

# the INDEPENDENT

Volume XIX Number 3

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

December 10, 2012

## Portfolio class spreads Malala's story Students portray Pakistani activist in art class project

By Emily Arntsen  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Malala Yousafzai, 15-year-old Pakistani student and female education activist, inspired art teacher Marion Powers to give students a project centered on her after she was shot in the head and neck on Oct. 9 by Taliban gunmen.

On Oct. 15 Malala was transferred to Queen Elizabeth Hospital in England where she is currently recovering. She's suffering no major brain or nerve damage.

Like many people around the world, Powers, who has traveled to the Middle East many times, was outraged by Malala's story. During October, Powers assigned her students' Malala-inspired art.

"I have always taken the opportunity when presented to teach my students about global issues and allow them to speak through their art," Powers said.

The Portfolio class, seniors Calvin Lamothe, Melanie Clough and Beatrice Fryxell Gillberg and juniors Julia Paccone, Sarah Lewiecki and Zack Trembowicz,

collaborated to make a life-sized portrait of Malala, which is on display in the front hall of the school.

Powers received many compliments on the piece and also received a lot of questions about who "Malala" was. Trembowicz explained why Malala and their artwork are important: "She's a

modern day martyr fighting for a noble cause. She deserves more widespread recognition."

Lamothe said, "Mrs. Powers was the one who introduced us to Malala, and after that, we all became pretty passionate about what she stands for. She's a symbol and a spokesperson for global education, especially for women, and when you take into consideration that she is essentially only a high school freshman liv-

ing in a male-dominated society, she is incredibly remarkable."

Clough painted Malala's face while the rest of Malala's body, a collage of magazine clippings and pages from books, was created by everyone in the Portfolio class.

"My favorite part of the piece is Malala's face; Melanie did

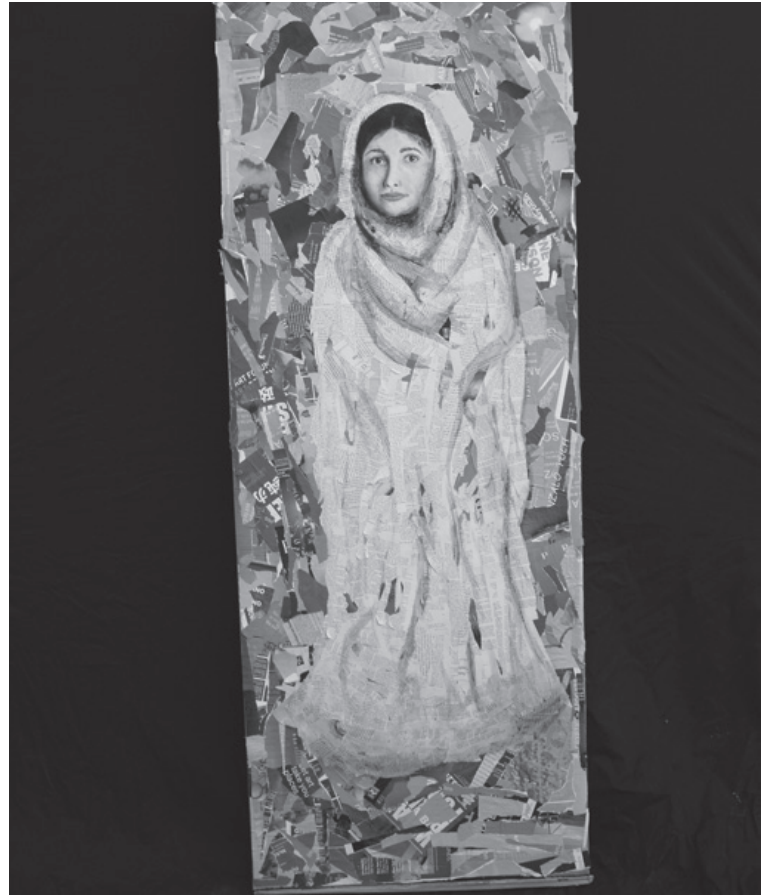
a really amazing job with it. But I think more than the actual components of the piece itself, I love the fact that we all worked together and incorporated our individual ideas into a big group project," Lamothe said.

Students took three days to finish the project. They were pressed

piece to be showcased in the school before Malala Day intended to represent the goal, CONTINUED PAGE 4

**'I have always taken the opportunity when presented to teach my students about global issues and allow them to speak through their art.'**

-MARION POWERS



EMILY ARNTSEN PHOTO

Portfolio students created a group collage in the image of Malala.

## Singers chosen for Senior District Festival

By Kendall McCormick  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Five students, freshmen Sara Rhuda and Alex Buck, sophomore Tucker Evans, and juniors Lindsey Duff and Alexandra Valenti, were chosen to participate in the Massachusetts Northeastern Senior District Festival, after auditioning Saturday, Nov. 17.

All five will participate in the choral section of the festival, which will take place in Lowell High School



COURTESY OF DONNA O'NEILL

Five high school chorus members, Tucker Evans, Alex Buck, Lindsey Duff, Alexandra Valenti, and Sara Rhuda, auditioned for and were accepted to the Northeastern Senior Districts Festival.

at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 12. The students must first attend two five-hour practices, Jan. 9 and 11, before participating in the concert.

**Out of the 1,043 students who auditioned, only 450 were selected.**

According to chorus teacher Donna O'Neill, being selected for the festival as a freshman is very difficult, making

the accomplishments of Rhuda and Buck even more impressive.

O'Neill also said she is happy with the growing desire to try out for the festival. For the most part, each year the number of participants auditioning for Senior Districts increases.

O'Neill thinks, in many cases, the growing interest is due to the popularity of the Junior District Festival for middle school students.

Although a few more students tried out and CONTINUED PAGE 4

## Seniors begin to put up stars

By Sofia del Valle  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After a misunderstanding between seniors and the guidance department regarding the college starboard, students have begun posting their stars on the starboard upon being accepted into college.

The starboard began seven years ago when Sharon Maguire, then high school guidance director, brought the idea to the high school. In years past, when students were accepted

into a school, they had the option of posting a star on the bulletin board outside of the guidance office displaying their name and said school.

Sherri Lewis, the new guidance director is now in charge of overseeing the imple-

mentation of the starboard.

"Over the summer, students and parents expressed concern about the starboard because for those that don't get accepted into the school of their choice, the stars are can be a source of anxiety," Lewis said.

According to Lewis, guidance

**'The stars are solely meant to share the happiness and excitement of the students going onto college. They represent dreams and goals.'**

-SHARON MAGUIRE

was planning on finding an alternative way to celebrate students' acceptance into college, but due to her medical absence, this decision was put on hold.

Because of her absence, students were under the impression that the starboard was

no longer allowed, Lewis said.

Senior Marissa Ostrovitz immediately protested what she thought was a final decision. She gathered the signatures of 94 seniors to petition against the removal of the starboard.

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News Briefs

Owl rescued on bus ride to school

Two weeks ago the bus was on its way to school when it stopped abruptly due to an owl in the middle of the road. Senior Maizi Swenson Heussi got off the bus and helped the owl to the side of the road, and then she called her mother who works in wildlife rescue. The bus driver would not allow Swenson to wait with the animal, so Swenson brought it back on the bus with her. Once at the school, she was asked to leave the owl outside and go to class, but science teacher Maria Burgess offered to wait outside with her until the owl was picked up.

DECA adviser Dean Martino named DECA Board member

This year DECA adviser Dean Martino is on the Board of Directors, co-directing our district. He, along with DECA adviser Ann Grassetti from Gloucester, is now in charge of coordinating the District DECA competition, organizing other advisers to work at the competition, setting up the competitors' schedules, and working with the state adviser.

Cross country team competes in All States

The boys cross country team made All States for the first time in school history. "We were very excited and proud to be representing the school as the first team to make it," junior captain Fiona Davis said. Davis also qualified individually. "We look forward to next year, as we will compete once again as a young team," she said.

Green scholars complete first Sustainability Day

By Rachel Daley  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Embarking on its first Sustainability Day of the year, the 18 Green Scholars traveled to multiple environmental landmarks around the Cape Ann area.

"We try to make the class interesting with days meant to be both educational and fun. These aren't just normal field trips; we go to several different places to enhance our knowledge of the environment and shifting climates," Green Team director Eric Magers said.

Director of Facilities Joe Lucido began the day by giving the students a tour of the school's green aspects, including the roof's solar panels, the boiler room, and the main electrical room.

Junior Jake Tyler commented on seeing the roof for the first time. "The benefits of taking Green Scholars became clear to me on Sustainability Day. We got to climb up onto the roof to see the solar panels, which no other classes can do," he said.

After the tour, the group went to Manchester resident Mike Chapman's bee farm. Chapman, who has been raising bees for five years, displayed the structure of

the artificial hives to the students and provided samples of the natural honey, which he harvested.

According to Magers, Chapman discussed the effects which climate change has on the bees' behavior, providing the students with environmental literacy, a main goal of the Scholars program.

Next, they went to the Ipswich wind turbine site to learn the positive impacts of wind energy on the environment.

Also included in the field trip was a walk around the second largest hill in Manchester, which is off of Pine Street, where the group observed the environmental effects of the wildfire of 1957.

The Scholars capped off the day with a visit to the Essex County Green Belt, a local land conservation group, to learn what environmental motives lead to their founding.

"It was nice to join together with all of the separate blocks of Scholars and remember that we're making the world a better place as a unit, one step at a time," junior Brittany Smith said.

"The day overall was both fun and informative. I think that seeing the hidden treasures around Cape Ann showed me that there are a lot of towns and people who care about the environment," Tyler said.

**'We try to make the class interesting with days meant to be both educational and fun.'**

-ERIC MAGERS



COURTESY OF LEAH THOMPSON

Eighteen Green Scholars spent the day at various environmental landmarks all across Cape Ann. The trip included a tour of the school's green facilities led by facilities director Joe Lucido.



COURTESY OF LEAH THOMPSON

The students took a trip to the second largest hill in Manchester and learned about the environmental effects of a 1957 wildfire.

Teachers, administrators meet to examine elementary curriculum, schedules

By Fiona Davis  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR



FIONA DAVIS PHOTO

Teachers and administrators aim to create a new elementary school scheduling model that is centered around 21st-century learning, with the aim being better efficiency in the schools.



FIONA DAVIS PHOTO

Curriculum director Scott Morison and a team of teachers have been working to make modifications to the elementary schools' programming and schedules. Both the teachers and administration think that it will be beneficial to present similar curricular information that can stretch across the entire district, meaning both Essex Elementary and Manchester Memorial Elementary. Although this similar curriculum is still being developed, the teachers agree that they are now better able to focus on components of the actual school day.

A team of teachers and specialists met to make necessary modifications to the elementary schools' programming and schedules, according to curriculum director Scott Morrison.

"Everything has changed in education... the only thing that hasn't is that we have kids six and a half hours every day, and so we were trying to find away to maximize those six and a half hours," Morrison said.

According to him, the task force focused on balancing the two elementary schools first by matching report cards and aligning the curriculum and then by streamlining the schedules.

"We had almost two completely different programs running at both elementary schools...we realized that we need to have common programming at the schools," he said.

The benefits of having both elementary schools presenting sim-

ilar curricular information stretch across the district, according to Superintendent Pamela Beaudoin.

"The goal is to make sure we can pace the curriculum the same at both elementary schools so that kids begin and end in similar places, so the receiving teachers the next year, then ultimately the middle school, have kids who have all had a similar experience," she said.

After defining a similar curriculum, according to Morrison, the team of teachers began to work on creating efficiency in the schedules by eliminating transition times between classes and dead spaces in the schedule.

