading is difficult because it's the curveball of auditions.'

-LINDSEY DUFF



COURTESY DONNA O'NEILL

Senior Lindsey Duff and junior Tucker Evans will compete against 200 other singers in the All-State Chorus Championship.

Students' Malala portraits will be displayed at House of Seven Gables, Central Street Gallery

By Devon Musgrave-Johnson
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

As part of a continuing project involving the middle school and high school, various art pieces featuring Malala Yousafzai will be displayed at the House of Seven Gables and Central Street Gallery.

Yousafzai is a Pakistani educational activist who was shot in the head by the Taliban in October of 2012 as she made her way to a school for girls. Since then, Yousafzai has become a prominent world figure because she stands on behalf of the rights of Middle Eastern girls to be educated and is on her way to becoming a household name.

The Malala Project, headed by art teacher Marion Powers, started two years ago on the day after Yousafzai was shot. According to Powers, she scraped her lesson plan for the middle school that day in order

to focus on a project involving Yousafzai.

"I am always trying to fight prejudice and stereotypes in my teaching, and this was a way to make the students see something bigger

than themselves," Powers said.

Eventually the project moved into high school drawing and



MARION POWERS PHOTO

Students' portraits of Malala Yousafzai, such as this one done by freshman Samantha Sherman, will be displayed at local venues.

mixed media classes and has been featured within the school, at Endicott College, and at the

Hawthorne Hotel for an event showcasing prominent women in society.

The Malala portraits will soon be exhibited at The House of Seven Gables between April 2 and 10. This exhibition will be open to the public.

Later on this year, six boards of Malala pieces will be on display at Central Street gal-

lery as part of an outreach program working to show student artwork from the area.

"This is a great way to spread awareness about Malala and her story while also showcasing some really great art pieces," senior Sarah Lewiecki said.

According to Powers, the Malala project should continue to grow as time goes by because Yousafzai's fight for an education is extremely important.

"This was a way to show all the students that one voice can make a difference, one person can change the world; and in this case the one person was a young girl who fought for an education," Powers said.

The Malala Project, headed by art teacher Marion Powers, started two years ago on the day after Yousafzai was shot.

WEBSurfer

By Connor Senay
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR



SoundCloud.com

SoundCloud gives every music lover what he or she wants. It provides music available to stream and play unlimited times for free and the ability to create playlists of your favorite songs. If the artist allows it, there may be the option to download the song or buy from iTunes directly linked to the window. You can explore by genre depending on what music preferences you have – from folk to hip hop. EDM (electronic dance music) is especially prominent on the website as of late, so if you're a fan of that, this is a great website to check out because of its wide assortment of subgenres.

RedBubble.com

Redbubble is a canvas for all of your brightest ideas. It is a diverse place and the biggest marketplace on the Internet for pieces of art and intricate designs. When you contribute designs and upload them to the website, people can look at and buy them for the price you set depending on the product. Once a sale is made, you get a significant portion of the profits from the item. A variety of products is available for purchase – from photo prints and posters to stickers and iPhone cases along with most types of standard clothing items.

FirstWeFeast.com

First We Feast provides an assortment of articles solely dedicated to the culinary arts. Their articles are divided up in to six categories: Latest, Eat, Drink, Travel, Laugh, Features. The Features and Latest are the ones that make their way to the front page. Each article gives an interesting summary of current food news. One such piece of breaking news is the announcement by Taco Bell to sell Waffle Tacos nationwide, which yielded an insane reaction from people all over Twitter. This website is perfect for all food fanatics.

Apps of My Eye

Cool apps for a smartphone or tablet

By Rachel Daley
INDEPENDENT EDITOR



BuzzFeed

BuzzFeed, which is also a website, is a news app which has a category for everyone. I can scroll through BuzzFeed articles for hours without getting bored. The app has four main article categories: Featured, News, Entertainment, Life, and More. Within these categories are even more sub-categories, including Travel, Do It Yourself, Food, Animals, Celeb, Rewind, Sports, World News, and Quizzes. BuzzFeed will surely keep you updated on both pop culture and current events. This app offers endless appealing visual articles, such as "27 Delicious Lemon Desserts," which gives pictures and recipes for 27 different lemon desserts, and "25 Impossibly Beautiful Wedding Locations in Hawaii," which is an article featuring pictures of breathtaking wedding venues in Hawaii. Aside from articles, BuzzFeed also features fun quizzes, which in the past have told me what kind of dog I am and what my fate would be if I participated in The Hunger Games. BuzzFeed is free on the app store, which is all the more reason you should download it today.



