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Perfect Season:

Football wins 36-6 in Div. IV Super Bowl; finishes regular season with 12-0 record

By **Hannah Dumont**
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

For the first time since 1999, the varsity football team won the Division IV state championship, defeating Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical School 36-6 at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough. The team finished with a record of 13-0, a first in the history of the team.

According to junior running back and kicker Brian Ciccone, the team "bonded" at Hometown Buffet the night before and spent the night at The Comfort Inn in Foxborough.

"The whole experience was unbelievable," senior captain and quarterback Pat Orlando said.

In the morning, the team woke up and headed to the stadium for a 9 a.m. kickoff.

"From the beginning to the end, we just clicked," Orlando said.

According to Ciccone, their goal from the beginning of the season was to win the Super Bowl.

"Our only real strategy was to win, and we did just that," junior fullback Jack Bishop said.

"We capitalized on all opportunities and the line blocked really well," Ciccone said.

Head coach Michael Athanas

said their strategy was to just keep doing what they've been doing all season: keep executing on offense and keep playing strong, hard defense.

Athanas and many of the players were in awe of the grandness of Gillette Stadium.

"Walking into Gillette Stadium was a great feeling for everyone. Coming from the Patriot's tunnel onto the field was amazing and it was the result of a lot of hard work. It was fun for everyone involved: coaches, players, and fans," Athanas said.

"Walking onto the field was the coolest thing in the world. It was indescribable, surreal, really," Bishop said.

Ciccone said it was a thrilling experience and he hopes the team can make it to the Super Bowl again next year although the team is losing five seniors.

"It is sad losing the seniors, and we are going to really miss them," he said. "I am confident though that we will continue to have success because we will have 25 seniors next year."

Athanas said the junior class has a lot of experience and talent so he is certain they will make up for what the team lost in the seniors.

Junior Drew Burnham agreed and said although they are losing a

FOOTBALL, page 10



At Gillette Stadium, the football team won the Div. IV state championship for the first time since 1999. The team's 13-0 season record was the first in the history of the program. Coach Michael Athanas said the team will continue to be successful next year due to talent in younger grades.

MOLLY FRIEDMAN PHOTOS

DECA's Winter Formal impresses students

By **Kyle Marsh**
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

DJ Max Baun helped to light-up DECA's "club themed" semi-formal, which was held on Dec. 13 from 8-10:30 p.m..

One hundred and seventy-two students attended the dance at Woodman's Function Hall in Essex.

"I thought that the DECA officers did a great job putting it together, and I was really happy to see the amount of people who came and that had fun," junior Kara Thomas said.



PHOTO COURTESY OF EMILY PERRIGO

DECA raised \$2,580 through their club themed dance on Dec. 13.

DECA officers sold tickets at lunch and after school for \$15 each. Students could also purchase tickets at the door for \$20.

In total, DECA raised \$2,580, according to teacher Dean Martino.

"I think that it was a good fundraiser. We made a lot of money because a lot of people showed up," junior Katie Gavin

said.

"Max Baun did a great job as DJ selecting the music," junior Alexis Martinetti said.

"I thought Max Baun did a really good job with the music and he got the crowd really pumped up and into the music," senior Annie Osborne said.

Baun, who graduated from

DANCE, page 2

World AIDS Day reminds students of epidemic

By **Bobina Vander Laan**
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

World AIDS Day, recognized by Student Council on Dec. 1, brought awareness to the students and the world on the HIV/AIDS pandemic. This day, officially distinguished in 1995 in the U.S., is used to hold memorials for those who have suffered from the disease and to inform others on the situation.

AIDS, or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, is a full blown case of HIV, or Human Immunodeficiency Virus. According to AIDS.gov, the virus attacks the immune system, destroying white blood cells called T cells. HIV is

transmitted through contact of bodily fluids, such as sharing needles, blood transfusions, having sex and through a mother during pregnancy, birth or breast feeding. The cure for this epidemic has yet to be found.

According to the organization UNAIDS, in 2007 over 2.7 million new people were diagnosed with HIV. The number of HIV-related deaths last year was 2 million, but statistics show that the global percentage of adults living with the disease leveled off in 2000.

Student Council members Jasmine Bailey and Eliza Cody, juniors, delivered a brief address over the intercom the morning of World AIDS Day to inform

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BRIEFS

Junior class to hold rummage sale in early February

In order to raise money, the junior class will hold a rummage sale in early February. All juniors are required to donate five items and help at the sale. Originally, the juniors were going to hold the sale on Dec. 13, but parents said they would be overwhelmed with the holiday season and people might not be able to afford to purchase items at the rummage sale.

Debate: Students compete at Hendrick Hudson and Glenbrooks

Freshman Margaret Henry broke to the octafinal rounds at the Malcolm A. Bump Memorial Tournament at Hendrick Hudson High School in Montrose, N.Y. The tournament ran from Nov. 14-15, and 24 students competed in Public Forum and Lincoln-Douglas. Bus driver Thomas Andrews provided transportation. Coach Jonathan Peele and parent Rachel Pohl chaperoned.

Eight students competed at the Glenbrooks debate tournament in Chicago, Ill., from Nov. 21-24. The competitors included seniors Luke and Max Elder and Jake McIntosh and juniors Jack Kelly, Matt Hoyle, Caleb Pearce, Eliza Cody and Jasmine Bailey. In Public Forum, Luke and Max Elder had a record of 4-2, broke to double octafinals and won, but lost in octafinals. Jake McIntosh and Caleb Pearce also broke to double octafinals with a record of 4-2, but lost. Students also competed in Lincoln-Douglas. Coach Jonathan Peele chaperoned the trip.

MERHS appears on list of America's best high schools

U.S. News & World Report has released its second annual list of America's best high schools.

The list recognizes three classes of school: gold, silver and bronze. MERHS won a silver medal based on "standardized test performance, proficiency rates of all students... [and] a challenging, college-ready curriculum," according to a letter from the magazine to Principal James Lee.

Osborne presents on levels of government

By Annelise Eaton
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

To supplement government class studies, David Osborne, who has worked with politicians including Al Gore and Bill Clinton and has written five books pertaining to government, spoke to classes on Monday, Dec. 8.

Osborne is the father of senior Annie Osborne and 2008 graduate Molly Osborne. He is currently a senior partner of a consulting firm that helps public organizations improve their performance.

Government teacher Dan Jewett said he asked Osborne to speak to classes about the role of local and state government and his experiences working with the government and possible

career options with the government. Osborne told students that 16 percent of all jobs in this country are in the public sector.

"The AP class is hyper focused on the federal government so he offered a different perspective on the roles of local and state government," Jewett said.

Osborne had student list the 10 most important roles of government and discuss whether local, state or federal governments were responsible for them.

"It showed them that all three levels are almost equally important," Osborne said. "My sense was that that surprised them."

Although he was intrigued by the topic of state and local governments,

senior Luke Elder said the portion of Osborne's presentation on career options in government was

'I think his presentation gave students more of an insight into career choices in politics besides just a politician.'
-LUKE ELDER



DJ BALL PHOTO

Government expert David Osborne presented to govt. classes on Monday, Dec. 8.

particularly interesting.

"I think that his presentation gave students more of an insight into career choices in politics besides just a politician," he said.

Jewett said the topics of Osborne's presentation related well to what students are learning in class.

"What he spoke about either directly related to what we've already covered or set up perfectly what we are about to cover," he said.

Osborne devoted about half the presentation to answering the students' questions.

"Some asked about his opinion

on the current political landscape, some asked about his career choices, and some asked about working with Gore and Clinton," Jewett said. "They all wanted to hear about his work in foreign countries including Japan, Malaysia, and Colombia."

Jewett said the presentation was very informative to his students and hopes that Osborne will present again in future years.

"I think the students were really impressed with [Osborne], his expertise, and what he had to say," Jewett said. "We are fortunate to have him in the community and willing to share his expertise."

FAST FACTS

- Osborne has worked with Al Gore and Bill Clinton.
- Osborne has written five books about government.
- On Dec. 8, he spoke to government classes about the role of local and state governments.

New music teacher creates 'MERSD A Cappella Singers'

By Nick Bouwer
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

New music teacher Donna O'Neill has formed an a cappella group which has already started performing. A cappella singing uses nothing but sounds from the human voice to create a song.

The group titled "The MERSD A Cappella Singers," performed their first concert at the tree lighting on Dec. 7 and sung in the winter concert on Dec. 9.

O'Neill decided to form an a cappella group because she has done so at every school she has taught in. According to her the group will be a success.

"I've done a cappella at every school I have taught in and I just love it. It will be a challenge, but I think if this group of kids stick together they will be very successful. There is a lot of talent here," she said.

Twelve people are currently in the group and more may join, but O'Neill will wait until after the winter concert to possibly allow another two or three people in.



COURTESY CAROLINE EPP

Music teacher Donna O'Neill formed a new a cappella group that performed for the first time at the town tree lighting ceremony on Dec. 7. Back row: Allie Freed, Tavia Pomazon, Jasmine Bailey, Caroline Wood, Katerina Eichenberger. Front row: Connor Hoff, Tyler Helton, Piper Browne, Abby Burke. Not present: D.J. Ball, Ashley Shotwell, and Holly Ream.

According to O'Neill one who wants to perform in the group is required to be in the high school chorus and obviously have talent in their voice.

"Twelve is a really good number for an a cappella group because you don't want too many or it will be too confusing and too complex to work," she said.