According to fourth-grade teacher Joe Gugino of Memorial School, the process of changing the schedules is paying off.

"We did a lot of data collecting, and then we looked at it and said, 'What do we need to change and align?' The biggest change to the schedule is that we got more aligned for times each subject is being taught, which is more consistent now," he said.

According to Morrison, teachers

**'We had almost two completely different programs running at both elementary schools...we realized that we need to have common programming at the schools.'**

-SCOTT MORRISON

# Peer Leaders head toy drive for disadvantaged

## School collects gifts for Gloucester's Pathways for Children

By Sarah Beckmann  
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Toy donations for all ages, facilitated by the Peer Leaders group, will be sent to Gloucester and be distributed to under-privileged children this coming Christmas.

This year's unwrapped contributions will be sent to Gloucester's Pathways for Children, or more specifically, the former Fuller School in Gloucester, guidance counselor and co-advisor of the Peer Leaders group Karen D'Amour explained.

"They bring all the toys that they collect over to the Fuller School, which is a closed [elementary] school in Gloucester...

...and they set the toys up in two rooms," D'Amour said.

Parents and guardians of these children will then be able to visit this school and choose the appropriate gift for their child, according to age and their child's interests.

"That's why [the toys] are unwrapped," D'Amour said.

**Parents and guardians will be able to visit this school and choose the appropriate gifts for their child.**

In past years, Manchester Essex has given toys not only to Gloucester but to other communities on Cape Ann as well, assistant principal Paul Murphy said.

"We used to do the toy drive with 'Toy's for H.A.W.C.,' where we brought the toys to Salem," Murphy said.

However, Pathways for Children expressed a greater need for donations; therefore, the toy drive efforts transitioned to Gloucester, he said.

Other school organizations have also headed this annual toy drive, and the Peer Leaders decided to take control this year, D'Amour said.

"In the past, the Diversity Alliance program spearheaded [the drive], but this year, because the D.A. isn't starting up until the beginning of second semester, they asked all the other clubs to participate," she said.

Expectations for the toy drive are high. D'Amour noted last year's overwhelming and "overflowing" stock, saying they had to take two trucks last year to transport the abundance of toys.

Students are encouraged to bring in multiple gifts but not to spend huge sums of money on them.

"I work at Zak's [Manchester], so I'll probably get something there," senior Whitney Hammond said.

She also plans on possibly bringing in a baby doll for a little girl; the store she works at has many of those types of toys.



AUSTEN COVIELLO PHOTO

The collection box for the annual toy drive is outside the main office. The toys this year will be going to Pathways for Children in Gloucester. The toy collection is typically headed by the Diversity Alliance, but this year the Peer Leaders are leading it.

# iPad cart receives school-wide approval, positive response



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

After visiting Burlington High School where each student has an iPad, math teacher David Alger applied for a grant from the Spaulding Education Fund and received 30 iPads. Above: Tenth-graders Cole O'Brien and Justin Eichenberger practice SAT grammar exercises in Mary Buckley-Harmon's English class.

By Natasha Statz-Geary  
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Teachers around the school have become increasingly interested in the iPad cart this year and have begun incorporating this technology into their curriculum.

"I was inspired after attending a conference about iPads in the classroom and after visiting Burlington High School, where every student has an iPad," math teacher David Alger said.

"The teachers at Burlington spoke highly of the iPads, so I decided a good first step would be to get some grant money to buy at least one classroom set," he said.

After receiving Alger's letter, the Spaulding Education Fund granted enough money for one cart, complete with 30 iPads.

Although the iPads were proposed and obtained by Alger, they have become increasingly pres-

ent in other classrooms around the school, even being used by the middle school occasionally.

"Right now, we're lending them to anyone who wants them. The English department is using them for grammar practice and AP practice," Alger said.

"This was my first time using iPads in the classroom. I was excited to use them for grammar because they provide students the ability to learn interactively, which is more interesting for them. There are so many interactive quizzes available on the Internet, and students can choose the areas they want to practice. I'm also hoping to give them practice for the SAT grammar section," 10th-grade English teacher Mary Buckley-Harmon said.

Sophomore Olivia Bonaccorso has used the iPads in both her geometry and English classes. In geometry, the class used the iPads to play Tic Tac Toe to practice deductive reasoning. In

English, students practiced grammar interactively on the iPads.

"I think that the iPads are definitely more helpful than conventional learning. I find it more interesting to learn through technology as opposed to sitting in a classroom and listening to a teacher talk all day," she said.

Bonaccorso isn't the only student who appreciates the change that the iPads bring into the classroom.

"I feel that the iPads are useful because they are engaging and don't bore students," said senior Kevin Cellucci, who used the iPads in Daniel Koughan's AP English class for AP exam practice.

Alger believes using the iPads in classrooms will help students prepare for college more effectively.

"When you graduate, chances are you're going to a college that delivers its curriculum using tablets, so it would be negligent to not teach students how to use them," he said.

# Global Issues classes complete fund-raisers for Somaly Mam, plan more

By Anna Tyler  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Global Issues has filled the next few months with fund-raising events with all proceeds going towards the Somaly Mam Foundation, which is a non-governmental organization dedicated to the destruction of human trafficking while saving women and children from the sex slave industry.

"I never knew that human trafficking was such a problem, and I am glad we are putting our efforts towards a great cause," senior Jackie Rose said.

According to Global Issues teacher James Wallimann, the three Global Issues classes hope to

raise \$15,000 by the end of year to aid the Somaly Mam Foundation.

Throughout the fall, the class has had three fund-raisers including Hat Day, a dodge ball tournament, and selling a variety of foods during Homecoming week-end. The three events brought in \$1,100 worth of proceeds.

"I think this a great start for the class, and our future fund-raisers should definitely bring in up to \$15,000 by the end of the year," senior Allyson Conway said. The class recently hosted a

restaurant fund-raiser at Buffalo Wild Wings Grill and Bar in Danvers on Dec. 5 from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. Students obtained flyers that allowed for 20% of their restaurant bill to go towards the foundation. According to Wallimann, the estimated proceeds are around \$500.

**'I never knew that human trafficking was such a problem.'**

-JACKIE ROSE

"It was a glowing success," he said. Global Issues will have a fund-raising booth set up at every boys' varsity basketball home game. The booth will sell raffle tickets and both long

CONTINUATIONS PAGE 4



ANNA TYLER PHOTO

The Global Issues classes are working on fund raising for the Somaly Mam Foundation which aims to save victims of human trafficking. Fund-raisers include restaurant nights, hat days, game booths, and more. They are also selling T-shirts which were designed by the class members and are on sale for \$12 and \$18.

# Peer Leaders attend Stand Up To Bullying conference

By Austen Coviello  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

About 5,000 people, including the school's Peer Leaders, attended Stand Up To Bullying's second annual conference. The event took place at the Tsongas Arena Nov. 29, 2012.

The field trip was primarily centered on the Peer Leader group, but it was later opened to any other high school and middle school students who desired to attend, according to guidance counselor Karen D'Amour.

This year's conference featured several young musicians who performed original songs as well as covers. D'Amour said she liked the idea of using music to reach out to a younger generation.

Some of the songs had lyrics that spoke directly about bullying, including Breje's song "Facebook Lover" which

focused on the huge impact of social media on people's lives and highlighted the theme of cyber bullying that was discussed throughout the conference.

A number of teachers told about their experiences with bullying, including Lizzie Velasquez, one of three people in the world with a disease that does not allow any weight gain, and X-Factor contestant Jillian Jensen.

**'We need to put bullying back in the spotlight and make sure that it gets addressed.'**

-KAREN D'AMOUR

According to senior Dana Filias, a member of the Peer Leader group the past few years, Velasquez's speech was the best part.

"She talked about how she used her experience as a victim of bullying as her motivation to be successful. I couldn't imagine how horrible she must have felt when she found the video of herself titled 'Ugliest Woman in the World,' but somehow she got through it and is now helping others," she said.

D'Amour said that Velasquez was "really brave," and her story was "inspir-



RILEY MCCARTHY PHOTO

Peer leaders and chaperones attended the Stand Up To Bullying Conference at the Tsongas Arena.

ing and made [her] tear up."

Jensen's singing was passionate, and when she spoke about her experiences with bullying, she broke down in tears.

"Even though she's past that point in her life, and she's a successful recording artist, that pain is still there. It proves that any kind of bullying has the ability to leave a standing impression," D'Amour said.

According to junior Jeff

Durkin, the most important goal the conference accomplished was raising awareness about the negative effects of bullying.

Junior Brittany Smith said the conference "opened [her] eyes to see and understand how bullying affects people."

While parts of the conference were effective, according to Filias the performances were "random," and she would have liked to see more speakers instead.

"I just think that we need to put bullying back in the spotlight and make sure that it gets addressed because sometimes it can be subtle. It is easy for us to think it's not happening here, but students probably experience it in our school without talking about it. One of the polls at the conference said it happened most in the hallways, so it's important to raise awareness in order to help victims," D'Amour said.

# Freshmen create masks while recreating Greek drama

By Lila Hughes  
INDEPENDENT STAFF

With a new curriculum in motion, freshmen are introduced to the drama unit by reading the Greek play "Antigone" by Sophocles, making masks and acting out scenes in class.

According to English department head Debra Isensee, the new freshman curriculum is split up into four units, one unit for each quarter, consisting of a novel or narrative, drama, poetry, and non-fiction.

"The English department felt the freshman curriculum, while offering variety, did not have a lot of direction. We weren't concerned with maintaining the same text, but rather the same understanding of genre," Isensee said.

According to Isensee, there was a consensus within the English department of choosing "An-

tigone" as the drama because of the strong female character, and because teachers remembered enjoying the play in high school.

"We decided to teach a Greek play before 'Romeo and Juliet' because we wanted to teach the origins of drama," English teacher Mary Buckley-Harmon said.

"Antigone" is a part of the Oedipus Trilogy by Sophocles. The trilogy tells the tragedy of Oedipus, who inadvertently kills his father and marries his mother. In "Antigone," Oedipus's daughter, the main character, is sentenced to death because she buries her brother despite a decree to leave him unburied.

Freshman English students made masks out of paper plates in class to wear while acting out scenes of the play.

"I made my face look very distressed because that is traditional of Greek theater masks," freshman Meghan Gavin said.

Greek actors wore masks because they were useful for switching roles, and they amplified the voice of the actors. Greek plays typically only had three male actors, who played female roles.

According to Isensee, the masks were worn to create a distancing effect, with the purpose of putting a wall between the actors and the audience.

"The Greeks had to know it was fake on a certain level but also had to be able to empathize on a certain level," Isensee said.

According to English teacher Allison Krause, "Any time we can do something more on the creative side to the curriculum is a nice change of pace, and they seemed to really go to town on their masks."

According to Krause, making the masks will help the freshmen become more engaged in the material, allows a personal connection to the text and promotes more active participation in class.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTOS

Above, student-created Greek-style masks hang on English teacher Mary Buckley-Harmon's bulletin board. Freshman Brittni Larcom constructs her Greek mask from a paper plate. Freshmen used the masks while performing the Greek tragedy "Antigone."

## CONTINUATIONS MALALA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 of education for all children, on Nov. 10.

Paccone said, "Working with this group was a blessing because everyone was so communicative, and everyone brought their own special talents to the table to produce a fantastic piece."

A select few of the portraits are on display at Endicott College during December.

"I hope to take them other places to be exhibited," Powers said.

## DISTRICTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 participated in the festival last year, this year four students, Duff, Evans, Rhuda, and Valenti, received recommendations to audition for the All-State Festival Chorus, more than ever before, according to O'Neill.

