

the INDEPENDENT

Volume XIX Number 6

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

April 29, 2013

Students, faculty wear blue and yellow for Boston Day to honor Boston Marathon tragedy victims fosters sense of community

By Rebecca Even
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

To honor the Boston Marathon tragedy victims, junior Fiona Davis organized a fundraiser and on Friday, April 26, every member of the school community wore blue and yellow in remembrance.

One of the victims, Marc Fucarile, who has family in Rockport, lost his leg in the bombing and had shrapnel lodged in his heart. As a roofer, Fucarile will be unable to return to his job after this injury.

Davis decided to raise money to contribute to a fund set up by his family to pay for his medical bills and support him once he recovers. The donation box will be in the main

office for the entire week.

Davis was inspired to launch this fundraiser because the Boston Marathon represents a lifelong goal of hers. She admires the competitors' determination and the way the marathon unites people across nationalities.

"To me, the Boston Marathon has always been something really special," Davis said. "It's something I've always aspired to run someday."

Davis also wanted to give students the opportunity to deal with and move past the tragedy, uniting as a school community and honoring Boston.

Blue and yellow were prominent throughout the school, and Davis, with the help of student and teacher volunteers, made ribbons for everyone to pin onto their clothing.

"My goal was to try to get



COURTESY OF CAROLINE EPP

Junior Rachel Daley, whose mother ran the 2013 Boston Marathon, held the American flag as the entire school gathered on Highland Field, wearing blue and yellow in support of the Boston Marathon bombing victims, first responders, everyday heroes, and law enforcement officers.

as many people to participate [as possible,] to reflect on what the marathon means, and to start moving forward," she said.

The same day, a moment

of silence was held to commemorate the victims of the bombing. Over the intercom, Davis spoke of dealing with the tragedy, and the SoundWaves

sang "America the Beautiful."

Other students appreciated the efforts made to address the tragedy and to unite the school. CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Senior wins award at research symposium

By Rebecca Even
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Members of the Authentic Science Research class took part in a trip to the University of New Hampshire on March 21 and 22, where they competed for a scholarship and watched other scientific presentations.

The competition featured students from northern New England presenting the research they did over the summer, either in poster form or as an oral presentation.

The juniors of the class, who have not yet completed their mentorship and research project, were there simply to



COURTESY OF MARIA BURGESS

Juniors Cam Shaw, Jack Freed, Michael Chlumecky, Neil Henry, Alex Taliaferro, and senior Chris Xavier were among the students who attended a research symposium at the University of New Hampshire. Xavier won second place and a \$1,500 scholarship for his presentation at the symposium and can now compete nationally.

learn about the experiences others have had in the scientific field.

Because of the broad range of subjects present at the symposium, students gained knowledge on the many different facets of scientific research.

"I learned a lot...because the presentations we saw and listened to were on a different topic every time,"

junior Annie Gonzales said. The presentations also inspired many of the juniors in attendance.

"The fact that so many people took it upon themselves to actually do their own experiments, because not everyone has [ASR] as a class, was really cool," Gonzales said.

The seniors, in preparation for the competition, spent half the school year writing papers summarizing their research, which they then submitted to the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium.

"The purpose of it was for our CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Independent staff distributes drug and alcohol survey to student body

By Anna Tyler
INDEPENDENT EDITORS

With a school year directed towards the effects of drugs and alcohol, the staff

members of The Independent decided to formulate and distribute their own drug and alcohol survey to all students in grades nine to 12.

The survey consisted of 20 questions concerning students' alcohol and drug use and was distributed by the English department in the last week of March.

Question topics ranged from

driving under the influence to parents' views on their child's possible drug and alcohol use.

"For years, the journalism staff has talked about alcohol and drug use being a problem in the school, and I have gotten this sense that

it was serious, but we never had a way of actually measuring it," journalism adviser Mary Buckley-Harmon said.

After agreeing on the formation of a survey, the newspaper staff began deciding which questions would best address their concerns.

"There are tons of CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

'I love to see how much students can learn to appreciate the nitty-gritty parts of science.'

-MARIA BURGESS

'There are tons of statistics available regarding high school drug and alcohol use, but I think it will be a lot more interesting and meaningful for students to see the responses of their peers.'

-MAGGIE LEHAR

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District addresses student alcohol, drug abuse

School introduces online survey, AlcoholEdu, and Save a Life Tour Assembly to counter issue

By Fiona Davis
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Incidents of teen drinking earlier this year prompted school officials to begin to address the issue of underage alcohol use, Superintendent Pamela Beaudoin said.

“We have had a couple of incidents... that probably prompted us to have the discussion about if we are educating people about what the outcomes are,” Beaudoin said.

According to Beaudoin, the school has not taken action on the issue in the past because the success of the students in other areas has often overshadowed the problem.

“We have a great student body, and I think we sometimes take for granted that just be-

cause we have wonderful accomplishments that we are not suffering the same problems as other schools,” she said.

According to Beaudoin, beginning an education-based program is a development goal of the district.

“We feel like we have some work to do around building up the whole health and wellness program... we want to really build up the program so people can have access to the information they need and a place and a forum to ask questions,” she said.

So far the school has introduced an online survey, AlcoholEdu, and the Save a Life Tour assembly, according to Principal Sharon Maguire.

“We need to do more prevention rather than intervention,” Maguire said.

According to her, there has been mixed feedback to

the Save a Life Tour so far.

“I think there has been a couple of reactions...it needs to be a program that does shock, and I think this did shock, but we should have made it clear that if a student gets upset during the showing, they were absolutely free to leave,” she said.

According to junior Sam Taylor, the assembly was both shocking and gave information students already knew.

“I didn’t like the images, and I had already heard what they talked about, so I am just not sure what the assembly accomplished,” Taylor said.

According to Beaudoin, refraining from discussing the topic of teen alcohol use would not help students.

“Not talking about it doesn’t help anybody... I would hate to wake up one day and wish we had done something about it,” Beaudoin said.

According to Maguire, the district wants to emphasize how dangerous drinking and driving is.

“We are talking about life or death...if that stops one of our students from getting in a car with someone who is drinking, then it was worth it,” she said.

‘We are talking about life or death...If that stops one of our students from getting in a car with someone who is drinking, then it was worth it.’

- SHARON MAGUIRE



SAVEALIFETOUR.COM

Save a Life Tour came and gave a presentation in order to highlight the intense risks that come with drinking and driving.

Students travel to England over April break, catch ‘Wicked’ performance



COURTESY OF MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON

Part of the England trip included an expedition to the famous and historic sites of Stonehenge and the town of Bath’s Roman baths.



COURTESY OF MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON

While in London, the group visited landmarks such as Westminster Abbey, Piccadilly Circus, and Tower Bridge.

By Anna Tyler
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Shakespeare’s birthplace and Stonehenge were among the sites students visited during April vacation in England.

The 12 students ranged from freshmen to seniors. Chaperones English teachers Mary Buckley-Harmon and Allison Krause accompanied them. They arrived on Saturday, April 13 and departed on Friday, April 19.

“The trip was awesome! It was my first time flying out of the country, and I was with a great group of people as well,” junior Tatum Hosman said.

Upon arrival, the group greeted their tour guide, Rikke, and headed to their hotel in London. The first full day in London included visits to Westminster Abbey, Shakespeare’s Globe Theater, Piccadilly Circus, and Covent Garden.

Monday consisted of more London sightseeing along with an excursion to Windsor Castle where the queen lives on the weekends.

To end the day, the group caught a performance of the Broadway show “Wicked” at the Apollo Victoria Theater in London.

“My favorite part of the trip was when we toured Windsor Castle. It was really fun, and we got to see and take pictures with one of the guards,” senior Jackie Rose said.

Excursions to see Stonehenge and the town of Bath’s Roman baths filled Tuesday’s agenda while Wednesday included trips to the Tower of London and a boat trip to Greenwich to visit the Royal Observatory and the Maritime Museum. A Jack the Ripper tour concluded the day.

Excursions to Oxford and Strat-

ford to see Shakespeare’s birthplace as well as Anne Hathaway’s cottage filled the last day of the trip.

During the previous trip to London in 2011, the group stayed in Greenwich, but this time they stayed in London, which allowed for more free time.

One special moment was getting to see Shakespeare’s grave site. We didn’t have time to see it on the last trip.

We also had time to tour the Globe Theater, which we also missed last time.

Krause agreed that the second trip was a success. “The trip was great. We had a fabulous time, and we got to see some things that Ms. Buckley-Harmon and I hadn’t seen two years ago. We had a great group of kids,” Krause said.

‘My favorite part of the trip was when we were able to get a tour of Windsor Castle. It was really fun, and we got to see and take pictures with one of the guards.’

-JACKIE ROSE



COURTESY OF MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON

Students visited the queen’s home, Windsor Castle, and took a picture with one of the guards.

Biology class explores interactive learning

Classroom animals, plants provide hands-on experience to students

By Austen Coviello
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

As the year progresses, science teacher Maria Burgess's biology classroom grows more into being its own ecosystem.

According to Burgess, the biology classroom's ecosystem, as she calls it, was started when she obtained two anole lizards for the class two years ago.

"I thought they would be a nice little addition to the classroom, and they would help my biology classes once we started talking about biomes," she said.

The lizards, Burgess said, require a tropical rainforest habitat. To create this within the classroom, there are heaters, lights, humidifiers, water-retaining bedding that allows organisms to decompose, and live tropical plants. The students are also responsible for spraying the tank with water each day.

Sophomore Molly Crehan

said, "We get to learn about the lives of animals instead of just learning from reading or lecturing, which I like."

Burgess also adopted two gecko lizards from a friend, which allowed the classroom to acquire a new biome because the geckos live in the desert.

The geckos, according to Burgess, recently laid an egg, which is waiting to hatch. The female died last year despite the class's attempt to research and cure her illness, but Burgess obtained another mate for the remaining male.

"Geckos don't always take to each other, and they fight, but these two really took to each other right away," she said.

Next, Burgess purchased a tarantula named Francisco, because the students thought a spider was an animal they would never think of studying, and "everyone is a little arachnophobia, including me," she said.

Another way Burgess connects the curriculum with the

animals is by having the students research them and collect information on the animals themselves as well as their habits and habitats.

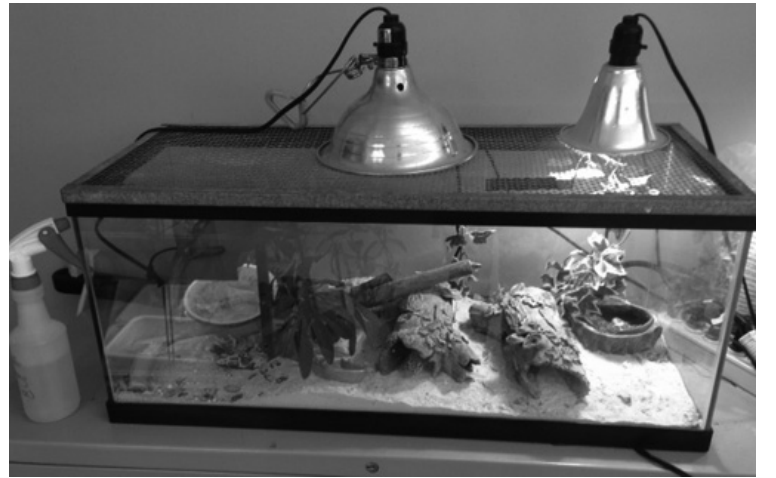
"Dr. Burgess always mentions the animals if they relate to what we are learning, and it would be cool for them to play an even bigger role in our class," Crehan said.