The singers will sing many dif-

ferent kinds of songs. "We'll be performing a wide variety of songs. We'll do some pop stuff, some patriotic stuff, some serious things, etc," O'Neill said.

"Right now we are working on 'Silent Night' in German and the theme song to Winnie the Poo, 'Poo's Corner,'" a cappella member junior Tavia Pomazon said.

The group will not have a lead

singer. "All students will perform solos at one point or the other, but for now we have one piece where Piper Brown will be doing a duet with Abby Burke and another where Piper will be doing a solo in the German version of 'silent night,'" O'Neill said.

"A lot of people stick to soprano, alto, tenor, base, but we do have to mix it up a little sometimes and we will all get a chance to sing a solo," Pomazon said.

According to O'Neill, the group is a big dedication and is not for the uncommitted. "The group is mainly for the purpose of having fun, but one must be there because they love to sing and have a willingness to practice a lot," she said.

FAST FACTS

- O'Neill has started an a cappella group at every school where she's worked.
- A cappella uses only human voices to create songs.
- The group has 12 members.

Continuations**DANCE Continued from page 1**

Manchester in 2007, played a variety of music.

According to sophomore Sarah Brown, the DECA officers supplied students with a variety of options - from the music to the food, including cookies and cake.

Some students complained the dance lacked an adequate amount of drinks. About halfway through the dance, students drank all the

Coke and water.

"They should have supplied us with more water, but everyone had fun," Martinetti said.

Students also complained that the room was too hot. "There needed to be a fan in the room," junior Ben Kekeisen said.

Overall, students had a great time. "I thought it was a really fun, good dance. It was a good introduction to Manchester," new sophomore Alyssa Fabyan said.

Sophomore Cameron Dandrea, think that dances should be held

more frequently.

According to Brown, the semi-formal this year out-shined last year's dance, held by the class of 2008. "I think this semi was more fun than last year," Brown said.

"[Baun] brought a lot of energy to the dance and it was just an awesome time," senior Jen Bishop said.

WORLD AIDS DAY Continued from page 1

students and teachers on the importance of World AIDS Day. Stu-

dent Council members from each grade distributed red ribbons to students throughout the day.

Bailey said raising awareness is important because AIDS affects a lot of people around the world. "It's an epidemic that spans continents and cultures. It doesn't matter about race, gender, location; it affects everyone," she said.

Cody said the announcement helped educate students.

"Students are informed and can step out to help the AIDS campaign," she said.



LAUREL EDINGTON PHOTO

Sophomores Phoebe Thorne and Caroline Kiley help organize and price toys at the Wellspring House in Gloucester. Needy families can purchase the toys that local families donated.

Sophomore class organizes toys at Wellspring House in Gloucester

By Laurel Edington
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Sophomore class members helped the annual Wellspring holiday store by pricing and organizing donated toys that were then purchased as gifts by needy families who would otherwise go without this holiday season.

The Wellspring House is a non-profit organization that provides programs to hundreds of needy families in the Boston area.

According to sophomore class officer Caroline Kiley, who got the sophomores involved, "this event is meant to give people with little money the opportunity to buy gifts and help to give them a sense of worth."

Each gift was labeled by price, category of toy, gender, and age group to make it seem like the shoppers were shopping in an actual store, sophomore Phoebe

Thorne said.

Sophomore Jessy Appelftoft said the volunteers wanted to make the store look like a "Toys R Us" store.

Kiley said Cape Ann families bought all the toys and donated them to the Wellspring House.

The Wellspring House sells toys on a first come, first serve basis to anybody who comes. Some tables have a limit on how many items from that table each person can buy. For example, each person can only purchase one electronic device.

When the store was open, volunteers took customers around and helped them pick out gifts, acting as personal shoppers, Kiley said.

The women who work at the Wellspring House and Susan Kiley, Caroline Kiley's mother and a volunteer at the organization, said the sophomores were committed and hard workers and that they appreciated their help.

Spirit Week

Student Council plans second annual event

By Skylar Coons
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Students will be participating in Spirit Week starting Jan. 27. Student Council sponsors the four days of spirit beginning on the Tuesday after the Mid-Year Exams.

Spirit Week will consist of each class dressing up according to the day's theme. The first day of Spirit Week is called "School Spirit Day" where each student is expected to wear green and white (school colors) and Hornets paraphernalia.

The next day is "Boston Teams Day," during which students will wear jerseys of their favorite Boston sports team such as the Patriots, Celtics, Red Sox, or Bruins. Local teams are allowed too.

"I like 'Boston Teams Day.' I'm going to wear a Celtics jersey," sophomore Adam Jackson said.

"Dress to Impress Day" is designed for students to look their best while wearing dressy attire.

On the last day, superhero costumes will fly through the hallways for "Superhero Day."

"I think everyone should wear capes. I'm excited because everyone always dresses really boring," freshman Aryanna Tiberii said.

During Spirit Week, the classes compete to win money to go towards their Senior Week. The Stu-



DJ BALL PHOTOS

During last year's Spirit Week, then-juniors in the AP Spanish Language class dressed in all black and senior Molly Foye dressed in rainbow colors for class color day (above).

During last year's Spirit Week, then-juniors Caroline Martin, Annie Osborne, Jake McIntosh and Lee Stroman dressed up as hippies for their class theme day (left).

dent Council awards \$100 to the class that shows the most spirit.

Physical education teacher M'Lena Gandolfi, administrative assistant Mary Lumsden, and Learning Center teacher Dominic Priolo will complete daily ballots during Spirit Week. These ballots will keep track of the class

with the most spirit.

They will recognize the winning class during the afternoon announcements on the last day of Spirit Week.

'I like "Boston Teams Day." I'm going to wear a Celtics Jersey.'

-ADAM JACKSON

FAST FACTS

- Spirit Week lasts four days from Jan. 27 to Jan. 30.
- Student Council sponsors Spirit Week and awards the winning class \$100.
- Each day has a different theme:
 - School Spirit Day
 - Boston Teams Day
 - Dress to Impress Day
 - Superhero Day.

Accreditation: Faculty completes leadership, mission, assessment and school resources reports

By Stephanie Smith
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Faculty completed and voted on four of the seven standards committee reports for the accreditation process on Wed., Dec. 17 instead of by the end of January, when faculty will vote to pass or reject the reports, according to Principal James Lee.

According to accreditation co-chair and English department head Dr. John Stuart, Lee moved ahead the deadline on some reports upon learning that they were close to completion.

On Dec. 17, faculty voted on the four complete reports: the leadership report, the mission report, the assessment report and the school resources report.

Lee said the three remaining reports will be completed and approved by the end of January.

"We've set somewhat arbitrary deadlines for ourselves in the hope of trying to have enough time to get ready to move to the new building," he said.

Leadership Report

According to Sharon Maguire, director of guidance, this report deals with "the way in which a school organizes learning for students, fosters leadership and engages its members, the professional culture of the school and decision making, policy and practices."

"Ours is really black and white. In leadership and organization, there's not a lot of gray area," she added.

Assessment Report

This report discusses the various methods the school uses to assess its students, according to English teacher Debra Isensee.

"It talks about the different kinds of assessment we use at Manchester and the ways in which the school assesses academic, social, and civic expectations of students," she said.

Mission Report

English teacher Dan Koughan said the report relates to the school mission statement, which "is the leaping off point for everything else we do as a school."

He said the report "discusses how the school mission statement was created, how it is implemented and reflected in the culture of the school and how we plan to address it in the future, revise it if need be."

School Resources Report

This report shows "how support services such as the library, the SPED program, health services and guidance support learning," science department head Erica Everett said.

"The job of this committee is to see how those entities help us achieve our aim of educating students," she added.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTOS

Spanish teacher Eric Magers and debate coach Jonathan Peele work on the Curriculum Committee report, which is due in January.

Special education teachers Lois Grayden and Patricia Wheeler work on the School Resources Committee report, which was due Wednesday (left).



AirCar hits market in 2009

By Brittany Edwards
INDEPENDENT STAFF



THE RAMBLING ROUNTREES/Flickr.COM PHOTO

The new AirCar, which is estimated to cost \$17,800 for a six-seater vehicle, includes Compressed Air Engine technology which emits .141 pounds of carbon dioxide per mile when driving above 35 mph. The cars are expected to be on the road in 2009.

In order to reduce car emissions, Zero Pollution Motors is finalizing the production of their AirCar line. These cars include Compressed Air Engine technology developed by French Formula One race car engineer Guy Negre.

The concept was originally meant to help polluted urban areas which suffer from large quantities of smog. These aerodynamic cars are made of fiberglass, which is easy to replace and repair, and injected foam. The range of speed is very small; it can only go up to 40 mph and drive for 130 miles between charges.

At speeds below 35 mph, cold air is placed at high pressure, heated, and put into the 75 horsepower engine. The air is run through a filter, which guarantees that no pollution is emitted and that the engine will not be harmed by environmental variables such as humidity and dust.

When driving over 35 mph, the engine uses small amounts of fuel and emits 0.141 pounds of carbon dioxide per mile. That is less than half the emission rate of the leading hybrid, the Toyota Prius,

which emits 0.34 pounds of carbon dioxide per mile.

Zero Pollution Motors states on their website that the AirCars are tested to the safety requirements of the United States. If heavily impacted, the tanks will crack and release the air, preventing explosions. Also, the tubular structure of the car resists impact in crashes. It will adhere to approval regulations of all other cars in the United States.