Valenti, an alto, Evans, a

bass, Duff, and Rhuda, both sopranos, will be attending auditions for the All-State Festival, which will take place on Dec. 15 at Shrewsbury High School.

According to O'Neill, being recommended is a very notable accomplishment; normally a maximum of two students each year from Manchester-Essex receive a recommendation.

Duff, who was selected for Senior Districts last year, said she did not have trouble making friends, as all the participants share musical interests and the desire to work hard. She also said, "I am looking forward to [Districts] this year because it will be a lot of fun with so many other students from our school participating. I'm really happy for everyone."

## STARBOARD

CONTINUED PAGE 1

"I have been looking forward to the starboard since I

was in middle school," she said.

According to Maguire, current high school principal, a group of parents met to talk about senior privileges, including the starboard.

Later, when Ostrovitz came to Maguire with her petition, Maguire informed Lewis of the students' reaction, and the starboard was ultimately put back into practice.

According to Lewis, feedback from current high school students will determine the existence of the starboard next year. The starboard may or may not be used to showcase students' college acceptances in years to come, but students' success will still be acknowledged, Lewis said.

"The stars are solely meant to share the happiness and excitement of the students going onto college. They represent dreams and goals," Maguire said.

Senior Megan Jones was

recently accepted to Babson.

"After receiving my acceptance letter, a huge weight was lifted off my shoulders, and putting my star on the starboard was incredibly rewarding," Jones said.

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCHEDULES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2 can now focus on the structural components of the school day without worrying about the schedule even though they are still adjusting.

"We know it is not going to be perfect this year... but if we can make progress every year, we can certainly be happy with that," he said.

The new elementary school scheduling model, which is centered around 21st-century learning, will be re-examined in the coming year to ensure it is facilitating the goals of organization and unity, according to Gugino.

"You want to have efficiency in the schools, and you want to be as much on the same page as possible," he said.

## GLOBAL ISSUES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3 and short sleeve T-shirts. Students are also looking into getting bracelets, stickers and lanyards to sell as well, Rose said.

"We are hoping the [basketball] games will bring in a lot of proceeds, and we are making sure all of our fundraising events are well advertised," Conway said.

As a holiday-themed fundraiser, the class made and sold ornaments to the elderly on Dec. 15 during the annual Senior Citizen Luncheon from 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Dining Hall.

"Our class seems to really want to help the cause against human trafficking. We're putting a lot of effort into setting up different fundraisers," Rose said.

# Health Matters



## Energy improves with lifestyle changes

By **Hannah Riordan**  
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Caffeine, often cited as one of the world's most addictive substances, is also known to cause minor health problems like insomnia, rapid heartbeat, and muscle tremors. Similarly, energy drinks like 5-Hour Energy have led to 13 deaths.

Many Americans rely on caffeine to give them a boost of energy throughout the day. What most people don't know, however, is that less compromising substances are available to provide healthier, more effective doses of energy.

Foods high in fiber and protein boost energy. Oatmeal and peanut butter are great examples of foods that could be worked into one's diet to help keep a steady level of energy throughout the day.

Eating lean meats like pork and chicken releases hormones like dopamine that increase alertness and focus.

Moderate amounts of chocolate, a slightly more natural source of sugar than energy drinks, contain stimulants that help to increase energy.

Vitamin B supplements



FLICKR.COM

**Foods like peanut butter or other nut products that are high in protein provide long-lasting energy between meals or activities.**

also improve energy, especially when taken during a meal and absorbed into the bloodstream along with healthy fats.

Beyond eating right, frequent exercise causes physiological changes such as increased blood flow and transmission of energy substrates to the brain.

Another lifestyle change known to help energy levels is getting enough sleep. For many people, a 20-minute "cat nap" can be extremely effective at

restoring energy. Ninety-minute naps encompass a full sleep cycle and present the most effective way to gain energy.

Simple activities such as talking to a friend or family member can also increase energy and awareness. Verbalizing frustration and fatigue practically banishes them.

Meditation and yoga practices are also effective ways to envision and therefore create a more peaceful, positive frame of mind.

## Baker achieves prestigious Eagle Scout rank in Troop 3

By **Landon Komishane**  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Senior Matt Baker was required to complete six years of service in order to receive the most prestigious honor in Boy Scouts of America, the Eagle Scout.

Baker officially became an Eagle Scout on Nov. 3 with the Troop 3 and his parents watching, according to Troop 3 leader Fred Rossi.

Baker is the latest member of Manchester's Troop 3 to receive the Eagle Scout, and according to him, he could not be more thrilled.

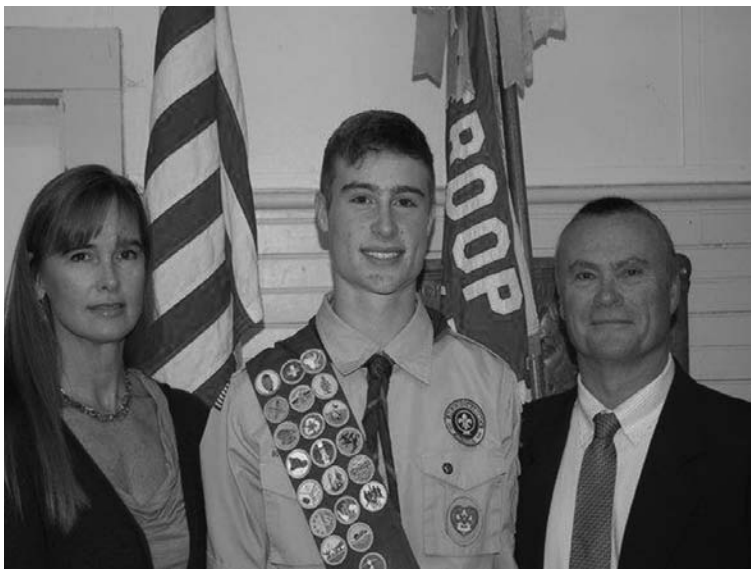
"It felt amazing to finally achieve the rank after being in the troop for six years and putting in hundreds of hours of my time," he said. "Knowing my parents were proud was a great feeling as well."

Baker said he had to achieve six ranks before receiving his Eagle Scout, and the work was extensive.

"The requirements for advancing to an Eagle Scout include a service project," he said.

His project was the Envirojam that took place last year, which according to Fred Rossi, was a day of free concerts and exhibits designed to raise public awareness concerning environmental sustainability.

"Matt secured permits and permissions from the Town's Board of Selectmen, the Parks and Recreation Department and the school. He also coordinated a large labor pool and a number of bands in order to



COURTESY OF MATT BAKER

**Senior Matt Baker is photographed with parents Amy and Tom Baker, who Baker said were proud of his accomplishments.**

have the event occur," he said.

"I had to write three essays, which were on my life purpose, my achievements, and my Eagle Scout project," he said. "I had to hold a position of leadership for six months in the troop, demonstrate scout spirit, earn a total of 21 merit badges, complete an Eagle Scout application, have a scoutmaster's conference, and finally a board of review."

Rossi was very impressed with Baker's accomplishment.

"Matt joins the ranks of notable figures such as President Gerald Ford, Astronaut Jim Lovell and entrepreneur H. Ross Perot," he said.

"He has made a difference in the lives of many younger scouts."

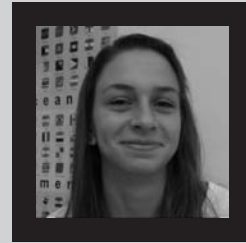
According to junior Erik Rajunas, a member of Troop

3, Baker's accomplishment set a standard for the rest of the troop, and members will look to him when they try and receive their Eagle Scout.

Baker enjoys the events he participates in with Troop 3 along with receiving his Eagle Scout.

"Troop 3 looks stellar when compared to others because of the resources it offers," he said.

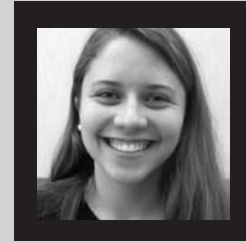
Baker said that he has gone on multiple trips with the troop, many that hone specific skills that the scouts learn in Manchester. "We take scouts scuba diving in the Caribbean and canoeing in Minnesota. Additionally, Troop 3 has a much higher output of Eagle Scouts, with five graduating this year. Usually, only two percent of all scouts achieve the Eagle Scout," he said.



**Freshman Bella Mastendino:**  
Sweaters and hot cocoa.



**Freshman Quinn Dunbar:**  
Sledding.



**Sophomore Abbey Martin:**  
Hot chocolate.



**Sophomore Cole Spencer:**  
Skiing.

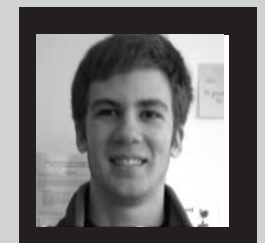
## Student Speak

### What is your favorite part of winter?

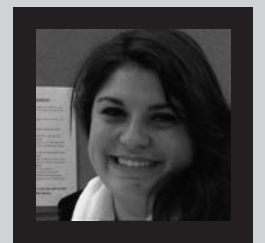
**Junior Sophie Neligan:**  
Skiing.



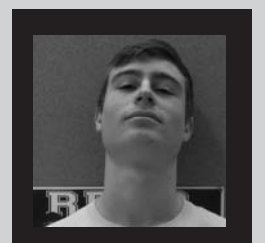
**Junior Liam Logue:**  
Basketball.



**Senior Natalie Caponigro:**  
Throwing snowballs at my sister's face!



**Senior Matt Baker:**  
Freestyle skiing.





## Eco-friendly gifts offer unique alternatives for typical presents

By Rebecca Even  
INDEPENDENT STAFF

With the holidays approaching, Americans rise to new levels of consumerism, buying many unnecessary and wasteful items. Instead of contributing to this waste, people now have the option of buying green gifts for the holidays.

One great option is a wooden iPhone case. Matek makes simple, handmade cases, for \$15.99. Sporting elegant designs like the Eiffel Tower in black ink, the cases are eye-catching and unique. With a wooden, eco-friendly case, any iPhone is protected from scratches, and if the case is thrown away, it biodegrades instead of festering in a landfill, like plastic.

Another gift idea is a vintage sari bracelet. Sold at uncommongoods.com for \$32 each and handmade in India, these fair trade bracelets are beautiful and eco-friendly. Available in blue or red and green, each bracelet is woven from old saris and entwined with gold hoops, giving it a shine.

For a shopper, reusable totes or canvas bags

are always a viable option. Earth Divas makes a recycled rice bag with bold colors and designs for \$19.99. This tote is fair trade, and is made from Indian fiber



AMAZON.COM

**A simple, handmade, wooden iPhone case from Matek with an Eiffel Tower design is an eye-catching and eco-friendly present.**

jute. It can be used for groceries or as a purse, reducing the use of plastic and paper bags.

Eco Cups are a great way to avoid using Styrofoam, paper, and plastic mugs for hot beverages. Found at amazon.com for \$8.15, they are reusable mugs that maintain

the sleekness of a non-reusable cup, while being both durable and easy to clean. Made of porcelain, they are insulated for both hot and cold drinks and the lid

can be tightly sealed. Along with this, each comes with a sleeve to protect hands from the temperature and is dishwasher safe.

Lastly, to wrap gifts, instead of using copious amounts of wrapping paper, try using fabric bags, newspaper, magazines, and old boxes. This will encourage creativity and give gifts a unique touch. It also saves a lot of money, since reusing newspapers and magazines is much cheaper than buying new rolls of wrapping paper.

Green gifts are not always easy to find, but often they are the most distinct and individual gifts, as well as benefitting the environment.

