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Maguire sets goals, supports core values

Interim principal plans to make changes for school year

By Fiona Davis
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Former director of guidance Sharon Maguire stepped in as interim principal this school year with several goals in mind, she said.

"I have been watching things going on in education, and finally I have the opportunity to make changes," Maguire said.

According to Maguire, key changes for the school year will support the district's core values in every aspect of students' educational experience.

"One of the values is whole child and where we care about every aspect of a child. I am looking at the opportunity for students to take, yes, academic classes, but also the...arts, just to make sure there are ample opportunities. With a schedule like ours, this is a very difficult thing to do," Maguire said.

According to Superintendent Pamela Beaudoin, the core values support a school where learning is based on more than just test scores.

"Achievement comes out



FIONA DAVIS PHOTO

Interim principal Sharon Maguire and administrative assistant Mary Lumsden review the school's parent night schedule and discuss the district's new core values that Maguire will support this year.

of making sure we are addressing everyone's needs across the board and trying to make sure instruction reaches all kinds of learners," she said.

According to Maguire, along

with department heads and guidance, she is re-examining the schedule to ensure that it still works for what students need and that it facilitates the idea of a 21st century education.

"We have what's called a 21st century education...we are working towards...having students get a certain amount of information and then using your own initiative and enthusiasm...to learn to

your fullest potential," she said.

Maguire said she is also concerned about students' emotional and social intelligence, and hopes to make the school a safer and more exciting learning environment.

Maguire said she will work closely with new guidance director Sherri Lewis-Sholler to ensure that students have an enjoyable school experience.

"Now that school is getting into full swing, we'll be able to start connecting with students, maybe doing some small group guidance counseling information sessions," Lewis-Sholler said.

According to Lewis-Sholler, she is glad to have Maguire's guidance throughout the school year.

"I feel very fortunate to be here for my first year with Ms. Maguire in the building acting as principal. She has been a tremendous resource," Lewis-Sholler said.

According to Maguire, the school year is off to a strong start that she hopes to build on throughout the course of the year.

"When the kids are doing well, and the teachers are happy, we have a very successful school," she said.

School establishes library policy

By Maggie Lehar
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Because controlling noise levels in the library was a problem last year, rules of conduct have been instated to encourage students to use the library appropriately.

Last year the library was out of control, according to library teacher Sue Krause.

"Students didn't treat it like a library. In a public library, you know you have to be quiet... in the school library last year it was a free for all," library assistant Catherine Hunt said.

"One of the major complaints we received was from the teachers who signed out the computers to teach a class. They had to compete with loud students from study hall or who had just wandered in," Krause said.

"The big thing that I found was that kids would bring their own computers in, find something funny on YouTube and laugh and laugh, and...that's not really

what a library is for," she said.

"It's too bad that there isn't a place that kids can hang out, but the school's not equipped with that," Krause said.

Students are still encouraged to come in and get books, do research, and study, Hunt said.

"We want kids to come in; we just want them to realize that it is not a lounge. It's not fair to the kids who want to study and have a quiet area to have to compete with the noise," she said.

"Kids need a purpose to come and use the library, not just to talk," Krause said.

The new rules have been successful at reducing distractions in the library, according to senior Jacob Martz.

"It's good that the school is making an effort to keep things under control. In the last few years the library has gotten out of hand. I spend a lot of time there for debate and ASR and I find it easier to concentrate and get work done now that it's quieter," Martz said.

Library Rules of Conduct

1. Treat fellow students, adults and school property with respect.
2. Computers are used for school work only. Games, Youtube, etc. are not allowed.
3. You may talk in the library as long as it is in a whisper and is necessary for a project.
4. The library is used by teachers for classroom research and must remain quiet during instruction.
5. Students who own laptop computers should stay in study hall. Students may use school computers if a class is not assigned to that block.
6. Food and drinks are not allowed in the library.
7. Please pick up after yourself and push in your chairs.
8. Students must ask permission to leave the library early for safety reasons

If you do not adhere to these rules you will not be able to return to the library.

Scheduling issues lead guidance to reevaluate, search for solutions

By Rebecca Even
INDEPENDENT STAFF

According to Sharon Maguire, interim principal, the guidance department is working to expedite the scheduling process and enable students to take more of the classes they want to take.

Maguire said one problem is that students have conflicting classes in their schedules, which forces them to choose between courses. She also said that students are unable to take all of their chosen courses because there is simply no room in their schedule.

"We have very talented kids, and they want to take many, many

courses, and there are only seven periods in the day," Maguire said.

Math teacher Sarah DeLuca, who assisted former principal James Lee by performing data entry for the schedule, said once students start taking AP classes, their schedules become more re-

'We are already talking about the schedule for next year... to try to avoid some of the conflicts that we ran into this year.'

-SHERRI LEWIS-SHOLLER

stricted, since many are only available in one time slot.

She said that this limits students' class options and complicates the matter of scheduling.

Guidance is also trying to overcome some of these

challenges by planning ahead, according to Sherri Lewis-Sholler, director of guidance.

SCHEDULING PAGE 4

News

Maguire
-page 1
New Teachers
-pages 2-4

Features

Mosquitoes
-page 6
Japanese
-page 8

Opinion

Pro/Con Marijuana
-page 9
Morning Traffic
-page 10

Sports

Golf, Football, Field
Hockey
-page 12

Arts

Student Artwork
-page 16

New physics teacher hopes to inspire students

By Landon Komishane
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

New science teacher Philip Logsdon joined the science department to teach physics classes and engineering classes.

Logsdon went to John Carroll University in Cleveland before going into the Air Force as an engineer. He has taught for five years overall. He previously taught at Westford Academy where he taught physics and engineering for three years in a school of 1,700 students

Logsdon likes the transition to a smaller school because of the diversity of classes. The

image of the smaller school along with the fact that the school is located on the North Shore attracted him to apply.

“Instead of teaching one or two of the same classes, I can teach three or four different classes in a smaller school,” he said. “I really liked the size. When I envisioned being a teacher, I envisioned myself teaching at a small school like this.”

According to Logsdon, his interviews were conducted by an interview committee, which included science department chair Erica Everett and Principal Sharon Maguire. His classes include AP Phys-

‘I am very eager to see students develop their knowledge-based information on everything that goes on in the world.’

-PHILIP LOGSDON

FUN FACTS

- Active tennis player
- Used to coach soccer and tennis at high school level
- Has two daughters and a son
- Lives in Reading
- Loves theatre



LANDON KOMISHANE PHOTO

Philip Logsdon previously served in the Air Force as an engineer as well as taught physics and engineering at Westford Academy.

ics C, ninth-grade physics, and an engineering class. His main goal is to try to create a comfortable environment for his students. “I want [my students] to enjoy the process of what they are doing

and the edification of knowing stuff,” he said. “I would like for them to get as much data as they can so they can make logical decisions, but I will also challenge them to grow a dendrite. They need

to be able to make connections.” Senior Jacob Martz, a student in Logsdon’s AP physics course, appreciates the commitment that.

LOGSDON PAGE 4

New guidance director seeks to ease college process



ANNA TYLER PHOTO.

Sherri Lewis-Sholler attended both James Madison University and George Mason University before becoming a middle and high school counselor in Washington, D.C.

FUN FACTS

- Has one older sister and a husband
- Favorite hobby is cooking
- Favorite seasons are fall and summer
- Has one dog, one cat, one parrot, and five chickens
- Favorite vacation spot is home

By Anna Tyler
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After Sharon Maguire’s transition from guidance director to principal, Delaware native Sherri Lewis-Sholler joined the faculty as the new guidance director. “She is very professional, and she is very knowledgeable. She has such a nice demeanor about her that she is very welcoming to students and to faculty. I think we have been very lucky for her to come onto this faculty,” Maguire said. Lewis-Sholler grew up in Dover, Delaware, before, attending James Madison University where she received her undergraduate in elementary and middle school education. She taught eighth grade for six years while simultaneously attending George Mason University in pursuit of a master’s degree in counseling.

She then became a middle and high school guidance counselor in the Washington, D.C area before moving to Massachusetts from Virginia nine years ago. Before joining Manchester Essex’s faculty, Lewis-Sholler worked as a guidance counselor at both Scituate High School and Winchester High School. “I absolutely love [my new job]. I love the building. I love the staff. Everybody is so nice and friendly. The kids are just amazing. They are so sweet and energetic. I’m just very very happy to be here,” Lewis-Sholler said. Her goals for the year include increasing communication with both students and parents and planning more parent events. This will give both a better idea of

what is going on and how to plan for college, Lewis-Sholler said. Coming from Winchester High School, which has about 1,100 students, Lewis-Sholler finds that she is enjoying the smaller size of the school because she is “getting to know the staff and students much quicker.” Tiffany Vander Laan, a senior, has noticed that students definitely seem to like her. “She has also been very helpful and understanding in regards to adjusting my schedule,” she said. According to Lewis-Sholler, she has no concerns for the year and expects things to run smoothly. “I’m looking forward to seeing how the year turns out and just enjoying it. [The school] is really starting to feel like home,” she said.

‘I absolutely love [my new job]. I love the building. I love the staff.’

-SHERRI LEWIS-SHOLLER

Science department makes new addition to engineering program

By Kristiana Valenti
INDEPENDENT STAFF

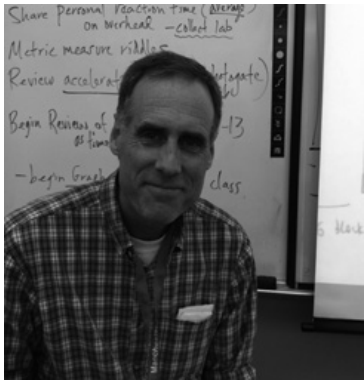
After the loss of two science teachers to the faculty this year, the department has welcomed John Banister-Marx, a University of Colorado and Stanford University graduate and former Governor’s Academy staff member, as a high school physics and middle school engineering teacher. Banister-Marx, who says he has had a keen interest in science and mathematics since a young age, is thrilled to begin teaching in the Manchester-Essex school district. With 25 years of classroom teaching experience and a background that includes living in places such as California and Arizona, he has worked with a variety of different students and says he is enthusiastic about his new job at Manchester Essex.

“I love how interactive his class has been. We have all really enjoyed having him for physics this year,” freshman Chelsea Rose said. “He definitely helped made the transition [from middle school] comfortable for us.” Though Banister-Marx teaches engineering, he has a n alternate subject of expertise. “I am an anthropologist by degree,” he said. “I’m kind of a fossil guy; anthropologists learn about human evolution. But I got into engineering because I was interested in the problem-solving aspect behind it...The fact that you can get things wrong several times and keep working through it to make it better is what makes [engineering] so fun.” Banister-Marx, an avid outdoors man, moved to Ipswich from the West Coast. “My wife and I live on the Ip-

swich River, so we are huge kayakers. We also try to find high points in each state and climb to the top,” he said. He and his wife climbed to the top of a 14,000-foot mountain in Colorado. “We are also big bird watchers and have recently taken up mushroom collecting,” he said. To add to his repertoire of outdoor experiences, Banister-Marx attempted skydiving in college. “It was great, although some of the guys that went got injured. I called my mom, afterwards and said, ‘How would you feel if I went skydiving? Well, it doesn’t matter, because it’s too late!’” Besides being an outdoor enthusiast, Banister-Marx is a fan of rock music and inspiring movies. “I love James Taylor, The Eagles, and Jeff Beck, which is more jazzy rock,” he said. “As for movies, I recently saw what might be defined as a chic-flick,

FUN FACTS

- Has been Skydiving
- Mushroom collector
- Favorite movie is “Bella”
- Looks like Mitt Romney
- Favorite band: The Eagles



KRISTIANA VALENTI PHOTO

John Banister-Marx attended University of Colorado and Stanford before becoming a physics teacher at Governor’s.

but it completely took my breath away. It was a movie called ‘Bella.’ I recommend it to everyone.” Banister-Marx, who laughs off the student and faculty talk that he looks like presidential candidate Mitt Romney, says he will

work on an accent and joked that he will dress like Romney as a prank someday. Though he is aware that both students and teachers have picked up on the resemblance, he is no stranger to being asked about it.