The estimated price of a six-seater vehicle is \$17,800. Not only is the car less expensive, but it will

also cost exponentially less than high fuel consumption cars in gas costs.

Negre sold the license rights to Japan's Tata Motors, and the cars are expected to be on the road in 2009. On their website, Zero Pollution Motors stated their mission for the future as, "To bring zero pollution motoring at any speed, for any distance, to the largest number of motorists possible and, in doing so, significantly improve the quality of the air we breathe and reduce our collective carbon footprint."

Stuart visits San Antonio for English teachers' convention

By Stephanie Smith
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

For the 14th time in 21 years, English department chair Dr. John Stuart has attended the national convention hosted by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE); he has also attended their spring conference twice.

Each year, NCTE hosts the convention in a different city; they hosted this year's convention, which Stuart attended on Nov. 20-24, in San Antonio, Texas.

Stuart had never been to San Antonio before this year's convention.

"It's a corollary advantage [of going to the convention] to get to see all these places I never would have seen otherwise," he said. "I thought [San Antonio] was charming."

In addition to changing location yearly, the convention has a different theme every year. This year the theme was "Shift Happens," Stuart said. He said the conference's many workshops focused on "trying to bring about change by having us recognize problems."

According to Stuart, one problem the convention addressed is the role of standardized tests in the public education system.

"A number of districts in the country are really upset at the way standardized tests scores are being



DJ BALL PHOTO

English teacher Dr. Stuart attended the national convention hosted by the National Council of Teachers of English for the 14th time in 21 years on Nov. 20-24 in Texas. This year, the theme of the convention was "Shift Happens."

used," he said.

"In Wyoming, there are schools where teachers are forbidden to teach novels and a number of books they purchased were locked up... because the school district has bought into McDougall-Littell's anthology and the script that teachers are to use when teaching that anthology," Stuart added.

According to Stuart, this is a national issue; in Springfield, Mass., he said the side bargaining for teachers in a contract negotiation gave up the teachers' right to do their own lesson plans in favor of a similar script system.

Stuart is glad this issue has not reached our district. "We don't ever want to get to the point where I can't choose to do the novels of Henry James because they're no

'We don't ever want to get to the point where I can't choose to do novels of Henry James because they are not part of somebody's script.'

-JOHN STUART

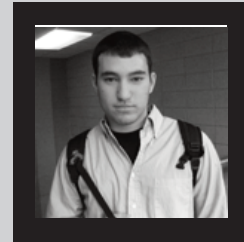
parts of somebody's script," he said.

He also attended a workshop about standardized tests called "The Lunacy of No Child Left Behind." Stuart said the federal program "essentially makes standardized tests the way to evaluate people and schools... but literacy is not measured by standardized tests."

Not all of the convention was as serious. Stuart said one highlight was a workshop about author Virginia Wolfe.

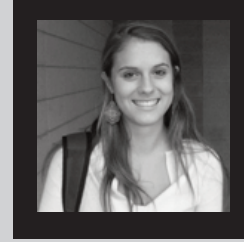
"I'm so glad I went because I think she's a really important author," he said.

Overall, Stuart enjoyed the convention and plans on attending next year's convention in Philadelphia as a retiree, he said.



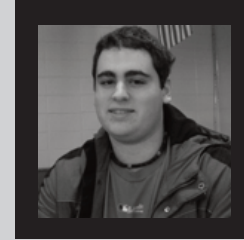
Senior
Phil Gordon:

Going to the movies and eating Chinese Food.



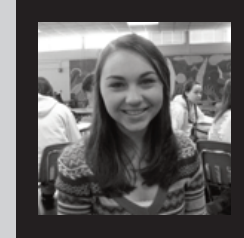
Senior
Annie Osborne:

Skiing at Sunday River.



Junior
Tim Surette:

Snowboarding.



Junior
Tavia Pomazon:

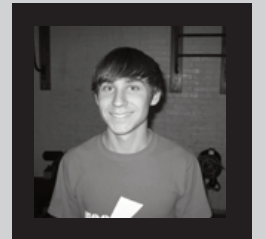
Ice skating every day with Eliza Cody.



What are your holiday plans?

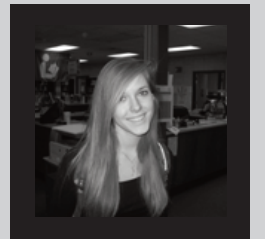
Sophomore
Ben Girard:

Going to Michigan and seeing family.



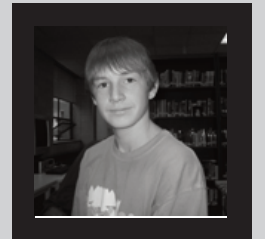
Sophomore
Caroline Kiley:

Going skiing in New Hampshire and spending time with my family.



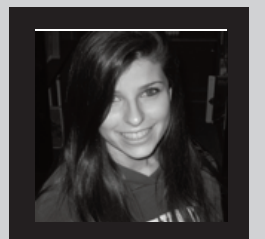
Freshman
Emmett Snyder:

Going to Ohio and visiting family.



Freshman
Gina Caponigro:

Going to California.



Health Matters



During holidays, vegetarians should avoid faux turkey, stick to side dishes

By Sophie Hagberg
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

While several vegetarian alternatives to the normal Thanksgiving turkey dinner are available, the substitutes are often distasteful or bland.

Tofurkey: This is probably the most well known of all the faux-turkey brands.

It consists of a hunk of dough shaped like a cylinder about six inches long, coupled with a container of "giblet and mushroom" gravy.

The dough is filled with a brown rice stuffing. Even when fully cooked, the tofu and wheat gluten dough-cylinder still looks pretty unappetizing.

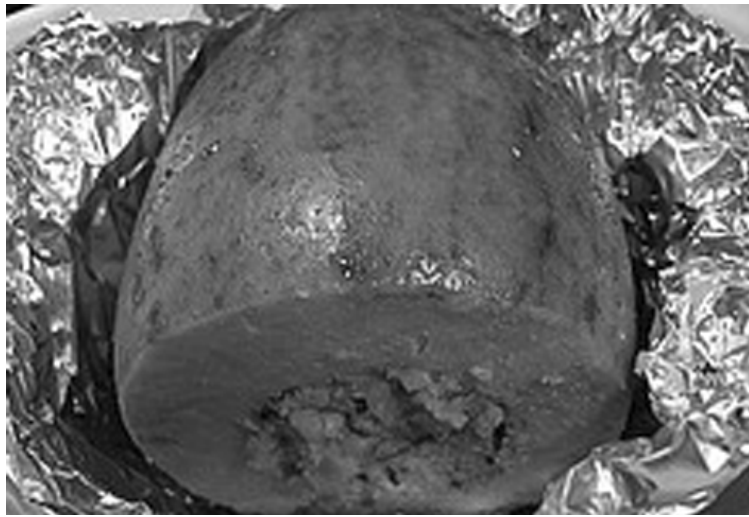
The gravy both looks and tastes pretty awful, so if you plan on eating this, it's probably better just to leave that part out.

The roast itself is kind of similar to actual turkey, but has a tough skin on the outside and a bizarrely chewy texture. In addition, it creates a strange peppery flavor that leaves a weird after-taste.

The stuffing inside the loaf is flavorful and tastes like well-seasoned rice and vegetables.

Price: \$12.99 for one roast (serves 6)

Celebration Roast/Field Roast: The structure of a Celebration roast is similar to the Tofurkey roast, except the



BUBBLETEA1/FLICKR.COM

The tofu and wheat gluten Tofurkey roast is filled with a brown rice stuffing and comes with a giblet and mushroom gravy that is unappetizing.

manufacturers took the time to make a sort of criss-crossing pattern across the outside, so that the roast sort of resembles a ham.

On the inside, a center of butternut squash, apples, and mushrooms definitely disappoints. When the roast was cooking, the inside became sodden and mushy and extremely unappetizing.

The surrounding doughy faux-meat was far superior to Tofurkey in its texture: just chewy enough, without being too soft or too sponge-like.

It was, however, slightly over-seasoned: the garlic and onion flavor was a little too strong.

Price: \$8.99 for one roast (serves 6)

Overall, faux-turkey dinners

tend to be rather unappetizing.

My recommendation for the vegetarian during the holiday season: stick to the side dishes, and pick up a sandwich on the way home.

FAST FACTS

• **Tofurkey: Wheat gluten and tofu roast with rice stuffing. Serves 6. \$12.99**

• **Celebration Roast: Doughy, faux meat filled with butternut squash, apples, and mushroom. Serves 6. \$8.99**

Student

Profile
Holly Ream



COURTESY HOLLY REAM

By Annelise Eaton
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

If money weren't a factor, what job would you pursue?
I'd be an interior designer because I love to decorate.

Who is the best looking onscreen couple?
Blair and Chuck from "Gossip Girl"

What is your favorite pair of shoes?
My pink ballet flats, but they've fallen apart.

If you could be professional in any sport, what would it be?
Skiing

What is the riskiest thing you've ever done?
CITYterm because I was away from school for four months.

What is the best Halloween costume you've ever had?
I was Tinkerbell when I was like 5.

If you could be from any US city, where would you be from?
New York City

Describe your dream meal.
I love fettuccini alfredo with broccoli and chicken. For dessert I would have apple pie with vanilla ice cream.

If you could switch lives with anybody in the world for one week, who would you choose?
Leighton Meester from "Gossip Girl."

What is your all time favorite movie?
I love "Lady and the Tramp."