**Instead of using copious amounts of wrapping paper, try using fabric bags, newspaper, magazines, and old boxes.**

## Senior signs letter of intent to play Division I tennis, commits to New Mexico State University

By Isadora Decker-Lucke  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Senior Brittany Collens recently signed her letter of intent to play Division I tennis at New Mexico State University.

"I am so happy about my scholarship. It's been my dream to get a full ride to a good Division I school since I was little, and I'm happy my parents won't have to pay for anything," Collens said.

According to Collens, this achievement is the result of many years of hard work. She has been playing tennis since she was four years old. She plays five to seven days a week for three to six hours, and dedicates another two hours to fitness.

Tennis has had a large effect on her high school experience as a whole.

"There have been many times I can't participate in school events or go out with my friends on the weekend because I have tennis," she said.

She also gets out of school early to train, which means she misses her classes and is responsible for making up work.



COURTESY OF BRITTANY COLLENS

**After years of hard work playing tennis, senior Brittany Collens receives a full ride scholarship to New Mexico State University.**

Ivan Fernandez will be Collens' tennis coach at New Mexico State. He met her in December of 2011 at a player showcase in Florida. Fernandez was impressed immediately, he said in an email.

Due to the rules of the NCAA, he could not initiate contact with her until July of 2012, but according to Fernandez, Collens stayed in contact with him until he began recruiting her in July.

Ella Silag Stearns has been close friends with Collens throughout high school. "[Brittany] really deserves it," she said.

"New Mexico was my number-one choice out of the schools that had been recruiting me. If I had to choose between the best tennis college in the country and New Mexico, it will still be NMSU because of the coaches, facilities and team," she said.

Fernandez shares Collens' excitement. "Her energy and enthusiasm will be contagious. I know how hard she has been working her whole life for this opportunity to play Division I tennis. She is going to be joining a very strong and entirely international team," he said.

## STUDENT PROFILE

Courtney  
Fraser



By Isadora Decker-Lucke  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

**What sports do you play?**

Basketball, field hockey and soccer

**What is your favorite animal?**

Hmm...pandas

**What's your favorite color?**

Green

**What's your favorite time of year?**

Summer

**What's your favorite TV show?**

"The Big Bang Theory"

**What's your favorite snack?**

Oreos

**What's your favorite store?**

Abercrombie and Fitch

**If you could take any vacation you wanted, where would you go?**

Thailand?

**Are you a cat or a dog person?**

Dog person

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

Leonardo DiCaprio

**What's your favorite part of winter?**

New Year's

**What's your biggest pet peeve?**

When people bit their nails.

**What movie do you never get sick of?**

"The Notebook"

**What's your secret obsession?**

The band "Of Monsters and Men"

**What's your favorite book?**

"The Maze Runner"



# Apple develops new iPad

## Decreases in size, gains new features

By Rebecca Even  
INDEPENDENT STAFF

HD video can be recorded, and automatic stabilization rids the footage of bumps.

5-megapixel iSight camera with backside illumination sensor, autofocus and face detection.

7.9-inch screen provides plenty of room for the user to view the caller.

Battery life of 10 hours.

Four times as many pixels as the iPad 2, making it impossible for the human eye to discern each pixel.

Available in black and or white and silver, and a 16 GB version costs \$329.



APPLE.COM

23% thinner and 53% lighter than a normal iPad.

Apps such as Siri and iBooks are built in automatically.



FIONA DAVIS PHOTO

Manchester resident Connie Brown talked to members of the Manchester Historical Museum on living in the town for 90 years.

## 90-year-old town resident reflects on life in Manchester

By Fiona Davis  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Manchester resident Connie Brown, 90, spoke to members of the Manchester Historical Museum on growing up on the North Shore in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s.

“I miss my old friends, the familiar faces I used to see around town. I miss the reunions with my classmates. Every now and then I want to ask somebody my age a question and remember they aren’t around,” she said.

Brown said she often finds change difficult, especially when she sees children texting while

According to museum curator John Huss, Brown was born in 1922, the second oldest of 10 children in a Greek-American family.

“Connie is one of our most respected citizens,” Huss said.

According to Brown, Manchester was an entirely different place during her youth: she recalled changes in the schooling, physical layout, and traditions of the town.

Prices for services were far less than they are today, and Dr. Willis, the town dentist, used to charge just 25 cents a visit, according to Brown.

“I always heard boys going to get gas from the gas station saying they had to get 25 cents worth for their date,” Brown said.

Through the decades, the character of Manchester, according to Brown, has remained the same due to the kindness of the people who inhabit the town.

“It’s not what you know, it’s who you know. In my lifetime, I’ve learned that you always need people to help you out when you are in a bind,” she said.

According to Brown, the aspects of old Manchester she misses most are the people she once knew.

**‘It’s not what you know, it’s who you know. In my lifetime, I’ve learned that you always need people to help you out when you are in a bind.’**

-CONNIE BROWN

out to dinner with their parents, a new phenomenon that never existed during her childhood.

“Something is just missing. There are changes. We know we have to have changes, and I know we have to change. It is hard to accept,” Brown said.

According to Historical

Museum administrative assistant Keval McNamara, the Nov. 7 program was aimed at teaching younger generations about town history.

“Oral histories are so important, and I know Connie is a good storyteller... When you are listening to someone engaging, you learn something,” McNamara said.

Senior Riley McCarthy, who attended the event, said Brown’s stories made her consider life in Manchester differently.

“I think the big values of her stories are how the kids in Manchester were a community in themselves. Today we are so consumed in our phones and computers, while life is just

flying by. Connie talked about how they played outside all night in the summer, and I wish that we had something in Manchester now that would bring us closer,” McCarthy said.



MAGGIE LEHAR PHOTO

## Teacher Maria Burgess takes in sick plants and nurses them back to health with biology students. Students diagnose, treat plants as part of plant hospital program

By Maggie Lehar  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After the success of the month-long pilot program last year, the plant hospital program is now up and running.

“The plant hospital is a program that is within the biology curriculum. We provide a service for anyone in the school who has a plant that needs a little help,” 10th grade biology teacher Maria Burgess said.

Students, faculty, and administration are all welcome to bring in their sick plants to the plant hospital, she said.

“Right now we have three plants in the plant hospital,” said Burgess. Currently in the hospital there is a vine, a variegated palm, and a small aloe plant.

“Whenever we get a sick plant, we assign one student to that plant. They then have to look at the plant and write up the symptoms,” she said.

Possible symptoms include brown spots, bugs, or trouble growing, Burgess said.

“Then the student researches the symptoms and finds what the diagnosis is. After he finds a diagnosis, he looks up a treatment plan for the plant,” she said.

The student then treats the plant. Once the plant has recovered, the plant is returned to its owner along with the diagnosis sheet and a list of tips for how to care for the plant, according to Burgess.

The plant hospital is part of Burgess’s biology class indirectly.

“We talk about it in class, but

it is something the students do independently,” she said.

Many students appreciate the effort the plant hospital is making to keep the plants in the school healthy and thriving, according to senior Ashley Deschenes.

“I think that the plant hospital will be a great addition to the school. It will really help with the school’s efforts to be green and keep as many living plants in the school as possible,” Deschenes said.

The plant hospital also cares for the plants around the school that belong to the Green Team, Burgess said.

“We really appreciate the work that the plant hospital does to help keep our plants healthy,” Green Team President, senior Kevin Cellucci said.

Where are they  
now ?

Melissa Moore

By Carolyn Heslop  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After graduating last June as valedictorian of the class of 2012, Melissa Moore chose to continue her education this fall at Tufts University.

According to Moore, Tufts was the best fit for everything that she wanted in a college.

“It has strong academics, a sense of community, a pretty campus, and I had the potential to play field hockey there,” she said.

Moore also said that she knew Tufts had an amazing international relations

program, and that was something that she had been originally interested in studying.

This year she is currently enrolled in Introduction to International Relations, Calculus II, Spanish Conversation and Composition, and Social Psychology.

“At the beginning of the semester, I was debating about whether or not to take Social Psych, but now I am consider-

ing majoring in Psych; it’s an incredible class, the professor is amazing, and it’s extremely interesting,” she said.

According to Moore, she had also been interested in playing field hockey at Tufts, as she was not completely ready to be done with sports after high school.

Moore said that she knew field hockey was going to be a lot of work since she was going to try to make it on the team as a walk-on; however, she was willing to do the extra work because of her love for the sport.

“I’m so proud of Melissa’s determination through tryouts. She had a tough road overcoming a surgery, and she was not recruited.

But, in the end Melissa made the team, being the only walk on!” her mother Linda Moore said.

Former high school teammate Ellen Burgess said that she was thrilled to find out that Moore was playing field hockey in college.

“She clearly had a true talent and passion for the sport in high school,” she said.

The team was also extremely

“There wasn’t a question in my mind that Melissa would be able to play at the next level.”

-ANDREA SLAVEN

# 2012 graduate attends Tufts, wins NCAA Championship



COURTESY OF MELISSA MOORE

2012 graduate Melissa Moore celebrates the winning of the NCAA Championship with her field hockey team. Moore is a freshman at Tufts University and is considering majoring in Psychology.

successful this season in that they won the NCAA Division III Championship, Moore said.

According to Moore, the team had a rough start to the season with a terrible 5-2 loss to Middlebury, but they quickly showed improvement in that they won every single game after that.

“For NESCAC, we qualified for the tournament based on our record, since we had beaten all the other teams in NESCAC besides Middlebury,” she said. “In the first round of the tournament,

we beat Wesleyan to advance to the next round, where we lost to Bowdoin 4-1.”

According to Moore, the team was still able to get into the NCAA’s due to their high record, and from there they won five more games before they were named National Champions.

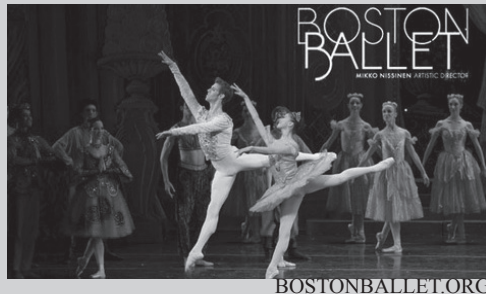
“Tufts field hockey was a huge reason for her happiness in college; of course, winning the National Championship certainly put that level of happiness over the top!” Linda Moore said.

Overall, Moore said she is really enjoying the college experience. Although college is a lot of work, she said that it’s also very fun, and she especially enjoys being able to socialize with her suitemates and her friends on the field hockey team.

“There wasn’t a question in my mind that Melissa would be able to play at the next level,” Moore’s high school field hockey coach Andrea Slaven said. “This is just the beginning of her success at Tufts.”

## Top eight excuses to escape the house during winter break

1) Boston Ballet’s production of “The Nutcracker” is being performed at the Boston Opera House from Nov. 23 to Dec. 30. Boston Ballet recently invested in all new costumes and sets. Tickets are priced between \$45 and \$177.



BOSTONBALLET.ORG

2) If you’re broke and if there’s actually snow this year, cross country skiing is a wonderful way to get outside and enjoy winter without spending any money. The Manchester golf course is great for cross country skiing and sledding.



FLICKR.COM

3) Beverly Tree Farm allows families to chop down their own Christmas trees. The farm is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every weekend during December.



BEVERLYTREEFARM.COM

4) The Trustees of Reservation are offering a magical, candle-lit Solstice Stroll through Ravenswood Park in Gloucester from 4 to 6 p.m. The event is free to Trustees members or \$5 for non-members.



THETRUSTEES.ORG

By Emily Arntsen  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

5) The Boston Frog in the Boston Commons is open for skating at 10 a.m. daily. Admission is \$5.