Spanish teacher transitions from elementary to high school

Begins at high school after 11 years at Memorial School



SARAH BECKMAN PHOTO

Maggie Sears is starting her first year as a high school teacher after 11 years of teaching Spanish at Manchester Memorial School. She currently teaches Spanish levels I, III, and IV.

By Sarah Beckman
INDEPENDENT STAFF

After spending 11 years teaching foreign language at Manchester Memorial School, Maggie Sears started her first year at the high school teaching Spanish levels I, III, and IV.

According to Sears, she “was ready for a new challenge” and decided to take on the upper-class students.

Sears is an undergraduate of Barnard College in New York. She spent a semester in Sevilla, Spain, during her educational career and also received her master’s degree from Salem State.

A couple of key differences separate the high and elementary schools for Sears, such as the rotating schedule and the learning pace, she said.

Spanish teacher Michelle Magaña emphasized these changes as well. “I think that another dif-

ficulty, which I would say for anybody coming to the high school, is the rotating schedule,” she said.

Magaña continued, “I think [the shift in ages] is really going to be a tough part of her job... adjusting how fast to move, because she’s used to moving at a

‘I love inspiring kids to want to learn more about Spanish.’

-MAGGIE SEARS

much slower pace with the little kids,” she said.

Sears said she is impressed with the effort and dedication of her students. “I’m used to having to push [the elementary

kids] a little harder than you have to at the high school,” she said.

Junior Olivia Bean said, “If I don’t understand something, she [will] come over and help me.” Bean also commented on Sears’ kindness.

Sears said she enjoys teaching in general.

“I love learning from my students. I love inspiring kids to want to learn more about Spanish and want to travel to Spanish-speaking countries,” she said.

FUN FACTS

- 3 children ranging in age from preschool to high school
- Biggest dream is to be in Mexico during The Day of the Dead
- Always wanted to teach in a Spanish-speaking country
- Grew up on Cape Ann; loves the beaches, woods, and slower pace
- Spent a semester in Sevilla, Spain in college

Physical education department welcomes new teacher

Recent graduate hopes to help students lead a more active lifestyle

FUN FACTS

Free time:
Cooking

Favorite band:
Tool

Favorite movie:
The Boondock Saints

Coollest place:
San Juan, Costa Rica

By Natasha Statz-Geary
INDEPENDENT STAFF

After the departure of the M’lena Gandolfi from the physical education department, the school hired Thomas Durfee, a 2012 graduate from Salem State University.

According to Durfee, he picked the physical education field because he is excited to see the enthusiasm on the students’ faces when they walk into class and because he always enjoyed gym class as a student.

“It just made sense to go into this field when thinking about my teaching career,” said Durfee, a football player in high school.

Sophomore Emily Callahan said she appreciates Durfee’s teaching style and manner in class. “I love how he takes the time to help students with their skills at a sport before jumping into games. He actually makes gym class fun and relaxing,” she said.

Durfee said his main goal is for students to take away an appreciation and enjoyment of gym class.

“I want to just promote the benefits of being physically active and to help students find any kind of activity that they enjoy. I want students to be able to bring things outside of the classroom, to be physically active and to lead a better lifestyle,” he said.

According to Sophomore Sophia Sortwell, Durfee is helping her have a positive gym

class experience even though gym is not her favorite course.

“Mr. Durfee has made me hate soccer a little bit less by setting up fun games for us to play during class and by never putting any negative pressure on us,” Sortwell said.

Durfee said he makes an effort to stay physically active on his own in order to set a good example for his students.

“On the weekends I like to grab a few friends and head down to the field to play touch football or something fun like that,” he said.

Durfee said his love of exercise stems from his belief that exercise is good for one’s general well being. “Physical activity is the best medicine,” he said.



NATASHA STATZ-GEARY PHOTO

Thomas Durfee graduated Salem State this year and now enters his first year of teaching high school physiscal education.

Math teacher returns to school for eighth year of teaching after four years away



DEVON MUSGRAVE-JOHNSON PHOTO

Math teacher Brian Carlson returns after getting his Master’s Degree and working at Peabody High School.

By Devon Musgrave-Johnson
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Brian Carlson has always enjoyed math, but he said his sister inspired him to teach. As he enters his eighth year of teaching, he joins Manchester-Essex after a three-year hiatus.

Previously, Carlson was a math major at Gordon College. He decided to become a teacher after asking himself, “What do I want to do with this?”

From 2002 to 2006 he taught at the high school but decided to leave in order to get a master’s degree and consider becoming a pastor. He then taught math at Peabody High School for three years.

Carlson said he decided to come back to Manchester-Essex because he wanted to be able to coach a sport and had friends who were teaching here.

“Manchester-Essex is a great school. This is probably the only place I would have left (Peabody) for,” Carlson said.

After seeing the job open-

ing posted by the school district, submitting an application, being screened by a small committee, and then being one of only five people interviewed, Carlson got the job.

“Carlson was clearly, by far, the most qualified and suitable candidate,” said Dan Lundergan, the math department chair.

According to Lundergan, when Carlson taught at Peabody, Lundergan had a chance to observe a math class taught by Carlson; Lundergan described Carlson as interested in the whole student, knowledgeable in mathematics, and excellent.

Sophomore Delaney Byrne appreciates the way class is run, “I think Mr. Carlson has a good teaching style,” Byrne said.

‘Carlson was clearly, by far, the most qualified and suitable candidate.’

-DAN LUNDERGAN

FUN FACTS

- Favorite ice cream:**
Mint chocolate chip
- Favorite color:**
Jade (also his wife’s name)
- Meaning of life in one word:**
Love

New special education teacher brings five years of co-teaching experience

By Kendall McCormick
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After becoming a father during the first week of school, special education teacher Brett Ordway joined the staff this year to co-teach two history classes and serve as a special education liaison. Ordway has been interested in history since high school, he said. He attended the University of Vermont as an undergraduate, majoring in history, followed by Northeastern University, where he earned his Master’s Degree in history. Only after searching for a teaching job in history did he decide to go into special education, discovering that he possessed favorable qualities for the field, he said. He then attended the University of Southern Maine to obtain his certification and Master’s Degree in special education. Ordway originally taught special education for five years at a high school in Kittery, Maine, in a similar co-teaching model. He currently co-teaches

both World History II with Jessica Tran and U.S. History I with Daniel Jewett. “I’ve done it for a while now...it’s kind of a difficult process knowing when you can add in, when you can help out, and when you need to stay back,” he said of co-teaching. Jewett agreed that a co-teaching model generally needs time to become more fluid; however, he thinks it is very helpful that Ordway is knowledgeable in the subject of history. “It’s really nice to teach with someone who has a background in special education but also a background in history... it’s difficult if the [co-teacher] does not have a full grasp of



KENDALL MCCORMICK PHOTO

FUN FACT

Favorite Movies:

“Fight Club,” “A River Runs Through It”

Ordway surveys students during a U.S. History I class that he co-teaches daily with Daniel Jewett

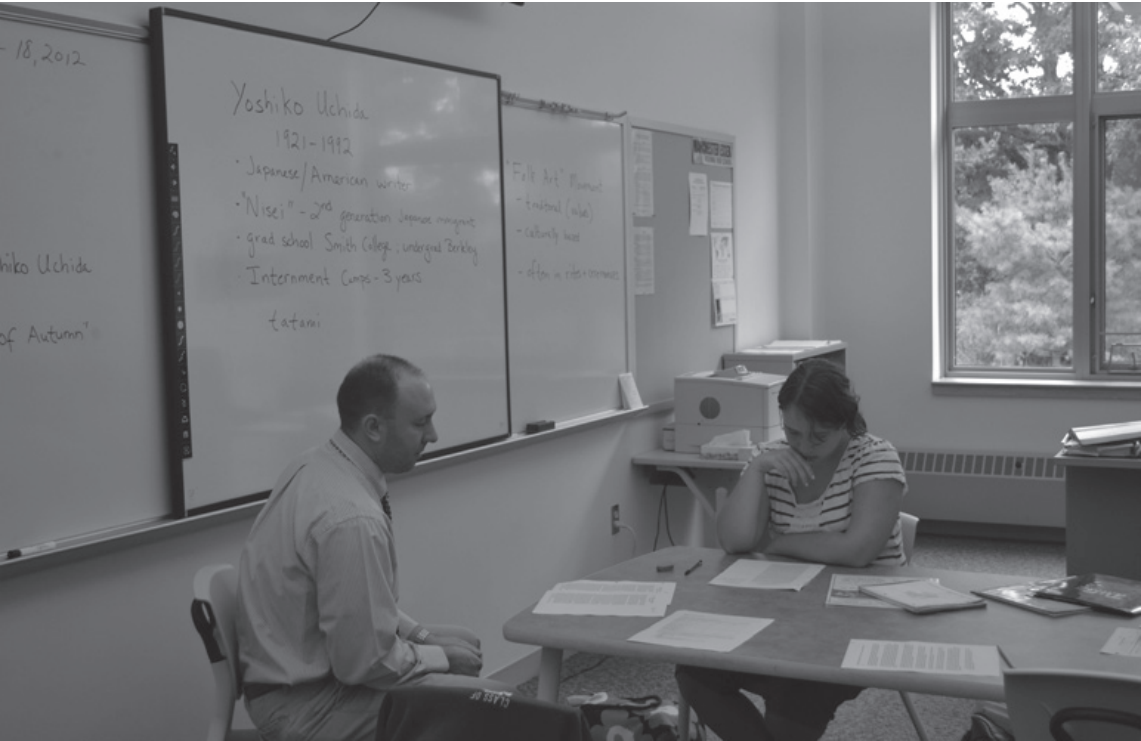
the curriculum,” Jewett said. Ordway is still adjusting to the new school after being out the first week with his new baby daughter who was born Sept. 5. He still has not met many of the staff members; however, said he has enjoyed working with those he has met. Special education chair Louise Vose has only known Ordway for a short period of time but describes him as having an approachable and quiet style, while maintaining a large grasp

on the topics he is co-teaching. “He’s very knowledgeable and very thorough...he has a great history background...I’m excited that he’s going to be one of our co-teachers in the history classes this year,” she said.