The animals in the room eat crickets and worms, so this year the biology classes decided to breed crickets to feed to them. They researched the exact conditions that would allow crickets to be bred and set up a tank for the crickets.

"We have also just started to make our own cricket food. We use ground-up cat food and dried milk, so we can feed the crickets nutrients the animals need for when they eventually eat them," Burgess said.

Another job of the biology class, according to Burgess, is working what they call a plant hospital.

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AUSTEN COVIELLO PHOTO

Maria Burgess is currently working on building her biology classes by implementing interactive learning experiences for her sophomore biology students. They now have various lizards, crickets, plants, and Blue the bunny. Burgess utilizes and refers to the living resources whenever they are relevant to what the class is learning.



AUSTEN COVIELLO PHOTO

Group travels to France for week-long school trip

14 French students spend April vacation studying culture, speaking language



COURTESY OF ALLYSON CONWAY

Seniors Allyson Conway, Anna Tyler, Devin Kelley, and Whitney Hammond were among the students who traveled to France over April vacation to immerse themselves in the culture and language.

By Carolyn Heslop
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Fourteen French-speaking students and their three chaperones took a trip to France during April vacation.

According to senior Allyson Conway, the group consisted of all French speaking students: four seniors, six juniors, and four sophomores.

Chaperoning the trip were French teachers Erin Fortunato and Julia Gross, as well as Gross's daughter, Adelaide, Conway said.

Despite the fact that it was rainy and the group was suffering from jet-lag, on the first day the students managed to see Eiffel Tower and tour around Paris, junior Jeff Durkin said.

"After staying in Paris for the first two days, we then went to the Loire Valley in Southern France and then north to the town of Bayeux in Normandy," Durkin said.

Conway said that some of the landmarks they visited included the Normandy Beaches, Notre Dame, the Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe, Le Louve, and Leonardo De Vinci's house.

French teacher and chaperone Erin Fortunato said that one of her favorite sights was Mount St. Michelle, which is a little island that, at high tide, can only be reached from a narrow path extending from shore.

Conway said that she too enjoyed the both famous and historic sites that were toured on the trip, but she also just enjoyed the traveling and exploring new locations.

"I really enjoyed walking around Paris, as it is so different from U.S. cities such as Boston and New York," Conway said. "The culture is extremely rich, and there is always something to see or do; one day we watched a street performer do tricks with a soccer ball as he climbed a lamp post."

According to Fortunato, in addition to getting a fun and

cultural experience, the students were also there to practice their French speaking skills.

"We had one day where we spoke no English at all, and if a student did speak English he/she had to put 20 cents into a sock," Fortunato said. "At the end of the day, all that sock money was distributed to people on the streets."

Conway said that overall the language barrier didn't cause them to have any trouble getting around; in contrast, it became a little frustrating when the native speakers would switch over to English simply because it was obvious that the students were tourists.

Fortunato said that she would like to try and continue this trip for students in future years, as she had such an amazing experience both travelling France itself and getting to know her students in a different way.

"I thought it was awesome that we were able to implement what we are learning in the class to a 'real world' situation," Durkin said.

Debate team creates news source to update students on current events

By Isadora Decker-Lucke
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Debate teacher Daniel Jewett and his students have created a website called World Buzz, where they summarize articles about current events in order to stay informed about what is going on in the world.

"I have no doubt that the best way to improve students as debaters and thinkers is to have them more engaged with what's going on in the world and the more we do that the more suc-

cessful we'll be," Jewett said.

Freshman Bella Mastendino, along with the rest of the debate team, has taken weekly quizzes on the information written on the website.

"It makes me more informed on current events, but I think that it's hard to find time to read everything and really pay attention to it," she said. Dozens of articles are posted weekly, and students are responsible for knowing all of the information posted.

The debate team has attempted to expand and test debaters' knowledge of cur-

WORLD BUZZ

WORLDBUZZ.MERSD.ORG

Debate classes have begun using a website called World Buzz to research current events in the news.

rent events in the past, but, according to Jewett, this has been difficult with the vast amount of information available from many different sources online.

"The idea is to create one source in which students summarize the news and one in which they then have a common reading and learning experience that al-

lows us to assess them," he said.

Sophomore Nick Albertazzi, who has written articles for World Buzz, said the website has definitely made him more aware of what is going on in the world currently.

When everyone looks to the same place for information, the debate team can create a widespread base of knowledge

that will help them in their future competitions, Jewett said.

The information that the students summarize in articles comes mainly from major newspapers, but during fourth quarter they hope to diversify their students by having students be responsible for specific sources or for different areas of the news.

Save a Life Tour visits, educates, spreads awareness

By Kelsi Field
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

In an effort to avoid the tragic outcomes that unfortunately occur throughout the Commonwealth and nationwide during prom and graduation season, visitors from the Save a Life Tour campaign presented on Monday, March 25.

The presentation was a combination of real life stories and multimedia accompaniments. A video played as an introduction, with lead presenter, Brian Belduga, telling his personal story to follow.

Belduga's sister was killed in a drunk driving accident after being allowed to leave "supervised party" by the host's parents. She was decapitated from the jaw up and her brother was faced with identifying his younger sister in the morgue.

The Save a Life Tour is a national campaign aimed at limiting drunken driving accidents. According to students,



SAVEALIFETOUR.COM

The Save a Life tour travels to high schools all across the country in an effort to minimize drunk driving accidents. They travel with machinery that is able to simulate drunken impaired driving.

the tour was effective, but had some unnecessary information. Senior Brian McAuliff said, "They put a lot of focus on motorcycle accidents. Obviously if a guy is going 100mph on a motorcycle he's going to crash."

Others agreed, saying that the videos were not as effective

as the actual story he told, which scared people straight.

Junior Julia Paccone said, "The actual stories were really sad and I saw a few people tearing up. Hopefully the right people got the message, even if some of the presentation didn't apply to everyone."

According to The Independent's survey, students who drink are beginning at a younger age, which affirms the administration's decision for the presentation to be shown to all high school students, even freshmen and sophomores who are not licensed drivers.

FAST FACTS

- Prom/Graduation season is the time when most teenage drunk driving accidents occur.
- On average Americans will drive drunk 427 times before getting arrested.
- 47,000 died last year of drunk driving accidents in the US.

According to Paul Murphy, the spring season brings a lot of worry to adults in the Commonwealth, and MERHS is doing its part to spread awareness, making sure that no students end up in situations like those whose stories were presented; hopefully students learned something.

Poet speaks to freshmen

By Devon Musgrave-Johnson
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Poet and teacher Alex Charalambides visited to speak to the freshmen class about poetry over the course of two to three days.

Freshman were beginning their poetry unit when Charalambides came to speak to them, so he was able to provide an introduction to the topic. "Actually having a professional come in was really a bonus for the students," English department chair Debra Isensee said.

During the first session with the students, Charalambides presented a poem to the class and used it as a guide to speak about metaphor and the use of language.

For the duration of the second session, students wrote their own poems with a focus on metaphor. According to Isensee, students showed a strong interest in Charalambides' lessons.

"I really liked the poet because he had interesting perspective and interacted with the class," freshman Julia Bonaccorsosaid.

Charalambides' visit was funded by The Spaulding Education Fund. "We were fortunate enough to have the funding

to bring him in," Isensee said.

Charalambides later performed for the entire high school and 8th grade with poets Eric Devenney, Nicholas Davis, Anna Gallagher, and Regie Gibson. Charalambides served as the host and the others competed while five students acted as judges.

Gibson was declared the winner of the slam, but students cheered on each of the four competitors. "The poetry slam was a great start to April break. I really enjoyed it," Sophomore Hannah Thorne said.

Charalambides has been traveling to schools to teach and perform for the past three years. "At first I accepted the residencies because I wanted to spread the word about youths in art, but now I find myself really getting into and enjoying the work itself," he said.

The Mass Poetry Outreach Project is a nonprofit organization that Charalambides also works for. The organization puts together a four-day festival in Salem called The Annual Massachusetts Poetry Festival featuring workshops for aspiring students. The festival begins May 2nd.



DEVON MUSGRAVE-JOHNSON PHOTO
Alex Charalambides spoke to the freshmen class about his poetry and writing approaches.

Driscoll attends Paralympics Training Camp

By Devon Musgrave-Johnson
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Freshman Brendan Driscoll attended the U.S. Paralympics Track and Field Elite Athletics Training Camp at the Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista California during April break.

"I honestly wasn't expecting to be invited during my freshman year of high school...I'm going to be competing with a really great group of athletes," Driscoll said.

During his stay, Driscoll attended many conferences, trained with other athletes hoping to make the Paralympics team going to France in September, and competed in two highly ranked track meets: The Pomona-Pizer Invitational and the Mount SAC relay.

He ran in both the 100 meter and the 200 meter dashes at the camp. During the 100 meter dash, Driscoll set a new personal best. He managed to drop his time from 16.86 seconds to 16.78 seconds.

In August of this year, Driscoll will travel to Puerto Rico to compete for team USA in the 2013 International Wheelchair and Amputee Sports World Junior Games. Brendan will be competing in the

100 and 200 meter dashes, archery, and possibly the triathlon.

"Just getting out there for the experience of it is going to be great," he said.

Over 800 athletes between the ages of 14 and 23 from 64 countries will be participating. Out of the 36 athletes representing the U.S., Driscoll is one of four under the age of 15.

Driscoll will be traveling with his sports team, The New Jersey Navigators. "It will be nice to go with people that I know," Driscoll said. The team is coached by trustee and fundraiser of The New Jersey Navigators, Jimmy Cuevas, who was awarded the National Paralympics Coach of The Year Award.

The New Jersey Navigators team is the recipient of the 2013 Amazing Sport Club Award.

Driscoll has also been invited to speak in front of 600 students at Cole Middle School in East Greenwich, Rhode Island, on the topic of growing up differently and bullying.

According to Driscoll, he is extremely excited for his presentation in front of a large crowd.

"I'm really excited to go and speak. It will be a really great experience for me," he said.

CONTINUATIONS

BOSTON

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"I think that it was very effective in bringing the school together... [solidifying] the whole thing and [bringing] a sense of community to the tragedy," junior Vanessa Kelley said.

ASR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
seniors, who have already done a research project, to be able to disseminate their research," said Maria Burgess, ASR teacher.

Many were selected to present a poster of their work; however, senior Chris Xavier was asked to give an oral presentation on his research, a

more prestigious opportunity.

Xavier came in second place at the symposium, earning a \$1,500 scholarship, a \$300 cash prize, and becoming eligible to compete in a national symposium, which is in Ohio. "I felt good about my presentation, but I didn't really expect to win," Xavier said.

Burgess said she loves working with the ASR students, since it gives them a chance to see if they want to go into the field of scientific research when they get older.

"I love to see how much students can learn to appreciate the nitty-gritty parts of science," Burgess said.

