

# the **INDEPENDENT**

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December 13, 2010

## Humanities Week provides interesting, fun performances

Refugee, singer, slam poet, artist, others entertain students

By Kyle Marsh  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Looking back on the 10-day Humanities Week, students praise librarian Sue Krause for her hard work organizing the program.

"I think she did a great job. She really put together a program that was very interesting that let the school see a wide range of the humanities," senior Christine Walder said.

"She did a great job choosing the performances. Everything was so engaging, and people looked forward to all of the performances," senior Isolde Decker-Lucke said.

Humanities Week hosted various authors including Ha Tran, author of "Empowered by Hope," an account of her escape from the Vietnamese Civil War. She moved to America with her husband (from an arranged marriage) and two children; she said she "never stopped fighting."

Other authors included Mike Tougaïs, author of "Survival Lessons: Triumph over Adversity," and Eric Jay Dolin who

**HUMANITIES WEEK, page 3**



MOLLY FRIEDMAN PHOTO

Seniors Dylan Parlee (left) and Drew Gosnell, and freshman Bruce Lane hopped up onstage to try out some of the dance moves the two African drummers were performing during the Humanities Week assembly.

## DECA hosts winter-wonderland-themed semi-formal

By Kyle Marsh  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

DECA hosted its annual winter semi-formal with a "winter-wonderland" theme in the cafeteria, and according to senior DECA officer Heather Burgess, the dance was largely successful.

"At the last minute we were having a little trouble deciding whether to have [the dance] or not because we weren't selling tickets right away, but it turned out a lot better than we imagined," she said.

Tickets were sold for \$15 in school, and 131 students attended the dance. Students were automatically entered into a \$10 iTunes gift card raffle when they purchased their tickets.

According to DECA teacher Dean Martino, DECA raised \$800.

"I thought the dance was very successful because of the number of people who ended up coming. A lot of people bought [tickets] at the door," senior Alex Carr said.

When students entered the dance, they were given a stamp on their hands and a water bottle.

"I thought it was awesome how they gave [water] to you when

you got there and put numbers on the caps. They were able to reduce their resources, and everyone was able to quench their thirst," senior Hannah Beardsley said.

DECA decided on the theme of "winter-wonderland," but according to Carr, Burgess led the planning and decorating.

"I knew I wanted to do a lot of white and blue with a lot of snowflakes," she said.

The cafeteria was divided into two separate areas in order to create a divided section to create privacy for students, according to

Burgess.

DECA created a "Facebook corner" so students could have a place to take photos, complete with snowflakes and Christmas trees, she said.

"It was really nice to have an area for dancing and an area to chill," senior Joseph Mussachia said.

In addition to the set up, students enjoyed the disk jockey, DJBJAY.

"I liked how the DJ set up a dance off between the boys and

**SEMI, page 3**



NICK BOUWER PHOTO

Several boys at the semi-formal started a conga line around the dining hall, encouraging everyone to join. DECA raised about \$800.



COURTESY OF DAN JEWETT

History teachers Lauren DuBois and James Wallimann participated in the trial run in Boston for the Amazing Race scavenger hunt.

## Amazing Race allows students to explore historical Boston

By Morgan Kennedy  
INDEPENDENT STAFF

With the creation of a new social studies curriculum, tenth grade students will have the opportunity to apply classroom studies to a visual, hands-on scavenger hunt in Boston that the history department already tested out.

The history department recently used a professional development day to conduct a trial run for the scavenger hunt. According to

Jewett, the trial was successful overall.

"The experience gave us insight into logistical issues like transportation, clue design, and site locations. It gave us great ideas on both pre and post field trip classroom curriculum," he said.

According to Department Chair Daniel Jewett, a curriculum focused on colonial America will be created and taught in tenth grade history classes during the fall of 2011.

**AMAZING RACE, page 3**

### NEWS

ASR/Bio field trip  
-page 2-



### FEATURES

How to "go green"  
in the winter  
-page 3-

### OPINION

SCORE  
drawbacks  
outweigh benefits  
-page 8-



### SPORTS

Winter sports  
boxes  
-page 9-

### ARTS

Powers'  
art exhibition  
-page 11-

## BRIEFS

## Barakat update

Barakat will sell "Candy Cane Grams" to the school starting next week. Candy Cane Grams will be sold for \$1 by Barakat members and then delivered with a message to the selected students. Barakat will also be hosting a winter-dance in January, themed "Tight-n-Bright" at the Manchester Community Center.

## Graduate Sprague Grayden stars in "Paranormal Activity 2"

Sprague Grayden, a graduate of Manchester-Essex and Barnard College in New York City, is the lead in the movie "Paranormal Activity 2." She plays the role of Kristi Rey, a woman who lives with her husband and newborn son. A demon supposedly haunts their home, and security cameras show their haunting ordeal. Grayden has also starred in shows such as "Joan of Arcadia," "Sons of Anarchy," "Criminal Minds," and most recently "Law & Order: Los Angeles."

## DECA holds mock competition

DECA held its third mock competition December 7, 2010 in the MERHS Dining Hall. "It was great to see 56 students dressed professionally and preparing for the first leg of the DECA competition season," DECA teacher Dean Martino said. Students performed role plays as individuals or in teams or present 30-page written projects covering Community Service and Social Media Marketing Plans, according to Martino. He said MERHS DECA would very much like to thank the following who judged the students in Role Plays: Jeff Azadian, Chris and Karen Bernier, Kathy Bliss, Mark Bliss, Heidi Burgess, Jennifer Ciaramitaro, Robert Hoff Jr., Martha Gardner, Mike Gothie, Chet Marcus, Debbie Marcus, and Joan Platt.

## Jermain, Girard, David place in Mass. State Cross-Country Meet

On Sat. Nov. 13, at the Mass. State Cross-Country meet, Ben Girard placed 17th overall with a time of 15:08; Nate Jermain placed 55th at 15:40; and Fiona Davis placed 52nd overall at 18:34. Girard then placed second in annual Essex Turkey Trot on Sun. Nov 17.

# Science classes travel to Boston on field trip

## ASR, Advanced Placement Biology students visit MIT library, BU lab, seminar

By Laurel Edington  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Students in the Advanced Placement Biology class and the Authentic Science Research (ASR) class went on a field trip to Massachusetts Institute of Technology's library and a Boston University lab and research seminar.

According to ASR teacher Maria Burgess, "Both classes are the two upper-level science classes in the school, and they have the appropriate level of thinking for the field trip."

After the bus arrived late because of a scheduling error, the two classes visited the MIT library.

Students and teachers learned about MIT's database resources. They were taught how to use MIT's website to find other research papers and sources. Then, they toured other parts of the school, such as a library where nobody can talk and the basement that holds hundreds of research books and journals.

Burgess said she took the ASR class to MIT in 2003. After that trip, each year the timing was wrong and other things came up, and she wasn't able to put the trip together again until this year.

Because the bus was late, the group could only tour one lab at BU; they had planned to visit two.

Following the library, they went to BU, and a research student quickly showed them around a tissue-engineering lab.

"The lab tour was my favorite. I loved learning about scientists' work with capillary growth and seeing where it all happened," senior ASR student Noah Prince said.

The group walked across the street into another BU building to watch a seminar on how axons, which are the means for neural (brain) communication, are related to autism.

According to Burgess, the trip was worthwhile because during the presentation, students were able to see other researchers interact.

While ASR students read the



LAUREL EDINGTON PHOTO

Junior Matt Corwin, seniors Noah Prince, Matt Bouwer, Olivia Dumont, and junior Shawna Allen observe a 3-D floor painting at MIT.

research paper about the seminar beforehand, the AP Bio students did not.

"I wish I understood [the seminar] better because it seemed interesting," junior AP Bio student

Daria Shnyder said.

Future classes will go on the field trip in the years to come.

Burgess said she wants to do it every other year so every group of students can go once.

# Physics teacher brings new approach to robotics class

By Molly Friedman  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR



MOLLY FRIEDMAN PHOTO

Senior Francis Davis and physics and robotics teacher Steven Cogger observe a robot made of LNX Leggos. The leggos teach students how to build a robot from start to finish and how to make it respond to the surrounding environment.

In addition to teaching physics for the first time this year, Steven Cogger decided to teach the robotics team with a new approach.

Beginning the year using NXT Leggos, students learned the basic ways to program and design their own robots. Cogger said the LNX Leggos teach the students the basic ways to move a robot from a starting point to an ending point and how to set it to respond to the specific surrounding environment.

Cogger assigned several projects to accustom the students to the robot designing process in order to move on to the next step.

"Whether it was having the robot follow a line of black tape or having it drive between a maze

and hit a button at the end, students were constantly being tested on their ability to design a robot," Cogger said.

As the class progressed, he added new projects to the curriculum that were not part of last year's.

**'Students were constantly being tested on their ability to design a robot.'**  
-STEVEN COGGER

After writing a proposal over the summer and receiving a grant, Cogger received money from the Community Lab Research Interest Group which allowed him to obtain certain materials to use for future projects.

With the money, Cogger set up seven different robot platforms which allow each student to focus on his or her main point of interest with a group. The students then get together to build their own robot using the provided materials.

Freshman Josh Brewster chose to work with the Tetrix and NXT group where he uses the Leggos to create his robot.

"I chose to work with these materials in order to see how they work together," Brewster said.

Students are constantly being tested and graded on their progress, according to Cogger. He said the best way to grade a student is to get an accurate idea of how the student works over time.

Junior Julien Gilbert chose to work on how a wireless PS2 controller can control an arduino-powered car. An arduino is a programmable mock brain that is able to attach to any object and be programmed to do anything.