New teacher joins special education department after working at Landmark

By Kendall McCormick
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Special education teacher David Veling hopes to bring some new knowledge to the special education department as one of the special ed liaisons and head of what is called the “transition program.” “This program involves supporting the students who may need more help and direct instruction around skills that they might need to be successful transitioning from high school to college or work or whatever life hold after,” he said. Veling attended Dickinson College located in Carlisle Penn., for undergraduate school and then went on to graduate school at Simmons College in Boston where he received his Master of Science in Education degree. After working at Landmark School for 11 years, Veling spent the past two years as the director of admissions and guidance at Clearway School in West Newton. According to Veling, he was not only a member of the educational staff at Landmark, but he also coached varsity baseball, as well as junior varsity soccer and basketball. “I came to Manchester-Essex because the school has a really good reputation and



CAROLYN HESLOP PHOTO

Freshman Taylor Hamlin studies with new teacher David Vehling. Vehling attended Dickinson College and worked at Landmark for 11 years.

the chance to build a new program is a really interesting opportunity for me,” he said. According to Veling, his experience so far has been very positive in that the other teachers are all very friendly and supportive and the students are fantastic to work with. According to special education aide Jared Harvey, he and

Veling had worked together at Landmark years ago and Veling still gives great advice when Harvey goes to him with questions. “It’s been wonderful working with my old mentor once again; I forgot how funny he is,” Harvey said. Veling said that it is very different to work here in that it is the first public school he has worked at, and as opposed to Landmark

school, not all the teachers have special education experience. “I know Mr. Veling from fundraising activities, and he is a really nice guy who is always cheerful and seems very dedicated to his job,” senior Alex Walder said. Harvey said that Veling is a great asset to the special education department and that he has great experience, having worked various jobs in special education.

FUN FACTS

If you had three wishes, what would your second wish be?

Knowing the answers to the unanswered questions

What animal would you never want to be?

A Pig

Who is you celebrity crush?

Julia Stiles

Salty or sweet?

Salty

CONTINUATIONS

SCHEDULING PAGE 1

“We are already talking about the schedule for next year... try to avoid some of the conflicts that we ran into this year,” Lewis-Sholler said. Maguire said that another problem encountered was the fact that the high school shares elective teachers with the middle school for three out of seven blocks per cycle. “Now you’re really going from

seven periods down to four periods a day... We eventually have to look at adding new faculty,” she said. Lewis-Sholler said if students are forced to choose between classes, they should compromise. She advises students to work closely with guidance to design their schedules. DeLuca advised students, “Look at passions.” She also recommended that students be flexible. According to DeLuca, one of the problems that slowed the

process was adapting to the new software program, Aspen. She said that, to create the schedule, all scheduling information, such as student recommendations, is entered into the computer, and then the computer creates different scheduling options. The best option maximizes the number of students who are able to take any given class. DeLuca said the guidance department was unused to the new program, and thus organizing classes was a

slower process than it is typically. Maguire said that, due to these challenges, they are reevaluating the scheduling process. “We really are going to take a look at this and try to figure out what we can do as a school to have... kids be able to take the courses [they] want,” she said. LOGSDON PAGE 1 Logsdon makes to his students. “He is very engaging and makes sure that the students are learning by making us participate,” he said.

Senior Sam Carlberg, another AP physics student, also likes the way Logsdon gets his students involved. “One of the greatest aspects of his class is that he gets students involved by having them teach individual lessons,” he said. “I am very eager to see students develop their knowledge-based information on everything that goes on in the world,” Logsdon said.

Health Matters

Manchester sprays for mosquitoes, protects community from disease

By Kelsi Field
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Cancelled practices, changed game schedules, and a spreading fear of mosquitoes have impacted the lives and schedules of the community due to the recent finding of an Eastern Equine Encephalitis mosquito in Manchester.

The mosquito itself was found close to the exit 16 onramp. As a precautionary measure, Manchester officials sprayed all streets off of Pine Street on the evening on Wed. Sept. 12. Officials also sprayed on the evening of Aug. 24 and Sept. 26, hitting all streets off of Pleasant Street.

Duet, the product sprayed aerially above Manchester, is designed to kill adult mosquitoes. According to the Board of Health, it has no negative effects on humans. Residents have nothing to be nervous about as the active ingredients break down extremely quickly, leaving no toxic residue, according to the Center for Disease Control.

EEE fear is so great that athletic events have been switched around so that athletes are avoiding playing un-



KELSI FIELD PHOTO

Senior Nicole Bradley practices field hockey indoors in Danvers Sports Park instead of outdoors to accommodate the spraying dates

der the lights as much as possible. The first field hockey night game was switched to the afternoon due to the mosquitoes.

“It was definitely a bummer that our first night game was cancelled, but in the end it is more important to keep the team safe and healthy” senior field hockey captain Maddi Bistrong said.

Practices have been cut short and fields switched around to accommodate spraying dates. “It is never good to have an abbreviated practice the day before a game,” senior soccer captain

Pat Hagar said. “But, as long as every team is flexible, we usually get a good couple of hours at some sort of field,” he said.

School coaches have urged athletes to come to practices protected from mosquitoes. Whether athletes choose to wear longer layers or douse themselves in bug spray, some sort of measure should be taken, especially during night practices.

“Mini bug sprays have been given out in our spirit bags; no field hockey players are getting EEE that’s for sure!” Bistrong said.

Study tips: Maintain organizational habits

By Sofia del Valle
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Though organization doesn’t come naturally to everyone, many tips are available to help develop better organizational habits.

Being organized has many

Storage

For some students, a separate binder for each subject may work the best. For others, one binder for all subjects is preferable. Consistence is key. Take the time to put papers where they belong, and they will be easier to access in the long run. Flash drives are helpful for storing and transferring electronic assignments back and forth instead of via email.

Notes

In high school, teachers don’t always tell you when information is important, so when a teacher begins expanding on more complex facts or ideas, take notes. Whether they are typed or hand-written, notes are always helpful to have for learning and retaining information, as well as reviewing for tests.

Planner

When homework, essays, and tests are assigned, that’s the cue pull out a planner. Any other important information such as work hours, babysitting, club meetings, and appointments should be written in the planner as well to ensure that all information is in the same place.

Study habits

Many studies show that studying for shorter periods often is more efficient than studying for hours in one session. Time management is a large piece of organization, so plan accordingly. Distribute work evenly to prevent stress the night before a big assignment, and take breaks periodically. Set aside limited time to go on Facebook, watch TV, and relax.

components to it, so by choosing just one area of focus, one will notice more improvement and less frustration. If a certain strategy seems simple and easy to manage, then attempting to conquer two jobs shouldn’t hurt. If maintaining both becomes too overwhelming, postpone one, and continue

trying to master the single task.

Since not all organizational systems will work for everyone, finding one that is successful is important. Having to try a few before finding the right one is okay and will help narrow down the most effective tactics.

Here are some helpful tips to staying organized in high school:

Student Speak

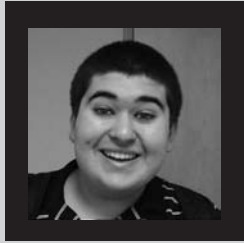
What is one song that you would love to never again hear on the radio?



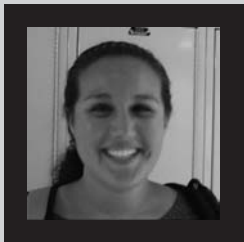
Senior
Devin Congdon:
“Starships” by Nicki Minaj



Senior
Ivy Silag Stearns:
“Dark Side” by Kelly Clarkson



Junior
Christopher Dente:
“Bees in the Trap” by Nicki Minaj

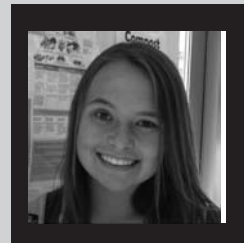


Junior
Samantha Taylor:
“The Lazy Song” by Bruno Mars

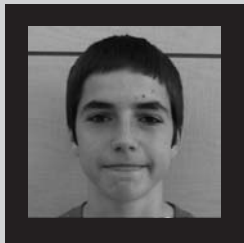
Sophomore
Leonardo Gallo:
“Call Me Maybe” by Carly Rae Jepsen



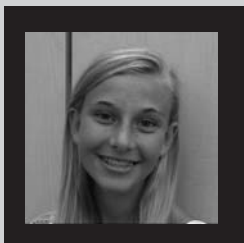
Sophomore
Bailey Graves:
“Payphone” by Maroon 5



Freshman
William Deschenes:
“Some Nights” by fun.



Freshman
Hannah Roy:
“Forget You” by Cee Lo Green





Green Team continues to push students to become more green

By Anna Tyler
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Even though the school year ended, the Green Team continued to promote environmental awareness throughout the summer.

At the beginning of July, Green Team Scholars attended a weeklong program at the Adelynrood in Byfield, Mass., run by the Gulf of Maine Institute (GOMI), a non-profit organization, which collaborates with 11 schools located in the Gulf of Maine area. There are five schools from the United States and six from Canada.

“It’s a great experience, and you get to do a lot of fun things while helping out the environment,” senior Jackie Rose said.

Green Team also took 22 students to the Appalachian Mountain Club and spent five days doing trail crew.

“They got to learn how to make water bars, steps, jersey turnpikes, bog bridges, and a whole bunch of other cool stuff,” Green Team director Eric Magers said.

The Scholars program is off and running and very large, according to Magers. There are 22 students working on projects based in the Manchester Essex school district.

The Green Team is striving to make the school the green-



COURTESY OF JACKIE ROSE

Senior Jackie Rose tests water samples at a week long program at the Adelynrood in Byfield, run by the Gulf of Maine Institute.

est school in Massachusetts and make Essex and Manchester green communities, according to Magers. The science department has also adopted both the Green Team and the Green Scholars Program, so they are now considered science classes.

On Oct. 12, all Green Team Scholars will participate in Sustainability Day where they will visit sites and partner organizations in the area to learn the conservation efforts being pursued locally.

The Green Team is working with local organizations like Bay State Textiles, Black Earth Hauler, Essex County Greenbelt, Manchester Essex Conservation Trust, Massachusetts Clean

Energy Center, and the New England Clean Energy Council.

The Green Team is also hoping to receive a \$30,000 grant, which will allow the school to obtain an onsite compost facility, Rose said.

“This will make our school a lot more sustainable because we can compost at school directly, and it will save us money by not having to keep sending our compost away,” she said.

The team will continue raising environmental awareness and spreading sustainable practices throughout the communities through events such as the Envirojam and community clean up days, Green Team president Kevin Cellucci said.

Student learns new language independently

By Maggie Lehar
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

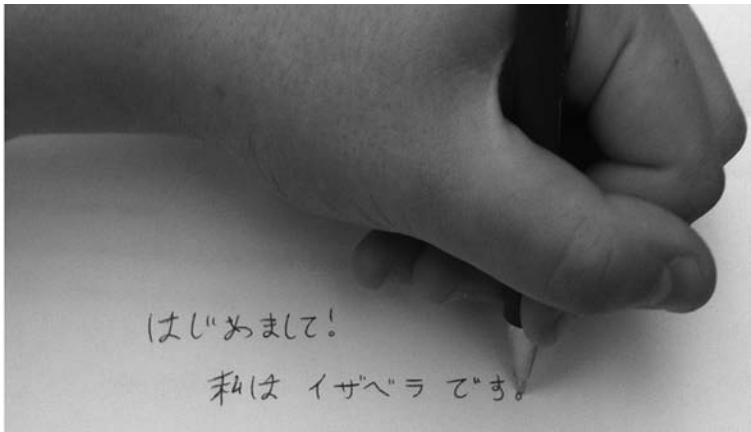
For the past three years, senior Isabella Zink has been teaching herself Japanese in her free time.