Gonzales said she enjoys the structure and content of ASR. "It's one of my favor-

ite classes; it's independent." **SURVEY**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

statistics available regarding high school alcohol and drug use, but I think it will be a lot more interesting and meaningful for students to see the responses of their peers instead of some random people they've never met," The Independent editor-in-chief Maggie Lehar said.

Students were encouraged to answer the questions honestly due to the survey being both anonymous and confidential.

"I liked the idea. I see no reason why kids would lie because it was anonymous. I know that I didn't lie on the survey. But I

thought it was a good idea for the newspaper because we always have assemblies and what not about drugs and alcohol, so it is a good idea to see how many kids in our school those actually affect or are supposed to be speaking to," senior Christine Pries said.

The results of the survey can be found on pages 8-9 of this month's issue.

BIO ROOM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3
Another job of the biology class, according to Burgess, is working what they call a plant hospital. People within the school bring in their sick plants, and each student is assigned a plant to try and cure. Burgess said they successfully resurrected math

teacher Richard Brown's orchid.

Some of the plants are air cleansing plants, and they absorb fumes in the room that come from the preserved animals used by the anatomy class.

Finally, Burgess said she wants to "find a way to make dechlorinated water" because the water in the room is non-potable.

The classroom's ecosystem, according to Burgess, will allow students to be more involved in their biology education, since biology is a lab science.

"We're hoping eventually it will be this little self-sustaining ecosystem. We have to keep doing more and growing so everything can really take care of itself," Burgess said.

Chemical Health

Is MIAA's Zero-Tolerance Policy fair for student athletes?

Pro

Landon Komishane

Rules are put in place for a reason: to try to avoid current problems in today's society. That is what the MIAA chemical health rule is trying to accomplish as the organization attempts to limit the use of alcohol and drugs by student athletes in Massachusetts.

The current MIAA chemical health rule states that "a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance." This rule applies to athletes during the whole year.

Most students will complain that the rule is too harsh because they could get suspended from sports even if they are in the presence of alcohol; however, these punishments are necessary to send the message to the student that underage drinking is not acceptable.

Student athletes might not like this rule, but they need to realize that their adolescence is important. If students are serious about their athletics, then they would not want to jeopardize their eligibility to participate in athletics just because they made a mistake by breaking the law.

Not only does this rule apply to alcohol, but it also applies to drug use. Results of drug use and underage drinking have been car accidents, drug overdose, and other alcohol-related deaths.

The MIAA uses this rule to punish students for breaking the law. Sometimes, getting arrested does not send the full message to students. With this rule in place, breaking the law will also take something that the students love, like sports, away from them.

Drinking is unacceptable in general for high school students; the lingering effects are undeniable. High school student athletes can just breeze their way through their life while using alcohol and drugs. The age limit is in place for a specific purpose: to avoid getting alcohol in the wrong hands.

While the MIAA's rule won't stop underage drinking in Massachusetts completely, it will take steps forward in influencing student athletes not to break the law.

This rule of punishing student athletes for being involved with alcohol and drugs is the first step to ensuring the safety of the student athletes and anyone who could possibly become associated with them in the case of potential accidents.

Con

Sofia del Valle

Stringent rules are often met with resistance by teenagers. The MIAA (Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association) Zero Tolerance policy is no exception.

According to the MIAA policy, if a student athlete is caught using drugs or alcohol at any point during the school year, he or she is suspended for 25% of the season; a second offense bumps the suspension up to 60%, and a third requires the student to attend a chemical dependency program.

These rules should only apply to the athlete during the season during which he or she participates in a sport be it one or three seasons.

Despite the laws in Massachusetts that limit the use of alcohol and drugs, it is naive to think that some high school students don't drink or do drugs outside of school. Trying to enforce the Zero-Tolerance Policy, a rule that simply reiterates these state laws, throughout the entirety of the school year is both redundant and ineffective.

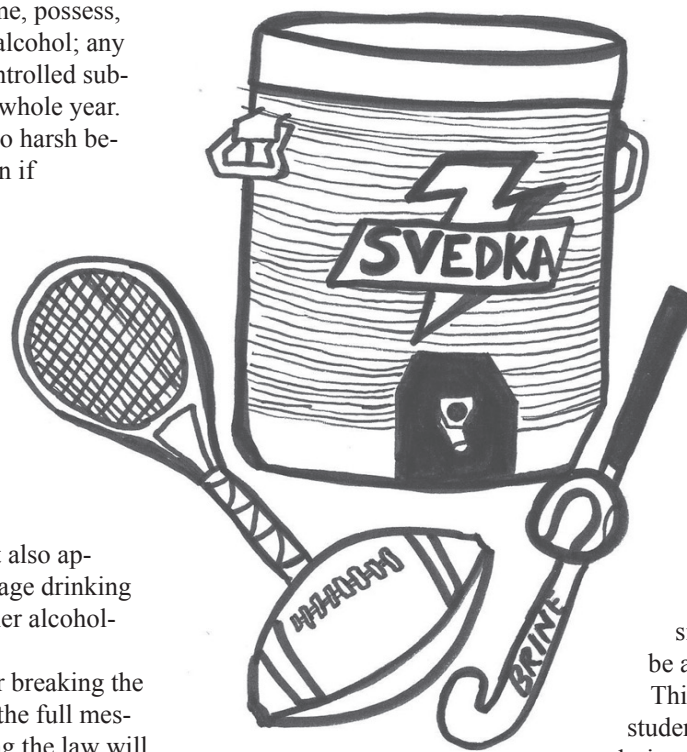
Exempting student athletes from the policy during their off season would be significantly more effective because they would be more willing to make a full commitment to their team, meaning not drink or do drugs over the course of the season.

If a student is not enrolled on a team during a given season, why should MIAA have any involvement in determining the consequences should a student get caught for using drugs or alcohol outside of school? In the case of such an incident, repercussions should be administered solely by the law, not by the state's athletic association. This issue is complex, and there is plenty of "gray" area. Suppose a student is caught using drugs or alcohol at a school function or event during his or her off season. Is it then reasonable to penalize the student's position and involvement on a team playing, though in some cases, up to six months later? Should there be a separate rule in the occurrence of this type of circumstance?

According to Paul Murphy, high school assistant principal, the Zero Tolerance policy only occurs in the case of an official police report involving a student athlete violating rules regarding underage drinking or drug usage.

It is still possible though, for the school to further investigate any photos, videos or overheard conversations referencing or displaying underage drinking or drug usage without a police report, which may or may not lead to a sports suspension, Murphy said.

Since the policy only applies if the police file a report against a student athlete, the MIAA should not be responsible for implementing any repercussions off season. Law enforcers can take care of this on their own.



RACHEL DALEY ILLUSTRATION

Music, movies glamorize drinking and smoking for teenagers

By Emily Arntsen
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Just the other day I caught myself saying, "This song almost makes me want to try coke." Wait, what? It's scary how subconsciously affected I am by music, movies, TV shows and advertisements.

I've been told my whole life that cigarettes are bad, but when I see a Hollywood starlet seductively toying with her cigarette, all I want to do is go out and buy a pack of Marlboro Lights.

Or when I see a Bond girl swill her vodka tonic before leaping into a sexy man's arms, all I want to do is drink fancy drinks and wear red lipstick.

Alcohol, drugs, cigarettes –

they're everywhere, flashing from every angle. I don't think I could tune the radio to a station that didn't play music centered on weed, shots, cocaine, or clubs.

Glamorous movies wouldn't be complete without champagne and cigarettes, action films without whiskey and guns. Movies portraying "typical highschoolers" wouldn't be interesting without joints or red Solo cups.

No matter who you want to be: glamour girl, James Bond or an average teenager, the media makes it seem like alcohol and drugs are a normal and essential part of that.

"Driving drunk, I'm doing my thing." Can we talk about this song lyric for a minute? Does this jerk have any idea what he's actually doing when he says this? He's creating an image that



ITSARAPROGO/FICKR.COM

Rapper Wiz Khalifa is one of many music artists to write lyrics that openly promote the use of marijuana.

any vulnerable teenager would want to mimic. And I get it. Who wouldn't want to feel like the rebellious trendsetters they hear on the radio?

Music is especially lethal for those of us who drive. Nothing makes us feel cooler than turning the volume up and letting our bodies vibrate to the bass while

we cruise around.

We listen to music that glorifies speeding, drinking and driving, burn rides, etc. all while driving, which makes a particularly dangerous combination. It's so easy to be invigorated by the music that all you want to do is something illegal, just for the hell of it.

But wait! Before we do something incredibly stupid, we must remember that the people we hear on the radio and the people we see in the theater don't represent real life.

We aren't rock stars, we aren't rappers, and we aren't winning Oscars, so let's not live pretending we are.



Science reveals reasoning behind human-dog connections

By Sofia del Valle
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

I recently found myself thinking about pets, dogs specifically. Upon purchasing Eliot, my rambunctious yet lovable beagle, my parents' biggest concern was that my sister and I would lose interest in him. Almost eight years later, Eliot is just as intriguing to us as he was the day we brought him home.

What exactly is it about dogs that cause people to grow so attached to them? I came across an article in the magazine *The Week* addressing the same idea.

The article is titled "Man's best oxytocin enhancer." According to the author John Homans, oxytocin is the "bonding hormone" that mediates the relationship between a mother and her child as well as trust between individuals. According to a study done in 2009, when people interact with dogs, the amount of oxytocin released in the brain increases.

My parents' biggest concern was that... I would lose interest in him.

It is not uncommon for people to talk to their dogs, often using a voice similar to one they would use to speak to a baby. According to the article, a theory by evolutionary psychologist John Archer states that dogs evolved in such a way to manipulate humans' "innate responses." It isn't a coincidence that dogs are born with such wide eyes and floppy ears, qualities that elicit peoples' maternal instincts.

It is not uncommon for people to talk to their dogs, often using a voice similar to one they would use to speak to a baby.

According to Homans, dogs play a positive role on the physical and emotional health of people. Because oxytocin is also the body's stress-relieving hormone, merely petting a dog can help reduce a person's anxiety. Studies also show that children brought up with a dog are more empathetic than those who aren't, and a 2008 statistic showed that a man with a dog is more likely to get a woman's number.

For those who doubt just how strong the connection is, imagine yourself in the hypothetical situation Homans poses in his article: in the case of a life threatening situation, who would you save first, your dog or a stranger?

STAFF EDITORIAL

Sporting events over vacations present problems for student athletes

As vacations approach, many student athletes planning on leaving fear that their season will be cut short or that their position will be in jeopardy, as coaches must suspend absent players from play and have the power to further penalize them, according to a school rule. However, this ideology completely disregards the true meaning of vacation and severely limits students in their ability to take part in valuable trips that may not be solely academic.

The reason for this rule is not uncalled for; in fact, it is simply a response to the Cape Ann League's decision to schedule sporting events over vacation weeks, according to athletic director Kelly Porcaro. Therefore, if too many athletes leave for vacation, enough players may not be present to even field a full team, let alone a competitive one.

However, the fact that the Cape Ann League chooses to schedule games over vacation weeks completely contradicts the entire meaning of vacation.