What is your cell phone ring tone?
I have a bad phone that doesn't give ring tones, so it just vibrates. If it could ring it would be "Break the Ice" by Britney Spears.

Is Britney really back?
Umm yeah...obvi.

Hidden fees narrow price gap between public, private universities

Public schools still less expensive

By Annelise Eaton
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Sample Tuition of Local Colleges

University of Massachusetts Amherst: \$18,346

Endicott College: \$24,530

Gordon College: \$27,294

Harvard University: \$36,173

Massachusetts Institute of Technology: \$36,390

Boston University: \$37,050

Boston College: \$37,950

Tufts University: \$38,840

According to USnews.com

According to boston.com, applications to public universities are expected to "increase dramatically" this year as a result of the tumultuous economy.

In 2008, the average price of college increased by 6 percent. Although public universities are still the more affordable option, tacking on hidden expenses has allowed them to increase their prices.

Public universities collect numerous fees in order to prevent their money from being absorbed into the state budget, Time Magazine said. The money that universities collect through tuition is considered state money.

Tuition at the University of Massachusetts Amherst has remained the same since 1999, but fees now total about four times the cost of tuition.

Each semester, in-state students pay \$857 in tuition, \$327 for a basic health fee, \$3,209 for a curriculum fee, \$675 for the service fee and \$47 for the activities fee.

Other fees that the university implemented in the past include the \$185 freshman entering fee, the \$175 freshman counseling fee and the \$102 telecommunications fee, according to Time.

Although fees may be heavy at public universities, total costs at these schools are far lower than at private universi-

ties.

This year, the average total cost at a Massachusetts private college will be \$32,592, making Massachusetts private higher education the most expensive in the country, boston.com said.

Colleges such as Boston College, which costs \$49,020, and Boston University, which costs \$51,100, skew the average price. The average student receives \$10,200 in grants and tax breaks, which lessens the financial burden.

Collegeboard.com urges students to view the cost of college as an investment in their future. Although the recent credit crisis has made it more difficult for students to get loans, private universities and the government are working to make money available to college students.

The Department of Education will administer almost \$95 billion in new grants, loans and work-study assistance in 2009.

At the same time universities have developed new financial aid programs to support their students.

Many schools, including most of the Ivy League, meet the full demonstrated need of their accepted students. The University of Pennsylvania, for example, has eliminated loans for students whose families make less than \$100,000 each year and who qualify for financial aid. Students at these schools who are receiving financial aid cannot graduate with debt.

According to the Collegeboard website, "more than \$143 billion in financial aid is available to students and their families."

Public universities collect numerous fees in order to prevent their money from being absorbed into the state budget.

Holiday fun: Take advantage of local events

Local opportunities to enjoy the holiday season are often overlooked. Don't feel obliged to travel to get the most pleasure out of the holiday season. Boston, only a 40-minute train ride away, offers multiple opportunities to participate in holiday events. Getting into the holiday spirit can even start from one's own home. When looking for something fun to do to enjoy the holiday season, make sure to consider these ideas.



WWW.WIKIPEDIA.ORG

- Have a holiday movie marathon with all your friends. Rent or borrow some holiday classics such as "Home Alone," "It's a Wonderful Life," "Miracle on 34th Street," or "A Christmas Carol." Make some hot chocolate and popcorn and you have yourself a festive and inexpensive holiday get together.



WWW.WIKIPEDIA.ORG

- Take the train to Boston and enjoy ice skating on Boston Common's Frog Pond. Open skate is from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays and 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. Admission is \$4 per person, but children 13 and under are free. Skate rentals cost \$8 and lockers are \$1.



WWW.WIKIPEDIA.ORG

- Go to the Chanukah Celebration at Emmanuel Church at 15 Newbury Street in Boston on Dec. 21 at 5 p.m. The event is set up by the Boston Jewish Spirit and features the Festival of Lights with menorah lighting, singing and reflections.



WWW.FLICKR.COM

- Experience the Bells Of Boston at Faneuil Hall Marketplace. Every Saturday beginning Nov. 29 thru Dec. 20, enjoy holiday music at 12 p.m. and 2 p.m. at the performance area located inside of the Quincy Market Building in the Upper Rotunda. The performance is free of charge.



WWW.WIKIPEDIA.ORG

- Have a cookie exchange. Each friend can make a different type of cookie and get together to trade them. Make sure to bring extras so each person can sample the other cookies.

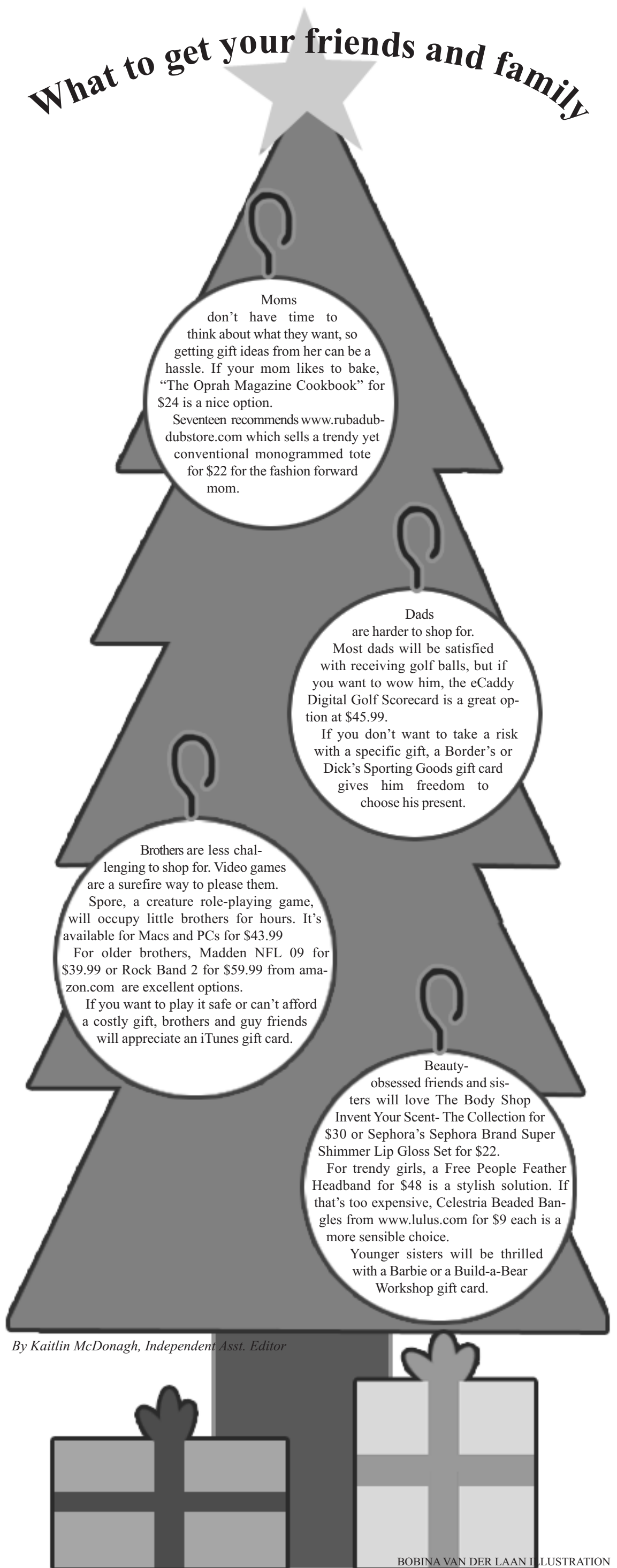


WWW.FOODPANTRY.ORG

- Volunteer at a soup kitchen. There is no better way to get into the holiday spirit than to help those who are less fortunate. The Cape Ann Food Pantry provides several opportunities to serve. Possibilities include distributing food at the Food Pantry Monday through Friday, with a variety of hours available, or serving meals at the Open Door program Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. If you are interested in volunteering, call at 978-283-6776 or e-mail info@foodpantry.org to schedule a time and date.

By Hannah Dumont, Independent Editor

What to get your friends and family



Moms
don't have time to think about what they want, so getting gift ideas from her can be a hassle. If your mom likes to bake, "The Oprah Magazine Cookbook" for \$24 is a nice option.

Seventeen recommends www.rubadubdubstore.com which sells a trendy yet conventional monogrammed tote for \$22 for the fashion forward mom.

Dads
are harder to shop for. Most dads will be satisfied with receiving golf balls, but if you want to wow him, the eCaddy Digital Golf Scorecard is a great option at \$45.99.

If you don't want to take a risk with a specific gift, a Border's or Dick's Sporting Goods gift card gives him freedom to choose his present.

Brothers are less challenging to shop for. Video games are a surefire way to please them. Spore, a creature role-playing game, will occupy little brothers for hours. It's available for Macs and PCs for \$43.99

For older brothers, Madden NFL 09 for \$39.99 or Rock Band 2 for \$59.99 from amazon.com are excellent options.

If you want to play it safe or can't afford a costly gift, brothers and guy friends will appreciate an iTunes gift card.

Beauty-obsessed friends and sisters will love The Body Shop Invent Your Scent- The Collection for \$30 or Sephora's Sephora Brand Super Shimmer Lip Gloss Set for \$22.

For trendy girls, a Free People Feather Headband for \$48 is a stylish solution. If that's too expensive, Celestria Beaded Bangles from www.lulus.com for \$9 each is a more sensible choice.