“Currently I’m learning Japanese at home using the Rosetta Stone program, language books, and online resources,” she said.

Zink also took an immersion program at the Boston Language Institute in Kenmore Square for four weeks during the summer.

“It was a 90-hour program with a native Japanese teacher and five other students. We studied grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure, and how to read and write in the three Japanese writing systems,” Zink said.

Zink has been interested in Japanese culture since a young age. “I was exposed to a lot of anime and Japanese shows when I was younger and I eventually became interested in the accurate and traditional side of Japanese culture as well,” she said.



MAGGIE LEHAR PHOTO

Senior Isabella Zink writing in Kanji, a system of Japanese writting

“I think that it is really great that she is pursuing her interest in Japanese,” senior Julie MacLeod said.

Foreign Language has always been a part of Zink’s life. “I started learning French when I was 3 years old at a bilingual school in Arlington, so I’ve grown up with two languages,” she said.

However, learning Japanese has been very different than leaning

French, Zink said.

“A lot of French words are similar to English words. Also, most of the grammar and

punctuation ideas are the same. However, Japanese is extremely different from both languages. When I’m learning Japanese I’m not just learning new words, but completely new letters and symbols,” she said.

Zink plans to continue improving her Japanese in the future.

“I hope to take Japanese classes in college. I’m also hoping to possibly visit when I’m in college, and if I like it maybe I could study abroad there,” Zink said.

Zink isn’t stopping at four languages. She has also recently begun teaching herself Latin and sign language.

“I wouldn’t want to spend the time learning other languages unless I was very interested in them. It’s not worth the effort unless you enjoy it,” Zink said.

STUDENT Aisling Batchelder PROFILE



By Isadora Decker-Lucke
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Where did you go to school before this?

I went to Shore Country Day School in Beverly

What sports do you play?

Soccer, basketball, lacrosse, skiing, and Irish step dance

What is your favorite animal?

Panda Bear

What’s your favorite color?

Blue

What’s your favorite TV show?

Seinfeld

What is your favorite season?

Summer

What’s your favorite snack?

Popcorn with peanut M&Ms

What’s your favorite store?

Anthropologie

Are you a cat or dog person?

Dog person

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

Beliz

If you were stuck on a deserted island with one celebrity who would it be?

Zac Efron

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

A butterfly

What’s your favorite rainy day movie?

The Notebook

What is the best vacation you’ve ever been on?

When I went to Australia and played with kangaroos.

What’s your secret obsession?

Painting my fingernails



iPhone 5 offers new design, features

Includes larger retina display, slimmer design

By Rachel Daley
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With a remarkably slim design that still makes room for a larger display and a faster chip, the iPhone 5 proves that less can definitely be more.

According to the Apple web site, the new design is 18 percent thinner, 20 percent lighter in weight, and has 12 percent less volume than the iPhone 4S.

iPhone 5 features a 4-inch retina display, yet has the same width as the iPhone 4S. As a result, the phone won't feel oversized or awkward while holding it in one hand.

Just one hour after Apple began taking pre-orders for the iPhone 5 at 12:01 a.m. on Sept. 14, the company sold out of the first batch and informed online buyers that the shipping date for the smartphone was being pushed back to Sept. 28 or later.

Although the company did not disclose how many phones were ordered, Fox News claims that over two million were ordered, therefore naming the release the most popular iPhone model yet.

Additional upgrades include new Siri features. She understands and can answer more



APPLE.COM

The new iPhone has a slimmer design, and an improved Siri.

questions, speak in more languages, and can tweet or make Facebook posts for users.

Along with the new iPhone comes the new iOS 6 mobile operating system, which consists of the built-in applications and multi-touch system found on the iPhone 4S.

A major upgrade which Apple made was the AirPrint feature, allowing for the phones to print

iPhone 5 Features

- 18% thinner
- 20% lighter
- 12% less volume
- 4-inch retina display
- Improved Siri features
- iOS 6 mobile operating system
- Wireless printing
- 8 hour battery life

wirelessly to an AirPrint-enabled printer. Additionally, the feature does not require buyers to download software.

The design is slimmer and guarantees up to eight hours on a cellular connection; however, Apple decided to change the connector as well, requiring all iPhone 5 buyers to buy new appliances to be compatible with the new "Lightning" connector.

The iPhone 5 became available in stores on Sept. 30 with phones starting at \$199.



ISADORA DECKER-LUCKE PHOTO

Junior Mike Davis delivers an impromptu speech to his Public Forum Debate class. Students often are required to give speeches during class in order to practice for tournaments.

Debate program finishes rebuilding, hopes for success

By Isadora Decker-Lucke
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Plunging ahead into their 41st year, the Debate Team is looking forward to attending about 25 different tournaments this season and welcoming new freshmen to the team.

History teachers Jennifer Coleman and Jessica Tran are both returning as Public Forum teachers; history department chair Daniel Jewett is teaching Lincoln Douglas and the incoming freshmen, and history teacher James Wallimann is teaching the Congress class.

Tran is now the director of debate, Coleman is travel coordinator and Wallimann is finance coordinator.

The team is focusing on Public Forum, Lincoln Douglas, Congress, Extemporaneous

Speaking, and Original Oratory this year, Coleman said.

"We have high hopes for the team this year," Tran said. She believes that the team can not only improve their record but can also increase enthusiasm and passion for the program.

"I think we will start moving in the right direction, and I expect that in the next two years we will have very significant success," Jewett said.

While all four teachers agree that last year's focus was mainly on rebuilding the program, they also all believe that the hard work will soon pay off.

"[My goals for the team are] to have people qualify for both national tournaments, and I want the team overall to be healthy, have good experiences and have fun while winning," Coleman said.

There are 38 freshmen on the

team this year, and many of the teachers see this as an indication of the program's strong future.

"I think that having so many freshmen is going to affect the team very positively in the next two years," Wallimann said.

"Our recruitment of 38 freshmen indicates that our efforts last year are paying off and that we're headed in the right direction," Jewett said.

There are only seven seniors on the team this year, many fewer than in previous years.

"It's good because the younger students get to travel a lot more, but it's unfortunate for them because there are fewer strong role models who've been in the debate program for four years," Coleman said.

Despite challenges, Coleman remains positive. "I am very much looking forward to this debate season!" she said.



COURTESY NIKKI SOUTHARD

Southard spent one year in Spain and stayed with a host family.

Senior describes year abroad

By Hannah Riordan
INDEPENDENT STAFF

By embarking on a nine-month trip to Zaragoza, Spain, during the 2011 to 2012 school year, senior Nikki Southard returned to Manchester fluent in another language.

Southard participated in the School Year Abroad program with other high school juniors and seniors from across America.

Robert Bilsbury, Southard's sophomore year Spanish teacher, said he supports programs that let students live abroad.

"I thought that it was absolutely

"I took history of Mediterranean art, which was really cool, and it kind of coincided with the history of Spain class that I was taking," Southard said.

She cited numerous differences between Spain and America.

"So much is different. I suppose everyone walks everywhere. School doesn't start until 9 a.m. They really focus on the arts in school in Spain and not science and math," she said.

Chrissy Pries, another senior and a classmate of Southard's, said that Southard was adjusting well to life back in Manchester.

"I don't think it's too hard of an adjustment for her to be back,

but I'm sure it probably is hard for anyone who spent a year living the dream," Pries said.

As a result of her experience, Southard wants to major in international relations in college.

"You're really sort of forced to adopt other people's cultures as your own. For colleges and everything I'm actually applying to St. Andrews, which is in Scotland," she said.

Southard highly recommends the SYA program to all students even

mildly interested in Spanish.

"Be prepared for the hardest time of your life, but it's so worth it," she said.

'Be prepared for the hardest time of your life, but it's so worth it.'

-NIKKI SOUTHARD

'I thought that it was absolutely awesome. I've always wanted to offer kids the chance to do that.'

-ROBERT BILSBURY

For more information about the School Year Abroad program, go to SYA.org for details about full year and summer programs.

Where are they now ? Alex Ray

By Max Nesbit
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After graduating as a member of the class of 2011, Alex Ray decided to attend Endicott College in hopes of playing on the baseball team, but he didn't get what he wanted.

Ray was a two-year captain, a four-year starter, and a two-year all-star for the Manchester-Essex baseball team, and he was recruited to play for the Endicott Gulls baseball team.

"Alex was always one of our best players both hitting and playing in the field, and it was no surprise that he went on to play at the next level," 2012 graduate Joe Burgess said.

After one year of attending Endicott College, Ray decided to transfer and attend Northern Essex Community College for a year until transferring elsewhere.

"More than anything I think that it was the distance that made

Endicott seem unappealing to me. It's located in Beverly, which is 15 minutes away, and I never felt like I was 'going away for school' like all my friends," Ray said.

"Alex liked Endicott, but he never loved it. I'm glad he has the courage to go out and try something new and find the college that is his perfect fit," Ray's dad David Ray said.

Although he didn't like many aspects about being so close to home, many facets were still appealing to him, Ray said.

"It was weird because I never really felt like I was away from home, but it was also really nice being able to go home for little things that could really give the normal college kid problems," Ray said.

Although the team didn't end up being the perfect fit, he still loved the privileges that came along with playing baseball in college, Ray said.

"Playing a sport in college is a great way to meet people out-

2011 graduate changes colleges, plans to continue playing baseball



COURTESY OF ALEX RAY

Graduate Alex Ray was a two-year captain, a four-year starter, and a two-year all-star for the Manchester-Essex baseball team, and he was recruited to play for the Endicott Gulls baseball team

side of class, and it is like being a part of a family, which is really nice your first year away from home. The only down side would be the time commitment; sometimes all I do in a day is play baseball, which some-

times can be a drag," Ray said.

Ray decided to switch schools as well as majors this past year and hopes to continue college in the fall of 2013.

"I'm switching my major from business marketing to ex-

ercise science, and in 2013 I am also hoping to move a little farther south or out west in order to broaden my horizons. I loved Endicott, but it just wasn't the school for me. My goal is to find that perfect fit for me," Ray said.

District's strategic plan, sets goals for student achievement
Multi-part plan aims to meet needs of students, teachers, community

By Fiona Davis
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Before the school year began, parents, faculty, and district staff members were hard at work formulating a new strategic plan, according to Superintendent Pamela Beaudoin.

The plan consists of a unified approach to school improvement that combines community partnerships, resources and school climate to achieve core values of whole child and student achievement, she said.

"It is all interwoven...if one piece is not really working, then the other pieces cannot work," Beaudoin said.

According to both Beaudoin and director of student services Allison Collins, the plan is a team approach.

"In terms of student services, our contribution to the strategic plan is that we work in partnership with general education... we work together to support the students," Collins said.

In order to facilitate achievement for all students, Collins said she has been working to implement programs for students with learning challenges, physical disabilities, economic hardships, and social difficulties across the district.

"We have some programs that have been implemented to help students who otherwise might have a hard time remaining in the district...and also trying to bring students back who might need a specialized placement," she said.

Curriculum director Scott Mor-



MERSD.ORG

The new startegic plan consists of an approach to school improvement that combines resources, community partnerships, and school climate to achieve core values of whole child and student achievement. Its mission is to instill a passion for learning in all students while also encouraging local and global citizenship.

'It is all interwoven... if one piece is not really working, then the other pieces cannot work.'

-PAMELA BEAUDOIN

risson said the new plan emphasizes meeting the needs of all students.