Student athletes in particular work extremely hard both in and outside of school, so there is no reason why they shouldn't



JOHN BEARDSLEY PHOTO

Athletes are prevented from participating in trips over vacations.

be allowed to have a vacation when all the other students get to have one. The practice and game schedules for high school athletes should not be as regimented as those of professionals.

The fact of the matter is athletes need a break too, and the limitation of when families with athletes can go away is unfair.

Not only are students re-

stricted in when they can go on family vacations, but they were previously not allowed to take part in school-endorsed trips either. Recently, however, the rule was waived by Principal Sharon Maguire when athletes planning on attending the April vacation trip to France brought the problem to her attention.

From now on, student athletes participating in any type of

a school-sponsored trip will be essentially exempt from athletic penalties, Maguire said.

However, according to junior lacrosse player Taylor Meek who attended the trip to France, the students are still expected to keep in shape over vacation through group workouts during free time.

The rule, additionally, contradicts what this school is trying to promote.

"The goal of our school is for students to be really well-rounded," Maguire said.

Students should be encouraged to take part in many different activities, not discouraged because they lose opportunities to go on impactful trips.

The Cape Ann League's decision to schedule sporting events over vacations causes conflict for all student athletes and coaches in the league, and the few games scheduled over vacation could easily be moved to another time.

While it is certainly necessary for student athletes to be dedicated team members, they are first and foremost students and deserve to take advantage of the limited number of vacations offered to them throughout the course of the year.

[The rule] contradicts the entire meaning of vacation.

Social networking websites distract students from valuable work time

By Rebecca Even
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Social networking sites are great for keeping in touch with faraway friends and relatives and communicating easily with those around you. But although they expedite the communication process, they also serve as prime targets for procrastination and distraction.

When I moved to Manchester from Connecticut in fifth grade, I missed my old friends, who were now three hours away. I emailed them a lot, but without smart phones, it often took them weeks to reply.

When I created a Facebook, I could chat with my friends, keep up with what they were doing,

and easily update them on my own life.

Talking with my friends often detracted from my homework time, but what did it matter? In fifth grade, I barely had any work to do.

Of course, having lived in Manchester for over six years, I've now settled in completely, but Facebook remains a useful tool and a dangerous distraction.

Many of my classes have Facebook groups where we keep each other updated on recent homework and complain about how much work we have.

The first is useful, the second is extremely dangerous. Even if I have my own mountains of

homework to do, it's always tempting to listen to other people gripe and to join in myself.

And although I love being able to chat my friends to ask about what I missed when

Many people get sucked into the voids that are [social networks].

I left early for an orthodontist appointment, I almost always get sidetracked. I look at people's profile pictures, read new statuses, and click on other

pages.

I'm not the only one who gets distracted. Many people get sucked into the voids that are Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Vine.

Everyone, especially students reluctant to begin homework, can

be tempted by easy distractions. While these websites can be useful for communication, they also easily ensnare teens whose only goal is to avoid their homework.

To get my work done, I have to exercise an extreme amount of self-control. No Facebook is permitted until I'm done with math homework, then a five minute break. This continues as I work my way through assignments.

I have not found a fail-proof way to avoid the distractions of social networking, aside from deleting my accounts. That being said, budgeting my time and being disciplined has prevented me from spending too many school nights regretting how much time I spent chatting with my friends, and browsing the lengthy news feed on my Facebook account.

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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.

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Alcohol, marijuana both negatively impact health, judgement

By Hannah Riordan
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Alcohol and marijuana go hand in hand. Alcohol is the most commonly used legal drug, while marijuana is the most commonly used illegal one.

Possibly because of the dangerous effects of dual use, many people often make lifestyle choices that involve either alcohol or marijuana, which leads to the debate about which drug is worse for overall health.

According to Jann Gumbiner of the University of California, Irvine, over the long term, alcohol appears to generally have more debilitating effects than marijuana. It affects the cardiovascular system, nervous system, gastrointestinal track, and especially the liver. Of Americans who report regular drinking,

around 50 percent, 7 percent, or 8 million people, are alcoholic.

Alcohol use in general is involved in 55 percent of all car accidents; other risks include alcohol poisoning and impulsive murders and suicides caused by decreased inhibition and increased aggression.

Marijuana is far less associated with detrimental health effects, although the lifestyle of someone who uses cannabis usually involves more intense, frequent use over time.

Although many proponents of the drug argue that it is not addictive, Psychology Today estimates that approximately 9 percent of users are physically dependent.

People who are addicted to marijuana, colloquially termed "potheads," often have trouble reducing or fully stopping their use. Marijuana addiction is accompanied by an intense with-

Many people often make lifestyle choices that involve either alcohol or marijuana.



COURTESY OF HANNAH RIORDAN

Both alcohol and marijuana severely limit the user's ability to react quickly in difficult situations.

drawal symptom similar to that of nicotine.

The non-profit organization Just Think Twice cites a roadside study that 45% of drivers pulled over for reckless driving were

found to have marijuana in their systems, negating the myth that marijuana doesn't affect driving ability.

Marijuana is also a contributing factor to lung cancer, risky

behavior, and cognitive impairment.

Neither alcohol nor marijuana is harmless or benign, and it is certainly a matter of opinion which is the lesser of two evils.

Explicit images, intimidating trips fail to stop reckless behavior

By Kendall McCormick
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Many schools take different approaches in trying to solve serious problems that affect the student body, such as substance abuse, driving, and bullying, gauging which preventative techniques are the most effective.

One approach involves the portrayal of the negative effects of these problems in an extremely explicit manner, thereby scaring students into avoiding these activities. This method is ineffective and almost excessively gruesome.

While students do need to know the consequences of their actions, showing extremely graphic videos is unnecessary. Telling students exactly what those consequences are is just as effective.

Instead of showing students terrible videos of car crashes that depict images that are scarring to many, students should be informed of the statistic of fatal car crashes in a year. That number alone should be more persuasive than videos showing the gory details. Isn't it enough to know people die in car accidents? Why would the specific details of those crashes make students any more

If students are partaking in illegal activities, they are making a conscious decision to disregard potential consequences.

apprehensive about driving?

The fact is they don't. These presentations just plant terrible images into everyone's heads.

Another ineffective instance of using fear as a teaching method is the freshmen trip to the jail. The idea in theory seems like a good one. Students, of course, need to understand the consequences of breaking the law. However, in practice, this trip is unproductive.

The prospect of jail for many students is enough of a threat. Especially in a generally high-achieving school such as Manchester Essex, jail is not a goal for most students.

Bringing students to a prison, where they are yelled at by scary prisoners who relay the tragic conditions of their own lives, is unnecessary. Prison is obviously an option for illegal actions. If students are partaking in illegal



SAVEALIFETOUR.COM

The Save a Life tour scares students to prevent drunk driving.

activities, they are making the conscious decision to disregard potential consequences.

Therefore, reinforcing the

penalties of wrongdoings is ineffective. Discovering the underlying reason for bad decision making would be more effective.

Drinking in controlled environment may prevent excessive alcohol abuse

By Natasha Statz-Geary
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Most adults I know agree that for teenagers to drink a small amount of alcohol at a family party is totally acceptable.

The extent to which parents should allow their children to drink under supervision beyond that point, however, is debated.

Many argue that parents should not be allowing, never mind encouraging, their children to drink; however, this is an ignorant mindset.

Most teenagers will find ways to obtain alcohol if they

want to drink, and it's definitely safer for teenagers to have a drink with their family at home under adult supervision as opposed to at a giant party a few towns over.

Additionally, allowing teenagers to have a drink in the house

Many teenagers are motivated to drink due to curiosity, so it's better they get that out of their system.

eliminates the massive danger of drinking and driving, as well as other potential threats of drinking at parties, including forced sexual acts and getting violently ill with no one sober around to help.

Even more important is the exposure to alcohol before college.

Many teenagers are motivated to drink due to curiosity, so it's better they get that out of their system in a controlled environment before they get to

college.

Drinking in college is practically inevitable, and if a teenager has been denied alcohol throughout his or her entire life, chances are he or she will go crazy once unlimited access to drinks comes around in college.

If a teenager has had experiences with alcohol before, he or she won't be as drawn into the craze of it in college because he or she will know what it's like and the consequences of drinking too much.

Not to say that parents should distribute alcohol. They should still discourage underage drinking, especially in excess.

Allowing teenagers to drink in moderation under parental supervision is a way to help them understand and learn to drink responsibly, which will prove to be an important skill to have in college and throughout life.



TOASTFORBREKKIE/FLICKR.COM

Some parents believe that exposing their teenage children to alcohol under supervision teaches them safe drinking habits.

Majority of students believe consuming alcohol, marijuana does not affect health, academics

By Maggie Lehar
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

According to a survey of 398 out of 484 MERHS students conducted to analyze the student body's views and practices regarding alcohol and marijuana use, 50% of students have consumed alcohol and 41% of students have smoked marijuana.

Seventy percent of students do not think that using alcohol or marijuana negatively affects their health or academic success; however, according to the Center for Disease Control, there are a multitude of risks associated with both drinking alcohol and smoking marijuana that can affect many aspects of the lives of students.

Use of Alcohol

The first question asked students whether or not they have drunk alcohol recreationally; the majority (50%) of students responded that they have drunk alcohol at least once. This percentage is consistent with the results of the national 2011 Monitoring the Future Survey conducted by the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan, which stated that 51% of high school students have drunk alcohol at least once in their life.

There was disparity between the results from students of different grades in regards to their consumption of alcohol. Less than a quarter of freshman students have drunk alcohol (24%), less than half of sophomore students have drunk alcohol (44%), and a majority of both juniors students (71%) and seniors students (71%) have drunk alcohol.

This data is also consistent with the findings of the national 2011 Monitoring the Future Survey that reported that 7 out of every 10 students (70%) have consumed alcohol (more than just a few sips) by the end of high school.

Students were also asked about their habits in regards to alcohol. Out of the students surveyed, 20% of students drink alcohol a few times a year, 30% drink alcohol once a month, and 11% of students drink alcohol every weekend. Less than 1% of students surveyed reported drinking alcohol more than once a week, and no students responded that they drink alcohol every day.

The data showed that out of the students who have drunk alcohol, the majority of students (79%) obtain alcohol through their friends. The other ways of obtaining alcohol students reported were from a parent (9%), stealing (8%), or from a sibling (5%).

The survey also contained questions concerning parents' views of their children's drinking. The majority of students (69%) answered that their

parents are aware of their consumption of alcohol, and out of the parents who know about their students alcohol consumption, 61% disapprove of it and 39% accept it. Less than 1% of students answered that their parents encouraged them to drink alcohol.

Use of Marijuana

Students were also surveyed about their use of marijuana, with 41% of students saying they have smoked marijuana. In the national 2011 Monitoring the Future Survey, only 31% of high school students had smoked marijuana, but the study also explained that this number was increasing each year. The junior class had the largest majority of students who have smoked marijuana, with 56% of students responding that they have. A majority of seniors surveyed (51%) also answered that they have smoked marijuana. Out of sophomore and freshmen students surveyed, 39% and 22% respectively reported having smoked marijuana.

Out of students surveyed, 10% of students smoked marijuana a few times a year, 10% smoke marijuana once a month, 11% smoke marijuana every weekend, 5% smoke marijuana more than once a week, and 2% smoke marijuana every day. This is less than the 4% of high school students that reported smoking marijuana every day in the national 2011 Monitoring the Future Survey.