Gilbert is also a member of the robotics club that meets after school separate from the robotics class. The club is able to enter competitions and is not counted as fulfilling a science requirement.

"I've always had an interest in science, especially technology, and taking this class would give me an advance over the other kids in the club," Gilbert said.

# Diversity Alliance works to raise domestic violence awareness through toy drive

By Ellen Burgess  
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Because of increasing domestic violence in the United States, the Diversity Alliance will spend the month of December educating students about the issue while also raising awareness about various religious holidays celebrated throughout the month.

The first event the Diversity Alliance is hosting is the widely recognized Toys for Healing Abuse Working for Change (HAWC) toy drive. According to club adviser,

M'Lena Gandolfi, the purpose of this event to raise awareness about domestic violence.

Toys for HAWC is an event the Diversity Alliance has been hosting for the past 12 years. The abundance of toys received for the program has been overwhelming and has allowed the Diversity Alliance to branch out to a second program called Well-spring, Gandolfi said.

Well-spring, a new program senior Caroline Kiley introduced, does not focus solely on women and children but incorporates men as well; it is open to any homeless person.

"Ten percent of domestic violence is against guys," Gandolfi said.

"Its fundamental goal is to provide security to the people in it, as well as a 'restart point' that offers classes and therapy sessions that help the women get back on their feet and get ready to re-start their lives," Kiley said.

According to Kiley, Well-spring involves various programs including the holiday store, a soup kitchen, and a teen mentor program, all of which help participants, both men and women, get back on their feet.

Diversity Alliance is also spon-

soring celebrations of holidays around the world. These holidays are related to either religion or culture. According to Gandolfi, in many schools the focus of winter holidays is always centered on Christmas. Because of this, the club's goal is to raise awareness of other holidays celebrated during December.

"The overall goal of these events is to open kids' eyes and raise awareness," senior Hannah Beardsley said.

"We want to try to create a tolerance for all differences that exist in so many venues," Gandolfi said.

## Four students to perform in District Festival after auditions



COURTESY OF CAROLINE EPP

Out of the 1,110 students that attended the Districts audition, junior Ian Gillis, senior Connor Hoff, junior Leanne Ciccone, and senior Piper Browne were selected to sing in the Massachusetts Northeastern District Music Festival Chorus. Gillis and Browne were further recommended for the All-State Chorus. Thirteen students total auditioned for the chorus, nine were singers and four were members of the high school band.

By Caroline Wood  
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Four Manchester-Essex students were selected out of 1,110 students to represent the school in the Massachusetts Northeastern District Music Festival.

According to the official press release of the Massachusetts Music Educators' Association, Inc., more than 50 public and private schools sent musicians to audition, on Nov. 20, and 450 students from grades 9-12 were selected to participate in the Festival Concert.

"Thirteen students auditioned for Districts this year; nine were vocalists, and four were band members," choral director Donna O'Neill said.

The students participating in the Festival Chorus are senior Piper Browne, senior Connor Hoff, sophomore Ian Gillis, and sophomore Leanne Ciccone. Both Browne and Gillis were additionally recom-

mended for All-State.

"Congratulations to the four who made it and special acknowledgements to Ian and Piper for their All-State Recommendation," O'Neill said.

The All-State Auditions will be held at the end of January, according to O'Neill.

The remaining students who auditioned were freshman Molly McCoy, freshman Alexandra Valenti, sophomore Loyd Waites, freshman Noah Gilbert, junior Morgan Kennedy, junior Savannah Repucci, junior Caroline Wood, junior Emmett Snyder, and junior Erik Keefe.

"I am so proud of all the students who auditioned. They showed a tremendous amount of dedication and hard work," O'Neill said.

Students warmed up in the waiting room. "I was very nervous looking at everyone else and listening to them singing, but it was important to keep your confidence

and not psych yourself out," Ciccone said.

Each school had an assigned number, and each number was called for a certain voice or instrument part. At that time, the students would wait in line for their turn.

Junior Savannah Repucci said waiting was extremely nerve-racking and a bit intimidating.

After being called, the students went into a classroom alone with an adjudicator, sang their prepared song, and performed a few measures of sight singing, which students said was the hardest part.

"It was hard because you can't memorize anything specific, but luckily Ms. O'Neill had helped us to prepare for that," Ciccone said.

Although not all 13 students were selected for Districts, most had high scores that just missed the cutoff.

"I thought it was a great experience, and I'm definitely planning on trying again next year," Repucci said.

## Brown, Peterson raise money for HAWC with holiday fundraiser

By Morgan Kennedy  
INDEPENDENT STAFF

With their recent holiday fundraiser to benefit Healing Abuse Working for Change (HAWC), seniors Sarah Brown and Olivia Peterson provided aid for victims of domestic violence.

Brown and Peterson ran a fundraiser with arts and crafts for children at the high school cafeteria on Saturday Dec. 12. The crafts included snowflake making, paper wreath making, and cookie decorating. High school volunteers worked at each table, helping children complete the crafts.

At the event, children were able to meet and get a photo with Santa

Claus.

Brown said she and Peterson wanted to support HAWC during the holiday season.

"We thought it would be nice to help victims of domestic violence during this time of year, so we created a fundraiser to benefit them," she said.

According to Brown, the event was funded by The Rotary Club, which donated \$150 for materials.

With a \$5 entrance fee per child, the fundraiser accumulated \$332, all of which was donated directly to HAWC.

Brown was happy with the fundraiser's outcome.

"It went really well. The parents loved it, and the kids seemed to

have a lot of fun," she said.

According to Peterson, other events, including the Holiday Craft Fair at the Manchester Community Center, caused challenges for the fundraiser.

"If we could do it over, we would advertise more and try to avoid scheduling it at the same time as other holiday events," she said.

Senior Piper Browne, a volunteer at the fundraiser, said it was well run.

"It was a successful fundraiser for an amazing cause, and it was very well organized. Sarah and Olivia did a great job," she said.

Brown and Peterson hope to pass on the fundraiser to members of the junior class next year.



MOLLY FRIEDMAN PHOTO

Senior Isolde Decker-Lucke helps a child to make a construction-paper wreath during the HAWC "Holiday Festival," which raised \$332.

## CONTINUATIONS HUMANITIES WEEK continued from page 1

wrote "Fur, Fortune, and Empire" and spoke to the sophomore class about the history of the fur America.

Krause also selected performers such as the Navy Rock Band, Ayla Brown, and African Drummers.

Others included the speed painter "Art Hero," slam poet Taylor Mali, and film directors Noah Hutton and Josh Fox.

Hutton and Fox discussed their respective documentaries "Crude Independence" and "Gasland," which explore the issue of gas drilling in America. Fox's Gasland was nominated for an Academy Award, according to Krause.

According to various students, the Navy Band, Brown, Tran and Mali gave the most interesting performances.

Senior Olivia Dumont particularly enjoyed the Navy Band. "I think it gave a new perspective to people that were considering the military as a career path. They were so fun and exciting," Dumont said.

Krause agreed. "They were the nicest men, and I just loved the way they interacted with the kids."

Brown, former Boston College

basketball star and American Idol finalist, sang and spoke the next day.

"She had a good story of success, but it would be more influential if she didn't just talk about herself the whole time," Decker-Lucke said.

"Her whole presentation lacked a message... 'You can applaud for that,'" senior Maddy Huleatt said.

The next day Tran spoke about her escape from the Vietnam Civil War.

"She was so inspirational. I thought her story was very touching," senior Corey Bradley said.

"Her genuine care and generous heart was shown in the way she spoke," Dumont said.

On Friday Dec. 3, slam poet Taylor Mali performed his poetry. Most students found the act comical.

"He was hilarious, but a few of his comments were border-line inappropriate for high-school students," Walder said.

"Taylor was so intelligent to be able to do what he does. He was a dynamic speaker; I love the way his voice commanded the audience," Krause said.

Teachers had mixed opinions about Humanities Week.

"I think it is good for students at

our school to have a variety of educational experiences. However, it was difficult maintaining momentum in my classes due to the frequency of the assemblies. But, Mrs. Krause did a great job," math teacher Richard Brown said.

History teacher Lauren DuBois said, "I think they did a good job trying to alert teachers so they could adjust accordingly."

Principal James Lee said that Humanities Week changed to a two-week program after scheduling issues arose from last year's one-week event.

"Within the next few weeks, we will meet with Mrs. Krause and the department heads to see if some other structures will work better for years to come," he said.

Overall, Krause said she was happy with the outcome of Humanities Week.

"I enjoyed booking it and putting it all together. When the students take time to come over to me and thank me, it's a nice feeling; I am so happy they all enjoyed it," she said.

### SEMI

continued from page 1

and the girls," freshman Brittany Smith said.

The winners were senior Molly

Friedman and junior Jeff White. They each received a T-shirt, crown, and a \$10 iTunes gift card.

"I liked the song selection, and the DJ was very energetic," White said.

DJBJAY played mostly hip-hop, pop, and techno songs, including songs to get the crowd involved, such as "ChaCha Slide" and "Teach Me How to Dougie."

"Overall I thought it was a lot of fun; I would definitely say this dance was better than the other dances we have had in the past," junior Kathleyn Carr said.

### AMAZING RACE

continued from page 1

After the classroom material is covered, students will take a field trip to Boston.

Participating in this activity based on the television show "The Amazing Race," students will break into teams and compete against each other in a race to locate and document historical landmarks around the city.

Such sites include Paul Revere's house and the USS Constitution. The curriculum will close with a final assessment including content from the classroom as well as the field trip.

After receiving a clue, each

group will locate a specific landmark using a GPS device where they will take pictures and videos of the site. They will be able to recognize its significance based on studies previously completed in the classroom.