"If you handed out medium T-shirts to an auditorium full of people, they would fit some people perfectly, but for others they would be too large or too small. It is the same idea when instructing students. It is a tall order trying to make sure we form instruction to fit everyone," he said.

According to Beaudoin, improving the school climate is an important part of the plan that will develop the student achievement aspect.

Collins said she hopes to create a welcoming environment for all students.

According to her, students can help in accomplishing this goal.

"I do think students have a responsibility...I would like to see students...work with some of the students who have learning and social challenges by being welcoming and supportive and taking peer leadership roles," she said.

'In terms of student services, our contribution to the strategic plan is that we work in parenterships with general education... we work together to support the students.'

-ALLISON COLLINS

According to Collins, developing community involvement in the district will also aid the staff in promoting the strategic plan.

"Community partnerships is having the community develop a better understanding of what is happening in the schools so that we can better work towards our goals for children," she said.

Finance director Avi Urbas said the school must be thoughtful in investments in people and resources in order to capitalize on contributions from taxpayers in the community.

"Resources are a big part of public education, and we have one of the best school systems in the state. We want it to continue to improve, but there is a lot of funding that goes into making the school system work. We have to balance improvement with fiscal responsibility," he said.

'The new plan emphasizes meeting the needs of all students.'

-SCOTT MORRISON

Mission

Educating all students, instilling a passion for life-long learning, and encouraging both local and global citizenship!

Core Values

Whole Child

We believe schools must establish a safe environment conducive to the development of the whole child, which extends beyond the academic core to include experiential learning, the arts, cultural awareness, and physical and emotional well being.

Student Achievement

We believe that challenging standards and differentiated instruction encourage all students to excel and become confident, engaged learners who achieve their potential at different rates and on different paths.

Climate

We believe our schools must create an environment of respect and appreciation for individual and cultural differences and instill a passion for responsible social action, both locally and globally.

Community Partnerships

We believe that providing a quality education for our children is a shared responsibility, fostered by partnerships among the schools, families, businesses and the community at-large.

Resources

We believe our district should provide appropriate resources in order for students to achieve our stated vision and mission.

On the Ballot

Should states Medical Marijuana be Legal?

Pro

Emily Arntsen

Medical marijuana has already established itself as an effective aid for nausea, headaches, anxiety, vomiting and other symptoms caused by cancer, AIDS and multiple sclerosis, so why not legalize it? Instead of rejecting marijuana as a hippie-gateway-good-for-nothing drug, society should try to understand the benefits of medical marijuana and use it to its full potential.

One effect that needs no further testing is marijuana's ability to increase appetite in patients undergoing chemotherapy; people don't call it "the munchies" for nothing.

To be more scientific, THC, the chemical in medical marijuana, connects to the THC receptors in the brain and spinal cord which ultimately impacts the patient's anxiety and metabolism levels, i.e. creating appetite and eliminating stress.

During the age of "all natural," wouldn't it make sense that medical marijuana is the answer for patients seeking a more organic recovery?

Just because a doctor prescribes a medication doesn't necessarily mean it's the healthiest choice. Blood-thinners, opioids and various steroids are common remedies for pain, but most of these drugs are more toxic and have dangerous side effects than that of medical marijuana.

The most common opioid, morphine, is a depressant that slows brain functions and psychologically numbs pain. Medical marijuana on the other hand, releases serotonin into the bloodstream which creates a euphoric feeling.

Contrary to popular belief, medical marijuana is not chemically addictive,

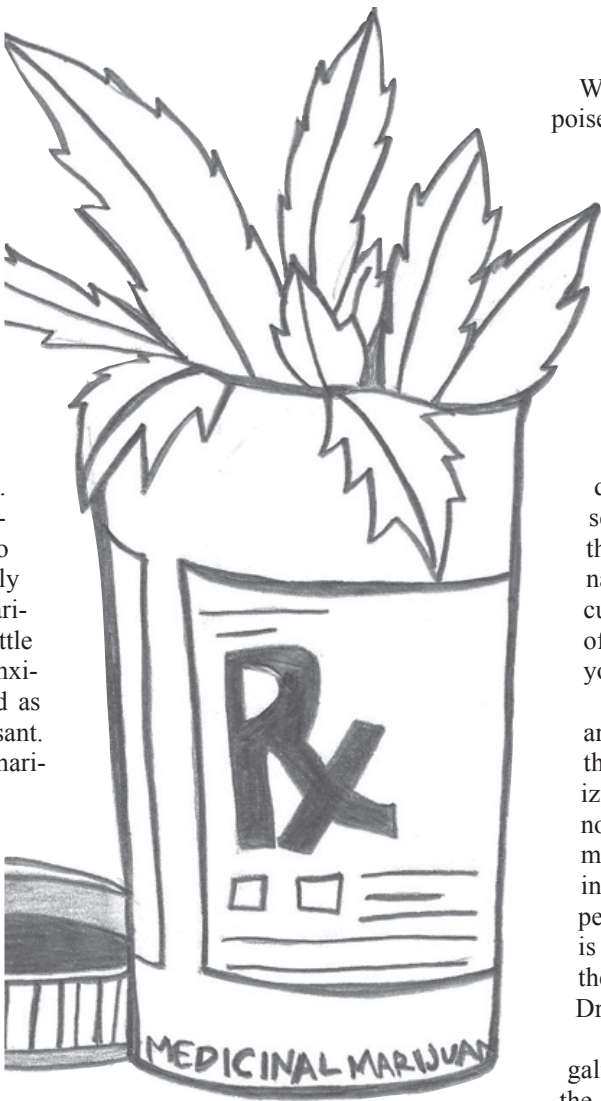
meaning there are no possible withdrawal symptoms unlike morphine and oxycodone, which are chemically addictive, according to the New York Times.

The same article goes on to say that not only is medical marijuana used to battle nausea and anxiety, it's also used as an anti-depressant.

Medical marijuana should be legalized for the benefit of cancer, AIDS and multiple sclerosis patients searching for an effective pain killer but also for people struggling with depression.

An effect of medical marijuana is said to be an 11 percent decrease in suicides in the 17 U.S. states that have legalized the substance.

The benefits of medical marijuana clearly surpass the negative effects.



Con

Fiona Davis

With a handful of states poised to legalize marijuana in November, the debate over the drug is certainly a trendy one, especially among younger generations.

While the validity of arguments for marijuana's medicinal properties is scientifically accepted, the core of the marijuana issue is in the repercussions legalization of marijuana has for youths and businesses.

Children and teens are impressionable, thus with talk of legalizing marijuana, it is not surprising that teen marijuana use is rising as teen's negative perception of the drug is falling, according to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

When Alaska legalized marijuana in the 1970s, teen marijuana usage spiked to two times the national average, according to NBC News.

A large percentage of the general public now views marijuana as a relatively safe drug, yet the Office of National Drug Control Policy reports that 374,000 people enter the emergency room each year with a marijuana problem.

Furthermore, in California, one of the first states to legalize marijuana, law enforcement officers report that marijuana dispensaries are detrimental to other nearby businesses.

"Assaults, robberies, murders, drug dealing, sales to minors, loitering, heavy traffic, and increased noise are criminal byproducts resulting from medical marijuana distribution," the California Police Chiefs Association's Task Force on Marijuana Dispensaries said. These crimes make previously prosperous business centers far too dangerous for shoppers, harming the already struggling economy.

Many policymakers expect increased tax revenue from the legalization of marijuana, but Asa Hutchinson, former head of the Drug Enforcement Administration said, "Marijuana was made illegal because it is harmful; citing revenue gain as reason to legalize the drug emphasizes money over health and ignores the significant cost burdens that will inevitably arise as a result."

The results of easy access to the drug have proven only to be crime, economic detriment, and dangers to teens..

Common sense dictates that dangers outweigh marijuana's benefits, but perhaps just as marijuana impairs the judgment of its users, the pro side has been impaired by ignorance of the facts.

RACHEL DALEY ILLUSTRATION

Seniors face disappointment from lack of usual privileges

By Austin Coviello
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Senior year is a long-awaited time in a student's high school career that is filled with the promise of privileges never before experienced in three long years as underclassman.

From the first day of freshman year, the seniors seem to have it made. They have the ability to sit outside on the balcony, basking in the sun while they eat their lunch. They even have a whole room to themselves to socialize with each other while working on homework. This year,

however, things are different.

As the class of 2013 entered its last year of high school, senior privileges changed drastically. After spending three years cooped up inside for lunch, the only light at the end of the tunnel was the seniors-only outdoor seating.

Unfortunately, after a few short moments of senior glory, the happiness was ruined by the sight of juniors flooding the deck. They were met by cries of denial from seniors when Assistant Principal Paul Murphy delivered the upsetting news: the juniors would be sharing the deck with the seniors this year due to a shortage of tables in the cafeteria.

Lunch on the balcony is one of the few highly anticipated privileges saved exclusively for seniors. Freshman, sophomore, and

Lunch on the balcony is a highly anticipated privilege exclusively for seniors



CAROLYN HESLOP PHOTO

Seniors struggle to fit in the community room due to juniors taking up seats on the outdoor balcony. Many seniors are frustrated with having to compromise their privileges with underclassmen and are not pleased with the school's choices.

junior years are bearable solely because of the opportunities of seniority presented in the final year.

Now, the juniors somehow speed to lunch, filling the tables

and leaving the seniors shocked and disappointed as they sulk to the community room, which has a shortage of chairs, leaving groups of seniors sitting

on the floor to eat their lunch..

As if not having a space for lunch outdoors during the few warm-weather months of the year is not enough torture for the senior class, another horror that met the class of 2012 upon entering the school year was the loss of the senior room for alternate uses.

The senior room has always been a secluded place for seniors to spend time together and work on schoolwork without the threat of interrupting underclassmen. Without it, seniors are forced to remain in packed study halls with underclassmen instead of being able to spend quality time together in their last year of high school.

The lack of senior privileges during the 2012-2013 school year has created a wave of disappointment through the whole class. In order to feel like an accomplished high school student, at least a few senior privileges are necessary.



Students volunteer for AMC Trip in New Hampshire

By Sofia del Valle
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

While many high schoolers lounged on the beach or by the pool, a group of 20 students travelled to Jackson, New Hampshire, and spent five days volunteering for the Appalachian Mountain Club. The goal of the AMC is to maintain a hikeable condition for trails by clearing brush, installing water bars and building steps of rock. Along with preserving trails, members of the AMC focus on living in an almost transcendental manner. They sleep in tents, cook organic food, wash themselves minimally, and spend limited time using electronic devices. This type of lifestyle was new to many of us on the trip. The first day was spent mainly learning about the lumber tools and equipment, and for the next four days, the routine stayed the same: wake up at 6:30 a.m., breakfast from 7-7:30 a.m., and from 8-4 in the afternoon, we were toiling over trees and dirt.

Tasks like axing stumps, sawing dead wood and debarking trees pushed the limits of our physical and mental endurance. A central part of the trip was creating water bars. We placed logs in trenches we had dug to create a water drainage system, which would prevent the trails from flooding. Though at times the work was difficult and tedious, a strong feeling of accomplishment came at the end of the day. For someone like me who doesn't gravitate towards activities like camping and hiking, the experience was worthwhile. Spending five days in the wilderness was a chance to try something new, and everyone was in the same boat. AMC brought us together, and during a hard day of labor, we shared a mutual sense of aggravation yet the need to finish the job. By the last day, while many of us were more than ready to leave, we felt a lingering sense of fulfillment knowing that the work we had done was long-lasting and that we had all survived.