Most students who have smoked marijuana reported obtaining it from their friends (64%). The next most common source of marijuana for students was dealers, with 35% of students who have smoked marijuana obtaining it in this way. No students reported obtaining marijuana through stealing or parents.

Risks associated with Drinking and Smoking

Seventy percent of students who responded to the survey an-

swered that they do not think that using alcohol or drugs negatively affect their health or academic success; however, according to the Center for Disease Control, there are a multitude of risks associated with drinking alcohol and smoking marijuana.

According to the Center for Disease Control, youth who start drinking before age 15 years are five times more likely to develop alcohol dependence or abuse later in life than those who begin drinking at or after age 21 years. Seventy-five out of the 198 students who reported drinking alcohol said that they began drinking at age 14 or younger.

Other risks associated with drinking alcohol include school problems, such as higher absence and poor or failing grades, social problems, such as fighting and lack of participation in youth activities, unwanted, unplanned, and unprotected sexual activity, disruption of normal growth and sexual development, higher risk for suicide and homicide, and changes in brain development that may have life-long effects, according to the CDC.

According to the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, smoking marijuana poses many risks to high school students, including legal problems, problems with memory and concentration, decreased motivation or interest, and mental health problems, such as depression, anxiety, anger, and moodiness.

According to director of guidance Sherri Lewis-Sholler, the negative effects of drug and alcohol abuse in adolescents are apparent in school.

"Your brains are just now developing so [drug use] affects your ability to focus and concentrate. I find the same thing with students who use alcohol excessively; it impacts brain function as well as other body functions and grades drop," she said.

According to the survey, 6% of students have come to school

under the influence of alcohol or marijuana and 13% have come to a school event under the influence of alcohol or marijuana.

Another major risk associated with drinking alcohol or smoking marijuana is alcohol or marijuana related car crashes according to the AACAP. Fifteen percent of students answered that they have driven under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and 39% of students answered that they have been a passenger in a car while the driver was under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Students who think they might have a problem with drug or alcohol use should let their parents or someone at the school know, Lewis-Sholler said.

"[Students should] seek out Ms. Aldrich or a guidance counselor so we can get treatment for them as soon as possible," she said.

Perception

According to the results of the survey, students ideas regarding what percentage of students drink alcohol or smoke marijuana vary greatly. In the survey, students were asked to estimate what percentage of MERHS students drink alcohol: 13% thought less than 25% of students drink, 30% thought 25-50% of students drink, 40% thought 50-75% of students drink, and 18% thought more than 75% of students drink. Students were also asked what percentage of MERHS students they think smoke marijuana. The most common answer was 50-75%, with 47% of students selecting this response. 10% of students estimated less than 25% of students smoke marijuana, 27% estimated 25-50% of students smoke marijuana, and 16% estimated more than 75% of students smoke marijuana.

Of the students who have smoked marijuana or drunk alcohol, the majority of students (77%) said that their main reason for consuming alcohol or marijuana was to have fun.

STATISTICS

- 50% of high school students have consumed alcohol
- 41% of high school students have smoked marijuana
- Freshmen: 24% have consumed alcohol, 22% have smoked marijuana
- Sophomores: 44% have consumed alcohol, 39% have smoked marijuana
- Juniors: 71% have consumed alcohol, 56% have smoked marijuana
- Seniors: 71% have consumed alcohol, 51% have smoked marijuana
- 69% of students' parents know about their drinking habits
- 6% of students have come to school under the influence of drugs/alcohol
- 70% of students do not think alcohol or drug use affects health/academics
- 15% have driven under the influence of drugs/alcohol
- 77% of students consume alcohol or drugs to have fun



SIGNS OF HAV

- Feeling guilty or ashamed a
- Lying to others to hide one's
- Needing to drink routinely in
- Frequently "blacking out" an
- drinking.
- Using alcohol in dangerous
- Continuing to drink despite p
- Denial (drastically underesti
- consequences of one's drink

HOW TO C

- Help them join a support gro
- Recognize that recovery is a
- Do not expect them to quit v
- Do not preach against drink
- Do not try and reason with t



Loose drinking rules of European countries encourage binge drinking

By Rebecca Even
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

As the debate over the drinking age continues, many people have turned to Europe as proof that looser laws prevent the binge drinking and alcoholism that is so common in the United States.

However, in many cases this is untrue. According to The New York Times, in 2012, "Europe [had] the highest proportion of drinkers in the world, the highest levels of alcohol consumption per capita and a high level of alcohol-related harm."

Based on this same data, drinking among Europeans causes 1 in 10 cases of sickness and premature death.

But when European governments attempt to limit drinking in excess, heavy drinkers turn to crime to acquire alcohol.

According to a study done by the Global Alcohol Policy Alliance in 2005, in any given year, 23 million Europeans rely on alcohol.

The British government is attempting to put a stop to binge drinking by proposing a minimum price on alcoholic beverages, The New York Times said. However, this raises the issue of bootlegging. If alcohol becomes too expensive in Britain, people might begin smuggling it into the country.

According to research by the



CORBIS.COM

Drinking laws in Europe may affect drinking habits of Europeans.

Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation in 2007, the percentage of 15-16 year olds that reported drinking in the past month in the United States was 33%.

In the United Kingdom, 70% of the teens surveyed reported drinking in the past 30 days.

According to a study done by the Global Alcohol Policy Alliance in 2005, in any given year, 23 million Europeans rely on alcohol.

The only country with a lower percentage than the United States was Iceland, where 30% of teenagers said they had a drink in the past month.

In contrast, some studies have shown that if teens are exposed to alcohol early on and taught to drink responsibly, they do not develop negative drinking habits. "[In America, children] who

[grow] up in families where alcohol was forbidden at the table, but [is] consumed away from the home, apart from food, [are] seven times more likely to be alcoholics than those who [come] from families where wine [is] served with meals but drunkenness [is] not tolerated," The New York Times said.

Although many people have criticized the harsh drinking laws in the United States, data has shown that these stringent rules have helped prevent many American teenagers from developing alcoholism early on.

However, some young people, as soon as they turn 21, having not been taught the dangers of binge drinking, are determined to get drunk. According to many studies, underexposure to drinking may actually be the cause of many alcohol-related problems in the United States.

Drinking at an early age increases risk of alcoholism

By Natasha Statz-Geary
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Most teenagers who choose to start drinking alcohol at an early age know about the short term risks but decide to overlook them for a night of fun; however, what they may not realize is that they are substantially increasing their risk of alcoholism at an older age.

Those who choose to drink at an early age are not only increasing their risk of liver failure and other negative side effects, but they are also increasing the chances of becoming dependent on alcohol.

A study done by the National Institute of Health in 2006 found that of 43,000 adult alcoholics surveyed, nearly half had a dependency on alcohol by age 21.

Even more staggering were the results from a Boston University study. The study used data from the 2001-2002 National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions, which used data from US citizens age 18 and older.

The study found that individuals who began drinking at age 14



FLICKR.COM

People who drink at an early age increase their risk of alcoholism.

or older were 38% more likely to develop alcoholism than those who began drinking at age 21 or older.

These numbers seem even more alarming considering that over 50% of America's population has had at least one drink by eighth grade, and 20% of the population admit that they've been "drunk" by eighth grade.

The short term effects of early drinking are also more numerous than most know.

A study done by the Journal of Research on Adolescence found that eighth-grade girls who drink are 26% more likely to attempt suicide than those who don't drink, and they also found a much higher risk of sexual assault to those who drink.

Additionally, their choice to drink can affect others around them. The Mayo Clinic found that those with friends and family members who are alcoholics are more likely to become alcoholics.

WARNING AN ALCOHOL PROBLEM:

- about drinking.
- drinking habits.
- drinking in order to relax or feel better.
- drinking and not being able to remember what happened while drinking.
- drinking in ways such as driving or mixing with medication.
- drinking causing personal or professional problems that result from drinking.
- drinking and not estimating how much one drinks, downplaying the negative effects of drinking (e.g., blacking out, etc.).

GET A LOVED ONE HELP:

- drinking is an ongoing process.
- drinking without help.
- drinking and not talking to the loved one while they are intoxicated.

Health Matters

Experts provide spring allergy solutions

By Fiona Davis
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

As spring approaches and flowers and trees begin to blossom, pollen will soon be in the air.

The numerous solutions to these air born allergens range in scope from household modifications, to property maintenance, to antihistamine medications.

According to BBC's health news section, opening windows and increasing ventilation in homes year round rather than closing them to the air outside helps to dry out living spaces and mediate the accumulation of allergens. Only in peak pollen season should windows be closed.

Other home improvements the BBC suggests include removing thick carpets, soft upholstered furniture, and house plants, all of which accumulate dust and pollen that aggravate allergy symptoms.

Mold can be just as much of an allergen as pollen, especially in rainy or windy weather, according to WebMD. To avoid molds, WebMD suggests keeping gutters and drains clear. The site also warns that mold can build up in air conditioning sys-



FIONA DAVIS PHOTO

Furnishing and household changes combat pollen as it worsens , as do over the counter medications like Benadryl and Zyrtec.

tems in cars, requiring treatment using products from automobile shops.

Another common allergy culprit is the family pet, which the BBC says should be removed from the household if a person is allergic. The alternative to removing the pet is allowing it to go outside for most of the day, confining it to uncarpeted rooms, and bathing it often.

Both WebMD and BBC suggest antihistamine medications to combat allergies; however, they

say these medicines are most effective if they are taken before allergy symptoms begin to occur.

If a person with a pet allergy plans to visit a house with pets, for example, BBC suggests that the person prepare by taking the medicine one or two hours before the visit.

WebMD says that the following medicines are some of the most successful and the most popular allergy relief options: Allegra, Benadryl, Claritin, and Zyrtec.

Business club gives first presentation, 12 kids attend

By Fiona Davis
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Starting a new club is no easy task, according to junior Kelly Moore, who recently began the Business Speakers' Bureau.

"I have spent a lot of time on this... it is definitely a large time dedication," she said.

According to her, students can join the club to meet professionals who have careers in business.

"Ideally people will be able to come to our presentations to gain a firsthand look at what outside companies do and to learn about the business world," she said.

According to Moore, she decided to start the club because of her own interest in a future business career and her goal of providing other students with helpful career information.

In preparation for the club's first meeting on April 10, Moore and co-founder, junior Mike Leahy, spent time putting up posters and promoting the presentation, Leahy said.

"We have done a lot of work with Ms. Maguire who sent out an email to the community... and we have also hung up a lot of flyers," he said.



REBECCA EVEN PHOTO

The Business Speaker's Bureau's first speaking guest was Michael Even, above, CEO of the investment company Numeric. Even said he was impressed with junior and club founder Kelly Moore. Moore worked alongside junior Mike Leahy on the club.

According to Leahy, Moore has been heading up their advertising activities and communications with speakers.

"Kelly has definitely been leading the club... she is the one who is getting in contact and who established the group," he said.

The first speaker was Michael Even, the CEO of the investment company Numeric.

Even said he was impressed by Moore's dedicated efforts in contacting him for the presentation.

"She has been very profes-

sional... and very consistent in reaching out to me," he said.