Jewett said the Amazing Race will benefit students by combining the classroom with Boston's historical background.

"This would take something off the textbook page and fuse it with a city of amazing American history, a city that the students are so connected to," he said.

History teacher James Wallimann said the experience will help students with different learning strategies to better absorb and understand the content of the curriculum.

"The fact that it is an interactive project will keep them more interested in the topic, and visual learners will be able to retain the information a little better," he said.

According to Wallimann, a pilot program will be put together for current tenth-graders to be run in the spring, before introducing the first full program next year.

Freshman Lizzi White is looking forward to the trip to Boston.

"I am really excited about the new curriculum. It will give us a chance to explore the city," she said.

# Health Matters



## Exercise without venturing outside

Stay in shape, have fun despite frigid winter weather

By Melissa Moore  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Winter, to most New Englanders, means curling up on a couch next to a roaring fire with a mug of hot chocolate while watching the snow fall.

Typically, those who want to stay in shape during this frigid season have two options: venturing out to the gym or running in the freezing weather.

However, several other entertaining methods of exercise exist without having to face Mother Nature's fury.

For those who don't want to leave their house, many options are still available and simple.

For a fast workout, run up and down the stairs for 10 minutes. It's a quick, easy way to stay in shape and does not infringe upon busy schedules many have during the winter months.

Watching T.V. is also a simple way to burn calories in the warmth of the home. Enjoy your favorite show while working out during commercial breaks, doing exercises such as sit-ups, push-ups, or lunges. Concentrate on a different muscle group each time a new ad break comes on the television.



HOOVERDUST/FLICKR.COM

Ice skating is one of the many ways to stay in shape indoors during the winter season while still having fun.

Another way to avoid the below-freezing weather is to go swimming. Do laps for a while or play fun pool games with friends.

If bundling up to go outside is not a problem, skiing and snowboarding are excellent, entertaining ways to get a workout. Both downhill and cross-country skiing are fun sports that get the heart pumping.

For those with less coordination or who do not know how to ski or

snowboard, sledding is always another option. Have a race to see who can run up the hill the fastest and then take a fun break by sliding back down.

Skating is another great way to get a workout. Go with friends and race each other around the rink.

With a plethora of entertaining ways to stay in shape, Mother Nature is no longer an excuse for not working out.

## Common Christmas traditions based on pagan practices

Use of Christmas tree traces to celebration of winter solstice

By Nicholas Bower  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Traditions like placing a star on the top of the Christmas tree, eating a chocolate "Yule log," and the use of candy canes as decorations have been passed down for centuries, but their actual meanings at the start of their ceremonial use have been lost to many with time.

A star or an angel is often placed on the top of the Christmas tree not because it "looks nice" or "completes the picture," but because it is to represent the the host of angels or the Star of Bethlehem from the nativity.

The tradition of placing an evergreen tree in one's home at Christmas started in Germany in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

With roots in pagan beliefs before the birth of Jesus, the tradition was mainly in celebration of the winter solstice.

According to the website All Things Christmas, the German priest Martin Luther was the first to begin the tradition of the Christmas tree as it is known today as the symbol for the tree of life in the Garden of Eden.

Not long after Europeans began



THISISMETRACY/FLICKR.COM

using Christmas trees, special decorations were used to beautify them.

Candies and cookies were used predominately in this decoration process, and straight white candy sticks were one of the major confections used as ornamentation.

During the 17th century, craftsmen created the white sticks of candy in the shape of shepherds' crooks to represent the shepherds in the nativity scene.

The candies were used as bribes for children to keep quiet during ceremonies at the living crèche, and the tradition spread through-



HERBERTHARPER/FLICKR.COM

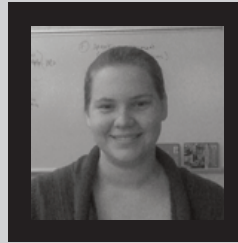
Stars are often placed on the tops of Christmas trees to represent the Star of Bethlehem. A yule log was a tree branch kept for luck for the next winter.

out Europe.

According to the website Enzine Articles, many families today also enjoy a chocolate cake at Christmas time most often made in the shape of a log known as a Yule Log.

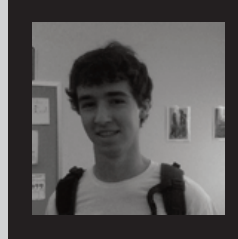
Originally part of a pagan tradition celebrating of the winter solstice, a Yule log was a tree branch, typically oak, for its slow burning properties.

When the log fire expired, a piece of the log was kept for luck and as kindling to start the next Yule fire, when the next winter came along.



Senior  
Ashley Steward:

"Jingle Bells"



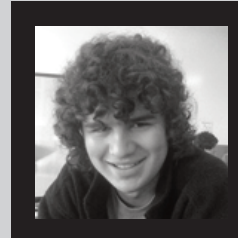
Senior  
Will Curatolo:

"Frosty the Snowman"



Junior  
Shawna Rice:

"Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer"



Junior  
Tyler Burnham:

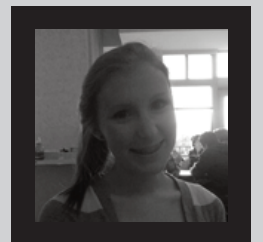
"Joy to the World"

# Student Speak

What is your favorite holiday song?

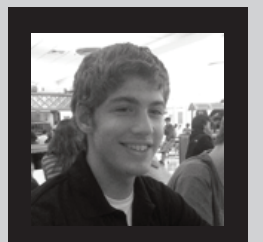
Sophomore  
Laurel Barrie:

"Carol of the Bells"



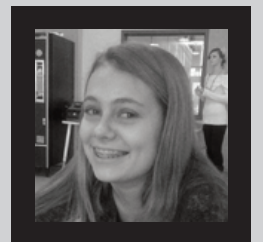
Sophomore  
Kevin Cellucci:

"Wonderful Christmas Time"



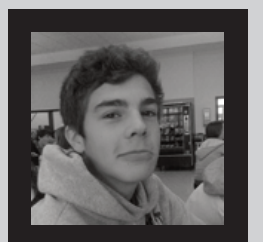
Freshman  
Abby Ranger:

"Silent Night"



Freshman  
Chris Dumont:

"All I Want for Christmas is You"



BY PIPER BROWNE



## Seasonal change, activities revive eco-friendly methods

Different products, practices ensure environmentally friendly winter

By Rebecca Lynch  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Going green is a movement where the success is based off of small efforts by individuals. According to [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov) these different techniques change as the seasons change, and certain methods apply solely to wintertime.

As the weather grows colder, people need to use more heat in their households. A leak connecting the interior to the harsh cold air decreases the temperature of the house. Examine windows and doors from leaks and use either plastic or weather stripping to fill it in. Leaks can also be found in electrical sockets and light switches. Those can be mended with an electrical socket insulator.

Small fixes can make a huge difference in the temperature in the house. A small leak multiplied by multiple windows generates enough cold air to severely impact a room's temperature. If the leaks are eliminated, people will not need to raise the thermostat. This will lower the heating bill while saving energy.

Fireplaces are also a source for heat. Ashes can be mixed with compost to help gardens in the spring. Newspaper can be recycled into fireplace logs. Wrap paper around wood and soak it in water. After drying, the newspaper will function as a log.

With winter comes snow, and the many existing snow removal methods are not eco-friendly.

Snow must be wiped from the roads, but some substances are damaging to the environment.

Non-toxic de-icing substances are more environmentally friendly and safer for plants and pets. Electronic snow removal products or snow shovels are preferable over gasoline-powered ones.



MIDNIGHTCOMM/FLICKR.COM



SAGE/FLICKR.COM



ENERGYSTAR.GOV



SDMINOR81/FLICKR.COM

• Cold air can severely impact a room's temperature. Inspect windows and doors for leaks and seal them with plastic or weather stripping. After blocking leaks, families can lower the thermostat and their heating bills.

• Many de-icing substances are harmful to the environment. Non-toxic de-icing substances are more eco-friendly. They are better for plants as well. To remove snow, use electronic snow removal products or snow shovels.

• While shopping, look for products marked with an "Energy Star" label (left). These products are more energy efficient. Updating home and office products with such products will help the environment and lower the energy bill.

• Instead of throwing trees out, check with local waste departments for recycling options. Other options include using tree needles for potpourri, using parts of the tree for garden mulch, or using the entire tree as a bird feeder.

Hordes of holiday shoppers can also adapt their habits to help the environment.

Holiday festivities provide opportunities to reduce waste. Shop with reusable bags and if using store-provided bags, do not take one when purchasing small items.

More energy-efficient products are tagged with an "Energy Star" label. Replacing home products with these updated ones will lower the energy bill.

For a Christmas tree, check with the local waste department to see if there is an option to recycle the tree.

Other options include using the trunks and branches as garden mulch. Tree needles can be used to make potpourri.

A more creative use is transforming the tree into a bird feeder. Place the tree outside and scatter seeds and orange slices over the branches.

## Student Profile

Lizz Warren



HANNAH DALEY PHOTO

By Hannah Daley  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Grade: 9

Who is your celebrity crush?  
Johnny Depp.

What's your favorite scent?  
Fruity.

What would your superlative be if your friends voted you for one?  
Clumsiest.

Describe the weirdest present you've received.  
A box of peanuts.

What's your favorite word?  
Popcorn.

If you had to, which ones would you lose? Eyes, ears, arms, or toes?  
Toes.

What's the worst thing about being a freshman? The best?  
The seniority rule: seniors can do whatever they want. Study hall is the best part.

If you were a bird, to where would you fly?  
The Bahamas.