For more information, visit the website <http://www.outdoors.org/>

STAFF EDITORIAL

Daily morning entrance traffic highlights need for second entrance, causes students to be late, presents danger

Though many benefits result from a combined middle and high school, many complications do as well. One of these problems is the congested drop-off entrance in the mornings. Each year it seems as though the number of students being driven to school increases. This year has been one of the worst for traffic in the mornings.

The traffic is so slow-moving that some students are forced to leave up to 20 minutes early just to get to school on time. The situation is additionally hard on parents, who have to get to work on time after dropping off their children.

Asking families to leave earlier in the morning is reasonable for some families closer to the school but becomes less practical for families farther away.

Rules prohibiting parents from driving through the teacher parking lot to drop off their children are reasonable; however, the fact that parents are doing so emphasizes the need for a second entrance.

A convenient location for a second entrance would be the doors opening into the lowest floor, near the superintendent's office, where students



KENDALL MCCORMICK PHOTO

Many parents of both middle and high school students are forced to drop off their children in the morning at one entrance, where slow-moving traffic may cause students to be late for class.

were dropped off during the first year of the new building, before the main entrance was created. A new rule could mandate that all parents with only middle school aged children should drop off at the lower entrance, while parents with at least one high school student could use the main entrance. The lower entrance would inevitably result in a longer

walk for students to their classes; however, middle school students would only have a short walk to the dining hall, where they wait in the mornings. Splitting up the entrance would not only be more convenient for parents and students but would also be safer. In the hectic traffic, the chance of a parent not seeing a student getting out of his

or her car or walking across the street largely increases. A second entrance would lessen the confusion and disarray involved with the current drop-off system, thus allowing for safety of the students. Creating a second entrance would make morning drop-off an easier process for both students and parents, while also providing for the safety of every student.

Practices at Sweeney conveniently resolve scheduling issues

By Sofia del Valle
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

As fall sports kick off, finding times and places for teams to practice becomes more of an issue. With two turfs and four high school teams needing practice and game times on a field, fitting everyone in can be hard. Practice at Sweeney is a slight inconvenience, but the field is helpful as an extra location for practices, even

if the grass is uneven and too small to play games on. A solution, on some days, has been to schedule one team at Sweeney Park. This decision allows more teams to practice at convenient times, such as right after school. The alternative to practices at Sweeney is having a later practice on the turf, but those practice times can be inconvenient for some students who cannot get a ride and end up having to stay at the school all day.

While practicing on the turf would be normally preferable to practicing at Sweeney, having late practice on the turf is much more inconvenient for students. With the presence on Eastern Equine Encephalitis in the area, practicing at dusk when mosquitoes are out can be very dangerous. Another potential health issue with late practice is sleep deprivation. After practice, athletes have to go home, shower, eat dinner, and finish homework. If practice ends at 8 or 9,

it is usually very late by the time students have the chance to get all of those things done. Playing on a turf field can be a bit different from playing on grass, especially for sports like soccer and field hockey where the ball is on the ground for the most part. However, both turf and grass can benefit teams in different ways. While practicing on a turf field is often preferable, the occasional Sweeney practice never hurt anyone.

the INDEPENDENT

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The Independent is published monthly throughout the school year. It is a product of the Manchester-Essex Regional High School Journalism class. Editorial space is available to all MERHS students, faculty, and community members. All submissions must be signed and put in the newspaper mailbox in the front office of MERHS. The Independent reserves the right not to print letters and to edit the content for clarity and length. While letters can be critical of an individual's actions, they cannot slander or libel. The staff editorial may be considered the opinion of the staff of The Independent. By-line opinions are written by individual staff members and should not be considered representative of the entire staff. The Independent staff hopes that all Manchester and Essex citizens will take advantage of this forum. The paper is meant to serve the school community, and we are open to suggestions to help it better serve its purposes.

Choosing colleges prepares siblings for separation

By **Natasha Statz-Geary**
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Every year, over 100 s enter their senior year and prepare for college, launching parents, students and teachers into a stressful year full of applications and essays galore. This year my brother Kurt is one of those seniors.

As children, my brother and I hated each other. When I was 4 years old, I tried to drown him in the bathtub. I just wanted him to leave my life forever. But now that Kurt is beginning to dip his toes into the dicey waters of college admissions, all I want is more time with him.

Kurt began thinking about possible schools around a year ago, and our dinner time conversation was soon consumed with college talk nearly every night. But then after our first college tour, the reality of the situation dawned on me.

I suddenly came to terms with the fact that I wouldn't always have Kurt within earshot, or within a car ride, or even in the same time zone as me.

Soon the tedious process of college tours became so much more than just an over-enthusiastic student spitting out verbal propaganda about his school. It became a serious process of finding the perfect school for my brother to spend the next four years of his life.

Soon enough I became an avid researcher of schools for my brother. And through the research I was gathering for

Kurt, I also discovered things about colleges that I could apply to myself. For example, I now know that University of Miami is home to one of the country's best quidditch teams.

But most importantly, the whole college touring process has made me so much closer with my brother.

‘The whole college touring process has made me so much closer with my brother’

-NATASHA STATZ-GEARY



STATZ-GEARY PHOTO

Siblings Natasha and Kurt Statz-Geary spent time together during Kurt's college visit to University of Miami. Tasha says she learned information that will help her with her own college search.

This summer my family went on a trip to California to tour colleges for a week, but it was also

a trip to spend time as a family before Kurt flies 3,000 miles away to start his new life. And

for that, I really am grateful for all of the early mornings spent driving off to look at schools.

College admissions rely heavily on tests for measuring intelligence

By **Hannah Riordan**
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Standardized tests like the SAT are age-old stressors that affect all American high school students. What most people don't know is that they aren't truly useful in gauging intelligence.

In the early 1900s, the SAT was developed to measure aptitude. Today it has evolved into a test that has almost nothing to do with aptitude and almost nothing to do with how successful

students become in college.

According to Claude Steele, professor and dean at Stanford University, the SAT only accurately measures around 18 percent of the qualities and skills that lead to success in college.

John Katzman, president and founder of the Princeton Review, said that Advanced Placement tests are much better at determining which students will be successful in college. Colleges do see Advanced Placement

test scores, but the College Board claims that colleges need a tool or a "grade yardstick" to compare grades from different schools.

"You do need a common yardstick. There's nothing to say that the SAT has to be this common yardstick," Katzman said.

Recently, the SAT has added twenty different Subject Tests that students may elect to take in their specialty areas.

Unfortunately, in a joint survey conducted by five organizations involved in the college standardized testing process, like The College Board and ACT Inc., universities did not rank the Subject Tests with any considerable importance to college admissions.

The same joint survey shows that high school grades are considered the most important factor in admissions decisions, with required tests ranking second most

Today SATs have evolved into a test that has almost nothing to do with aptitude and almost nothing to do with how successful students become in college.



BIOLOGY CORNER/FLICKR.COM

important and pattern of high school course work ranking as the third most important factor.

Perhaps by the time a new generation of college applicants

applies to college, the SAT will be nonexistent, but for now the infamous test is still a vital part of college admissions.

Students should not take classes just to appeal to colleges

By **Devon Musgrave-Johnson**
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Sometimes it seems as if the only purpose of high school is to prepare students for college. Often people will take a class solely because it looks good on applications.

This decision is a very difficult one because the results of actions taken in high school do not become consequential until it is too late to go back on the choices made.

The safe choice to make is to focus in on an interest and attempt to take a rigorous course in that area of study. In this way, a student can still look impressive but not get overwhelmed. It's important to enjoy a

class; otherwise, all motivation to study and do well will be lost.

Taking on difficult classes causes enough stress already without disinterest in the class. Resentment towards the class will just continue to grow.

If the workload from a class is going to be too much to bear and the only positive for taking it is to look good on applications, taking that class is not the best choice.

Learning can be fun if the topic is interesting. The human brain is programmed to try to learn and take on new information.

If you ask a majority of teens across the country, they will be able to tell you in a heartbeat where a celebrity is from, the stats of their favorite sports team, or what shows are going to be on TV that night. They can answer these questions because they care about the answers.

The same goes for school subjects as well. A student who enjoys science will be eager to double up on science classes, such as biology and chemistry, in their sophomore year.

If students care about what they are learning, they will benefit more long term than they would from a class that gives them no motivation..

Sometimes it seems as if the only purpose of high school is to prepare students for college.



DEVON MUSGRAVE-JOHNSON PHOTO

Some students value the content of a class over the credentials the class will supply them for collage applications, while others are focused solely on impressing colleges. The safe choice to make is to focus in on an interest and attempt to take a rigorous course in that area of study. In this way, a student can still look impressive but not get overwhelmed.

Football team hopes to win league title

By Austen Coviello
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After finishing last year’s season with a record of 5-6, the varsity football team is entering the 2012 season with hopes of improvement, according to coach Mike Athanas. Athanas, who has been coaching the football team for 10 years, said the team has goals to improve their 1-3 record and eventually play for the league title at the end of the season. The last five games are league games, and, according to Athanas, the beginning of the season has been helpful in acting as a “stepping stone in order to be ready to go in October.” This season the team has five senior captains: Cory Burnham, Jacob Fitzgerald, Zac Fleming, John Beardsley, and Rockport senior Julian Flavin. “Having so many talented se-



AUSTEN COVIELLO PHOTO

Junior Liam Logue leads his line during warm-ups at football practice. The football team always does stretches and warms up before practicing. Important upcoming games include Hamilton-Wenham on October 20 and the Thanksgiving Day game against Georgetown.

niors will be a big strength this season. Not only have the captains but all of the seniors shown strong leadership so far,” Athanas said. According to Burnham, leading the team and helping out are important focus points for him and the other captains. “When I started out, the captain

leadership helped a lot, so I want to try and do the same,” he said. Junior Chris Dumont, according to Athanas, is a promising underclassman who will be a key player to watch during the 2012 season. “I am excited for this season because we have a really strong offense and good senior leadership. We all have goals of making playoffs, and we’re determined to achieve them,” Dumont said. According to Athanas, the team does not have any major areas of improvement they need to work on as the season progresses; however, they need to “keep trying to improve a little bit every game to reach their goals.” “This season is different because we lost a lot of good players who graduated, but we also gained more seniors that have taken on huge leadership roles. They’ve all worked hard, and it has been exciting so far even though we have a losing record,” Athanas said.

Golf team has high expectations for this year

By Landon Komishane
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Development of the golf team this year will continue to prosper because there were no graduating members, coach Jane McConnell said. “It’s great to return 12 varsity members,” McConnell said. “For the first time ever, I’ve got 12 players that I could fit into a match on any given day. It’s not only a luxury in terms of numbers, but 12 of them are playing better than they ever had. We have depth and that’s what we have needed.” Their only loss was then-sophomore Miles Wood, who transferred to Noble and Greenough. “We’re absolutely fine right now,” McConnell said. “We have the strongest team we’ve

‘We had the same team last year, and no one feels any more or any less important. There’s a lot of good chemistry on the team even between the new younger players and the veterans.’