BOSTONFROGPOND.COM

6) “The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey” premieres on Dec. 13. Tickets are \$10 if purchased on [fandango.com](http://fandango.com). The movie is also available in 3-D.



FANDANGO.COM

7) The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston is exhibiting Mario Testino’s collection “In Your Face.” His photographs include unconventional celebrity portraits and photos of Prince William and Duchess Kate’s wedding. The exhibit is showing through Feb. 3, and tickets are free for students 17 and under and \$23 for students over 18.



MFA.ORG

8) The Essex County Green Belt sponsors Appleton Farm’s annual dog sled race. This year it’s on Jan. 19 and 20. Anywhere between six to eight dogs per team pull sleds through Hamilton landscapes. Admission is free.



NEWENGLANDSLEDDOGRACES.COM

# Priorities

## Is sacrificing sleep to complete homework beneficial?

**Pro**

**Devon Musgrave-Johson**

Whether people like it or not, homework is an important part of high school. It's vital to finish assignments before school the next day.

Teachers often assign readings or notes for homework, with the intention of discussing it in the classroom. They expect that every student has completed the assignment and therefore will be able to participate in the class discussion. Students that haven't done this reading immediately stand out and are unable to contribute, lowering their grade as well as the level of class discussion.

These students are then behind both in homework and in understanding. The next night, they would likely be presented with double the workload, the homework assigned that day and the work they have to make up from the previous night. Because they weren't able to participate in class discussion, they don't have the same opportunities to gain a deeper understanding of the reading as other students in the class.

Due to the consequences regarding the homework policy concerning freshmen and sophomores, sacrificing homework in order to get more sleep just isn't worth it. Not doing homework has much too large of an effect on grades for it to be passed by. Not doing homework leads to a detention that may have to take the place of a sport or after school activity.

Going to sleep before homework is finished is also a bad idea because it acts as another thing to worry about. Instead of going to bed a half an hour to an hour later, completely satisfied with the night's work and ready for sleep, one would have a lot on their mind and lose even more sleep because of that.

When the mind is buzzing with work left unfinished and worries of the consequences to come, a person is much less likely to fall asleep right away. A short but deep sleep is much more beneficial than a long night of tossing and turning and worry.

Homework can be a huge cause of stress, so it might be easy to justify sleep over work. However, in the long run, forgoing homework not a good choice. Finishing homework in lieu of sleep is much more beneficial, even if sleeping is a much more appealing option.

**Con**

**Kendall McCormick**

High schools today seem to bring a larger workload than ever before, making work management difficult for students with a lot going on every day. Though many students don't like the idea of not completing their assignments, sacrificing sleep to finish homework can be even more detrimental than not completing homework is.

For high school students, staying up until early in the morning is a common occurrence. Many do not think twice about staying up to finish homework, and think they will be able to function on little sleep.

Though they may be able to function, constantly losing of sleep can result in a decreased ability to focus and think in school, making all that studying almost useless when the student is actually in school.

Students may complete all their assignments on time, allowing them to stay caught up with their workload; however, sacrificing sleep can cause them to not retain much of the information they learn in school the next day.

WebMD.com says, "[Lack of sleep] impairs attention, alertness, concentration, reasoning, and problem solving," making it increasingly difficult for a student to learn.

The site adds that sleep plays a role in "consolidating memories in the mind." Not only can the student potentially fall behind in understanding concepts that are taught, but he or she also may not remember much of the information studied the night before, making assessments seem more difficult.

Students' grades can falter even more from losing sleep than not completing homework assignments.

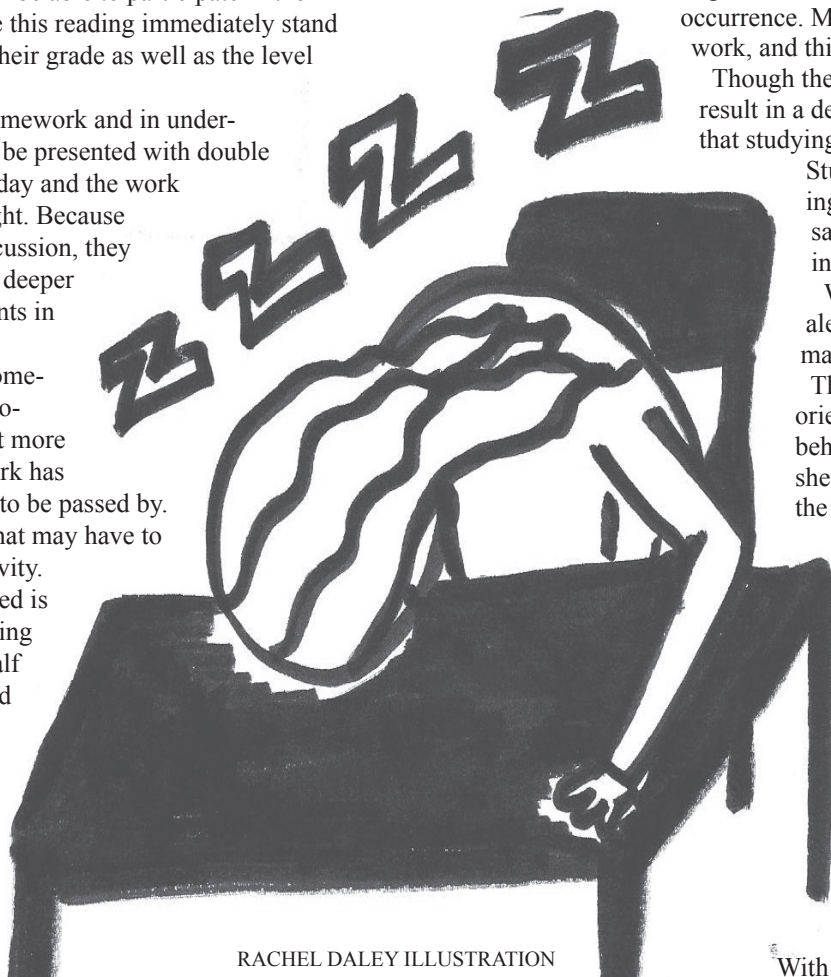
Aside from the harmful school-related effects of not sleeping enough, sleep deprivation can also cause long-term health problems such as heart disease, high blood pressure, and strokes.

According to an article in USA Today, "Working adults who routinely sleep less than six hours a night are four times more likely to suffer a stroke."

While this article may deal particularly with adults, it still shows the detrimental long-term effects of not getting enough sleep, not to mention the immediate risks that come with sleep deprivation, such as impaired driving ability.

With so many students driving themselves to school every day, over-tiredness presents a huge risk on the roads, disabling students' ability to drive with awareness.

School and grades may seem very important now, but they are not important enough to risk serious health problems now or later down the road. Not completing an occasional homework assignment is much less damaging for students than losing important and necessary sleep.



RACHEL DALEY ILLUSTRATION

## Playing three sports in high school forces students to work hard, stay fit

**By Sarah Beckmann**  
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Athleticism means power, but also time, commitment, and determination.

No one is more familiar with these terms than the tri-sport, student athlete.

However, the exhilarating feeling associated with playing a sport can be

overshadowed by pure exhaustion for a student athlete.

They are called student athletes for a reason; they're not athlete students.

The amount of sports a student plays per year not only add physical stress, but also add

mental stress and hardship to the overall academic year.

Time management is one area of stress for a student athlete, because he or she must find time to do homework around scheduled practices and games.

Failure to manage time efficiently can result in lack of sleep, which hurts the person both mentally and physically.

Tri-sport athletes can suffer greatly in this area, especially since they sometimes do not take a full week to switch sports seasons.

They are committed to their team, and practice a grueling two hours every day, five days a week.

It is the individual choice of a student to participate in school athletics; it's their responsibility

**Students choose to participate in school athletics; they are responsible to take on the obstacles and overcome them.**



FLICKR.COM

Tri-sport student athletes have the challenge of balancing both school and their athletic commitment.

ity to take these obstacles into account and be prepared to meet and overpass them.

Do athletics really look good on college applications? They might for some colleges, but overall, they probably focus more on a student's academic side.

Sports serve not only as fun pastimes, but as social outlets too—especially for new students trying to make friends at school. (Not to mention the physical workout included.)

Three-sport athletes stay fit all year long and start training again during the summer for a new

three-season long year.

Once student athletes get into the rhythm of school and sports again, they prove what they are capable of (which can be unimaginable to themselves and others), and what they are not capable of; they work hard all year.



## Moving evokes bittersweet sentiments

By Sofia del Valle  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Though I have lived in the same cape-style home in Beverly my whole life, all of my engagements have always taken place in Manchester, be it school or sports.

Living in Beverly has certainly posed various difficulties. A 12-minute drive to school may not seem long, but time and miles add up when my dad makes two plus trips each day. Though constantly driving between the two towns was an annoyance before I got my license, my parents had come to terms with the situation.

At the end of this past summer, my parents casually decided to try to sell our house. They

### I don't know if I'll ever get to see my room, the kitchen, or the beautiful yard my dad for years worked so hard to maintain again.

agreed to put the house on the market for no more than two months, and if it couldn't sell during that period, it would be taken down, no questions asked.

My family cleaned and organized in preparation for the scheduled open house, and the rest was out of our hands. On the day of the open house, the realtor later informed us, 32 people, both individuals and families, had shown up. In a matter of a week, the house had sold, and that meant we had to find a new house. We had been eyeing a charming house in Manchester, and after a hectic buying process, the house was ours.

While moving is exciting for my family who has always wanted to move to Manchester, having to leave my house behind is quite bittersweet. After I move out, I don't know if I'll ever get to see my room, the kitchen, or the beautiful yard my dad for years worked so hard to maintain again.

Thinking in these terms is hard for me to grapple with, and although I am sad to leave the house I've grown up in for 17 years, I am excited to start fresh in a new home, and I am looking forward to the memorable experiences at my new home in Manchester that will soon ensue.

# STAFF EDITORIAL

## High school causes harmful health-related side-effects

Dear Diary,  
Some nights, before I get into bed, I feel like a zombie. My eyes are bloodshot from looking at a computer screen all night while doing my homework, and my body aches because the most exercise I've gotten all day has been getting from the first floor of the school to the third. Before I fall asleep, I think to myself, "High school must be so bad for my health."

Let me tell you what it's really like to be a high school student. I go to school, sit for approximately six hours, then return home to sit some more in front of a textbook or a laptop, frantically trying to finish my homework until the wee hours of the night, or is it even night anymore? Now it's morning, and I'm falling asleep at my desk and drinking caffeinated beverages just to finish those last few paragraphs of that research paper that may or may not even make sense because who can make sense at that hour? And now my eyes are closing, but I still haven't even looked at my French work! I start thinking about how awful a grade I'm going to get on this paper and how terrible it will be to wake up in a few hours, and my stress level



EMILY ARNTSEN PHOTO

Parents and teachers often expect too much from high school students, causing high levels of stress, insomnia, and obesity.

rises, all leading to insomnia, depression and obesity!

Sincerely,  
Over-worked Student

Well, maybe that's a little dramatic, but it's not far from the truth. For students who don't play sports during the school

year, it's especially difficult to get enough exercise because

work loads are so heavy.

Not getting enough exercise isn't the extent of high school students' problems though.

Blame whatever you want, our New England home or high school; the fact is,

during the fall, we sometimes go all day without seeing the sun! We leave our houses just as the sun is rising and come home with only an hour to spare before everything turns pitch black. It's enough to make us crazy!

Stress is also an enormous side effect of high school. Between the crazy-competitive, helicopter moms and the pushy, I-want-what's-best-for-you dads, it's hard for students to maintain their sanity. Typically, all parents mean well; after all, they just want us to make the most of our education, but sometimes parental pressure actually has the reverse effect.