If you had to stay one age forever, what age would you choose?  
Nineteen because you get to drive and do whatever, and you don't have to live in your parents' house.

If you got to choose anywhere in the world to be right now, where would you go?  
Fiji. It seems so cool.

Harry Potter books or movies?  
Movies.

Who is your favorite person to read about in the tabloids?  
Angelina Jolie because of all of her kids.

What is your biggest fear in life?  
A hurricane happening in Manchester.

What's your favorite brand and flavor of gum?  
Peppermint 5 gum.

## Student awarded for year's worth of extensive community service at Beverly Hospital

Sophomore Maggie Lehar finds 'enjoyment' in 50 hours of work, specializes in Child Development Center, patient transport

By Caroline Wood  
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Sophomore Maggie Lehar received the Beverly Hospital President's Volunteer Service Award, which included a certificate, a letter from President Barack Obama, and a pin for volunteering 50 hours in one year at Beverly Hospital.

"I volunteered in the Child Development Center and now I am volunteering in Patient Transport," Lehar said.

According to Lehar, the atmosphere was friendly; everyone working there was kind and always willing to help.

While working in the Child



NABILA MAHMUD PHOTO

**Sophomore Maggie Lehar volunteered for 50 hours in one year at Beverly Hospital. Lehar spent her time in the Child Development Center.**

Development Center, Lehar found her work very enjoyable.

"It was like a day care for young children. I basically played with the kids the whole time," she said.

**'Volunteering is definitely something I want to continue doing. I have really enjoyed it, and it has been a great experience!'**  
-MAGGIE LEHAR

Lehar is currently volunteering in Patient Transport where she brings patients to different parts of the hospital.

She said she loves volunteering in Patient Transport because of the enjoyment she gets out of

talking with the patients and being able to help them.

"Volunteering is definitely something I want to continue doing. I have really enjoyed it, and it has been a great experience!" she said.

Lehar hopes to have a future career as a doctor or medical personnel.

"I'm not sure exactly what I want to do yet, but I know I want a career in the medical field," she said.

According to Lehar, she has attained a great amount of experience from volunteering.

"Just the feeling I get knowing what I'm doing is making a difference is awesome, even if it's just a small one," she said.

Lehar's guidance counselor,

Karen D'Amour, said she was "very excited" to hear the news of Lehar's award.

"The true purpose of community service for graduation is to have students learn how to be good citizens and active contributing members of their community, be it local, national, or global. Maggie is certainly very deserving of this award and sets a wonderful example to others," she said.

D'Amour noted that the majority of high school students "not only meet the 40-hour community service requirement but exceed the requirement."

"This is the case with Maggie Lehar and a number of our other students. In fact, some of our seniors have completed over 100 hours of community service," she said.



NABILA MAHMUD PHOTO

The Interact Club is hosting a competition between grades to bring in the most food for donations to Cape Ann Food Pantry.

## Interact club promotes upcoming community-building fundraisers

Marian Siljeholm  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

For over five years, the Interact club has been raising money to help underprivileged individuals.

Through fundraising, the club raises money towards community service projects on both a local and global level.

Last year, the club purchased a goat to provide milk and food for an impoverished family through HEIFER, an international nonprofit organization that works to eliminate poverty and hunger worldwide.

Club leader junior Melissa Moore says she is unsure about the main project this holiday season; however, she was encouraged by the positive response from the club's successful fall fundraisers,

including Halloween grab bags and a turkey raffle.

Junior Maddie McNamee is also excited for the club's future plans. "I'm thrilled to be involved in Interact this year. We're scheduling some great events and fundraisers!"

During the busy holiday season, the club plans to have a Christmas tree raffle and food drive.

During meetings, members appreciate Moore's attitude towards new ideas.

"I love how in Interact there's no strict schedule on what we have to do,

so we're all allowed to bring new ideas into the group," said junior Emily Gonzales.

Despite the business, Moore is already planning for spring initiatives focusing on fun activities to promote student involvement including penny wars, duck races, and a candy heart drive for Valentine's Day.

**'We're scheduling some great events and fundraisers!'**  
-MADDIE MCNAMEE

## Alumni donate to district after 50th reunion Story High Class of 1960 'love' new facilities, reflect on changes

By Rebecca Lynch  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

While preparing for their 50th reunion, members of the Story High School Class of 1960 made the decision to make a donation to the Manchester Essex High School.

According to Middle School Administrative Assistant Margaret Driscoll, alumni Mary Mackie and Nancy Manning visited the school before their reunion. After Driscoll showed them around the building, they decided they were going to try to get their classmates to make a donation.

"I offered them some ideas about the clubs and programs that we have in the high school, and they took it from there," she said.

Mackie said there was no specific goal for making the donation, and she and the reunion planning committee concluded that the staff and students should decide the use for it.

Principal James Lee is responsible for handling the donation.

"I think [the donation] is great. For them to sort of pass the hat around is a great thing. To use the donation, I'm going to wait until an idea or request comes through that could use the funding," Lee said.

According to Mackie, she and her classmates graduated from Story High School, and 25 out of the 32 graduates are living. Originally located on Bennett Street in Manchester, the high school even-



COURTESY OF MARGARET DRISCOLL

Alumni David Curran, Mary Macki, Judy Del Rosario, and Nancy Manning join Principal James Lee (center) to present a donation for the high school from the Story High Class of 1960.

tually moved to where the Ed Field playground now stands. The class attended Priest School until fifth grade when Memorial School opened in 1952.

Members of the class enjoyed seeing the new school's facilities.

"My husband, friends, and I loved the school with the setup for the middle school, auditorium, gym and cafeteria. I still have a hard time calling the library the 'media center,'" Mackie said.

The new building was not the only change Mackie observed.

"I can't get used to the football field on Lincoln Street. When I was growing up, that was Flatley's pit, and we would play

around the construction equipment and catch pollywogs in the pond," she said.

Mackie reflected on where the school district now stands.

"Manchester, and now Essex, has always attracted excellent teachers, and working in a clean new building with a professional atmosphere will continue to do the same. They are both great communities to grow up in. There is parental and community support and a strong tradition of fine education. Hopefully current students will feel a similar affection for the educational system in 50 years as the Class of 1960 does now," she said.

## Websites offer answers to intriguing questions

### Causes of brain freeze, feet falling asleep, different taste perceptions

**What is physically happening when we get a "brain freeze?"**



According to wisegeek.com, researchers suggest that the excruciating headache people experience while eating or drinking something cold on a warm day results from the freezing of a cluster of nerves above the palate and a sudden influx of warm blood to the brain.

The actual nerve the food or drink affects is the sphenopalatine

nerve, which is extremely sensitive to abrupt changes in temperature. When the cold substance hits the roof of the mouth, this nerve sends a warning to the other nerves in the cluster so that the brain can prepare itself to expect a "major freeze."

One's brain doesn't actually freeze; however, the blood vessels surrounding the brain shrink as a reaction to the cold stimuli.

This then results in a pounding headache due to pain receptors, but placing the tongue on the roof of the mouth to warm the palate can reduce the duration of this sensation, which usually lasts about 30 seconds.

**Why do our feet "tingle" when they fall asleep?**



Paresthesia is the sensation that occurs when one's foot "falls asleep," according to reference.com.

The sensation is caused by putting pressure on sensory nerves, which reduces blood supply to the local area and cuts off communication between the brain and nerves of the limb, causing numbness in the skin.

After feeling numbness, the uncomfortable tingling and prickling sensation will occur; however, once pressure on the limb is released, nerve communication to the brain restores, and the sensation will subside.

**Why do certain foods taste differently to people?**

According to ilovebacteria.com, the more taste buds one has, the more intensely one perceives the tastes, especially bitter ones.

"Supertasters" are sensitive to strong flavors and can have up to twice as many taste buds as the others.

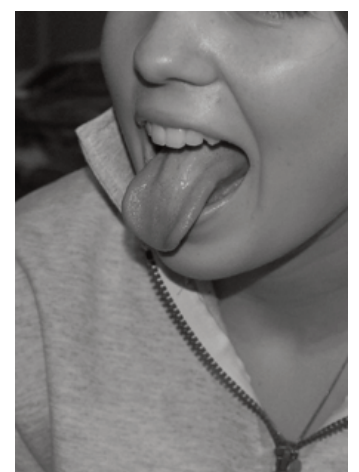
While 25 percent of people are supertasters, 25 percent are non-tasters and 50 percent are medium tasters.

Although many believe that taste is only dependent on taste buds, it also depends on smell and how the brain reads signals from the tongue.

The ability to smell and taste relies on about 1000 genes. Scientists recently discovered that about 50 of these genes are only active in some people, causing some to like a specific food while it may make others want to vomit.

Everyone has different genes that switch on and off, so one has different receptors for different flavors.

By Hannah Daley, Independent Editor



MOLLY FRIEDMAN PHOTOS

# Happy Holidays!

## Is being politically correct important?

### Pro

Kaitlin McDonagh

Around the holidays, people become more concerned with being politically correct; instead of hearing “Merry Christmas,” it’s now more common to hear “Happy Holidays.” Although some people don’t think being politically correct is a big deal, it’s important to view the issue from different angles.

In a school where students predominantly celebrate Christmas, most people don’t bother to acknowledge other holidays. This is because there is a lack of variety when it comes to religious denominations.

Because of this lack of diversity, students don’t know a lot about other religions. Learning about other winter holidays is important because it makes everybody feel included. With fewer people who celebrate other holidays, such as Kwanzaa or Hanukkah, more people are likely to feel left out when other students talk about Christmas.