Younger sisters will be thrilled with a Barbie or a Build-a-Bear Workshop gift card.

By Kaitlin McDonagh, Independent Asst. Editor

BOBINA VAN DER LAAN ILLUSTRATION

New Year's Resolutions

Do resolutions effectively produce change?

Pro

Rebecca Lynch

New Year's Eve is a holiday full of tradition, a time for reflection on the past year and plans for the next. Resolutions are the foundation for success in the coming year.

While partying with friends and family and watching the ball drop in Times Square, everybody decides how to improve their lives in the near future.

A resolution is a personal decision to accomplish a goal. To not follow through on a goal is easy, so should we still make a resolution in the first place? Absolutely.

A goal sets the guide for accomplishing an objective. Without a starting point, there is no end result. A structured plan provides organization and motivation to help achieve the goal.

Setting a New Year's resolution requires thought and provides insight into what should be improved. A resolution can be anything, tailored to specific wants and needs. Typical goals include weight loss, improved grades, increased volunteer time, enhanced optimism, improved performance in athletics, etc.

New Year's Eve is the perfect time to create a resolution. The upcoming year is a clean slate. You have a whole year to achieve your goal, allowing time for both long and short-term resolutions.

The point in making a resolution is not to set yourself up for failure, but to attempt to improve something in your life. Disastrous resolutions aren't an excuse to never make one again, but a chance to analyze what went wrong.

Many resolutions are enthusiastically made but then fade as the year progresses. The failure is usually due to setting a goal that is too difficult or having high expectations.

Setting a reasonable goal that can be accomplished is the key to following through on the resolution. Creating a specific goal and planning it out will enhance your ability to succeed. Also, confiding in family members and friends will provide support.

Determination also plays a part in having a successful resolution. By setting a personal goal and sticking with it, you learn about yourself and your abilities.

People don't bother to set resolutions because they are sure it will fail. They're missing a chance to improve their lives.

No one should discourage others from change. Why does it matter if you can't follow through with your resolution? By making it, you are only setting yourself up for success. If you succeed, pat yourself on the back.

If you don't, learn from your mistakes and carry that knowledge to future resolutions.

Con

Bobina Vander Laan

The start of another year represents a fresh start and resolutions for the coming year. Although the New Year encourages looking at life in a new light, making resolutions forces one to look back on past grievances and attempt to correct them, however futile these attempts may be.

Rarely are these goals followed through throughout the year. The failure rate is high; just ask any student or family member. Do you even remember last year's resolution?

Whether the New Year's resolution be to lose weight, get all A's, or even get a boyfriend, the promise is most likely hard to accomplish in a year. Those who do complete their resolutions do not do so because of the New Year; they do it for self-gratification. A resolution can be made at any time of the year, but the fact that it restricts a person to only make them at the beginning of a year is ridiculous.

For example, if a person's resolution is "I will not eat Twinkies this year," this individual will attempt to follow through with that promise. But as soon as he breaks and even so much as nibbles on one snack cake, the resolution will be considered a failure.

This person will think they do not have to follow through for the rest of the year. He will forget that resolution and wait until next year to take it up again. But until then, that person will buy that jumbo pack of Twinkies craved since January.

New Year's Resolutions are restricting and allow people the escape route "I'll try again next year" if it does not work out. Resolutions are a pass/fail system; pass if you complete the impossible task, fail if you slip for a second.

The implementation of a resolution requires a person to look back and try to correct what did not work out last year. The excuse is if a goal is not accomplished that year, there will always be next year. Then the year after that, and the year after that. When does the cycle end?

The logical action would be to set up small goals, interspersed throughout the year. Forget the phrase "New Year's Resolutions" ever existed. Focus on yourself, your goal and all the chances you have to reinvigorate it. Promises at the beginning of the year hardly offer such an opening.

The New Year is a time to celebrate and enjoy the coming of a new beginning, not to worry about past resolutions and the ones to come. Enjoy the celebrations, embrace a fresh start; being bogged down with a promise is a burden no one



BOBINA VANDER LAAN CARTOON wants on January 1.

Couples should exchange meaningful gifts

By Skylar Coons

INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

In the holiday season, many young couples struggle over what to get each other. Not everyone knows how much to spend or what to buy.

Couples need to be careful not to spend excessive amounts and need to realize that each other's company and a small yet thoughtful gift are more important than material possessions.

An iPod Touch ranges from \$229-399 and expensive underwater cameras don't take pictures in the snow outside, anyways.

If you want to buy a gift for a boyfriend or girlfriend, you shouldn't waste money on a gift

everyone else wants. New \$500 skis and new \$100 phones should be left to the hardworking parents.

A stuffed animal isn't a good idea either. The key behind a great gift isn't how much it costs, but how much it means to the receiver.

In season one of "Gossip Girl," Serena gets Dan a very expensive watch, although she put thought into the gift, he turned it down because he didn't have that much money to spend on her.

They decided not to spend a lot of money. Serena set up an empty room with movie screens of snow falling because he wanted it to snow for Christmas.

Dan snuck a Christmas tree into her hotel because trees weren't allowed in, but Serena had wished that she could have a Christmas

tree this year.

Most people have many gifts to buy during the holidays, and if they thought of a meaningful or useful gift, they would have more money left over for others.

Some presents could be clothes from a favorite store that you picked yourself. This way you can spend \$20 or \$40 on a shirt or two.

Then, you can get creative by painting a picture or decorating a picture frame with a choice of pictures to go along with it.

Consider favorite movies that might be coming out on DVD such as "The Dark Knight" or posters from a favorite movie. Maybe his or her favorite band is releasing a new CD. Each of these are \$20 or less.

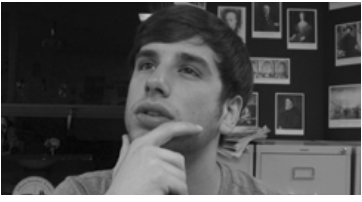
The combination of small gifts



BOBINA VANDER LAAN CARTOON

equals around \$100. A thoughtful or useful gift lasts longer than a

diamond ring that could get lost the next day.



Gays should be treated with respect in a country known for equality

DJ BALL

Something is wrong with our country.

Only in America can we elect a leader who represents the essence of equality yet ban gay rights in states such as California, which passed Proposition 8 that banned gay marriages, or Arkansas, which passed the Unmarried Couple Adoption Ban, a measure that primarily prohibits same-sex couples from being adoptive or foster parents. Since when does government create laws that determine whom Americans are allowed to love?

We have always characterized ourselves as the land of the free, the land of the brave, the land where everyone is equal, but what is equality?

Equality is what our founding fathers fought for, what women fought for, what African Americans fought for. Equality is the equal protection of rights for every United States citizen, yet one group in America is not equal.

Homosexuals live as second class citizens. Jim Crow Laws that were used to segregate African Americans are very similar to how these Americans are living. They are "separate but equal." Since when did the Separation of Church and State end, allowing religious morals to seep into our legislature?

The way in some politicians speak of homosexuals being ill-fit to fight in wars, incapable of raising children and even sinful is disturbing.

Even more disturbing are the statistics of who actually votes against gay rights: a large percentage of African Americans vote against gay rights. For example, 70% of African Americans in California backed Proposition 8. The fact is ironic and surprising as African Americans have also fought for equality.

From marriage to adoption rights, homosexuals in America do not live as most do.

Wake up America. We cannot advocate equality and democracy worldwide when people in our country still face persecution.

After reading this article some may just go on living life as they already do, cursing others who are not like them. These people should pay attention to the news. Hear the stories of the soldier in Tennessee whose funeral had anti-gay protesters holding hateful signs describing the soldier's death as God's punishment for being gay, or about the boy from California who, after coming out as a homosexual the day before, was shot in the head by one of his classmates.

We have elected change, now it is time to fully provide it.

STAFF EDITORIAL

Journalism staff shares their New Year's resolutions

Before you know it, Jan. 1 will be here and everyone will be coming up with New Year's resolutions for 2009.

This year the journalism class has decided to share our resolutions with readers.

Many of us wish to be more athletic this coming year. Kyle Marsh and Sophie Hagberg want to go on more runs.

"I want to start running and not quit after a week. I want to stick to an actual running schedule," Hagberg said.

Stephanie Smith has a similar resolution. She wants to go to Manchester Athletic Club more often.

"My New Year's resolution is to actually go to the MAC instead of just saying I will," Smith said.

Maura Driscoll wants to stay in shape all year, through sports, going to the gym and running on a regular basis.

Skylar Coons and Nicholas Bouwer both have made resolutions relating to music.

"My New Year's resolution is to positively influence others through music whenever I can,"

Bouwer said.

"My New Year's resolution is to practice my guitar more often," Coons said.

Many of us have resolutions relating to school.

"I want to stop leaving all of my work until the last minute," Julia Melamed said.

DJ Ball hopes to stop procrastinating on schoolwork, and Molly Friedman wants to stop stressing over homework and grades. Like these, many of us want to stop spending unnecessary time on Facebook as a way of procrastinating.

"I want to concentrate on my schoolwork more and not get distracted by Facebook when I should be doing homework," Hannah Daley said.

Some of us want to improve in sports.

"I want to improve my softball skills and become a better pitcher," Rebecca Lynch said.

"My New Year's resolution is to get at least one hit every game during the softball season. Last year, I was put on varsity because they needed a catcher, but my hit-



NICK BOUWER CARTOON

ting skills weren't up to par. I want to prove to myself that I can be a good hitter," Laurel Edington said.