According to Moore, 12 students attended the club's first meeting, and she was pleased with Even's informative presentation and thought the turnout was good for the first meeting.

"Mr. Even was a great public speaker, and he educated the whole group about the stock market and gave us some very useful advice," she said.

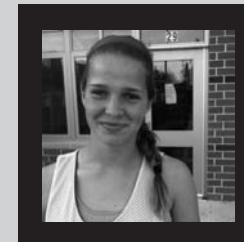
The next speaker, according to Moore, is former student Justin Sandler who founded the company Black Earth Compost. She said she hopes to have the presentation in late May.

'I have spent a lot of time on this... it is definitely a large time dedication.'

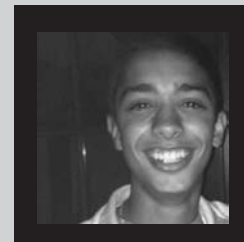
-KELLY MOORE



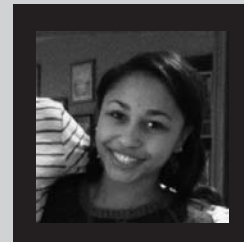
Freshman Scotty Franklin:
"Somewhere in Greece."



Freshman Jenny Cochand:
"The Caribbean."



Sophomore Lucas Firme:
"Coco Key."

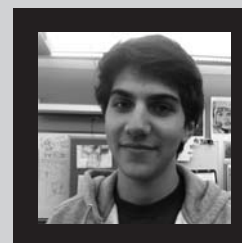


Sophomore Maya Heath:
"The Eiffel Tower."

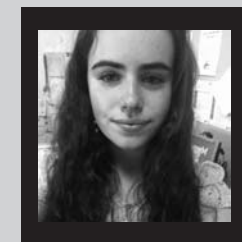
Student Speak

If you could have prom anywhere, where would you want it to be?

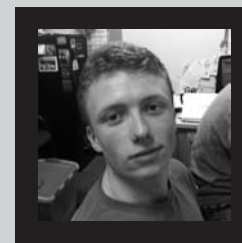
Junior Chris Pelligrini:
"On top of a mountain in Brazil."



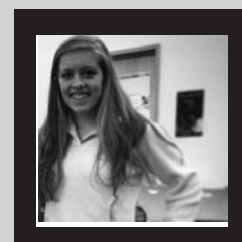
Junior Anna Heffernan:
"Castle Hill."



Senior Pat Hagar:
"The Penthouse."



Senior Megan Jones:
"A cruise boat."





Microsoft creates versatile new tablet, available in two versions

By Isadora Decker-Lucke
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Attachable magnetic keyboard.

Variety of apps to choose from, which are compatible with Windows 7 and Windows 8.

The Pro starts at \$899.

Front-facing camera.

10 pt. multi-touch HD screen.

Pen for writing and drawing.

Includes stereo speakers, headset jacks and coverports.

Many included applications.

Hardware warranty lasts one year.

Weighs 2 lbs.

MICROSOFT.COM



RACHEL DALEY PHOTO

Senior and Green Scholar Max Nesbit and the Museum of Science presenter race to create light.

Green Scholars travel to Museum of Science, visit several energy exhibits

By Rachel Daley
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Embarking on its second Sustainability Day on Wednesday, March 13, the Green Scholars program traveled into Boston via train to spend the day at the Museum of Science.

The trip aimed to increase environmental literacy by viewing several exhibits regarding energy efficient technologies and climate change. Additionally, they attended special movie showings in the Mugar Omni Theatre and Planetarium.

"The trip complemented and reinforced our Green Scholars program while also providing an ideal way to encourage students to have fun while learning," Green Team director Eric Magers

said.

To begin the day, the Scholars visited the "Catching the Wind" exhibit, where they learned about the technology of wind turbines and heard stories about local wind turbine projects throughout Massachusetts.

Next, the students attended a presentation on current energy issues and what pathways humans can take to provide solutions. According to junior Anna Heffernan, the presenter explained how nano-technology can be used to make current energy technologies, such as solar panels, even more efficient.

"It was reassuring to find out that scientists are working on things like photo-voltaic paint, which could be used in households across the world," Heffernan stated.

According to multiple Green Scholars, the favorite event of the day was a special movie viewing of "The Last Reef" in the Mugar Omni Theatre, which has a screen wider than one's peripheral vision can span.

"It was unlike any other movie I've seen before," junior Jake Tyler said. "The theatre made it easy for the movie to get its point across: our connection with ocean's complex, parallel worlds."

"I felt like I was right there swimming with the jellyfish," Heffernan said. "It was an amazing experience."

To cap off the day, the Green Scholars went to a few more environmental exhibits, learning about climate change and the natural habitats scattered throughout New England.

"Once again, I had a lot of fun on this Sustainability Day," Tyler said. "I can't wait for the next one!"



ACCESSIBLE ICON PROJECT PHOTO

People with disabilities who will be most affected by the new icon often help with the painting of the symbol, done with a stencil.

The Moving Forward Project reframes public idea of disability

By Isadora Decker-Lucke
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

At Gordon College, the first version of a new "accessible icon" was created, and it has sparked a nationwide movement.

The previous International Symbol of Access, which is often seen on handicapped parking spaces, looks very sedentary and immobile to many people, including Jeffrey Gentry, the Senior Director of Community Relations and Program Development at Triangle Incorporated in Malden, MA.

Triangle Incorporated is a non-profit to which visual artist Sarah Hendren donated her design for a new, accessible icon.

Hendren worked on her design with philosopher Brian Glenney, who works at Gordon College.

"Sarah's really interested in visual representation and how symbols alter the world, and she was really annoyed with the International Symbol of Access

because she viewed it as very static, as basically screaming out 'push me' rather than indicating that people with disabilities are advocates who can access the world successfully on their own," Gentry said.

Glenney is also interested in the way that the perception of the world shapes our understand-

ing of it. "I started to see people calling the International Symbol of Access the handicapped symbol. The word handicapped is a negative term for people with disabilities, it actually means cap in hand, like a beggar," he said.

The previous International Symbol of Access, which is often seen on handicapped parking spaces, looks very sedentary and immobile to many people.

According to accessibleicon.org, many changes have been made to the previous symbol. The head and legs are tilted forward and the arm is pointing backwards "suggesting dynamic mobility of a chair user" and indicating that the person is moving themselves rather than being moved.

According to Gentry, the symbol is approved

by the American Disabilities Association, and has already been implemented in many places such as Malden, New York City, Clark Shoes National

'People with disabilities have a real role and a contribution to make to society, and we need to be open to and willing to perceive that.'

-JEFFREY GENTRY

Headquarters and Talbots International Distribution Center. The City of Burlington and many retail locations in North Carolina are considering using the icon as well.

"It's meant to reframe the idea of disability for the public. Part of our mission at Triangle is to help the world

realize that we're all equal with ability, and that's really important... people with disabilities have a real role and a contribution to make to society, and we need to be open to and willing to perceive that," Gentry said.

"For only being around for eight months, we've made a lot of progress," Glenney said.

Boys' lacrosse carries 2-5 record into May

By Landon Komishane
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Transition to a new coach in Jack McCavanagh was a challenge for the lacrosse team, but according to senior captain John Beardsley, they are close to being on the same page with McCavanagh.

Beardsley said it was only a matter of time before McCavanagh and the team could get acquainted with each other.

"The transition to his coaching style wasn't bad," Beardsley said. "It was just getting to know him and him to know us that took some time."

Beardsley also said that the two assistant coaches, Steven Driscoll and Alex Kaufman, help the team and coach well alongside McCavanagh.

'I like our intensity. We play with fast pace and with a lot of energy. To be successful, we have to be consistent. We need to learn to play our best at all times.'

-JACK MCCAVANAGH

McCavanagh said that the team is currently 2-5, with wins coming against St. Mary's and Gloucester and losses including Peabody and Masconomet. He is focused on the development of his team, the team's record.

"I like our intensity. We play with fast pace and with a lot of energy," he said. "To be successful, we have to be consistent. We need to learn



LANDON KOMISHANE PHOTO

Freshman Jack Hennigan goes to steal the ball from a Gloucester player. He's considered an X-factor for the team moving forward.

to play our best at all times."

Beardsley said that the team's best game was a 9-7 loss against North Reading. Although they did not come out victorious, he said that the team played very hard against a tough opponent.

The team has found many positives as new players are stepping up in their new roles. Junior captain Chris Dumont and Beardsley specifically pointed freshman Jack Hennigan as one of those players.

"We knew he would play and be good, but he surprised me," Beardsley said. "He is as our main face off midfielder and one of our best defensive mid-fielders."

Dumont also mentioned junior Mike Chlumecky and sophomore Chris McAuliff as keys on defense and freshman Bennett Strayton as someone who has played well on attack.

Every member of the team would have to step up at some point in the season in order for the team to be successful, Dumont said.

Girls' lacrosse manages to improve despite small numbers

By Emily Arntsen
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Girls' lacrosse has proved its strength by continuing to improve, despite the small size of the team this season with 16 players.

"We hardly have enough girls to scrimmage against each other," junior player Brittany Smith said.

Regardless of graduating five senior players last year, the team hasn't sacrificed its competitive edge, according to head coach Sarah Holch.

So far, the girls' record is 7-1. Their one loss, to Marblehead High School, was extremely close, 12-11.

In the next couple weeks, the team has many important games, according to Holch.

Holch predicted their match against Newburyport was going to be very competitive because Manchester Essex beat Newburyport twice and pre-

vented them from making it to the tournament last year.

The team beat Newburyport 13-7.

Since the team has such small numbers this season, each player "really impacts the team," Holch said.

"I can't really pick out any key players; each girl is equally important to the team, even if they're on the bench," she said.

The team's success this year is due to "excellent focus and a great team atmosphere," Holch said.

Over April vacation, the team was missing a key player for two games due to an educational school trip. Senior captain Carolyn Heslop said that her ab-

sence "fortunately didn't hurt the team." They won both games held over April vacation without her.

Each player is healthy; there are no injuries.

"So far we haven't run into any major problems. Everything has gone pretty smoothly so far," Holch said.

In fact, Holch said the team has been particularly lucky: "We've had beautiful weather all year.

There's only been one practice where we had to stop early because of thunder."

The team still has the goal of going far in the state tournament, according to Holch, and if the team plays together for the rest of the season, then they will succeed and achieve their goals that they have set forth.

'I can't really pick out any key players; each girl is equally important to the team, even if they're on the bench.'

-SARAH HOLCH



EMILY ARNTSEN PHOTO

Freshman Jennifer Cochand warms up before one of her games. Her teammates describe her as a piece of the future for the team.

Sailing starts season with 11 wins, hopes to continue success

By Hannah Riordan
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

The sailing team is halfway through their season, which was packed with several preliminary regattas that have helped to determine how competitive they will be for the rest of the season.

The team won a recent race, the O'Day Qualifier, by 52 points, which allows them to compete in the upcoming round of fleet race competition in Greenwich, Connecticut.

So far, the group holds a record of 11-2. Senior captain Brady Winn said he hopes to carry this momentum to bigger victories.