In order to prevent others from feeling bad, it’s important to be mindful of others’ religions. It’s fine to say “Merry Christmas” to people who celebrate the holiday, but it becomes awkward when the person’s religion is uncertain. To avoid this mistake, it’s easier to say “Happy Holidays” to everyone, regardless of whether his or her religion is known or not.

Not only does this stop awkward encounters, but it also shows that other holidays and religions are accepted. When somebody says “Happy Holidays,” it shows that he or she is making an effort not to offend anyone.

To many, it may seem ridiculous that people are offended when their holidays are ignored. In order to understand their feelings, it’s important to step into their shoes; how would it feel to essentially be ignored during the holiday season? There’s so much hype over Christmas that nobody pays attention to other holidays.

Some people still believe others shouldn’t make a fuss if their holidays aren’t widely acknowledged. The fact of the matter is people do feel offended, whether one agrees with it or not. When somebody feels this way, it is important to make him or her feel comfortable; whether one thinks he or she is overreacting is a different issue that shouldn’t matter.

Essentially, it comes down to this: it’s important to make the largest number of people feel as appreciated as possible. Without being politically correct around the holidays, it’s impossible to do. By putting aside personal opinions and acknowledging other religions, the holidays will be a happier time for everyone.

### Con

Ellen Burgess

“Merry Christmas! Happy Hanukkah!” These few phrases are acceptable to say, however, playing any religious holiday music or performing any festivities surrounding a religious holiday is not allowed in school, in the hopes of remaining politically correct.

Unfortunately for students, the school’s intolerance for music or other festivities is too strict throughout the holiday season.

Holiday phrases are acceptable to say, but if the chorus tries to sing music specifically written about Christmas or another individual winter holiday, the school will not allow it to be done without incorporating another. Certain activities such as decorating lockers or performing religious festivities are also not acceptable.

The school is public, meaning it is unacceptable to teach a specific religion; however, when holiday music is played, there is no intention to teach the specific religion, and students understand that.

The school is also too strict about not allowing students to only recognize a single holiday. Although students are allowed to wear and represent their individual beliefs, students must also recognize that there is more than just one religious holiday. This should not be mandatory, as it does not bother many students.

“I don’t really care about people saying ‘Merry Christmas’ all the time; it’s not like it offends me,” Jewish junior Daria Shnider, said.

Singing religious songs is also a tradition that should not be considered breaking the school rules. If the chorus would like to sing a song about Christmas, that song should be allowed because students of other religions do not mind the music.

Assistant Principal Paul Murphy said that there can be “no religious songs because not everyone is Christian.”

Students of other religions do not have a preference of whether other students do or do not recognize their own religious holiday.

“It can be funny and annoying at the same time, but it doesn’t bother me as much as the school portrays it to,” Shnider said.

Students realize that there are very different religious beliefs throughout the school and that their specific religion is not always the most widely celebrated. This does not harm or affect students in any way.

As long as a specific religion is not being advocated during the holiday season, there should be no reason to remain politically correct in school.



NICK BOUWER CARTOON

## Parking spaces: Drivers in wrong spots create domino effect

By Laurel Edington  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Before the school year started, student drivers purchased parking spaces for \$70 in the upper parking lot. Teachers are unfairly parking in these spaces, which is frustrating students.

Every student who purchased a spot, as well as every teacher, is assigned specific spaces.

According to Principal James Lee, “All teachers have their own assigned parking spots. There is no need for them to park [in students’ spots.]”

Students are becoming agitated with this parking situation.

After spending \$70, students

find it obnoxious when other cars are parked in their spaces, especially because teachers already have parking spots of their own. Just because it might be easier to park in the upper lot does not mean that teachers should take students’ spots.

According to Lee, between both lots, 10 parking spaces are open for guests.

“When somebody takes a student’s spot, [the student] should park in an available parking spot. Then tell [high school office administrative assistant Mary Lumsden] either the type of the car, or preferably, the license plate number,” he said.

What makes the situation more confusing is the lack of anything that marks or designates the

parking spaces for certain people.

Teachers, students, and guests don’t know exactly which parking spots are assigned for whom. A space that is noticeably empty for a week could be for a guest or a student who has been out sick.

Lee said that the school is going to “better assign guest parking spots because it becomes a domino effect.” When a parent or teacher parks in students’ parking spots, students then park in teachers’ parking spots, and the cycle continues.

In order to fix this problem, signs need to state who can park where. It should be mandatory that drivers park in their assigned spots so this confusion doesn’t continue.



MOLLY FRIEDMAN PHOTO

Students are required to park in the upper lot, but often, spots left empty in the morning are taken by other students or teachers.



**Hollywood has bad habit of recycling ideas**

MAURA DRISCOLL

One would think that with such a creative and evolving culture, it would be possible for Hollywood to come up with new and original ideas for the latest films and movies.

Instead, Hollywood is relying on previously trademarked ideas of other successful franchises and series and capitalizing on that success by remaking the concepts.

Undoubtedly, television and movie studios are flooded with potential ideas from Hollywood hopefuls, begging for their crazy proposals to facilitate their big breaks.

Even if studios choose not to draw new concepts from screenplays or other submitted material, millions of published works exist from which original films and shows can easily be conceived.

Why is it then so difficult for these entertainment masterminds to find a fresh new idea to make into a movie or television series?

For example, the first movie directed by Sam Raimi and starring Tobey Maguire in the "Spider-Man" franchise came out in 2002, and by 2007, two more films were made. Now, just three years later, Columbia Pictures has scrapped plans for a fourth Spider-Man film and has opted instead to reboot the series, with an entirely new cast and director, despite the overwhelming success of the previous films.

How is it possible to reboot a franchise, with a planned release date in 2012, only five years after the last movie was made?

Obviously, fans won't be happy about the sudden alterations to their beloved series, and even those who aren't diehard enthusiasts of the web-slinging superhero will have no choice but to compare every aspect of the new film to the old versions.

Another ridiculous example of Hollywood's creative laziness is the fact that a "Mean Girls 2" sequel is about to be released – straight to DVD. Why anyone thought it would be a good idea to create a new version of "Mean Girls," lacking all the actors that made the original so perfect, is mind boggling.

This attempted extension of the "Mean Girls" brand is simply a studio's way of trying to milk the success of its predecessor and to lure in viewers, who are attracted solely because of the title. Its plot is just like any other emotionless bore of a movie about high school girls and their catty drama – is the name "Mean Girls 2" really necessary?

Hollywood must start pooling its imagination and stop creating useless remakes of old series.

# STAFF EDITORIAL

## Students deserve grade rounding

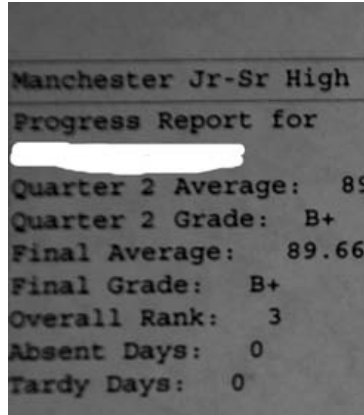
With the majority of students working rigorously to obtain respectable grades, the fact that teachers are no longer able to round a student's grade if he/she is a tenth of a point away from a higher grade is somewhat harsh.

According to Principal James Lee, the grading policy changed due to an inconsistency in the way teachers were grading.

"Some people would round while some wouldn't round, and in essence, there was a gap between 89 and 90 for instance. There was no grade assigned to the values between 89 and 90, so all we did was close the gap," he said.

As a result of closing the gap, the grade needed to obtain a B, B+, A-, etc. was increased by .5.

While keeping uniformity with the way teachers grade is completely logical, rounding should still be allowed if students now have to earn .5 points higher than last year in order to obtain a de-



P	100.00	B	83.00	D+	67.00
A+	98.00	B-	80.00	D	63.00
A	93.00	C+	77.00	D-	60.00
A-	90.00	C	73.00	F	0.01
B+	87.00	C-	70.00	I	0.00

MOLLY FRIEDMAN PHOTO

With the new grade scale (right), an 89.66 does not round up to an A-, unlike in years past. The computer no longer rounds up if the numerical grade ends in .5 or higher.

sired letter grade.

For example, if a student were .2 points away from an A-, these .2 points below could have easily been lost simply by getting a couple of test questions wrong that may have been unfair, passing in homework a day late and receiving a 0, or answering an open-response test question in a way that

was not exactly compatible with what the teacher was looking for.

Teachers ultimately can assign any grade they want, so in theory, teachers could override the grading program and give a different grade, but this is not encouraged, according to Lee.

Even though rounding is techni-

cally not allowed, it should be permitted to diligent students.

The fact that students who are often doing more than what is asked of them receive a B+ because they are a tenth of a point away from an A- is unfair; rounding should be awarded to those who show ambition and integrity.

## SCORE viewed as an obstacle, not opportunity

### Added stress, commuting problems override possible advantages

By Kaitlin McDonagh  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

SCORE may seem like a great opportunity for seniors; it gives them a chance to pursue an internship in a career field they are interested in. For five weeks, students are employed alongside educated adults and gain experience about what a specific career field is really like.

Although the idea behind SCORE is logical, in actuality, SCORE is more of a burden than a blessing to most seniors.

It's simply too difficult for a

large number of students to execute SCORE projects. It's undeniable that a student with three or more AP classes will have to find a project in the school, but what about students with only one?

Although seniors are exempt from certain classes at the end of the year, they still have to return for AP classes until they have taken AP exams. This makes it more difficult to find an internship where a student can leave for a certain amount of time, limiting students to in-school projects.

In the real world, people can't simply leave their jobs for a certain period of time because they

have other engagements. Not only do AP classes interrupt students' time at their internships, but they also limit how far students can go.