Other resolutions are unique and can't be characterized in groups with others.

Kaitlin McDonagh wants to be less selfish. Bobina Vander Laan wants to get at least six hours of

sleep each night. Annelise Eaton and Hannah Dumont want to spend as much time with friends before leaving for college next fall. Emily Hammond wants to be as environmentally conscious as possible. And Brittany Edwards want to enjoy the simple pleasures in life and find beauty in everything.

Class officers resort to force to raise support for fundraisers

Students fail to participate in class fundraisers, drives

By Sophie Hagberg
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

A lack of participation plagues class fundraisers. Throughout the grades, numerous attempted events serve as a testament to this fact.

As you walk down the halls, you can see countless sign-up sheets for fundraisers, class activities, and other school-sponsored activities: all of them are either empty or have a minimal number

of people. With this kind of lack of participation, teachers and students alike are resorting to other ways of rallying support for class events.

In the case of the junior class rummage sale, the class officers and advisers decided that forcing students to participate was the best way to go. In this fundraiser, due to occur during February, every student in the class is required to participate.

Each member of the class of 2010 has to pitch in somehow during the upcoming fundraiser. During the previous few weeks,

students were required to go up to the library and sign up for a specific way to help. In addition, students had to sign a contract saying

The only real way that this situation can be remedied is by student action.

that they would show up. If a student decides to skip, he or she will be charged an additional \$15 on their class dues.

The fine as a punishment for not showing up is definitely sending the wrong message to students. It basically says that students can shirk on their responsibilities, as long as they pay money instead. I'm sure that at least a few students will take ad-

vantage of this in the junior class.

In addition, food, toy, and clothing drives have suffered from a lack of participation. For weeks, these boxes stay relatively empty, until messages over the announcements in the morning hassle students to bring something in. Student participation is extremely low in these kind of activities, and we have yet to see any plausible way besides forcing students to rally the support needed.

The only real way that this situation can be remedied is by student action. All students need to remember that they are members of this school community, and participation in fundraisers is the only way that classes will create any funds.

the INDEPENDENT

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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.

Girls' basketball defeats Georgetown 64-63

By Hannah Daley
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Starting off the season with a 64-63 win against Georgetown, the girls' basketball team is looking forward to completing their goals and improving their skills throughout the rest of the season.

The girls' first game was close against their rival, Georgetown; however, they managed to pull it off in the last 5 seconds when sophomore point guard Lizzy Ball shot a free throw.

The game's high scorers were senior captain Lee Stroman (13), Ball (12), and junior Sam Christopher (10).

Coach Lauren DuBois said she wasn't surprised at the win.

The game was intense the whole time, but the girls stayed in it. It was a rough game, but a good one," she said.

Ball said several good things

about how the team played during the game.

Our defense was great. Elsa [Keefe] and Hannah [Dumont] both did a great job covering one of the better girls on the opposing team. Lee [Stroman] and Jordan [Biggar] had some great shots, and we always know our team chemistry will pump each other up," she said.

DuBois and senior Jen Bishop said the team needs to improve on some things during the season.

DuBois said the team needs to work on executing offensive plays and staying under control.

We need to keep the intensity level up throughout the whole game," Bishop said.

In order to work on these things, DuBois works on the offense, conditioning, and agility work at practice, she said.

Ball and Bishop said they really enjoy having DuBois as a coach.

"Dubs is very passionate about



DJ BALL PHOTO

Junior Sam Christopher (left), Abbi Biggar, Alicia Volpe, and Ashley Grimes practice their right-handed dribbling in place at a recent practice. The girls defeated their rival, Georgetown, 64-63. Top scorers were senior captain Lee Stroman (13), sophomore Lizzy Ball (12), and Christopher (10).

the game, and she always pushes us to play as hard as we can," Ball said.

She's difficult in a nice way. She's definitely the best coach I've ever had because she's en-

couraging and takes pressure off me," Bishop said.

With many games ahead of them, the team is looking forward to the rest of the season, according to Ball.

We're looking forward to pushing ourselves and making it back to the Garden," she said. Their next game is Dec. 19 at Rockport at 5:30 p.m. According to Ball, they are hoping to dominate.

Swimming

Team loses first meet but remains enthusiastic

By Bobina Vander Laan
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Competing in their first meet against North Andover, the swim team started their season enthusiastically, but lost 65-92.

The most notable win of the night was the varsity 200-yard medley relay, a great achievement for competing against a big school, said coach A.J. Migonis. This group consisted of senior Erik Walder, sophomores Maddy Huleatt, Matt and Nick Bouwer.

"North Andover and Masconomet will definitely be a challenge," Migonis said prior to the meet. "North Reading and Lynnfield are more our speed."

The team pulled through for a

number of races. Among them were Matt Bouwer's second place in the varsity 100-yard free-style and Walder's second place in the varsity 50-yard free style.

In the past, individual times have done well, with team races taking a backseat. This season, the team seems to be improving on all fronts, Migonis said.

Walder had surgery last year, but he started this year strong as captain of the varsity team. Huleatt is the junior varsity captain, which includes both high school and middle school swimmers.

Migonis said approximately 37 people are on the team, and most new students to the program are from the middle school. The team, composed of both Manchester-Essex and Rockport students, is

the smallest of the seven Cape Ann League swim teams.

For future meets, Migonis has many goals for the team. "As a swimmer, you always want to improve your stroke, form and times. We'll work on those areas and hopefully make a presence at the Cape Ann League meets," he said.

Migonis said key players to look for include veterans junior Jack Kelly, Walder, and Huleatt. Among the new swimmers are sophomores Nick and Matt Bouwer.

Returning divers are sophomore Christine Walder and junior Caroline Moore.

Migonis said accomplishments last year included one or two relay teams that qualified for sectionals, along with divers who qualified for Cape Ann League.



TIM BOUWER PHOTO

Captain sophomore Maddy Huleatt catches a breath at the first swim meet of the season against North Andover.

Track and field team begins season with large student turnout

By Kaitlin McDonagh
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Over the past month, the new indoor track and field team has grown greatly since their first meeting. Thirty-six students attended the team meeting on Nov. 28.

"I think it is a great privilege to be starting up this program at this high school," coach John Barbour said to the students.

Sophomore Nate Jermain and seniors Eric Kimball and Leo Daley started the team, which is not funded by the athletic department. Athletic director Hardy Nally said, "Within two years the athletic department will take this program over."

Practice begins at 2:20 p.m. in the weight room and ends be-



DJ BALL PHOTO

Senior Eliza Blatchford uses the elliptical machine at a recent track and field practice. The team warms up in the weight room.

tween 3:30-4 p.m., and consists of a group stretch, warm-ups, workouts, and a 20-minute group run at the end.

Practices on Saturdays are optional.

The first week of practice, all members had to follow the same

workout schedule, but as the season progresses, members will split into separate groups and follow a workout schedule that applies to the event they are participating in.

According to Barbour, the first week consisted of "a lot of administrative and housekeeping" work. "I'm sure [students] are keen to get into the regular schedule," he said.

Students are enthusiastic about the team. Sophomore Caroline Kiley said, "I'm really excited. I'm happy the school has started this track program because a lot of

kids are interested."

On Dec. 7, the Mass State Track Coaches Association (MSTCA) sponsored a "learn by doing" clinic at the Reggie Lewis Center in Boston, which 10 team members participated in. It was the MSTCA's fifth annual clinic. According to Barbour, high school students from as far away as Connecticut attended.

The team's first meet was on Dec. 12 at Ipswich High School.

The track and field team's next meet is at Ipswich High School on Dec. 19.

'I think it is a great privilege to be a member of starting up this program at this high school.'
-COACH JOHN BARBOUR

BOYS' BASKETBALL

New coach appreciates athletic program

By Maura Driscoll
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Veteran coach Duane Sigsbury took over the position of varsity boys' basketball coach for the 2008 – 2009 season.

For 29 years Sigsbury has been involved in basketball. Beginning his career at 4 years old in a youth league, he continued to play until he was 26. From the age of 16, Sigsbury has coached basketball.

Originally from Reading, Mass., Sigsbury proceeded to Salem State following high school.

At Woburn High School, Sigsbury coached varsity boys' basketball for seven years.

As for his new coaching position, Sigsbury loves it.

"I love Manchester-Essex. I love the school, and the students and athletes in Manchester are great. It may be a small school, but the athletes are very good."

Students feel the same as Sigsbury. "He's the man!" sophomore Joseph Mussachia said.

In their season opener against rival Georgetown, the boys suffered a loss in a close game. "We played awesome," Sigsbury said.

Losing 51-49 at the buzzer in Georgetown's home gym was a

tough way to lose, but, "it was a great game," Sigsbury said.

Top scorers in the game were senior captain Kyle Donovan with 17 points and sophomore Joseph Mussachia with 20 points.

When it came to containing Georgetown's star player, Jaymie Spears, "Pat Orlando played unbelievable defense and he never came off the floor," Sigsbury said.

Sigsbury has high hopes for this year's team.

"We want to set a solid foundation so our program is making the tournament every year, and I know this year's team has an opportunity to be the first of many," he said.



MOLLY FRIEDMAN PHOTO

Sophomore Dylan Parlee goes in for a layup in the boys' practice. Coach Duane Sigsbury, the former coach of Woburn High School, hopes to take his team to tournament this year. In their first game of the season, the boys lost 51-49 at the buzzer.