A common question students ask themselves is: Am I doing this for myself or for my parents? Parents enforce strict rules about grades and sports that are often too much for students to handle. Times have changed. Student expectations have risen since our parents were in school and along with expectations, stress levels have also increased.

So, it's important that teachers and parents remember to give us students a break every once in a while. The next time you see the dark circles under our eyes, remember that being healthy is a priority, and cut us a little slack.

### I go to school, sit for approximately six hours, then return home to sit more.

## Owning a car provides freedom while promoting responsibility

By Rebecca Even  
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Many teenagers long for independence, and a car is usually the perfect fix. It signifies complete self-sufficiency. However, cars are expensive, as is gas, and owning one is sometimes an overwhelming responsibility. If you damage it, you pay for it. If you need gas, you use your own hard-earned money to fill up the tank.

Hitching a ride with a friend or borrowing a parent's car is often tempting. Despite these deterrents, owning a car gives you freedom and a new sense of

responsibility, both of which are worth the extra money spent on gas and repairs..

While carpooling can be fun, you are prey to your friends' whims. If they are late picking you up, which they usually are, you are all

late for the movie. If they want to go somewhere other than the planned location, you are stuck tagging along.

If they are bad drivers, you are forced to clutch the armrests as hard as possible and give them

gentle advice, all the while keeping in mind that, since they have been nice enough to give you a ride, you cannot yell at them for their horrible driving.

### [Carpooling] can never compare to being in control of your own destination and wellbeing.

A jerky ride can also result in carsickness, which is never a good thing. Throwing up

before a movie is not an auspicious start to a fun night. Although carpooling is a good way to socialize, it can never compare to being in control of your own destination and wellbeing.

Borrowing a parent's car

can also be a wise decision. You essentially have your own car, without the responsibility of actually owning it. For the most part, your parents pay for gas and upkeep of the car, which saves you a lot of money. However, parents are almost always busy using their cars. Most parents are busy working or transporting siblings across town for extracurricular activities. Because of this, an available car is an uncommon occurrence.

All in all, although there are multiple alternatives to owning a car, none of the options compare to the liberation of knowing that you can go anywhere, whenever you want, without worrying about the needs of anyone else.

### 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.

## Students should be obliged to learn about and understand political issues

By Max Nesbit  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Politics is a subject that normally only pushes itself into teenage conversation during the month before the presidential election, which only occurs every four years.

Politics is a subject that shapes our country, our policies, and our everyday life, but very few high school students knew any of the presidential candidates' policies or where they stood on very important issues.

The majority of teenagers today are just not interested in politics and do not take the initiative to learn the necessary facts to become a valued voter in the future.

The school offers courses like United States Government, which covers in detail the

election and gives in-depth analysis of each candidate's ideas, which helps students understand what is going on in the election. The course is offered to juniors and seniors, but only eight students chose to take it, and the class did not even have enough numbers for an honors level version.

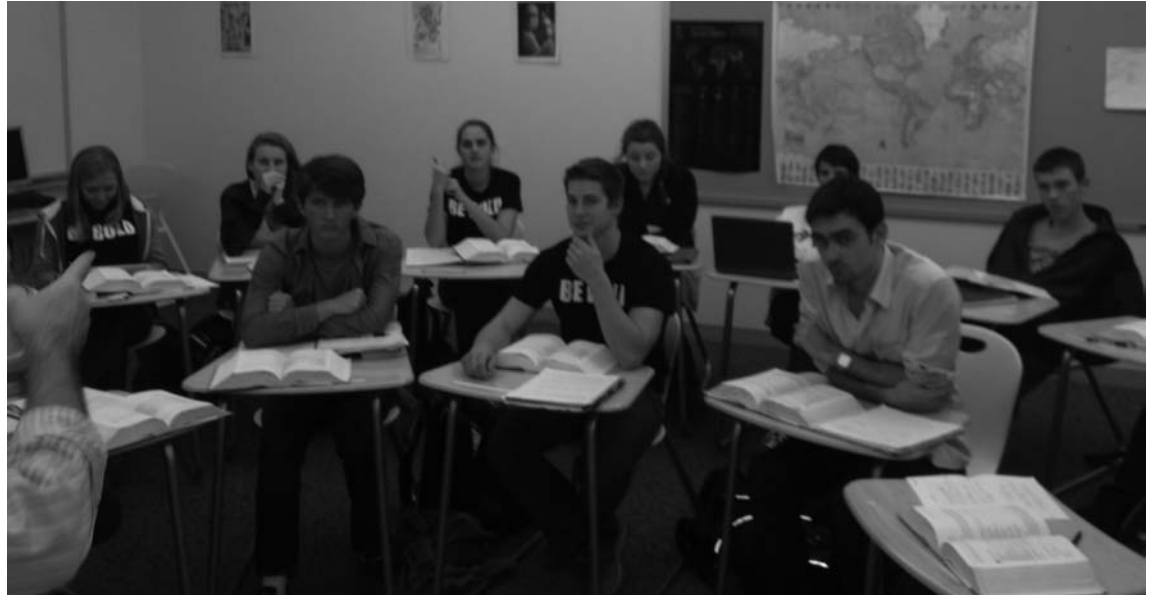
The school election helped push the idea of voting into students' heads, but many of them still voted based on their parents' values or which candidate was more handsome.

Social studies classes need to take more initiative in engag-

ing students in current events and pushing kids to become more interested in politics, especially at a young age.

This includes more time being spent talking about the election, especially because it is an event that only occurs

**Very few high school students know any of the presidential candidates' policies.**



MAX NESBIT PHOTO

**Since political affairs shape our country, comprehension of these issues is vital for students who will soon be voting on them. Only once students understand the topics, can they begin to form opinions.**

once every four years. Students should be taught the platforms of both candidates so that they are able to make an informed decision regarding who should be their commander in chief.

"I think that social studies teachers should concentrate more on working current events

and politics in their everyday curriculums, but it is tough for teachers because the statewide requirements are so strict and demanding for a certain requirement to be met, especially in the history department," department chair Dan Jewett said.

The election did not only in-

clude the president; voters also had to decide on three important and controversial ballot questions.

It is vital that students educate themselves on these important and prevalent issues, both for their own sakes and for the future of the nation.

## Unused lockers waste valuable space that could be put to better use

By Hannah Riordan  
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Lockers are the quintessential architectural backbone of American high schools. In movies, lockers have many roles. Besides storing books, bullies often shove nerds into them, couples lean against them while they talk or kiss, and flyers are posted on them.

In reality, however, some students never use their lockers at all.

All students receive their

locker number and combination over the summer when their schedule arrives. Many memorize their combination right away and even buy organizational shelves for the inside.

I use my locker in between almost every class. My backpack is painfully heavy even when I stop at my locker to drop off books; I can't imagine a day without it.

While I see my locker as invaluable, several of my friends have never even opened theirs.

They claim that they don't have time or need for a locker. These students leave many of their heavy textbooks at home and simply carry binders

**While I see my locker as invaluable, some of my friends have never opened theirs.**

and notebooks on a daily basis.

One would never guess that there are dozens of empty lockers around the school, because some hallways contain lockers overflowing with books and belongings.

If only a percentage of students actually use their lockers, the empty lockers could be put to better use.

The administration could ask students who want a locker to sign up for one. They could then offer more than one locker to kids who keep a lot of their belongings at school.

This fall there was a problem with storing sports equipment in the second floor water fountain hallway. If athletes had two lockers stacked on top of each other, they could store sports bags with ease, solving two problems at once.



HANNAH RIORDAN PHOTO

**Lockers are necessary for those who carry many belongings to school. Empty lockers take away space from those who need extra.**

Letting students elect to have more than one locker would offer more privileges to students who

bring many belongings to school, and would eliminate wasted space and unneeded clutter.

## Early college visits seem unneeded



THECAMPUSCOMPANION.COM

**Though many choose to view campuses early in high school, starting early is not necessary in order to find an adequate college.**

By Sarah Beckmann  
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Why bother to look at colleges early? Does the high school student really need to start choosing in sophomore year, or later on?

These questions, along with many others, swirl and sift through the average teenager's mind and may cause her pointless stress on a subject that has yet to affect her.

The college process today is not what it was like a few decades ago—it's a full-fledged business. Parents and children alike pay millions of tuition dollars every year.

People almost take college

for granted, because it's a common conception that a son or daughter will attend the college after high school.

But students who wish to enter college after graduation are under significant pressure.

If they fail to pick the right school, they risk spending even more money, time, and emotional hardship by transferring.

**Traveling to see the distant colleges is costly and seeing too many can confuse students on what college is best for them.**

And that's the problem: choosing the right college.

Some would say to start looking sooner rather than later, which makes sense. No one wants to be stuck toward

the end of senior year without any experience as to what colleges are like.

However, the amount of colleges the student visits may positively or negatively affect her.

First, traveling to see the distant colleges is costly, and seeing too many can confuse students on what the best college is for them, not for others.

Then again, they might have a better range of choice if they look into a number of schools. They will be able to compare and contrast each to deduce what makes the best college.

To achieve the best college experience possible, a high school student can definitely start looking at schools to get an idea of what college life is like but shouldn't rush it; there's no need to begin sooner than junior year.

College visits can also be difficult to manage with schoolwork and should be treated as less of a priority, as grades get students into colleges to begin with.

There's no need to look at 19 colleges beforehand. Too many colleges and too many viewpoints may cause a senior to get overwhelmed choosing the right school.

## INDOOR TRACK

**Coach:** John Barbour

**Captains:** Senior John Beardsley, juniors Fiona Davis, Erik Rajunas, and Sarah Lewiecki

**Impact players:** Seniors John Beardsley and Jacob Martz, juniors Fiona Davis, Taylor Meek, Anna Heffernan, and Sam Nesbit, and sophomore Olivia Lantz

**Record last year:** Boys: 1-5 Girls: 2-4

**Goals:** Qualifying for the Cape Ann League championship meet and doing as well as possible at that meet

**Coach's quote:** "What we're working on is to try and develop a structure that will give everyone a chance to train and develop at his or her appropriate level and give them the right amount of attention."

**Captain's quote:** "Sometimes we'll be in the hallways or on the field, and we'll use pretty much everything that's available to us to try to improve our times."-Junior Fiona Davis



Fiona Davis



Erik Rajunas



John Beardsley



Sarah Lewiecki

## SKI



Megan Jones



Brian McAuliff

**Coach:** Tim Wonson

**Captains:** Seniors Brian McAuliff and Megan Jones

**Impact players:** Seniors Megan Jones and Brian McAuliff, junior Lizzi White, sophomores Alex Marshall, Parker Edington, William Kiley, and Chris McAuliff, and freshmen Megan Clark,

**Goals:** Have both the girls' and boys' teams make it to the state tournament

**Coach's quote:** "We look forward to helping each of them become more confident skiers, better racers as well as strong and positive representatives for our school and community."

**Captain's quote:** "This year, now that we have more kids, we can take it to the next level and really start focusing on the competitive side of racing, rather than the building of a new program."-Senior Megan Jones

## BOYS' HOCKEY

**Coach:** Derek Papalegis

**Captains:** Seniors Connor Douglass and Mike Tupper of Rockport

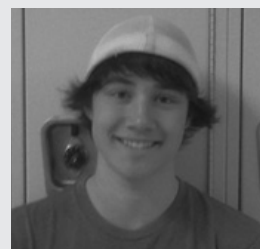
**Manchester players:** Sophomores Cole Spencer, Alex Tognazzi, and Jason Conrad

**Record:** 13-6-1

**Goals:** Make the state tournament finals.

**Coach's quote:** "All three players (Spencer, Conrad, and Tognazzi) have a great work ethic and try their hardest every time they step on the ice."