"We're out there to sail and have fun and we have a great group which can be really accomplished. For me, I really want us to win states this year," Winn said, adding that the team has been very close to



HANNAH RIORDAN PHOTO

Sophomore William Kiley and junior Luke Andersen trail junior Cam Shaw and sophomore Cam Holley during a recent practice.

a state title in recent years past. Sailing won another race at Sharon; coach Kevin Dooley

said that the team used Manchester Harbor to simulate the more isolated conditions of a lake.

Sophomore William Kiley has high expectations for the

season following what he considers to be a successful first half.

"We are fairly optimistic about the second half; however, it will be much more difficult than the first, and achieving our season goals will

require a level of maturity and dedication that I feel the team is capable of producing," Kiley said.

Important races against Tabor, Sharon, and St. George's happened on the weekend of April 27. The race against Tabor was a team race, not a fleet race, and Dooley said that this shifted the focus of practice while the team prepared.

Junior captain Quinn Andersen stressed the impor-

tance of the race against Tabor. "I think we were all nervous

'Achieving our season goals will require a level of maturity and dedication that I feel the team is capable of producing.'

-WILL KILEY

to race against Tabor, especially because we embarrassed ourselves a few years ago by forfeiting and haven't

been asked back to race since," Andersen said.

The team lost team races to Tabor and Duxbury, and competed at the second round of the O'Day Qualifier for fleet racing against the 15 best teams in New England.

Nonetheless, both captains confirmed that they won against Martha's Vineyard on Saturday and hope to continue their success throughout the next of the season.

Baseball team continues to improve, shows promise

By Sarah Beckman
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With a 2-5 opening record, the baseball team continues on a path of progress toward another shot at the State Tournament.

Prior to the first game, juniors Kevin Carter, starting varsity left fielder; and Billy Burnham, first and third baseman and JV pitcher, commented on the relative smoothness of tryouts, noting the lack of cuts from both teams.

The resulting varsity team, led by captains and seniors Max Nesbit, Jake Fitzgerald, and Cory Burnham, is comprised of mostly the same players from last year, except a few who really "shined" at tryouts, according to Carter.

One such exception is freshman Brandon Bartlett, the only freshman chosen to play on varsity this year.

To prepare further for the remaining season, both JV and

varsity teams attended multiple morning practices and games over April break at their home field of Memorial Park, Essex.

Varsity tried to reload after Georgetown handed them an 8-0 loss on April 11 to start the season, according to coach Robert Garrett. Georgetown scored five runs in the first inning; Garrett said it was difficult to recover, especially on the road.

"It was the first game for many [new] varsity players, so there were a lot of first game jitters," he said.

However, the Hornets battled back on April 27 when faced with Georgetown for the second time, defeating them 5-4 and giving them their first loss of the season. Bartlett pitched a complete game, and Cory Burnham scored in the bottom of the sixth inning to seal the win.

"This is the first time Manchester Essex has beaten Georgetown in a while, [though] I don't know the exact length of time," Carter said.



SARAH BECKMAN PHOTO

Junior Kevin Carter takes a swing in a home game at Memorial Park in Essex against Lynnfield.

The team's remaining victory was on April 16 in a home game against Lynnfield. Prevailing with a 6-4 win, the Hornets hit in five runs to tie and eventually surpassed Lynnfield's early 4-1 lead.

The main goal the team is

looking towards so far this season is making the state tournament for the second straight season.

"It was an amazing experience making the state tournament last year, but now that we did it once all we want to do is go back. We

know we can compete once we get there so all we need to do is play as a team, make the plays we need to make, and really focus on doing what we need to do to win the games we need to win to make the state tournament," Nesbit said.

Softball team continues to develop skills and improve record



SOFIA DEL VALLE PHOTO

Senior captain Kelsi Field practices catching a fly ball on turf field.

By Sofia del Valle
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Six games into the season with new coach Steve Price, the softball team's record currently stands at 1-5.

"We had positive results when we won our first game of the season against Ipswich," Price said.

The final score was 7-3.

Over April break the team played two games against Rockport and Haverhill, both of which resulted in heavy losses.

According to Price, the team was short-handed at this time due to vacations and other commitments, which clearly showed on the field.

"We haven't really had everyone play together because of vacations, so once the whole team is together we should be even more successful," said Kelsi Field, senior softball captain.

Nicole Bradley, also a senior captain, hopes to better the team's record.

"We are definitely beginning to come together as a team and we will remain positive throughout the season," Bradley said.

Junior Paige Zaval said that the team has been doing well in practice and will definitely have a stronger season compared to last year in which the final record was 3-16.

Despite previous shortcomings the team experienced during April vacation, according to Price the team is making good progress.

"We've worked very hard on defense positioning. I've put in a system that is different than what the girls have been used to, and

they've improved greatly since the early practices," Price said.

Field also hopes to continue applying what they do in practice to their games as well as increase the overall communication between players on the field, she said.

According to Price, other areas he plans to work on with the team is having a more aggressive approach at the plate when players are up at bat, and taking fewer strikes.

In terms of adjusting to a new school and athletic program, Price said that he is happy with the transition and that everyone has been very supportive.

"The players have been great. They're hustling, they're working very hard, and they want to win," he said.

'We are definitely beginning to come together as a team and will keep getting better as a team.'

-NICOLE BRADLEY

Ultimate Frisbee concentrates more on having fun, playing hard

By Max Nesbit
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With a young group of play-

ers this year, the ultimate frisbee team is concentrating more on having fun and less on wins and losses, according to coach Eric Magers.

"We have won some and lost some, but I really do not care about the outcome of

the game. All I really care about is that everyone is improving and that everyone is having fun while they're doing it," Magers said.

The team is young this year, and their goal is not to make the playoffs but to prepare the

team for future runs for the playoffs, according to Magers.

"We definitely have a young team, but it is a team filled with talent. In every grade we have

someone who can be a star in the future, reaching all the way down to the middle school.

This year we have some really talented seniors as well, but our main focus is on the future at this point," junior captain Sam Nesbit said.

Although the team has been success-

ful in accomplishing their goals, there are still many aspects that Magers wants to improve.

"I would really like to make sure that our program is organized a little better and that we have a more defined A and B team. This is



TIERNEY MCTIERNAN PHOTO

Captains senior Alex Walder and junior Sam Nesbit wait on the sideline of a game on Hyland field.

something that can easily be fixed, but other than that this season has been a success," Magers said.

Senior captain Alex Walder said, "This is my last year of disk, and I really could not have asked for anything more. I love

playing every day with everybody on the team, and we play hard and have fun every day."

According to Magers, the team is young, and some key players that have stepped up for the team are eighth-grader David La-

Forge and senior Audrey Davis..

"Of course my captains have been the real leaders of this team though, and I hope that they can only push us more into the right direction as the season continues," Magers said.

Boys' tennis defeats Hamilton-Wenham, wins CAL Open

By Rachel Daley
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Starting off the season with a 4-0 record and a rare win against Hamilton-Wenham, the boys' tennis team is looking particularly strong compared to previous years.

With six returning varsity players, including previous Cape Ann All-League players sophomore Michael Fuca and senior captain Calvin Lamothe, and new seventh-grader Sam Girian, the boys cruised over Hamilton-Wenham 5-0.

"It felt phenomenal," coach

'Everyone on the team has their own personal aspect of tennis they have to work on, so each practice we strive to get better in that regard'

-COLIN BABIKIAN

Robbie Bilsbury said. "It was definitely a match we were really gearing up for all season."

According to Bilsbury, each individual match was well-contested, but the boys played "outstanding tennis," resulting in a win.

According to senior captain Colin Babikian, this was the first time the boys have beaten Hamilton-Wenham since 2007.

"Hopefully this is a good sign for States, but you really never know," Babikian said. "Everyone on the team has their own personal aspect of tennis they have to work on,

so each practice we strive to get better in that regard."

The team also won the Cape Ann League Open in all three

singles positions and in second doubles. Fuca is playing at first singles for the year, Lamothe is playing at second, and Girian is playing at third. Juniors Jeffrey Durkin and Seth Cohen will pair together at first doubles while seniors Babikian and Josh Christopher will play at second doubles.

Although the wins are exciting, the boys are not letting the excitement get to their heads, Bilsbury said.

"Masconomet is going to be good because they just got a new number one singles player who will push everyone down," Bilsbury said. "Every team we play is capable of giving us a battle."

Babikian, Lamothe, and Bilsbury all agreed that they need to stay focused and take things match by match, and they will in turn succeed by doing so.

"All of our work is finally paying off," Lamothe said. "We have a really strong team this year, and I think we will definitely make it farther this year in States."



RACHEL DALEY PHOTO

Sophomore Winston Feuerbach back hands the ball at a practice.

Girls' tennis team dominates with opening record, sets pace for season

By Lila Hughes
INDEPENDENT STAFF

After finishing their first week of matches, the girls' tennis team set the pace for the rest of their season by winning both matches against Boston Latin Academy and Hamilton-Wenham, maintaining a 6-0-0 record.

Because of the late winter this year, the team had to have 5:30 am practices at the Manchester Athletic Club before their first match. Although, according to tennis coach Philip Logsdon, the team's spirit about it was great and there was very little complaining.

Their first match and win of the season at an away match against Boston Latin Academy. The team won the match 5-0, and the junior varsity team won most of their matches. Returning to the team this year is first



LILA HUGHES PHOTO

Senior captain Brittany Collens plays singles on varsity and plans on participating in college tennis.

singles player senior captain Brittany Collens, who will be playing at New Mexico State University next year.

"Brittany Collens played Dede, who is another tournament

level player from Boston Latin, and traded some wonderful strokes back and forth...some of those strokes were incredible to see," coach Logsdon said.

The following day, the ten-

nis team played a home match against Hamilton-Wenham and won 5-0. This was the first time the tennis team played on the new courts in front of the elementary school.

According to Logsdon, Molly Carlson was very tactical and strategic in how she placed her shots when playing first doubles with junior Rachel Daley.

"This is one of the first years where we have both strong singles and doubles teams which will create really good results. I can see us winning States this year, especially if we beat Bedford in the North Division," captain Rachel Daley said.

The team has a total of 34 girls, 10 as varsity players and 24 junior varsity players. In the Hamilton-Wenham match, 18-20 girls actually got to play, some girls never having played competitively.

"With the addition of Brittany Collens and having coach Logsdon step up, our team will be better than ever this year," captain Michelle Fuca said.

According to Logsdon, Fuca has a signature spin shot; it was useful during Hamilton-Wenham.

Track team aspires to continue success with benefits of new coaching method

By Kendall McCormick
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Both girls' and boys' outdoor track teams are currently maintaining winning records at 2-1 and have additionally exhibited many strong individual performances, according to head coach Jeff Destino.

After the three first meets in the season, six Gloucester athletes on the girls' team are qualified for the state meet: Elle Wierbicky in the 200 meters, Bianca Giacalone in the 400 meters, the 4 by 100 meter relay team of Kayla Nasser, Timia Buckley, Elle Wierbicky, Bianca Giacalone, Liz McCormack in the discus and shot put; and Hannah Pastagal in the discus.

The team has been so strong in the beginning of the season that Destino believed they could have beaten Danvers, their one

loss, had all the athletes been present.

According to Destino, the new method of coaching involving multiple specialized coaches has been very effective in the organization of the team. He added that the athletes have benefitted greatly from their individual coaches' expertise.