Despite these drawbacks, students who do have the time for SCORE would benefit from being exposed to a particular career field they are interested in; however, the majority of seniors have too much to deal with without having SCORE thrown on top.

The goal of SCORE, which is to give seniors the opportunity to test out a career they are possibly interested in pursuing, is a good one. The more experience the better, but in order for students to

maximize their time, the program needs to be reconstructed.

For example, the time requirements should be smaller or eliminated completely. As long as students are working hard and have created a project they feel passionate about, then the time put into it shouldn't matter as much.

It's true that SCORE is beneficial in some ways; it gives students real-world experience and helps them discover what they are interested in. Unfortunately, many students cannot achieve this goal because of some of the guidelines of SCORE and the limitations in their own lives.

the **INDEPENDENT**

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## GIRLS' BASKETBALL



Rebecca Lynch



Abbi Biggar

**Coach:** Lauren DuBois

**Captains:** Seniors Rebecca Lynch and Abbi Biggar

**Players to watch:** All of the players

**Goals for this year:** Beat Georgetown and Ipswich High Schools

**Coach's quote:** "It's always hard to lose players, but it happens every year and you adjust. New strong players step up and take control, and I am expecting the same this year. Everyone needs to look to make something happen on the court."

**Captain's quote:** "As a team we have high expectations, and we're looking to work hard everyday in practice." - Rebecca Lynch

### Girl's Basketball Schedule

Thursday 12/9	5:00PM	vs.	Beverly High School (scrimmage)
Tuesday 12/14	5:30PM	@	Rockport High School
Friday 12/17	6:30PM	vs.	Georgetown MS/HS
Thursday 12/23	6:30PM	vs.	North Reading High School
Tuesday 12/28	7:30PM	@	Holiday Tournament
Wednesday 12/29	TBA	@	Holiday Tournament
Tuesday 1/4	6:30PM	@	Lynnfield High School
Friday 1/7	6:30PM	vs.	Ipswich High School
Monday 1/10	6:30PM	vs.	Lynnfield High School
Tuesday 1/11	6:30PM	@	Hamilton-Wenham Regional High
Friday 1/14	7:00PM	@	North Andover High School
Friday 1/21	6:30PM	vs.	Pentucket Regional High
Tuesday 1/25	7:00PM	@	Masconomet Regional High
Friday 1/28	6:30PM	vs.	Triton Regional High
Tuesday 2/1	6:30PM	vs.	Newburyport High School
Friday 2/4	6:30PM	vs.	Wilmington High School
Tuesday 2/8	6:30PM	@	Amesbury High School
Friday 2/11	6:30PM	@	Georgetown MS/HS
Thursday 2/17	6:30PM	vs.	Rockport High School

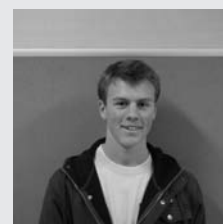
### Boys' Basketball Schedule

Tuesday 12/7	4:00PM	vs.	Beverly High School (scrimmage)
Thursday 12/9	5:00PM	@	Melrose High School (scrimmage)
Tuesday 12/14	6:30PM	vs.	Rockport High School
Friday 12/17	6:30PM	@	Georgetown MS/HS
Wednesday 12/22	6:30PM	vs.	St. Mary's Junior Senior High
Thursday 12/23	7:00PM	@	North Reading High School
Monday 12/27	5:00PM	@	Trinity Catholic HS
Tuesday 12/28	TBA	@	Nashoba Holiday Tournament
Wednesday 12/29	TBA	@	Nashoba Holiday Tournament
Tuesday 1/4	6:30PM	vs.	Lynnfield High School
Friday 1/7	6:30PM	@	Ipswich High School
Tuesday 1/11	6:30PM	vs.	Hamilton-Wenham Regional High
Friday 1/14	6:30PM	vs.	North Andover High School
Friday 1/21	6:30PM	@	Pentucket Regional High School
Tuesday 1/25	6:30PM	vs.	Masconomet Regional High
Friday 1/28	6:30PM	@	Triton Regional High
Tuesday 2/1	7:00PM	@	Newburyport High School
Friday 2/4	7:00PM	@	Wilmington High School
Tuesday 2/8	6:30PM	vs.	Amesbury High School
Friday 2/11	6:30PM	vs.	Georgetown MS/HS
Monday 2/14	6:30PM	@	St. Mary's Junior Senior High
Thursday 2/17	6:30PM	@	Rockport High School

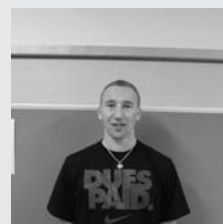
## BOYS' BASKETBALL



Alex Carr



Alex Porter



Joseph Musacchia



Sean Nally

**Coach:** Duane Sigsbury

**Captains:** Seniors Alex Porter, Alex Carr, Joseph Musacchia and junior Sean Nally

**Players to watch:** Senior captain Alex Carr and junior Chris Bishop

**Goals for this year:** To make it to the State finals

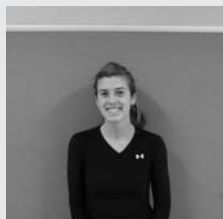
**Coach's quote:** "We'll play one game at a time, and our goal will be to try to win the [Division IV State] League Championship."

**Captain's quote:** "We can't just look for the key players. Basketball is a team effort, and we need every player to contribute just as much. I'm looking for everybody to step up." - Joseph Musacchia

## INDOOR TRACK



Nate Jermain



Olivia Dumont



Anya Ciarametaro



Stephen LaForge

**Coach:** John Barbour

**Captains:** Seniors Olivia Dumont and Nate Jermain, Juniors Anya Ciarametaro and Stephen LaForge

**Players to watch:** Seniors Danny Oliver-Munn, Ben Girard, Nate Jermain, and junior Anya Ciarametaro

**Goals for this year:** Focus on runners' individual skills

**Coach's quote:** "We will work hard each day to improve and show the rest of the League that we are fearless and the embodiment of sportsmanship. If we win a meet along the way, I will be ecstatic."

**Captain's quote:** "Although we may not win most meets, I feel that due to the fact that we have a lot of middle schoolers, the program will build into a successful varsity squad under the excellent leadership of coach Barbour." - Stephen LaForge

### Indoor Track Schedule

Saturday 12/18	8:00AM	@	CAL Meet
Wednesday 12/22	6:45PM	@	Amesbury High School
Tuesday 1/4	3:30PM	@	Ipswich High School
Saturday 1/8	TBA	@	Fresh/Soph Meet
Wednesday 1/12	6:45PM	vs.	Wilmington High School
Saturday 1/15	8:00PM	@	CAL Meet
Tuesday 1/18	3:30PM	@	Pentucket Regional High
Sunday 1/23	TBA	@	Division 4 Relays
Wednesday 1/26	6:45PM	@	North Andover High
Saturday 1/29	8:00AM	@	Triton Regional High
Tuesday 2/8	TBA	vs.	CAL Open

## GYMNASTICS



Katherine Hennigan

**Coach:** Rich Healey

**Captains:** Sophomore Katherine Hennigan, Hamilton-Wenham students Suzy Balk, Becky Moffat, Brooke Fougere

**Players to watch:** Sophomore Katherine Hennigan, Hamilton-Wenham students sophomore Emily Ciroulo, freshmen Julia Bucci and Jessie Herlihy

**Goals:** To win at least two meets

**Coach's quote:** "High school gymnastics is all about team, that is the aspect I like the most, and I think that is what draws so many kids to the program."

**Captain's quote:** "I am most excited about learning my new skills and putting them in my routines to compete them." - Katherine Hennigan

## SWIM TEAM



Christine Walder



Maddie Hueleatt



Matthew Bouwer



Nicholas Bouwer

**Coach:** Katie Garvin

**Captains:** Seniors Maddie Hueleatt, Matthew Bouwer, Nicholas Bouwer, and Christine Walder

**Players to watch:** Seniors Maddie Hueleatt, Nicholas Bouwer, Matthew Bouwer, and sophomores Alex Walder and Dustin Ferzacca

**Goals for this year:** Win at least one meet

**Coach's quote:** "We had some really close meets with Ipswich and North Reading last season, so hopefully we will have some good ones again this year, maybe even with a different outcome."

**Captain's quote:** I'm really looking forward to this season because in the past we've been building the team, and I think now were working really hard and ready to fully compete in the league. - Maddie Huelett

### Gymnastics

Tuesday 1/4	7:30PM	vs.	Masconomet Regional High
Thursday 1/6	7:00PM	@	North Andover High
Friday 1/7	7:30PM	vs.	Danvers High School
Tuesday 1/11	7:30PM	vs.	Salem High School
Monday 1/17	6:30PM	@	Beverly High School
Tuesday 1/18	7:30PM	vs.	Peabody High School
Thursday 1/20	7:30PM	vs.	Winthrop
Tuesday 1/25	7:45PM	@	Marblehead High School
Wednesday 1/26	7:30PM	@	Gloucester High School
Saturday 2/5	6:30PM	@	NEC/CAL League Meet
Sunday 2/13	TBA	@	State Individuals
Saturday 2/19	TBA	@	Sectionals
Saturday 2/26	TBA	@	States

### Swimming

Wednesday 12/1	7:30PM	vs.	CAL Relay Carnival
Tuesday 12/14	7:00PM	@	Hamilton-Wenham Regional High
Thursday 12/16	8:30PM	vs.	North Reading High School
Wednesday 12/22	8:00PM	vs.	North Andover High School
Wednesday 1/5	7:00PM	@	Lynnfield High School
Saturday 1/8	6:00PM	@	CAL Dive Meet
Monday 1/10	8:00PM	vs.	Hamilton-Wenham Regional High
Friday 1/21	5:00PM	@	North Reading High School
Friday 1/28	2:50PM	@	Ipswich High School
Monday 1/31	5:30PM	@	North Reading High School
Wednesday 2/2	7:50PM	vs.	Masconomet Regional High
Sunday 2/6	9:00AM	vs.	CAL Championships