JOSH CHRISTOPHER

ever had, including last year. We have great players now, and we can reach the goal with them.” With most members returning, the captains are senior Josh Christopher, junior Petey Morton, junior Kevin Carter, and sophomore Ben Bichet. They all have high expectations of the team. “We expect big things from everyone this year after losing no seniors,” Morton said. He also expects the captains to be a factor in doing that. McConnell also has high expectations for the captains. “They help me coach the team. They are very responsible,” she said. “Each of them oversees the development of the team. I consult them on almost every decision

I make and I look to them to set the example and be positive.” According to Christopher, the fact that there are no graduated seniors allows the team to grow. “We had the same team last year and no one really feels any more or any less important,” he said. “There’s a lot of good chemistry on the team even between the new younger players and the veterans.” According to Morton, the team went 10-5 last year, the best record it has ever had. The team made it to the state qualifying round, and those goals have been intensified this year. “Our main goal is to get to the state tournament final this year,” McConnell said. The captains have more specific goals other than just getting to the state tournament final. “We want to go undefeated, which would mean beating all Cape Ann Large schools and qualify for the state tournament,” Morton said. The team is currently 7-2, so they are not undefeated, but they think that they are on the right track, according to Morton.



COURTESY OF JANE MCCONNELL

Senior Josh Christopher puts as sophomore Michael Fuca looks on.

Field hockey team starts season with eight wins

By Rachel Daley
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Despite losing their three senior captains last year, the field hockey team is preparing for the state tournament by focusing on mental aspects of the game. Their record last year was 10-5-5, and they have already won eight games to start out the season. According to third-year coach Andrea Slaven, the girls are clicking earlier in the season because of the high number of returning players. “The girls really come to work every day and have been consistent on the field,” she said. Senior Captain Nicole Bradley agreed. “I think that this year everyone has more experience.



COURTESY OF LISA CLARK

Sophomore Annie DeConto dribbles past a North Reading defender as junior Maddie Dahlin calls for the ball.

Last year we only had five returners, so it took a little longer to get back into things,” she said. The team’s main goal for the season is to be recognized for their sportsmanship. “We don’t want to be known as cocky as a top competitor in the Cape Ann League,” Slaven said. The three senior captains, Bradley, Bistrong, and Field are striving to be Cape Ann

League Champions and to go far into the state tournament. “This year, there is a whole new dynamic to the team that is really positive and focused,” Bistrong said. “I think we have a very good chance of going far into the tournament if we keep up the hard work.” Field also recognizes the fact that the team is prepared for the tournament run. “We have a lot of really solid players, not just one star who carries the weight, and I think that’s what makes us a threat.” According to Field, the team wants 2012 to be the year to win the Division II North Title. “We have always come so close, and to win it would be great; we all just have to play our hardest,” she said.

Boys’ soccer aspires to make state tournament

By Carolyn Heslop
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With a solid preseason under its belt, the soccer team starts the season off with a strong record off 3-3-2, according to varsity coach Robbie Bilsbury.

The team’s goals for the season include staying focused on the match at hand and working to get better by showing improvements as the season progresses, Bilsbury said.

“Another major goal for our team this year is to make the state tournament because this hasn’t been done for about six years,” senior captain Chris Xavier said.

Overall, the team has a nice balance between talented young

players and older experienced players, according to Bilsbury.

He also said that as opposed to having one star that rules the field, the players are all on the same page and are continuously working together as a team.

Senior captain Alex Walder said the team is already exhibiting strong ball movement and

better communication while on the field.

The team finished last season 2-18, so the team is already off to a better start, he said.

Although Bilsbury said that comparing seasons is not his favorite thing to do, he said that this year there have been fewer injuries than in the past. This means there are more players ready and able to play, he added.

‘The team has a nice balance between young talented players and older experienced players.’

-ROBBIE BILSBURY



CAROLYN HESLOP PHOTO

Seniors Pat Hagar and Will Nadai gather the ball preparing for a free kick against Rockport

Xavier also said that some of the team’s strengths this year include a large number of players who really know how to put the ball in the net, as well as a strong defensive line.

“We have really good talent and team chemistry that is really

going to help us going forward in the season,” Bilsbury said.

Bilsbury also said that along with the captains, seniors Liam Aldrich, Patrick Hagar, Walder, and Xavier, other key players include senior Will Nadai, junior Sean Gutierrez, and sopho-

more Lucas Firme, who serve as strong vocal leaders on the team.

“We have gotten a really strong start to the season, and we are just hoping to play our best and improve as much as we can as the season progresses,” Walder said.

Girls’ soccer hopes to improve on last year’s season



JOHN PRIES PHOTO

Ellie Zwart fights off a defender in a 2-0 loss against Marblehead in their first game of the season

By Max Nesbit
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Despite starting 0-8, the girls’ soccer team hopes to make other teams play “their soccer” and make the state tournament, according to coach Bryan Shields.

The team is led by senior captain and goalie Ella Silag-Stearns, senior captain Chrissy Pries, and junior captain Rachel Daley, all of whom hope to rebound from a four win season after Jess Crossen graduated and Casey Cook transferred to Beverly High School.

“Compared to last year, the team is 10 times more in shape and we are definitely being more aggressive overall,” Pries said.

The girls also have to adjust to a coach who is in his first year coaching girls’ soccer at the high school level. “Coach Shields has given us

a formation on the field that allows for defensive and offensive progression. Last year we had the footwork, but didn’t know how to execute it in games, and he has really helped us in that aspect,” Daley said.

According to Shields, the girls really excel in their understanding of the game, their toughness and aggressiveness, and their ability to stay compact and play team defense.

The team excels in many areas, but they need to improve on their execution and communication, Pries said.

Although the team’s main goal is to qualify for the state tournament and contend for a state title,

they also hope to complete many smaller goals to help them gain their ultimate goal, Daley said.

“We have set many smaller goals such as understanding and executing game plans, improving tactical and technical skills, and developing an understanding of how to watch and learn from games,” Shields said.

The girls began their season against Marblehead on Sept. 11 losing 0-2, but they still have many important games yet to come, Daley said.

“I think our team has a real chance at making the tournament, and it would be great to see some fans at an game like Georgetown,” Pries said.

‘Compared to last year, the team is 10 times more in shape and we are definitely being more aggressive overall in every game we play’

-CHRISSY PRIES

Cross country focuses on qualifying for state championship

By Emily Arnsten
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Cross country runners this season share a universal goal of qualifying for the cross country state championship and improving their scores at the Cape Ann League Championship.

Junior captain Fiona Davis believes the girls’ team has “never had a better chance of making it” because of the growth of the program.

Currently 11 female participants and 33 male participants are on the team, almost doubling the size of the team

since last year, according to junior captain Lindsey Duff

Aside from the state qualifiers, which the team has never participated in, the runners are also

excited for the Cape Ann Cross Country Championship on Oct. 27.

“Cape Ann League Championship (CALs) is what we’re looking forward to the most; we’ve all set personal goals for ourselves at CALs as well,” Duff said.

As for the team record so far, the boys are undefeated 3-1 and the girls are 0-4.

“We’ve never started out the season with two wins (for the boys’ team). This made us realize that

‘The girls’ team has never had a better chance of making the state tournament because of the growth of the program this year, and we only hope to improve from here on in’

-FIONA DAVIS



CAL SCORES PHOTO

Junior Molly Carlson, eighth grader Maddy Conway, eighth grader Julia Potter, freshman Bailey Diamondidis, and sophomore Julia Whitten compete in race against Amesbury Sept. 12

our boys’ team has a good shot at being the Cape Ann League Small Champions, which would be unprecedented,” Davis said.

Sophomore captain Cameron Holley thinks this season will be one of the best because “the whole team did extra training over the summer.”

The key to success is to “run in a pack – when we do that, we push each other to run faster and help each other out,” he said.

Coach Andrew Migonis also believes that the team’s cohesiveness this season will lead to success. “Rather than just one guy out front and one guy lagging

behind, we have packs of runners who can race together,” he said.

As for personal goals every runner has their own but, freshman captain Charlie Davis wants to “in general run faster, but specifically beat my record of 18:30 for a 5K race,” he said.

Athletic department focuses on concussions

By Carolyn Heslop
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Within the past year, concussions have become a major topic of discussion, especially among high school students and administrators.

According to high school nurse Cyndi Aldrich, there were 38 cases of sports-related concussions and 11 cases of non-school related concussions in just last year alone.

Aldrich said that it is hard to judge the exact number of concussions because last year was the first year that the school concussion policy was enacted and the first time that any real attention was brought to the issue.

Athletic director Kelly Porcaro said that it is now mandatory for students to complete certain forms and

tests related to concussions before they are even able to begin a sport or certain extracurricular activities.

Part of this process includes the mandatory ImPACT test in which students must take a baseline every two years, she said.

According to Porcaro, this test is not academic based, but purely tests the student’s visual memory, speed, and reflexes, which are certain areas that would be affected if the student did acquire a concussion.

If a student begins to experience symptoms such as retrograde amnesia, dizziness, nausea, headache, inability to focus, sensitivity to light, and blurry vision, he/she is advised to take the ImPACT test again, and his/her results are compared with those of the baseline, she said.

“The severity of the con-

cussion varies from person to person,” Porcaro said.

“They are not really graded by grade one or grade two; it just really depends on the symptoms.”

Junior Taylor Ketchum received a concussion last year on the second day of basketball tryouts when he hit his head against the wooden floor of the gymnasium.

According to Ketchum, his concussion not only meant that he was sidelined during the basketball season but also that school became increasingly difficult for him.

“The concussion became a big issue for me mainly because I couldn’t do any school work for an entire month,” Ketchum said. “It was hard because I couldn’t focus on anything, and I couldn’t do any of the tests that I still had to makeup.”



COURTESY TAYLOR KETCHUM
Taylor Ketchum and Joe Burgess watch a free throw go in. Ketchum was out for several weeks last year due to a concussion.

When the student is finally allowed to return to sports or school, it is at the discretion of the neurologist, physical trainer, and the student’s primary care physician, Porcaro said.

She said that there is a specific and detailed five step re-entry plan that students in similar situations to Ketchum must follow upon their return to a sport.

Captains meet with athletic director to discuss leadership qualities

By Lila Hughes
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Captains of fall sports met on Sept. 9 at 6:30 p.m. with athletic director Kelly Porcaro to talk about leadership skills and responsibilities that come with being a captain.

According to senior field hockey captain Nicole Bradley, captains are now required to attend a meeting before their season starts to discuss leadership qualities and fill out a packet called “Team Captain Leadership Playbook.” This packet includes questions about responsibilities to their team,



LILA HUGHES PHOTO
Senior Coco Bradley fills out the packet that was required for all captains.

coach, and school.

“Filling out the packet made me think about questions captains sometimes forget to ask themselves,”

Bradley said.

According to senior soccer captain Patrick Hagar, the meeting lasted for 30 minutes. Captains watched

an educational video on how to be a successful captain while filling out parts of the required packet.

The captains were asked to take the packets home, finish filling them out by going online to the MIAA website, and return them completed at the next meeting.

The packet focuses on leadership not just on the field but off the field, such as being a good mentor, having a good work ethic, being selfless, and showing good judgment. Captains reflect on ways they can improve individually as well how to improve as a

team. The packet also asks about positive and negative attributes from captains in the past.

“I think having that meeting really showed how important it is for captains to not just be a role model for their team but to be a role model for the school,” Hagar said.

According to senior soccer captain Liam Aldrich, Porcaro asked the captains to set up a meeting with their coach to discuss expectations of the season and to make sure the captains and coaches are on the same page before the season starts.