Freshman distance runner Charlie Davis said the intensive and specialized workouts at practices have helped him improve from the indoor track season.

He, along with freshman Megan Clark, is looking forward to the upcoming Freshman-Sophomore meet on April 27 where both freshmen will be able to compete with athletes their own age from a wide array of towns.

Clark is a newcomer to track but has enjoyed the season so far, improving her times and meeting new people.

Destino said they are specifically looking to improve in



FIONA DAVIS PHOTO

Freshman Charlie Davis has improved with the help of coach Jeff Destino's new training procedure.

jumping events, which include the long, triple, and high jumps, as injuries have thinned out the number of participants in that

field.

The team is looking to continue excelling at a conference level, according to Destino,

as six in-league meets remain before the post-season.

Both track teams seek to improve over the remaining season.

Seniors direct play and construct dressing room for S.C.O.R.E. project

By Emily Arntsen
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

For part of their S.C.O.R.E. project, seniors Kelsey Trumble, Nicole D'Ambrosio and Chloe Schwartz will produce the high school spring play.

Originally, the girls wanted to produce "Audience," which was abandoned because of the DramaFest Competition, but because of a lack of actors and time, the club will put on two comedic skits, "The Actor's Nightmare" and "Words, Words, Words."

These skits will be performed in conjunction with other musical performances on May 30 and 31.

S.C.O.R.E. adviser Elizabeth Edgerton will assist the girls with all phases of theater production like "the directorial and management aspects," she said.

"I'll help them with things like rehearsal scheduling and reserving the auditorium," Edgerton said, "but they'll be the

ones directing the play and telling the actors what to do; I'll just be dropping hints."

Edgerton believes this is a good opportunity, "especially for Chloe and Nicole, who have been on stage a lot but not necessarily backstage," to discover if theater could be a potential career path for them.

D'Ambrosio is thankful for this opportunity because she is "undecided" as to what she's going to do in college, but she hope that she can "keep with theater as a hobby," she said.

Not only is this year's spring play unique because it will be produced by high school students and be performed along with live music, but it will also double as a fundraiser to create dressing rooms for the actors.

The seniors plan on incorporating a cabaret and other musical numbers into the spring theater production to "make things more interesting," according to Trumble.



EMILY ARNTSEN PHOTO

Students play an acting game before auditions for seniors Nicole D'Ambrosio, Kelsey Trumble and Chloe Schwartz's production of the skits "The Actor's Nightmare" and "Words, Words, Words."

Over the past few weeks, the girls have cleaned out the two unused costume storage rooms in preparation for the new dressing rooms. All proceeds from the theater and music production will go toward new mirrors and lights for the dressing rooms.



COURTESY OF MOLLY MCCOY

The SoundWaves perform in conjunction with Boston University and Marblehead High School in the MERHS auditorium.

SoundWaves host fourth annual A Cappella Night

By Landon Komishane
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Three local A cappella groups performed at the fourth annual A Cappella Night on April 25.

According to Sound Waves director Donna O'Neil, the A cappella night started in her second year, and the SoundWaves were the only group to perform.

"Last year, the SoundWaves got invited to an A cappella night," she said. "Since we knew that we had a great facility, we suggested hosting it as a group."

According to O'Neil, this year featured the SoundWaves,

Marblehead High School, and Boston University. Former student Leanne Ciccone led Boston University's group. O'Neil thought it was nice to have a former student at the event.

"It was great exposure to hear all the other groups, especially a collegiate group," she said.

O'Neil also said that all the proceeds went to the junior class. History teacher and junior class adviser Jennifer Coleman said that the class made almost \$700.

Juniors Hannah Parker and Evanthisa Boling played a huge part in organizing the

event, according to O'Neil.

"Some of the things we did to prepare included advertising, selling tickets, and inviting other groups to come and sing with us," Boling said. "We basically brainstormed other A cappella groups we either knew or knew of and then contacted them to see if they could make the event."

"I do have to listen to the other groups before inviting them, so I know if they're good enough to perform," O'Neil said. "All of the groups were incredible, and it was an incredible night."

Boling said that the event was a lot of fun for everyone.

O'Neil saw this event as a great way to show spirit.

"When we have this type of event, spirit is so great that it doesn't take on a competitive nature," she said. "Everyone supports each other, and it's a great thing to see."

'When we have this type of event, there is so much spirit that it doesn't take on a competitive nature.'

-DONNA O'NEIL

YouTube sensation Ninebrassmonkeys documents famous people, receives thousands of views

You Know You Love YouTube

By Devon Musgrave-Johnson
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Benjamin Cook, more commonly known as Ninebrassmonkeys, has only been making YouTube videos for three months; but Cook has already made a large impact in the YouTube community.

His channel centers around a documentary series called "Becoming YouTube" in which he interviews famous YouTubers and gives his own satirical opinions about a range of topics from why there aren't as many girl vloggers on YouTube to if video views and subscribers really matter at all.

Some of the most well-known YouTubers that Cook has interviewed include New York Times bestselling au-

thor John Green, Dan Howell (Danisnotonfire), Charlie McDonnell (CharliIsSoCool-Like), and Alex Day (Nerimon).

Despite the fact that Cook has only released eight episodes of the series, it gained mass popularity by the first episode because well-known YouTubers were talking about it on their own channels. Over 100,000 people are subscribed to Cook's channel and an average of 137,000 people watch

'Benjamin Cook, more commonly known as Ninebrassmonkeys, interviews famous YouTubers.'

-DEVON MUSGRAVE-JOHNSON

each episode. Each video is 16 minutes on average, much longer than most popular YouTube videos that range from three to six minutes in length.

Cook had been on YouTube for years before uploading his first video.

He had been watching some of his friends grow to Internet stardom and wondered why some people become YouTube famous and some people will never get more than 15 views on a video.

The series "Becoming YouTube" is centered on figuring out what makes someone's channel popular, but its main goal is to encourage people to set up a video camera and start blogging.

Cook strongly believes in being an individual. He has many pierc-



TUMBLR.COM

Benjamin Cook, Ninebrassmonkeys, toasts his audience after one of his satirical documentaries poking fun at famous YouTubers.

ings and orange hair, both of which are his signature looks.

Cook has a second channel, called Ninebrassmonkeys2, which includes raw, uncut foot-

age that didn't make it into the videos on his first channel.

Ninebrassmonkeys2 only has a third of the subscribers that his main channel has.

Spring style guide 2013

Trends include lace, chiffon, sock buns

Girls, let's be honest. When spring comes along and the very first day the temperature outside is bearable to wear a skirt or dress, we jump at the opportunity to wear our favorite spring outfits. We take out the big chunky sweaters from our closet and replace them with light, fun, and colorful spring clothes. Here are just some "must-have" fashion trends for the spring of 2013.



FOREVER21.COM

Although lace has a common connotation with being "scandalous," you don't have to wear it in such a fashion. Lace is a light and delicate fabric and has the potential to look sophisticated, but it can also look cute and fun. Even the smallest amount of lace can bring an entire outfit together like a lace headband or even a colorful lace bandeau. Forever21 sells a lace-sleeved shirt, available in pink and white, for \$10.



PACSUN.COM

Chiffon is so breezy and flirty. As it starts to get warmer, wearing a chiffon skirt or shirt will keep you cool throughout the day. You never want to forget to layer underneath chiffon because it is such a sheer material. Chiffon button-down shirts have become popular, and they look great with a colored bandeau underneath. Chiffon skirts also look great when there is a light breeze. Pacsun sells a great patterned chiffon skirt for \$39.50.



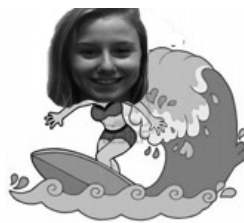
URBANOUTFITTERS.COM

If you want to keep your hair out of your face but are tired of putting it in a pony tail, a sock bun is the way to go. Wherever this trend came from, it makes outfits look even better than they did before. Try putting a headband on to go with the bun to jazz it up. At Urban Outfitters, you can buy a bun ring to hold your hair for \$6.

By Lila Hughes, Independent Staff

WEbsurfer

By Lila Hughes
INDEPENDENT STAFF



Etsy.com

Etsy.com is not simply an online market place such as Amazon.com but instead is a community of artists. At the home page, there are various categories to click on including art, home & living, jewelry, vintage, trending items, and more. People can sell their unique and artistic items on this website. Similar to most marketing websites, there is a search bar where you can search for any item you are looking for. Some people consider Etsy.com an "artsy" eBay.com, but there is definitely more to it. There is also an Etsy "community" which sponsors events like craft shows, seminars on how to create a successful business, vintage festivals, and more! Another place to explore on Etsy is the "Online Lab" where videos of lectures from successful artists are posted. The "blog spot" on Etsy is where artists can post items they aren't particularly selling or repost something they liked on the Internet and say something about it. If you are an aspiring artist who wants to create an online business, Etsy.com is a cool place to sell merchandise and share ideas.

Reddit.com

If you want to inform yourself about recent news in a comical manner, Reddit.com is a place where all sorts of articles and pictures are posted. Many of the posts on Reddit are usually funny pictures (like memes) or articles, but can also cover serious topics. You can click on categories such as "Hot," "New," "Rising," and "Controversial." Each post can be shared on all sorts of social media like Facebook and Twitter. If you create an account on Reddit, you can submit links and create posts that will fall into the various categories. At first, the website might seem confusing and daunting, but after exploring the website's content, you will quickly adapt to the format of the website and the dry, sarcastic humor it entails. Here's a disclaimer: once you start reading Reddit, you'll never want to stop reading.

Apps of My Eye

Cool apps for a smartphone or tablet

By Rachel Daley
INDEPENDENT EDITOR



Vine

Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram just weren't enough. Vine has gone viral in the past month, becoming the newest free social networking app to have. Vine is a mix between Twitter and Instagram, consisting of following your friends so that their six-second video loop shows up on your "feed." While Instagram is more for sharing artsy pictures with effects, Vine is far more comical, eliciting the most humorous sides of people. Without annoying hashtags, overly edited pictures, or forced comments, Vine is the most entertaining of the four main social networking sites. What makes Vine addicting is the loop aspect of the videos posted. If someone creates a video of them being weird, you get to watch it over and over again with no interruptions. Additionally, boys are behind on the new trend, allowing females to show their true colors. Vine is a funny, simple, and highly addictive app that is increasing in popularity daily.



Shazam

If you're lazy and like to listen to music, Shazam is the perfect app for you. The directions are simple: click the shazam button at the bottom of the screen while listening to a song you don't know, and it will track the song according to its lyrics and beat. The name of the song and the artist who wrote it will appear on the screen, along with a link to iTunes and its YouTube video. With this app, you will no longer need to memorize lyrics you hear on the radio and look them up later on Google. Shazam is simple and effective, and it surely won't end up in the growing pile of apps in your Smartphone that you never use. Additionally, if you agree with your friends' tastes in music, you can connect with Facebook and see which songs they have recently "tagged," or found by using Shazam. If you want to find a song with a name that you already know, Shazam provides a search bar which will take you directly to the song. However, this can easily be done on iTunes or Spotify as well. You won't regret downloading this app, especially since it's free!