## HOCKEY



Cam Smith

**Coach:** Derek Papalegis

**Manchester-Essex Captain:** Senior Cam Smith

**Players to watch:** Cam Smith

**Goals for this year:** Making it to the tournament, achieving a better record than last year and winning the conference title

**Coach's quote:** "[Smith is] a player all his teammates look to and I can always count on."

**Captain's quote:** "There have always been a couple of guys to look up to from my own school, but I know all of the other players since we have been together for so long." -Cam Smith

## SKI TEAM



Molly Friedman



Ian Towle

**Coach:** Tim and Peter Wonson

**Captains:** Seniors Molly Friedman and Ian Towle

**Players to watch:** Seniors Molly Friedman and Ian Towle

**Goals for this year:** Rebuilding the program, doing well as a varsity team, and improve the skills of newer members

**Coach's quote:** "I want to build the team's strength and help it become something the kids and the school can be proud of." - Tim Wonson

**Captain's quote:** "We are looking forward to seeing how kids improve and how we do as a varsity team." - Molly Friedman

### Boys' Hockey Team

Wednesday 12/15	8:00PM	@	Minuteman Regional
Saturday 12/18	3:30PM	@	Boston Latin Academy
Wednesday 12/22	8:00PM	vs.	Mystic Valley Regional Charter
Saturday 1/1	5:40PM	@	Northeast Metro Regional Vocational
Wednesday 1/5	8:00PM	vs.	Amesbury High School
Wednesday 1/12	7:00PM	@	St. Clement High School
Saturday 1/15	TBA	@	Mystic Valley Regional Charter
Monday 1/17	12:00PM	vs.	Bedford Public Schools
Thursday 1/20	8:00PM	@	Shawsheen Valley Vocational Tech
Saturday 1/22	8:00PM	vs.	Minuteman Regional
Wednesday 1/26	7:00PM	@	Swampscott High School
Saturday 1/29	6:00PM	vs.	Nashoba Valley Voc-tech High
Wednesday 2/2	6:10PM	@	Nashoba Valley Voc-tech High
Saturday 2/5	12:00PM	@	Amesbury High School
Wednesday 2/9	4:00PM	vs.	Boston Latin Academy
Saturday 2/12	7:00PM	vs.	Shawsheen Valley Vocational Tech
Wednesday 2/16	6:00PM	vs.	Northeast Metro Regional Vocational

### Girls' Ski Team

Thursday 1/6	3:00PM	vs.	OPEN DATE
Tuesday 1/11	3:00PM	vs.	Cohen Hill
Thursday 1/13	3:00PM	vs.	OPEN DATE
Tuesday 1/25	3:00PM	vs.	OPEN DATE
Thursday 1/27	3:00PM	vs.	OPEN DATE
Tuesday 2/1	3:00PM	vs.	OPEN DATE
Monday 2/7	3:00PM	vs.	OPEN DATE
Tuesday 2/15	TBA	vs.	Interscholas- tic Race
Thursday 2/17	TBA	vs.	Bove Race
Thursday 3/17	TBA	vs.	State Ski Race

### Boys' Ski Team

Monday 1/10	3:00PM	vs.	OPEN DATE
Wednesday 1/12	3:00PM	vs.	OPEN DATE
Thursday 1/2	3:00PM	vs.	OPEN DATE
Wednesday 1/26	3:00PM	vs.	OPEN DATE
Monday 1/31	3:00PM	vs.	OPEN DATE
Wednesday 2/2	3:00PM	vs.	OPEN DATE
Tuesday 2/	3:00PM	vs.	OPEN DATE
Tuesday 2/15	TBA	vs.	Interscholas- tic Race
Thursday 2/17	TBA	vs.	Bove Race
Thursday 3/17	TBA	vs.	State Ski Race

# Art teacher is one of 19 artists selected in seARTS show

By Kyle Marsh  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Art teacher Marion Powers was one of 19 artists selected to have a piece of artwork showcased in a show sponsored by the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts (seARTS) at the Cape Ann Medical Center in Gloucester.

The show was established in July, but the open house was held on Nov. 20.

SeARTS is a non-profit organization devoted to "re-establishing Cape Ann as a world-class center for working artists," according to the organization's website.

Powers said her piece will be

up for a year in the existing show, and then the work will be replaced by new artwork.

"It's the start of something new because they will have it annually. SeARTS is trying to connect with multiple businesses, and the med-

ical building was the perfect place to start," she said.

A committee of three jurors chose the 19 pieces of art.

"I called the piece I submitted 'Green Circles;' it was inspired by Malaysia," she said.

The painted piece contains various blues and greens in a somewhat abstract orientation of circles.

"I am currently doing a colorful series right now on circles of paint. To me, the colors represent different countries that I have been to," Powers said.

She said her art has always been inspired by travel; Powers has traveled to Greece, Bosnia, Japan, Ireland and India, among others.

According to Powers, she enjoys creating art outside of school.

"I like having the balance between professional work and teaching. If you want to be a better teacher, you have to keep working at your craft," she said.

Her students admire her ac-

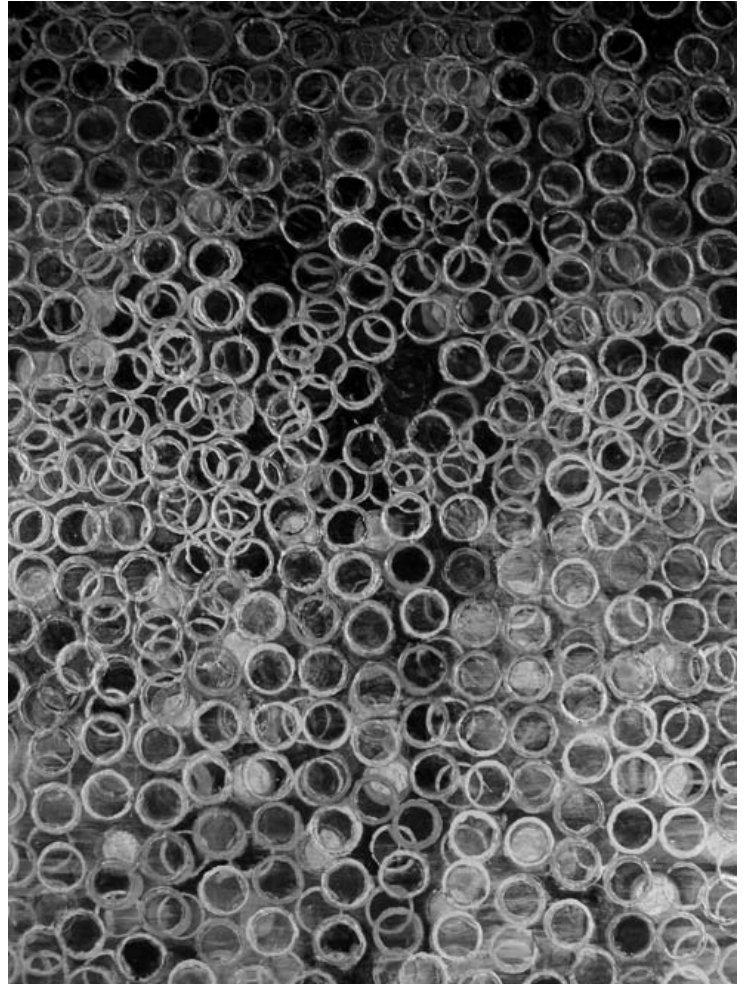
**"I think it's really great that her passion for art extends beyond the classroom; it is really great to see that she is doing free-lance work as well"**  
-OLIVIA RICE.

## FAST FACTS

- Art teacher Marion Powers was one of 19 artists selected to showcase art.
- Her piece is called "Green Circles."
- She painted with different shades of blues and greens.
- It will be on display for one year at the Cape Ann Medical Center in Gloucester.
- Three jurors chose the 19 pieces of art.
- She is working on a colorful series of circles.

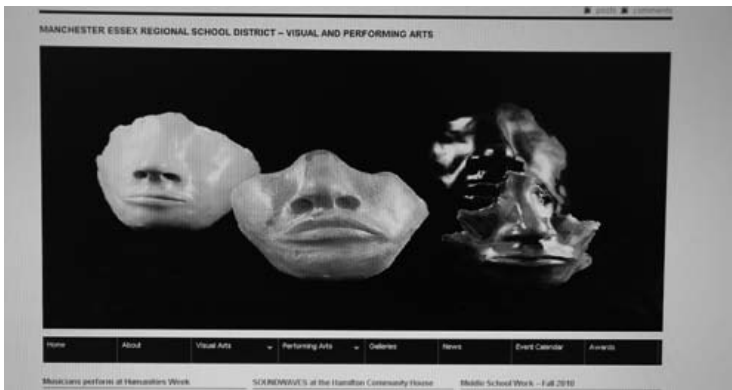
complishments in art outside of school.

"I think it's really great that her passion for art extends beyond the classroom; it is really great to see that she is doing free-lance work as well," senior Olivia Rice said.



MOLLY FRIEDMAN PHOTOS

Art teacher Marion Powers was selected as one of 19 other artists to showcase a piece of artwork in the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts. Her piece, "Green Circles," is painted with blues and greens in abstract circles.



MOLLY FRIEDMAN PHOTO

A new art website showcases student artwork and course descriptions for visual and performing arts classes.