Co-op hockey team opens season in close game, stays positive

By Nick Bouwer
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

While the new co-op hockey team with Rockport and Ipswich has suffered their first loss, new coach Derek Papalegis said they still have high spirits and strong goals for the season. With a lot of new players to work with this year, Papalegis said that this season will be good.

"This season is going to be exciting. There are a lot of guys here

with which we've put together four solid lines so I think we will make state tournaments easily. We are also doing a lot of new drills

and plays that these kids haven't done in the past, so I feel like that will improve their game and help guide them to victory," Papalegis said.

Saturday, the team lost 6-4 against Bedford. "We had potential to win because it was a close match, but it was disappointing. There were flashes of good, but a lot of bad too. However, it was only the first game and there is always next time," said junior Pat Hofmann, who plays on the team along with junior Matt Graves, sophomore Danny O'Neil, sophomore Cam Smith, and senior Sean

Golden.

Held at the O'Malley rink in Gloucester Practices this year go from 5:30 a.m. to 6:20 a.m. on the weekdays and on Sundays from 4:30 p.m. to 5:20 p.m. They range from agility work to drills and simulations.

"It all depends on what part of the season we are in. Right now we are doing a lot of conditioning as well as passing and shooting, defensive coverage and simulations later on in season," Papalegis said.

"We work on systems. Fore checking, back checking, penalty kills, power plays, and different situations. Right now we are mostly working at a high tempo with

sprints and conditioning at the end," sophomore player Cam Smith said.

The team has one main goal for the season.

"A team qualifies with nine wins out of an 18 game season for the state tournament. Of course we are hoping to go to the state championship match, but our main goal is definitely to make tournament. We also want to build and get better for the future," Hofmann said.

According to Papalegis, at this time in the season the team needs to work on shooting and passing



COURTESY OF JEN BISHOP

Senior captain Sean Golden was selected as a captain for the Manchester-Essex, Rockport, Ipswich 2008-2009 hockey team.

the puck around the rink, and on over all offense. Smith also said this is the main problem the team has.

"Our position defense is good, but our offense needs work. We need to learn how to break out our zone cleaner and faster with the puck," Smith said.

According to Papalegis, Smith, and Hofmann, the team will be a success in the season.

"I think we'll be competitive in our league. There is a lot of talent here, but we just need to work harder to accomplish our goals," Smith said.

"We have potential, for sure. In the past years we played the same schedule of matches against the same teams, but now that we are part of Rockport and Ipswich as well we will be playing against a lot of different teams. This is good, though, because we get a clean slate to start the season off with which will put us in a very clean state of mind," Hofmann said.

Gymnastics prepares for first meet with new faces, talent

By Rebecca Lynch
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

With the first meet approaching, the Hamilton-Wenham, Manchester Essex gymnastics team is focusing on preparing the routines of new and returning members.

"The team looks great. We have a lot of new faces and talent, which should make for a good season," junior Chandler Kennedy said.

According to coach Rich Healey, the team is conditioning to develop strength and endurance.

They're also practicing routines.

"The pre-season is really great to figure out what we already have and what we need to work on," sophomore Vicky Nicholas said.

The team is strong in floor and balance beam routines, but they need to improve in the bar and vault, Healey said.

Their first meet is Jan. 6.

"We're hoping for a winning record and our main focus is to make sectionals," Healey said.

"This league has very tough competition and the scores are always close."

Gloucester, Danvers, and North Andover will be the most compet-



DJ BALL PHOTO

Sophomore Vicky Nicholas brings new talent to the team.

itive meets, Kennedy said.

Several members have joined the team for the first time.

"Those of us who have less experience are trying to put together routines based on what we can do and learn new things," Nicholas said.

According to Healey, the returning gymnasts have helped the newer kids.

Kennedy, who is recently had surgery to reconstruct three torn ligaments in her ankle is helping make up and critique routines.

Meanwhile, she is conditioning on bars and hopes to be back by early January.

Kennedy and Nicholas are the only members from Manchester-Essex.

"The combination of schools is great. We get along really well and we support each other a ton," Kennedy said.

The team is conditioning to develop strength and endurance.

FOOTBALL

continued from page 1

core part of the team, he is excited to see what next year will bring.

Among one of the seniors who will be leaving, Orlando will leave hard shoes to fill Bishop said.

Orlando beat his brother Vinny Orlando's record of 53 touchdown passes in his career and finished his career with 54.

"My brother and I joked around about it the whole week before, but it was just fun competition,"

Orlando said.

Orlando plans to play football in college but is still deciding where he will attend.

"We have been talking to a lot of colleges about Pat. He definitely plans to play and he will go wherever the best fit is for him," Athanas said.

"It was a great way to end my season and career. It was unbelievable," Orlando said.

Boston Globe named Orlando Div. IV player of the year. He was also named an All-League and All-Scholastic player by the Boston Globe and the Herald.

Football Award Winners

Varsity

Mike Esielonis Award *Pat Orlando*
Ed Field Defensive Award *Clayton Morrissey*
Alan Cummings Award *Alex Carr*
Joe Hylan Coach's Award *Max Quirk*

Offensive Players of the Year *Ben Kekeisen*
Brian Ciccone

Unsung Hero *Doug Kenerson*
Jake Douglas

Most Improved Offense *Yuri Klypka-Simpson*
Most Improved Defense *Justin Burke*
Garin Sweet

Scout Team Player of the Year
Hornet Awards

Jake Brown
Ben Smith
Trevor Smith
Dan Patey
Tony Tran

Junior Varsity

Best Offensive Player *Mavrick MacEachern*
Best Defensive Player *Cooper Riehl*
Most Improved Player *Stephan LaForge*
Coach's Award *Paul Pennoyer*

Best of 2008:

Movie



TIMEINC.NET

“The Dark Knight” stars Heath Ledger, Christian Bale and Aaron Eckhart.

“Batman: The Dark Knight”

Following the death of superstar Heath Ledger, the second installment in the Batman series skyrocketed in popularity.

Already successful as a result of its predecessor, “Batman Begins,” “The Dark Knight” was destined to be a big winner at the box office.

Leading the cast as Batman and Bruce Wayne was Christian Bale. Supporting that talent was Heath Ledger as The Joker, Maggie Gyllenhaal replacing Katie Holmes as Rachel Dawes, Gary Oldman as James Gordon, and Aaron Eckhart as Harvey Dent and Two-Face.

The movie’s superb acting is secondary to the exhilarating plot lines and nonstop action.

Song



PHOTOBUCKET.COM

“I Kissed A Girl” reached the top of the charts in 20 countries.

“I Kissed A Girl,” by Katy Perry

The bi-sexual anthem encouraging experimentation took the nation by storm in 2008.

Katy Perry’s now infamous song about girl power shot to the top of the charts within days of its release, including in 20 countries. So far, 2.5 million downloads have been recorded.

The catchy beat and Perry’s intoxicating voice are the main reasons that “I Kissed a Girl” rose to such rapid fame all over the world. The song’s release brought Perry instant popularity.

With lyrics such as “I kissed a girl and I liked it, the taste of her cherry chapstick,” not keeping the song on repeat all day is difficult.

T.V. Show



BARONBOOMBOX.BLOGSPOT.COM

“House, M.D.,” starring Hugh Laurie, airs on Fox at 9 p.m. on Tuesdays.

“House, M.D.”

Currently in its fifth season, the Emmy Award winning drama “House, M.D.,” starring the famously sarcastic Dr. Gregory House is back in his best season yet.

For the second season in a row, “House” stars a fresh batch of doctors working for Dr. House at Princeton-Plainsboro Teaching Hospital.

The season premiered with a thrilling episode, following the death of Dr. James Wilson’s girlfriend, a former employee.

Each episode is a constant maze of mysterious symptoms to which House’s team must discover the cause. The mix of dramatic medical instances and comic relief makes for a truly spectacular hour of television.

Book



AUDIOEDITIONS.COM

“Breaking Dawn” is the last of four books in the Twilight series.

“Breaking Dawn,” by Stephanie Meyer

As the final book in the Twilight series, Stephenie Meyer’s “Breaking Dawn” is a thrilling ending to the popular story of Bella Swan and the vampires she befriends in rainy Forks, Wash.

Selling 1.3 million copies within 24 hours, the final installment set a record for its publishers’ sales.

Arranged differently from the previous tales where the entire story is told from Bella Swan’s perspective, the fourth book has three sections: Bella tells the first and third whereas werewolf Jacob Black, Bella’s best friend, tells the second.

With much more dramatic and intense themes than the previous books, “Breaking Dawn” keeps you guessing.

By Maura Driscoll, Independent Staff

P.F. Chang’s offers diverse menu at a low price

By Emily Hammond
INDEPENDENT EDITOR



MOLLY FRIEDMAN PHOTO

P.F. Chang’s, a Chinese restaurant located at the North Shore Mall, offers seating for over a 100 customers.

entation.

The restaurant seats over a hundred people, so waiting for a table isn’t a worry. The extensive menu is broken down into 12 sections: appetizers, soups and salads, grill, lunch bowls, traditions, chicken, meat, seafood, noodles and rice, vegetarian, sides, and desserts. There were so many options it took me and my guests 20 minutes to decide on what to order.

Being a vegetarian, I was extremely impressed by their menu. They offer just as many vegetarian dishes as meat and seafood dishes. In the end, I decided on their coconut curry vegetables (\$8), and my guests chose Ma Po tofu (\$8), and chicken lo mein

(\$9).