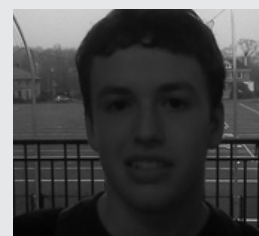
**Captain's quote:** "Our goal is to do even better than we did last year and get past the semifinals."-Sophomore Cole Spencer said.



Cole Spencer



Jason Conrad



Alex Tognazzi

## GIRLS' HOCKEY



Brittany Smith

**Coach:** Emily Hudak

**Captains:** Juniors Brittany Smith and Rachel McKay of Gloucester

**Record:** 12-8-2

**Goals:** Make the state tournament and move closer to the state title

**Coach's quote:** "We have a strong team this year, and the added numbers really help us do what we want to do out on the rink. I think that we have a young team, but a strong team. I want to make the state tournament again this year but move even closer towards a state title."

**Captain's quote:** "We have lots of different levels of talent and in order to succeed we need to make sure we are a team, that we pass well, and play together."

## BOYS' BASKETBALL

**Coach:** Bryan Shields

**Captains:** Seniors Max Nesbit, Liam Aldrich, Taylor Ketchum, and Josh Christopher

**Impact players:** Seniors Max Nesbit, Taylor Ketchum, Liam Aldrich, and Dylan Estes and juniors Sean Gutierrez and Petey Morton

**Coach's's quote:** "It's just business as usual"

**Captain's quote:** "We want to win the Cape Ann League, but ultimately go all the way to the state championship and take it all. We have a lot to prove this year." -Senior Taylor Ketchum

**Record Last Year:** 19-3

**Goals:** Win a state championship.



Max Nesbit



Liam Aldrich



taylor Ketchum



Josh Christopher

## GIRLS' BASKETBALL



Carolyn Heslop



Evy Weihs

**Coach:** Lauren DuBois

**Captains:** Seniors Carolyn Heslop and Evy Weihs

**Impact players:** Seniors Carolyn Heslop, Evy Weihs, Allyson Conway, Ella and Ivy Silag-Sterns

**Coach's quote:** "I'm just excited to get started. We've had a good week of practice, and I think overall our talent level across the board is a lot higher than in previous years."

**Captain's quote:** "I like being able to help out the girls on my team and get them excited about playing basketball every day." -Senior Carolyn Heslop

**Record Last Year:** 5-16

**Goals:** make the state tournament.

## SWIMMING, DIVING

**Coach:** Mary Maher

**Captains:** Seniors Alex Walder and Sarah Sergeant

**Impact players:** Seniors Alex Walder and Sarah Sergeant

**Coach's quote:** "I would like to see our swimmers improve technique and increase speed so that they continue to achieve personal bests and prove to be competitive in the Cape Ann League."

**Captain's quote:** "After meeting the new coach and watching the team practice, I feel confident as ever and excited for the season ahead." -Senior Alex Walder

**Record Last Year:** 2-6

**Goals:** Achieve personal bests, prove competitiveness in the CAL.



Alex Walder



Sarah Sergeant

## GYMNASTICS



Madeline Dahlin

**Coach:** Alex Gabriel

**Captains:** Seniors Emily Ciruolo, Julia Bucci, Jessie Harlihy, and junior Madeline Dahlin

**Impact Players:** Seniors Emily Ciruolo, Julia Bucci, Jessie Harlihy, and junior Madeline Dahlin

**Coach's quote:** "My favorite part of coaching is getting to know the girls. I honestly love everything about coaching."

**Captain's quote:** "I think that it's actually fun to co-op; it's nice to have a lot of friends from other towns." -Junior Madeline Dahlin

**Record Last Year:** 1-7

**Goals:** Improve through hard work and practice.

# You Know You Love YouTube

## Vsauce compiles the best of the web

By Devon Musgrave-Johnson  
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Vsauce, run by Michael Stevens, is a fast growing YouTube channel. Vsauce currently has about 1,500,000 subscribers and 225,000,000 video views.

Michael Stevens was born in Stilwell, Kansas and attended the University of Chicago. He now lives in London and works for Google in content strategy and for YouTube in programming strategy.

Vsauce is self-described as filled with “amazing facts and the best of the Internet.” The channel has four main segments: DOT, IMG, LÜT, and DONG.

DOT is a segment filled with

videos that each covers an “unusual” topic in science. These include the reason why humans have two nostrils, why humans dream, and why you can’t technically ever touch anything.

The videos in IMG are each a compilation of all of the “best images on the internet” for each week. Similar to this, the videos in LÜT, pronounced “loot,” are a variety of “amazing things that can actually be bought on the internet,” such as a chair made out of teddy bears.

The initials “DONG” stands for “do online now, guys.” This segment is filled with videos about undiscovered games and websites that Stevens wants people to visit.

In addition to Vsauce, Stevens has two other YouTube channels



VSAUCE.COM

Video blogger Michael Stevens introduces up-and-coming to his audience via his YouTube channel Vsauce. He has separate channels explaining different websites based on characteristics.

called Vsauce2 and Vsauce3.

Vsauce2 is simply a continuation of Vsauce. It contains segments called BiDiPi, FAK, Mind Blow, and Weirdos. Each of these have themes similar to those of the main channel, Vsauce. The

videos on Vsauce2 are mainly

narrated by a man named Kevin.

Vsauce3 is entirely dedicated to playing and designing video games. It has many of the same segments of Vsauce and Vsauce2, but all of the

topics are related to gaming.

Vsauce had a twitter account called “@TweetSauce”, a Facebook group, and a page on districtlines.com in where they sell merchandise, such as tee-shirts and mugs.

## Art student receives approbation for mermaid-inspired dress



EMILY ARNTSEN PHOTO

Junior Emily Arntsen models her dress of uncommon materials.

By Natasha Statz-Geary  
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Art teacher Marion Powers and art students have recognized junior Emily Arntsen for her mermaid-inspired dress.

When assigned by Powers to make an article of clothing out of non-traditional materials for her mixed media class, Arntsen, who has loved art since childhood, designed a dress inspired by mermaids, something she has always had an obsession with.

The non-traditional materials used in the project were a space blanket, soda tabs, dental floss and tin foil. She took some liberties by using the fabric of the dress and the zipper, since they weren't

recycled. “Originally, I wanted to cover the whole dress with soda tabs covered in tin foil, which look like silver scales, but it was way too much work and very time consuming,” Arntsen said.

To begin she measured and

sewed the bodice of the dress and then attached it to the skirt.

“At first I wanted to fit the dress to the mannequin, who is a little more chesty than me, but I decided to fit it to myself instead. It’s a little inconvenient that I can’t put it on a mannequin though,” she said.

She ended up hand sewing 160 soda tabs covered in tin foil to the bodice of the dress using dental floss for thread.

**‘Sewing all those soda tabs was so tedious.’**

-EMILY ARNTSEN

“Sewing all the soda tabs was so tedious! The inside of the bodice is all marked up with stitches.

They look like tally marks,” she said.

As for the skirt of the dress, Arntsen sewed a space blanket underneath the sheer navy fabric the dress was originally made of. The whole project took about two and a half months.

“My favorite part about the

dress is that I can wear it. And that it resembles a mermaid. It’s really hot though because the

**‘The dress is quite spectacular. It is one of the most beautiful pieces I have seen as a teacher.’**

-MARION POWERS

space blanket is supposed to trap heat,” Arntsen said.

The end result was greeted with much approbation from Powers and peers alike.

“The dress is quite spectacular. It is one of the most beautiful pieces I have

seen as a teacher,” Powers said. Fellow art students have also taken notice of Arntsen’s work.

“I especially love her dress because it is very inventive. I would never think to use the materials she used in that way. Also, I am very impressed by how much time and effort she put in. She spent so many classes sewing those soda things,” said junior Julia Paccone, who is in Arntsen’s mixed media art class.

Arntsen hopes to see her artwork continue beyond high school.

“Art is one of those things you can do your whole life. I definitely want some art in my future and in college,” she said.

## Manchester residents embrace holiday season, attend Tree Lighting

By Anna Tyler  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Manchester residents welcomed in the holiday season on Sunday, Dec. 2 by attending and participating in the annual Community Friendship Tree Lighting at the First Parish Church, Congregational.

The Tree Lighting has been sponsored by the Manchester Woman’s Club since the 1960s and includes musical entertainment from all age groups in the church, which is then followed by the lighting of the Friendship Tree and Christmas caroling.

“I think the Tree Lighting is a great tradition because it is something everyone can look

forward to and enjoy, and it also brings the community together. It was sad realizing that this was the last tree lighting I would ever perform at,” band member and senior Julie MacLeod said.

To begin the ceremony, Reverend John G. Hughes, II and Shirley Preston, president of the Manchester Woman’s Club, greeted the community, which was followed by the audience’s singing of “O Come, All Ye Faithful.”

The high school band, chorus, and a cap pel la group, SoundWaves, partook in the holiday festivities and performed various holiday songs.

“The band played very well together and with the holiday spirit. I could see that they came to play, and they played from the heart,” band director Joseph Sokol said.

After the SoundWaves’ performance, La Petite Chorale, conducted by Wendy Manninen, and the Memorial Elementary School chorus, conducted by Anne Wood, sang holiday songs as well.

“You could see from the ovation of the crowd that they really enjoyed listening to the groups,” Sokol said.

The band, chorus, and SoundWaves also performed their holiday song selection at their annual Winter Concert on Dec. 13 and at the Senior Citizen Luncheon for Manchester’s elderly on Dec. 15 in the dining hall.

“Christmas is one of my favorite times of the year and being able to bring holiday cheer to my home town community makes it even better,” chorus and band member, senior Devin Kelley said.



RILEY MCCARTHY PHOTO

The high school band takes a break during the annual Tree Lighting at the First Parish Church in downtown Manchester.



## ABC's new hit show 'Nashville' delights viewers with intense drama

By Hannah Riordan  
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

ABC's new hit drama "Nashville" seamlessly blends music, romance, and conflict.

The show, which is actually filmed in Nashville, focuses somewhat on a rivalry between famous country star Rayna James (played by Connie Britton), and upcoming diva Juliette Barnes (played by Hayden Panettiere). Several subplots arise from the lives of friends, family, and acquaintances of Rayna and Juliette.

The show also boasts original country music song, which music lover and sophomore Annie DeConto said was a big attraction for her.

"I wanted to start watching it because I am an avid country music fan, so the idea of a show that revolved around country music but also had other subplots and aspects of the show was interesting," DeConto said.

Similarly, songs from the show will be available for purchase on iTunes once the season ends, as will episodes of the show.

Viewers of "Nashville" have responded positively; DeConto, senior Laurel Barrie, and senior



ABC.COM

Juliette Barnes and Rayna James, played by Hayden Panettiere and Connie Britton, create the main rivalry of the popular show.

Carolyn Heslop all said they would recommend the show to friends.

"I do have to say that I don't think a lot of my guy friends would be interested in it, as it definitely seems to appeal more to girls, but it's really just a fun and entertaining show," Heslop said.

DeConto added that she would eagerly recommend the show to fans of "Gossip Girl," another one of her favorite shows.

Some of the show's most emotional moments can be found when characters perform at

Nashville's iconic Bluebird café. Rayna and her old flame Deacon perform a touching rendition of a song they wrote when they were in love, while Bluebird employees Gunnar and Scarlett also connect onstage.

Beyond acknowledging the show's good musical score, Barrie observed that depth of character is one of the show's strengths.