Flappy Bird Remakes

If you haven't noticed, Flappy Bird remakes are overtaking the app store on iTunes. Why, you ask? Because the creator of Flappy Bird removed his addicting game from the app store after tweeting that it was ruining his life. For those who have never played Flappy Bird, it is an almost annoyingly simple game in which you must tap the screen of your smart phone to make a bird fly through tubes. The game provides an extremely small margin of error, so you must be prepared to lose countless times in a row before getting a high score. If you never downloaded Flappy Bird (shame on you) and you want the opportunity to play a nearly identical game, scroll through the Top Charts of the app store and pick your poison. My personal favorites right now are Splashy Fish, Flying Cyrus (featuring the head of Miley Cyrus instead of a bird), Hoppy Frog, and Dumpy Doge. However, don't be fooled by these apps; none of them provide quite the same amount of satisfaction as getting a high score on Flappy Bird.



Guess The 90's!

Do you want to get connected with your childhood self and relive games, celebrities, and shows from the '90s? Download Guess The 90's! today! This is a trivia app where you are shown a picture of person, item, or show from the '90s, and you have to type in what the person or thing is called. For each picture, the app provides 20 letters for you to use while guessing. Although this app is challenging since a few years have passed since the '90s, it's fun to recollect certain aspects of your childhood and take a trip down memory lane.

'Oxymoron' fails to match incredibly high expectations

By Oscar Heanue
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Rap fans around the world can let out a collective sigh of relief, knowing that "Oxymoron," the long-anticipated major label debut from Schoolboy Q, has finally been released.

For years, the rapper has hyped up the album as one of the last great gangster releases, saying: "There's no more gangsta

rappers. It's just trap music now. So I wanna get that old feeling back that I do naturally." He has even gone as far as to compare it to Dr. Dre's acclaimed West Coast classic, "The Chronic."

Unfortunately for Q, with all this hype comes sky-high expectations. "Oxymoron" would

need to be an indisputable classic in order to please fans.

The album opens in exactly the manner that Q wants it to. The lead track, "Gangsta," comes in loud, ignorant, and perfectly mixed. From money to guns

to women, "Gangsta" almost aggressively introduces all the ignorant gangster rap themes that Schoolboy hoped to fill the album with, all while remaining catchy and fun to listen to.

These themes carry over to the next track, "Los Awesome." On this song, Q, a member of the Hoover Street Crips, finds himself rapping alongside Jay Rock, Q's current label-mate and a former Blood. Schoolboy has said in interviews that his section of the Crips has no problem with the

For years, Schoolboy Q has hyped up the album as one of the last great gangster albums, even going so far as to compare it to 'The Chronic.'



SCHOOLBOYQ.COM

Schoolboy Q's 'Oxymoron' is unable to meet the incredible amount of hype it gathered but is nonetheless a strong release.

Bloods, and this truce allows for Q and Jay Rock to come together in gangster rap harmony.

Things get messier as the album progresses. While "Collard Greens," the album's lead single,

remains a standout track, a number of tracks towards the middle of the album begin to feel forced. From the absurdly hypersexual "Studio" to repetitive filler track "Oxymoron," the songs are no longer filled with the same gangster charisma that the beginning of the album possesses.

A few bright spots do remain. The album contains a few more introspective tracks. "Stuck in this body high, can't shake it off/ I'm falling off, I can't hold a thought," raps Q on "Prescription," which deals with his oxycodone addiction. Along with "Hoover Street," which reflects on his gang experiences, these tracks still show that Schoolboy has potential to put out a classic album.

"Oxymoron" finally wraps up with arguably the strongest track, "Man of the Year." Although it is not nearly enough to bring the album to the classic status that Schoolboy Q had hoped for and promised, the excellent final song solidifies the album's status as an above-average project.