Track co-op, share field space, creates sense of community with Gloucester High School

By Lila Hughes
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Cooperation with Gloucester High School that began in the spring with a track co-op and expanded this fall to a shared use of Highland Field for football games is an upstanding example of sportsmanship and should be highly commended.

The towns of Essex, Manchester, and Gloucester are now not only close to each other in proximity, but are unified through athletics.

Through the track co-op, athletes from both schools received the opportunity to pursue new activities and reach new levels of success in a sport where higher participant num-

bers translate to higher achievement and a fun team experience.

Gloucester’s willingness to invite athletes to participate on the track team and to accommodate them seamlessly into the program is a testament to the kindness and forethought of the athletes, parents, coaches, and administrations of both schools.

In return for Gloucester’s favor, Manchester Essex will share field space with the Fishermen, who now play home football games at Highland Field due to renovations to Newell Stadium in Gloucester.

Repairing Newell Stadium will benefit track athletes through the much needed rebuilding of the track.

The ability of the school community to recognize Gloucester’s

need for a field and offer to share fields shows compassion and cooperation between schools.

Both of the schools’ actions set an example of sportsmanship for students to follow and to build upon in years to come.

When a school reflects the positive attributes it wishes to instill in its students, it shows responsibility for and awareness of how its actions affect students.

The ties between the two schools help to facilitate the creation of further opportunities for collaboration, not just in athletics, but also in community initiatives and town government.

Efforts to unite the two schools should be maintained in order to continue fostering a sense of community across town lines.



ANNA HEFFERNAN PHOTO
Junior Kacie Quinn and junior Anna Heffernan won fifth place in the Northeast Conference track championships in the Manchester-Essex co-op with Gloucester track



By Kristiana Valenti
INDEPENDENT STAFF

‘Glee’ begins fourth season with big changes



FOX.COM

The season four ‘Glee’ cast prepares for the premiere with a photo shoot.

Some major “Glee” fans, called “Gleeks,” offered insight about possible story lines they would like to see. “I would love to see Marley and Jake [two new characters] together this season. I think it would be great for them both to join the Glee Club, and they had great chemistry in the

first episode,” junior Alexandra Leventis said.

“I’d love to see Finn and Rachel back together, even though Rachel is in

New York and Finn isn’t,” junior Athena Venetsanakos said, referring to the show’s ex-key couple. “I just hope to see Brittany have more solos,”

said freshman Kyle Needham, who doesn’t typically watch the show on a weekly basis. “She is now a senior and a great performer.”

“Tina deserves more solos, obviously,” senior Olivia Frontiero said, speaking of a now-senior who was often overlooked. “It would be nice for her to have more solos and to see her grow as a character,” Leventis agreed.

Though “Gleeks” are clearly enthusiastic about the current season and their favorite characters and couples, some have expressed interest in changes they hope to see.

“I’d love it if they could sing ‘Lights’ by Ellie Goulding,” Venetsanakos said.

“I just want to have the whole original cast back with the new club and perform, which will hopefully happen,” Needham said.

Fox’s hit musical/dramatic comedy, “Glee,” is the fall show on everyone’s mind.

For three years, fans have watched as a group of eccentric teens from a multitude of backgrounds tried to unite themselves as William McKinley High School’s show choir group, known as the Glee Club.

Because the show takes place in a high school, the Glee Club lost several of its major voices due to graduation last year—including jock Finn, misfit-turned-semi-popular Rachel, teen mom Quinn, and loud-mouthed, opinionated Santana.

As Season 4 aired in September after a finale in which the Glee Club won their first ever Nationals competition, fans were eager to see who would replace their favorite vocalists as well as where the graduating students would be.

The season has unfolded interestingly thus far as the show bounces between several cities, following veteran Glee members at new locations and also returns to the high school to watch the new club evolve with old members and new.

‘Because the show takes place in high school, the Glee Club lost several of its major voices due to graduation.’

WEbsurfer

By Kelsi Field
INDEPENDENT EDITOR



Ragechill.com

Ragechill.com is an up and coming music website. Browsers are supplied with a digital scale, which they can pull either to “rage,” generally electronic pump up jams, or “chill,” softer love songs. Basically, the left hand side of the scale is party music and the right hand side is much mellower, acoustic music. The middle of the scale is for songs anywhere in between. RageChill is a great way to find new music, keeping up to date with newest releases. A RageChill app is also available on iTunes, so the music can be played via iPods as well. RageChill is like Pandora, but based off mainstream teenage music trends. It is less personalized but more likely to broaden one’s music tastes. Warning to listeners: RageChill does not edit explicit lyrics.

Collegeprowler.com

Prowling colleges is something all high school students tend to do. Heck, picking a college can be the biggest decision a normal teen will ever have to make. Collegeprowler.com is the best place to find out fun information about the colleges. Who wants to go to school with ugly people? Collegeprowler.com ranks students looks at universities. Yes, academics are also rated, as well as safety, campus food, diversity, local atmosphere, and safety. Collegeprowler.com grades everything with a letter scale from A+ to F-. Students who have visited or are enrolled in the schools also write blurbs on the universities themselves. All reviews are for students, by students. The reviews are relatable since they provide straight facts students with all different majors and interests.

CRAZY LIBS

A Letter From Summer Camp

By Sofia del Valle
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Dear _____,
(Family Member)

I’ve been having a _____ time at camp.
(Adjective)

There are _____ campers in total. The weather has
(Number)

been good... it only _____ once. I’ve
(Type of weather verb past tense)

been _____ everyday! Along with
(Verb ending in -ing)

making new friends, I’ve grown more

_____, and I think you’ll see a
(Adjective)

change in me when I get home. The food is

really _____. I’ve had baked
(Adjective)

_____, fried _____, and my all-time
(Noun) (Noun)

favorite, barbeque-grilled _____.
(Noun)

I’ve really loved being outside, even if it means

getting a(n) _____ bite every now and
(Animal)

then. When I have downtime, typically I

_____, or toss a _____ around with
(Verb) (Noun)

some friends. You’ll also be glad to hear that

I’ve taken up _____. Though camp has
(Verb ending in -ing)

been fun, I do miss you, _____, and especially
(Family Member)

_____ so much. I’ll see you soon! Be sure to
(Family Member)

say hi to our _____, _____, for me!
(Animal) (Name)

Sincerely,

(Name)

YouKnow YouLove YouTube

Vlogbrothers revolutionize video blogs

By Devon Musgrave-Johnson
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Brothers John and Hank Green have been video blogging since Jan. 1, 2007, when Hank decided to have an entire year of textless communication with John. They would communicate only through video blogs, telephone calls, or in person. Every day they switched off making videos on the same YouTube channel. They came to call themselves the VlogBrothers. Eventually their channel gained over 760,000 subscribers, more than 250,000,000 video views, and many fans. The VlogBrothers have made over 1,000 videos about anything from books to America's health care system to space travel.

They make money on their videos from advertisements, but neither brother has ever specified how much. Once the Green brothers' videos began to rise in viewership, people who subscribed to them began to call themselves Nerdfighters. According to John and Hank, Nerdfighters define themselves not as people who are against nerds, but as people who fight to "decrease world suck." The motto of these people is "Don't Forget to be Awesome" with the initial DFTBA. During the five since after Hank uploaded the first video, both John and Hank have created other YouTube channels. Both brothers upload videos to a channel called "CrashCourse." John uploads 10



DEVON MUSGRAVE-JOHNSON PHOTO

Brothers John and Hank Green video log to over 760,000 subscribers about varying tropics.

— 14 minute videos regarding different topics in history, and Hank uploads videos of the same length about biology. Hank also has channels such as "Sci-show," "Truth or Fail," and "Hank's channel." Additionally,

he founded "Vid-con," a conference for various YouTubers and their fans to get together, sign autographs, and hear presentations. According to JohnGreenBooks.com, John is a New York Times bestselling author. He has

published young-adult novels such as "The Fault in Our Stars" and "Looking For Alaska." The latter has been taught in high schools across the country. He has won both the Michael L. Printz award and the Edgar Award.



LILA HUGHES PHOTO
Portrait of junior Ian Lewiecki painted by twin sister Sarah.

Twin brother featured in art student's work

By Lila Hughes
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Junior Sarah Lewiecki created her latest piece, inspired by her twin brother Ian Lewiecki, over the summer. The acrylic painting is called "Brother." "The painting took me about a month, and I worked on it for an hour each day," Lewiecki said. According to Lewiecki, the current version of the painting is not the finished product, but she hopes to finish it by the end of the month. The impressionistic painting consists of different shades of purples and blues, giving off a mood of melancholy, Lewiecki said. Lewiecki plans on modifying the background and parts of the face to make it look more realistic. She said her favorite part

about the painting is the mouth, the nose, and the overall mood. Last year, Lewiecki won a Gold Key in the Boston Globe Scholastic Art Awards for her self-portrait that was similar to this painting. Both paintings use the same technique, which includes circles that contain different shades of analogous colors. They are both portraits from the shoulders up, and are the same size in width and height. "I'm a huge fan of the design aesthetic and the repetition of the shapes. They add a whole other dimension to the painting," junior Zack Trembowicz said. The two paintings having complimentary color schemes, and according to Lewiecki,

this emphasizes the fact that though she and Ian are twins, they are two different people. "Although she hasn't finished yet, this painting might be stronger than her self portrait. Last year was focused more on color, and this focuses more on mood. It shows growth and maturity from Sarah as an artist," art teacher Marion Powers said. "I would say my style is semi-realistic but is also abstract," Lewiecki said. She attended classes at Montserrat College of Art this summer, and she is taking the Art Portfolio class at the high school. Although Lewiecki does not want to be a freelance artist, she said she would like a career where creativity would be required.

'I'm a huge fan of the design aesthetic and repetition. It adds dimension to the piece.'

-ZACK TREMBOWICZ

Mumford and Sons album exceeds expectations

By Rebecca Even
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Mumford and Son's new album, "Babel," faces high expectations. "Sigh No More," their debut, has sold over two million copies in the United States alone. Despite the pressure, they have produced a compact album without a single unnecessary track. The band has made no effort to change their sound, instead deciding to stick with the style of their last album, a British folk sound. Although this may seem like they are cutting corners, the eloquence of their lyrics and the sophistication

of their music prove otherwise, as on "Ghosts That We Knew." "So give me hope in the darkness that I will see the light," begs Marcus Mumford, lead singer. "Just promise me that we'll be alright." The quartet writes all of their own songs, which is obvious in both lyrical depth and melody. Their folk sound lends a fresh vitality to the album, and their experimentation with new instruments, such as the trumpet, yields unique and successful results. While some of the songs are soft and quiet, others

are quick and loud with percussions, piano, and guitar. In "Lover of the Light," Mumford croons the chorus while, in the background, the instruments build. This technique creates an intensity that has the listener waiting in suspense for the moment when Mumford's voice and the instruments are both shouting, full of feeling and meaning. "Love the one you hold," Mumford commands over a crescendo of instruments. "And I'll be your gold." Despite the fact that second albums are notoriously unsuccessful, Mumford and Sons has managed to produce an album that is on par with their first. Key tracks include the intense "Babel," the haunting "Ghosts That We Knew," and the explosive "Lover of the Light."



COURTESY OF MUMFORDANDSONS.COM
Mumford and Sons' new album cover titled 'Babel.'