"Juliette is a very misunderstood character. She becomes more and more developed, and you feel more sympathetic for her each episode as she deals with her mother's addiction problems and struggles with being in the spotlight," Barrie said.

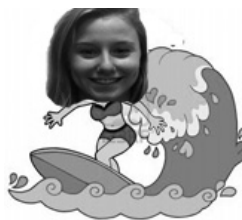
Juliette tackles topics like shoplifting, drug abuse, and estranged family members, adding to the show's dramatic plotlines.

"Nashville" is fall's must-watch, entertaining new show.

**[Sophomore Annie] DeConto [said] that she would eagerly recommend the show to fans of 'Gossip Girl.'**

## WEBsurfer

By Lila Hughes  
INDEPENDENT STAFF



### Wanelo.com

Looking to shop online for the holiday season? Wanelo is a great website to find products you didn't even know you wanted. By creating an account on Wanelo, you can see what products are "trending" on the Internet, varying from fashion, to apartment décor, to tech accessories, and more. When you click on a product, you get three options: Save, Buy, or Tag. If you click save, the product will save to your account so you can access it again. If you click buy, it will lead you to the website where the product is being sold. If you click tag, you can tag friends so they can see the product. If you find a product on the Internet you like and think others would like it too, you can add the post on your account by copying the URL, and Wanelo will create the product post. Other accounts will be able to save the product you posted, tag friends, or even buy the product. On your Wanelo account, you can also follow certain people, collections of products, or stores you may like. With the gift-giving season already here, Wanelo is a fun new way to find gifts to put on your holiday wish list.

### Summertomato.com

If you love food as much as I do, you know you have to be conscious of what and how much you eat. Summertomato gives tips on how to be healthy while still enjoying all different kinds of foods. This website is a collection of articles, lists, recipes, news, links of the week, and tips on maintaining a healthy lifestyle through food. Examples of articles on Summertomato are "Ways to Eat Less Without Noticing," "How to Become a Great Cook Without Being a Chef," and "Why Sliced Bread was Never a Great Invention." Darya Pino, a trained scientist who advocates for local fresh food, created Summertomato. There are many places to explore on Summertomato, whether you want to watch your weight, find out what the healthiest snacks are, how to find the freshest food, or find new ways to prepare fresh food. You can subscribe to the website by receiving free email newsletters, a Tomato Slice newsletter in the mail, and receive emailed articles.

## Apps of My Eye

Cool apps for a smartphone or tablet

By Rachel Daley  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR



### Snap Chat

In the past few months, a certain app from the iTunes store has gone viral. Looking around the classroom, you might see kids making strange faces into their phones; but don't worry, they are just using their new favorite app: Snap Chat. The glory of it is that users can send embarrassing pictures of themselves or others to friends knowing that the receivers can't save it for blackmail. Luckily, Snap Chat allows for the user to choose the duration of time (one to 10 seconds) for which the receiver can view it. However, using this app involves learning the step-by-step process. First, you must take a picture of yourself or others using your smart phone or Apple product. Next, Snap Chat allows you to either draw on the picture or type text onto it, increasing the amount of humorous possibilities. Next, you can either send the finished product to one friend, or increase your victim's humiliation by sending it to multiple people. If you haven't downloaded it already, I can offer you one warning: this app is highly addictive.



### Spotify

When you download this app, you'll realize that Pandora has gotten far too much recognition. Spotify gives you instant access to millions of songs which you can search through, rather than crossing your fingers and hoping for it to play (a common situation I find myself in while using Pandora). Spotify provides a pre-made iTunes library and has recently upgraded its features with a radio option where it creates a playlist based on your chosen desires in artists and genres. However, unlike Pandora, the radio will upgrade constantly, transforming its playlists with new artists and albums. Creating your library in Spotify is as easy as dragging a song which you searched for or came across in a friend's library into your own. The only downfall of it being a free app is that your music will occasionally be interrupted by annoying advertisements, but even this is definitely worth the free, high-quality music which you will enjoy.

# ‘Argo’ provides true story on modern history

By Landon Komishane  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Filmed in Los Angeles, Virginia, and Istanbul, this movie is based on a true story about the Iranian Revolution, when militants stormed the United States embassy in Tehran. As 52 people in the embassy became hostages, six Americans escaped and went to the Canadian ambassador's house.

Ben Affleck plays Tony Mendez, a CIA specialist who comes up with the plan to make a fake movie and try to convince the Iranians that the escapees are Canadian filmmakers who are scouting locations like Tehran, when they actually are not. Mendez consults well-known makeup artist John Chambers (John Goodman) who used to craft disguises for the CIA. Together, they find film producer Lester Siegel (Alan Arkin), who helps them gain publicity and a fake studio for the movie.

Arkin's performance was notable because it refuted his role in show business.

He did an exceptional job of showing his Hollywood attitude through comedy, which made the film more enjoyable. The screenplay was written

by Chris Terrio, and he wrote it based off of two previous novels, "The Master of Disguise" by Antonio J. Mendez and "The Great Escape" by Joshua Bearman.

Terrio brilliantly carried out the plot by talking about historical events that occurred during the time period.

The movie, directed by Affleck, not only provides another realistic plot and setting to his credit but also effectively portrays the situation of these escapees with fear and intensity.

Though there are differences between the actual situation and the movie such as Arkin's role being fictional, the cast was effective in making their experiences seem real through their looks and their acting.

The escapees had uncertainty towards Mendez's plan and were constantly struggling to learn their new identities

One error Affleck made while directing this movie

was explaining the process of creating the fake movie. The movie did not give much detail about how that was created.

The audience's confusion arose further when Mendez, Chambers, and Siegel were supposedly holding auditions for their fake film. People did not know what that accomplished or what the process of it was; there was no need for the scene.

Although there was confusion in that part of the movie, Affleck did a good job of creating the backdrop for that scene.

He alternated that scene with the escapees attempting to hide from militants, which showed that time was running out for Mendez to follow through with his plan before the militants discovered their plot.

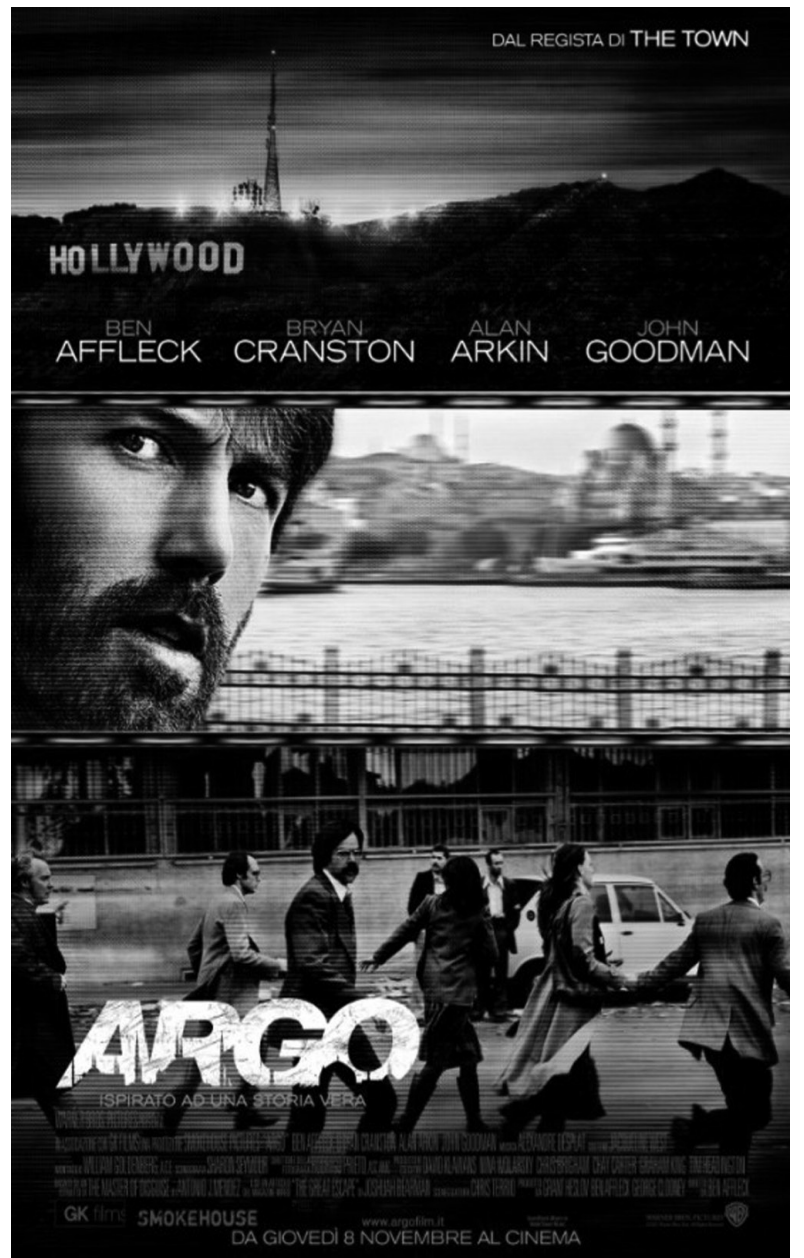
They would be executed if their plan failed. "Argo" is stressful with the escapees trying to get out of Iran or they

will be executed, and the audience is always on the edge of their seats. The film provides that necessary bal-

ance between the intensity and action which meritorious movies need.

**The film provides that necessary balance between intensity and action which meritorious movies need.**

**The movie, directed by Affleck, effectively portrays the situation of these escapees with fear and intensity.**



“Argo” keeps the audience on the edge of their seats by creating stressful and time-pressing situations for the main characters.

# ‘Life of Pi’ includes impressive CGI, 3D visuals

By Maggie Lehar  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

“Life of Pi” is a thought-provoking tale of survival filled with emotionally powerful scenes and stunning visual effects.

Based on the best-selling novel by Yann Martel, “Life of Pi” follows the story of a young Indian man named Pi Patel (Suraj Sharma), who is the son

of a zoo keeper. Patel survives a disaster at sea and finds himself adrift in the Pacific Ocean sharing a lifeboat with a huge Bengal tiger. While cast away, Patel forms an unexpected connection with the tiger.

Patel forms an unexpected connection with the tiger.

The film continues to explain how the two of them got onto the lifeboat. It covers Pi's childhood as the son of a zoo owner in a very whimsical style.

The most impressive aspect of the film

was the beautiful special effects, such as the amazing 3D. Director Ang Lee (“Sense and Sensibility” and “Brokeback Mountain”) does not use the 3D effects as a gimmick, but instead to direct the viewer's

attention to certain details like the ocean ripples. This use of 3D creates an interesting visual experience.

The special effects used to craft the tiger named Richard Parker are also impressive.

It is not at all obvious that the tiger is computer generated, and Lee makes it very easy for the viewer to believe it is a real animal.

The talented actors in “Life of Pi” were another strength of the film.

Sharma has no other screen associations to his name and was an unknown actor before starring in “Life of Pi.”

He does an outstanding job, along with actors Irrfan Khan (“Slumdog Millionaire”) who plays Patel as an adult, and Rafe Spall (“Prometheus”) who plays a writer.

“Life of Pi” is rated PG for emotional thematic content throughout the film and some frightening action sequences. It brought in \$22,251,514 opening weekend.

**‘Life of Pi’ is a thought-provoking tale of survival filled with emotionally powerful scenes.**

**The most impressive aspect of the film was the beautiful special effects, such as the amazing 3D.**



In “Life of Pi,” the 3D graphics enhance the story of Pi Patel (Suraj Sharma) as he learns to adapt to life on the sea with a Tiger.

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