'House of Cards' sets new standards for the political drama

By Landon Komishane
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Men who want power will do whatever it takes in order to rise to the top. This is the plotline for the Netflix original "House of Cards."

The series is a political drama set in Washington DC. Garrett Walker (Michel Gill) is inaugurated as the 45th president. While he promises South Carolina Congressman and Democratic Majority Whip Francis "Frank" Underwood (Kevin Spacey) the position of Secretary of State, Walker does not keep his promise.

Underwood then resolves to do whatever is necessary to create his own empire in Washington, with the support of his wife Claire (Robin Wright) and his loyal Chief of Staff Doug



NETFLIX.COM

Kevin Spacey plays Francis Underwood, a ruthless pragmatist who will do anything to gain political power in the Netflix original series 'House of Cards,' which is now in its second season.

Stamper (Michael Kelly).

Underwood has his pawns, and he sets out to destroy anyone in his way. He gets help through Washington Herald journalist

Zoe Barnes (Kate Mara), but they don't just have a professional relationship.

Seasons 1 and 2 create fictional situations out of real current

events in order to move the plot, including issues with the energy crisis and China. These situations allow Frank to move forward with his plan.

By Season 2, Frank is in a

new position, and the stakes are even higher as more people are pushing to find out about his corruption. The Season 2 premiere provides a shocker that changes the landscape of journalism and politics.

An interesting aspect with "House of Cards" is the narration. At times, Underwood will look straight into the camera and explain what the situation is. While annoying at first, the

narration from this perspective becomes entertaining.

Netflix has been progressive in the past two years with this series because not only is this the first online-only series, but

The Season 2 opener of 'House of Cards' provides a shocker that changes the landscape of journalism and politics.

Netflix also releases all the episodes at the same time. While this opportunity may result in binge watching, it allows viewers to watch the episodes whenever

they have the urge to do so.

"House of Cards" was renewed for a third season, and this new season will bring about change. It should continue to entertain viewers with its interesting succession of events and its use of American politics.

Ambitious films of the coming year create excitement among moviegoers

By Zack Even
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL - MARCH 7

After the success of "Moonrise Kingdom," Wes Anderson moves from a New England summer camp to a Hungarian hotel without losing any of his signature quirkiness, if the offbeat trailers are any indication. With many of Anderson's

recurring stars, including Jason Schwartzman, Edward Norton, Owen Wilson, Tilda Swinton, and Bill Murray, as well as a few new, but still famous, faces, such as Ralph Fiennes, Harvey Keitel, and Jude Law,

'The Grand Budapest Hotel,' 'Interstellar,' and 'Foxcatcher' aim to be some of the best movies of 2014.

"The Grand Budapest Hotel"

will definitely surprise moviegoers. The film also largely features virtually unknown actor Mario Revolori, who stands to gain significant recognition just as Schwartzman once did

in Anderson's second film,

"Rushmore."

INTERSTELLAR - NOV 14

To say that even by his own standards, director Christopher Nolan's newest film "Interstellar" sounds both technically and visually daring means a lot. Could it be that Nolan, whose films includes mindbenders like "Memento" and "Inception," is being too ambitious in the new movie, which follows a group of explorers' journey through a wormhole? After all, the stan-

dards are set high, and not just among Nolan's films; space movies have reached a new level, especially with this year's Oscar favorite "Gravity." However, the film will likely match expectations with Nolan at the helm, especially since he is directing a cast that includes Matthew McConaughey, Anne Hathaway, Jessica Chastain, and Michael Caine.

FOXCATCHER - TBD

In one of his few dramatic

roles, Steve Carell will play John du Pont, a mentally unstable man who murdered Olympic medalist David Schultz (Channing Tatum) in 1996. Carell was already a frontrunner in the Oscar race when the movie was delayed until 2014, and his performance will likely be different than anything he has ever done before. After all, the only other truly derailed character Carell has ever played was Brick Tamland in the hilarious "Anchorman" series.



INTERSTELLARMOVIE.COM

Christopher Nolan's upcoming movie 'Interstellar', starring Matthew McConaughey as an astronaut, will be released in November.