## Art teachers generate visual, performing arts website

By Laurel Edington  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

High school art department members worked to make a new visual and performing arts website that showcases student artwork.

Art teacher Caroline Epp was the main creator of the website, [www.thearts.mersd.org](http://www.thearts.mersd.org).

"I took everything I had and put it all in one place," she said. "It's another place to display student work. It shows the community what is going on. We wanted to be a school in the digital [online] discussion."

She works on the website while other teachers send her information and photographs to include.

The website uses both pictures and documents to explain what is happening in the arts department.

"We're able to highlight and let the community and the people within the school be abreast with

everything that is happening," art teacher Marion Powers said.

Community members are able to learn about the art department through the website.

"It's nice that the site can also let the community see what the school and students are doing in the art department," senior photography student Maggie Cellucci said.

The website also includes the performing arts, such as drama, band, and chorus from all grade levels.

Drama director Gloria Tanner said she hopes "that it creates buzz—that it demystifies what we are doing and inspires more kids to get involved because they can see what we're doing. It gives kids credit for their work."

Not only does it provide examples of artwork, but the website also has information about each class.

Epp said she included course descriptions and curriculum documents on the website.

## Teacher art pages

### Staff art project a hit last year, less popular this year

By Nick Bouwer  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Five years ago, art teacher Marion Powers started a project for her students now known as the "page project."

"A number of years ago Mrs Hunt was in the Library and she was throwing away boxes of books, and I thought it was almost sacrilegious to throw out so many valuable books. So I began to think and of course the light bulb went off in my head to create a project for the students with them," Powers said.

According to Powers, the idea is that students get a page from one of the books and work on a noun, adjective, or adverb in that page and create a piece from it, using the page itself as the background of the piece.

Powers thought of the idea to incorporate teachers into the project last year during Humanities Week, and the "staff art pages project" evolved.

"When we had Humanities Week last year, I was trying to find a way to involve the faculty in some kind of artistic project, especially the ones that say art is so distant from them because I know anyone can do it, but the main reason for it was to bring faculty closer together in this enormous school," Powers said.

27 faculty members participated last year and 17 participated this year.

According to senior portfolio student Caitie Pallin the project



MOLLY FRIEDMAN PHOTO

Teachers used pages in books to create artwork. Art teacher Marion Powers gave a page from a book to each teacher, and they chose a word to design their piece around. The project was incorporated into Humanities Week.

was a success last year but lacked participation this year.

"I thought it was definitely a success last year because teachers put time and effort into it. This year, however, I only saw a few that were very impressive, and a lot that you could tell didn't have any effort put in them at all. Mrs. Tanner's page stood out to me the most because it was really well thought out using the words 'reading by torchlight' and it looked like she worked hard on it," she said.

Senior portfolio student Olivia Rice also said that it was not as much of a success this year.

"I think it was a really good idea Mrs. Powers had to do this, but it was easy to see which teachers put an effort in the project and which decided it wasn't worth trying. I definitely think I saw the

different types of personalities teachers had through their work. Mme Kendrick's page was my favorite because it sent a really good message about the word "listen" and was really creatively made," she said.

Foreign language teacher Stephanie Kendrick participated in the staff art pages project this year and last year.

"I personally think that it is one of the most wonderful ideas to involve the staff in art because students rarely get to see what we can do with our artistic abilities. I think it was not the same appeal as it was to the staff this year as it was last year. This is because December is a very busy time for us, and I myself was late turning in my project and had doubts before that I would be able to turn it in," she said.

# 'Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part One' makes for a spectacular, moving installment of ending

Filled with raw performances, comedic relief, movie leaves audience wanting more

By Maura Driscoll  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

As the first half of the finale in the epic Harry Potter saga, "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part One," directed by David Yates, accomplishes its goal of being a thrilling first installment in a pair of movies already proving to be spectacular representations of the book itself.

Picking up where the last movie, "Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince," left off, "Part One" starts on a high note, as Harry and members of the Order of the Phoenix hilariously take protective measures, by transforming themselves to all look like Harry himself, to safely transport themselves to the Burrow.

But their trip is not burden free, as not too long after they all take flight, Death Eaters are upon

them, with Lord Voldemort (Ralph Fiennes) at the helm.

The harrowing escape is just the beginning of the action-packed adventure that main characters Harry Potter (Daniel Radcliffe), Ron Weasley (Rupert Grint), and Hermione Granger (Emma Watson) go on together in their quest to destroy Lord Voldemort's seven horcruxes.

Perhaps the most important quality of the new film is the improvement of the acting. In the past, characters like Harry Potter were portrayed as silly and unbelievable due to the unfortunate acting from actors like Radcliffe, whose weepy reaction to the news of Sirius Black's escape from Azkaban in the third film was more cringe-worthy than sad.

However, Radcliffe, Grint, and Watson all step up their game individually with the ability to give moving and phenomenal performances as their characters, with ex-

ceptional chemistry.

Finally, a Harry Potter film with emotion and depth has been made. Most apparent in the relationship between the three main characters, in the adorable yet incredibly frustrating sexual tension between Ron and Hermione, and any scene involving Dobby the house elf, "Part One" conveys a poignant sentiment that was previously unattainable in the film series.

Though some could argue that the film drags in some spots, as over 100 minutes of it take place in the wilderness with just Harry, Ron, and Hermione present, the cinematography presented is positively breathtaking and makes for an enchanting plunge into the realm of Harry Potter and his world.

Cliffhanger ending aside, the riveting penultimate to the revered Harry Potter series is one that leaves the viewers satisfied yet craving more.



The first installment of "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows" is a great representation of the book. It's now in theaters.

## Nicki Minaj achieves success as female rapper, releases debut album 'Pink Friday'

By Hannah Daley  
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Since the hip-hop/rap industry is predominantly comprised of males, success is inevitably difficult to attain for females, but phenomenon Nicki Minaj has triumphed with her debut album "Pink Friday," reaching No. 3 for most-downloaded albums on iTunes.

The 25-year-old Trinidadian artist, whose real name is Onika Tanya Maraj, chose "Nicki Minaj" as her stage name when she entered the industry in 2004.

She just released her new album but was already nominated for "Best New Artist" at the 2010

MTV Video Music Awards in September.

Although many of her lyrics are vulgar and aren't meant for young kids to hear, Minaj undeniably conveys amazing musicality, wit, confidence, and range in her new album.

Off of "Pink Friday," songs such as "Right Thru Me," "Roman's Revenge," and "Moment 4 Life" most accurately express these components.

While "Right Thru Me" shows Minaj's vulnerability by rapping about a frustrating relationship in which the other has "the peep hole to [her] soul," and how she is "Tired of letting; Passive aggression; Control [her mind]," Minaj releases her anger in "Roman's Revenge."



JAMIE MCCARTHY/MTV.COM

Female rapper Nicki Minaj has reached No. 3 with her debut album "Pink Friday." It's on sale in stores and on iTunes.

Minaj said in her MTV special "My Time Now" that Roman is the name of a boy inside her who

says what she is too afraid to say. Even though the track contains a lot of cussing, she aggressively

raps with confidence and swagger, proving that "she will remain where the top begins."

Although few females achieve success in the business, Minaj sets herself apart from the small number of thriving women with her enunciation and variety of different voices.

For example, she sings the chorus in "Right Thru Me" and then raps the next verse; she also raps in a softer voice and then with a deeper and more aggressive-sounding one, depending on her attitude toward the lyrics.

If confidence, intriguing lyrics, and range are what you look for in a rapper, download Minaj's debut album for \$11.99 on iTunes or individually download songs for \$1.29 each.

## Nicholas Seafood and Grille mixes traditional cuisine with friendly atmosphere

By Piper Browne  
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Nicholas Seafood and Grille, a new restaurant recently opened in Manchester at 40 Beach Street, has hopes of sticking around longer than previous businesses in the same location.

The restaurant has a tasty mix of seafood and other American cuisine, offering soups, salads, burgers, sandwiches, seafood, and dessert. The wide variety of foods, great atmosphere, and friendly staff all prove to be very promising for the new restaurant.

Nicholas' has moderate prices



Nicholas Seafood and Grille is a restaurant where the staff is mostly family. It's located in Manchester near the train station.

and is able to compete with other restaurants in town such as The Landing and Cala's. One can get a soup or a salad for \$5 to \$8 and a burger, sandwich, or other entrée for under \$20.

The swordfish entrée was fla-

vorful and crisp while the delicious key lime pie was tangy and light. The clam chowder was a perfect blend of clams and potatoes, and the haddock special was unique with tomato and basil surrounding it.

The restaurant has a commodious location near the train, harbor, beach, and shopping area and should attract many tourists in the summer with outside seating. It has ample parking, including handicap parking spaces, and is wheelchair accessible.

Nicholas Seafood and Grille offers a warm and inviting atmosphere with a Christmas tree up for the holidays, lights surrounding the room, and comfortable table and chairs. It's perfect for families because of the wide variety of foods and the additional kids menu. The bar and restaurant are separated enough so neither are intrusive of the other, but both are easily accessible.

Although not technically family-owned, the staff are mostly

family. Marcia O'Brian owns the restaurant. Her brother-in-law brings the fresh lobsters, and her nephew supplies the fresh clams. Both of her sisters work there too, and the new head chef, Manny Marques, is O'Brian's cousin.

Prior to working at Nicholas', Marques spent 15 years working for the popular restaurant The Gull in Gloucester. He then spent five years at the Gloucester House and eight to nine years at Woodman's, according to O'Brian.

While The Landing and Cala's have recently been taken over by their bars, Nicholas' still remains a family restaurant, enticing for all ages. One can enjoy a quality and well-priced meal while being entertained by their full bar and wonderful staff.