Though the menu was impressive, it fails to warn customers of spicier dishes. One of my guests wasn’t expecting the heat that came with his Ma Po tofu, which was so spicy that he broke a sweat and constantly needed his water refilled.

P.F. Chang’s low prices make up for its menu’s flaws. For the amount of food you get, the prices are extremely generous. Each of us had enough food to bring home and eat as a meal the next day.

If you love Chinese food and want a unique way of experiencing it, then I would definitely recommend you try out P.F. Chang’s.

Before entering the restaurant, I knew P.F. Chang’s was going to be a unique eating experience.

Former student, artist brings experience to art classes

By Kyle Marsh
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Former Manchester student and local artist Kristen Brousseau, who joined the staff in September, brought new techniques as a student art teacher to the high school.

“She lets you use your own ideas and creativity instead of putting her own ideas into our work,” sophomore Sarah Brown said.

Brousseau, who just ended her student teacher experience, worked with art foundation and drawing classes from grades seven through 12, but she specialized in ceramics.

“She’s really easy to talk to and helps on all of our projects. Ms. Brousseau has really good ideas,” sophomore Rachel Jones said.

Brousseau became interested in ceramics when attending Manchester High School. “When I was a sophomore, the principal found pottery wheels in an old closet. It started with that, and then at UMass, I studied ceramics in Australia,” Brousseau said.

She received her Major of Sociology and a Minor of Studio Art at UMass and continued to study at

Salem State to become a certified teacher and eventually get her Masters of Ceramics.

“Being a student teacher is a one semester-long program that all education learners have to go through to get their initial license. To get their master’s we have to work for three years,” she said.

She also had to pass three observations, in which her teacher from Salem State came to Manchester to view three classes that she solely taught.

“Kristen has the attributes of an outstanding teacher. She is intelligent and caring. She is receptive to her students. She was as successful teaching classes of 27 students as she was working

with a student one-on-one,” said Marion Powers, her cooperating art teacher.

On top of teaching and studying, Brousseau shares a studio in Ipswich with four other artists, and has her own studio, equipped with two kilns, in her home.

For the past five years, she sold her art at various craft fairs and galleries.

Brousseau also teaches at two studios, Ocmuglee Studio, named after a unique clay, and at the Red Brick Studio in Beverly.

She’s really easy to talk to and helps on all of our projects.
-RACHEL JONES

Winter concert:

Interesting selections add twist to show

By Laurel Edington
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

During the annual winter concert, the band, chorus and the new a cappella group performed well-known selections as well as holiday-themed pieces for an enthusiastic audience.

First, the chorus sang the popular Beatles song "Let It Be." Senior Colin Rosso played the drums along with the accompanist, Jorge Ibanez. Their rendition brought a thundering applause from the audience. "Jingle, Jingle, Jingle Bells," the chorus' other selection, was a different take on the well-known "Jingle Bells."

Donna O'Neill, the new chorus director, had her first concert with Manchester-Essex. According to her, the chorus sounded very professional and she was very proud of their hard work.

Twelve chorus members, who were selected for the a cappella group, sang next.

Sophomore Piper Browne was the first soloist of the evening for the song "Stille Nacht," the German version of "Silent Night." In the next piece, "House at Pooh's Corner," Browne and senior Abigail Burke sang lead.

The chorus then performed



MOLLY FRIEDMAN PHOTO

Sophomores Olivia Dumont and Amy Needham played in the band at this year's winter concert.

three more songs: "Ose Shalom," "Ding Dong Merrily On High," and "God Bless America."

Chorus members, sophomore Cole Caviston and freshmen Jodi Dewitt and Lili Shotwell agreed that their last song, "God Bless America," with junior Tyler Helton as the soloist, was their best selection.

"They were excellent," O'Neill said. "The chorus gave a great performance."

The band followed the chorus, and played "The Star Spangled Banner," "Those Magnificent Marches," and "Merry Bells of Christmas."

According to Sokol, musically speaking, the band played much better than in the past. They were

prepared and he felt comfortable on stage with them, it was all a team effort.

Finishing the evening was the band, which played "Feliz Navidad" and the "Raiders March."

Sokol said each year, the band plays some of the same selections. This year they played the crowd and band favorite, "Feliz Navidad," again.

Rosso said the song was the band's best selection this year as well and noted that the 65 members made the instrumental sections stronger.

"The audience enjoyed the entire concert, and the members realized that it was a very good performance, which was a very good feeling," Sokol said.

'Band, chorus, and the new a cappella group performed well-known selections for an enthusiastic audience.'

Britney Spears:

How a 'fallen star' becomes 'comeback queen'

By DJ Ball
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Everyone cannot stop talking about Britney Spears.

Sure she is beautiful, talented and a household name, but what is so intriguing about this "Pop Princess?"

Her tale is an American dream. With her talent and charisma, Spears took on the entertainment industry as a small town girl with high hopes. She never gave up, though the cards did not always play her way.

When her fame hit mega-star status, Spears became America's sweetheart. We all watched her grow, change styles and become what she is today.

In 2007, Americans saw their sweetheart self-destruct. From shaving her head to countless stays in rehab, Britney was often referred to by the tabloids as a "fallen star." No longer were we paying attention

because she was a great entertainer; we watched in horror as Spears spiraled into her inner turmoil.

In just a year, Britney came back to prove to us all that she does not give up. She went from having one of the worst MTV Video Music Award performances singing "Gimme More" in 2007 to winning three awards the following year.

The reality is, we are so intrigued with her because she is just like us. Famous or not, we are all equal. We hurt, we love, we make mistakes, and nobody is better than anybody.

With her new album at number one on the Billboard Charts and a tour about to start in April of 2009, Britney Spears proves to America and the rest of the world that she is an entertainer who will not be put down.

She has seen the successful side and the destructive side of the industry, yet she is here to stay.

Britney Spears proves to America and the rest of the world that she is an entertainer who will not be put down. She has seen the successful side and the destructive side of the industry, yet she is here to stay.



BRITNEY.COM

This year, Britney Spears is making a comeback with her new album 'Circus.'

FAST FACTS

- 'Circus' debuted Nov. 27.
- She had her first performance on 'Good Morning America.'
- Her tour comes to Boston on March 16.
- Her 'Circus' video premiered on Dec. 5.
- She has sold over 83 million CDs in less than a decade.



Song Downloads

🎵 "Heartless" by Kanye West

Hip-hop/rap artist Kanye West outdid himself when he released his new single "Heartless," which fans of his previous work should download.

Similar to his last single "Love Lockdown," West showcases an edgy voice, which sounds as though he's singing into a fan.

Although some listeners may not find this techno-sounding voice appealing, West's lyrics are another aspect of the song to look forward to hearing.

West demonstrates a sense of vulnerability through this single, which he doesn't normally express through his actions in the media or through lyrics in his other songs such as "Gold Digger."

"Heartless" is about a girl who breaks up with a guy, "but in the end it's still so lonely" for the guy. The girl then attempts to get back together with him; however, the guy says to her, "You can't make it right, I'm gon' take off tonight."

West's single displays new sounds, a new beat, and a new theme that will thrill anyone who enjoys an edgy hip-hop song.

🎵 "The Stoop" by Little Jackie

"The Stoop" by pop artist Little Jackie may not be a well-known tune; however, it's one that pop music lovers should download.

The song, from her album "The Stoop" is very upbeat, putting listeners in a happier mood.

Although the beat of Little Jackie's song is cheerful, the rhymes in her lyrics add to the general appeal of the song too.

Rhyming lines such as, "It is what it is, it ain't all hard up in the hood/Sittin' on my front step and it's all good," allow Little Jackie's tune to flow well and make it easy for listeners to sing along.

Little Jackie and her music may not be widely recognized, but her new hit "The Stoop" portrays her as a renowned pop star.

Anyone who wants to hear a feel-good tune should download "The Stoop."

🎵 "Single Ladies" by Beyoncé

Off her new album "I Am...Sasha Fierce," R&B artist Beyoncé Knowles has released another great song titled "Single Ladies."

Knowles relates to several women through her lyrics, talking about women who just broke up and just want to have fun doing their own thing.

Although Knowles' lyrics are appealing because of the fact that she calls out to all the "single ladies," the song also has great musicality.

The fast upbeat rhythm makes it hard to stay seated once this song comes on the radio. The song keeps its beat with clapping throughout the song, so there's never a dull part in this hit.

Girls who want an upbeat tune and something that they can relate to should download "Single Ladies."

🎵 "On Top of the World" by T.I.

Although "On Top of the World" may not be the most popular song on the hip-hop/rap album "Paper Trail," T.I. fans will not be disappointed after downloading it.

Featuring Ludacris and B.O.B., the song provides collaborations between the three artists, so the song is never monotonous.

While T.I. and Ludacris rap the main verses, B.O.B. sings the chorus and acts as a backup singer.

Along with entertaining collaborations, "On Top of the World" is also amusing due to its upbeat rhythm.

A keyboard and drums keep the beat to keep listeners on their feet for what's to come in the song.

T.I. fans should also download this tune because of the lyrics he uses.

In "On Top of the World," T.I. raps about how he "used to dream about the money and the cars and girls," but now he sees them because he's "sitting on top of the world."

Listeners can relate to his lyrics because they may dream about things, but then they work hard for them to become a reality.

For great collaborations, an upbeat rhythm, and relatable lyrics, download T.I.'s edited version of "On Top of the World."

By Hannah Daley, Independent Editor