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15 DECA students qualify for Internationals

Seven students place first in their category at state conference

By **Skylar Coons**

INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Fifteen DECA students qualified for Internationals at the DECA State Career Development Conference at which 1,350 students competed.

Dean Martino, DECA teacher, said the largest team accomplishment as a team was that 100 percent of the students met the proficiency level of the written exams.

"I didn't recognize how important that was until the board of director members were congratulating us," he said, "Our entire team was highly complimented on manners and class, the way they held themselves as young professionals."

Senior Spenser Peterson and Kyle Donovan placed first in "Internet Marketing Team Decision Making."

Peterson said, "When we didn't get called for fourth or third, Kyle gave me a pat on the back and said, 'Alright, second year in a row,'" referring to their first place win in the same category last year.

Peterson said the competition was "definitely harder than last year," and he said he was a little nervous when he and Donovan weren't called for second place.

Juniors Julia Martz and junior Amanda Azadian placed second in "Travel and Tourism."

Martz said, "It was really successful. It was a great experience for everyone. We all went there working to do our best, and a good amount of us came out successful."

Students who qualified will attend the International Career Development Conference in Anaheim, Calif., from April 29 to May 2. See page 8 for a list of qualifying students.



COURTESY OF MADHURI PARRIS

One hundred percent of students met the proficiency level of the written exams at the DECA State Career Development Conference from March 5-7 in Boston.

Stuart creates scholarship

By **Kyle Marsh**

INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

After 33 years of teaching, Dr. John Stuart, English department head, will leave the school with an annual scholarship fund in his name.

Stuart designed the John W. Stuart, III, Trust Scholarship, which will award \$1,000 to a senior who shows exceptional activism in human and civil rights.

This activism may be portrayed through service with the Diversity Alliance, Student Council, theater, arts, The Independent, or any similar organization.

In order to receive the scholarship, the senior must be enrolled in a four-year college for the coming year, complete service for human or civil rights, and submit an application.

Although Stuart will not directly elect the recipient, he expects to receive many recommendations.

According to Stuart, a committee run by Sharon Maguire, the head of guidance, will review the applications.



DJ BALL PHOTO

Retiring English department chair John Stuart created a scholarship as a thank you to students.

Stuart currently teaches grade 12 AP English and creative writing.

"He really invests in everyone and their creativity. He embraced that we were all different and that our writing would reflect these differences. He's really accepting of everyone," junior Kara Thomas said.

"He lets the students be creative by using our own ideas," said sophomore Sarah Brown, a student in his creative writing class.

Stuart is very thankful for all of his years at the high school.

"People get sentimental when making big changes in their life. I am very thankful for my career and the students that have made it possible. I have the resources to give a thank you, and I hope it will be of good service," he said.

Roof Decay: 'Goo' leaks from ceilings

By **Stephanie Smith**
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Since the end of Christmas vacation, brown goo has been constantly leaking through the ceiling, primarily at the junction of the freshman and junior corridors, outside the gym doors.

According to facilities manager Joe Lucido, the disintegration of the roof is causing the leaks.

He said the roof is 15 to 20 years old and composed of a rubber membrane, a layer of insulation and a layer of fiberboard, as well as tar residue from the previous roof. The sheets of material come in 10-foot wide rolls, and the leaks are mostly at the seams between these rolls.

The roof is decaying due to seagulls, Lucido said. "They puncture holes in the rubber. Their droppings are so acidic they break down the seams."

When it rains or snows, water "saturates the insulation and fiberboard. When that gets wet and saturated, it breaks down and you get that tarry-looking goo, as it's been called," he said.



EMILY HAMMOND PHOTO

A plastic tarpaulin and one trash barrel replaced the five containers that previously blocked hallway traffic while catching leaks from the ceiling.

The record amounts of snow this winter have exacerbated the problem. Lucido said custodians typically clear paths for melting snow on the roof one or two times each winter; as of mid-February, they had cleared paths six times.

At first, custodians combated the leaks by placing buckets under the drips. As the leakage increased, more buckets and trashcans were necessary. The line of buckets across the hall made travel difficult for students.

Now, a plastic tarpaulin at-

tached to the ceiling catches the goo and water from all of the leaks in that area and directs the flow to one trashcan at the side of the hall.

"The whole idea is rather than having separate buckets to be kicked in the hallway, obstructing the hallway, channel it off to one side," Lucido said.

Students needn't worry that the goo is harmful.

"It's an organic product, so as ugly and nasty as it may look, it's not toxic," he said.

NEWS

Robotics Competition
-Page 2-



FEATURES

Ways to avoid procrastination
-Page 6-

OPINION

March vacation would be detrimental to students, faculty
-Page 10-

SPORTS

Boys' basketball loses by 1 in quarterfinals
-Page 12-



ARTS

Spring Fashion Review
- Page 15-

BRIEFS

Hooper Fund sponsors presentations, extracurriculars

Established in 2000 to honor the memory of Robert Nelson Hooper who died in 2000, The Hooper Fund is a non-profit organization that gives financial grants annually to extracurricular programs such as school and town athletic leagues, youth recreational activities, and summer programs.

The Hooper Fund helped the newly-formed track team, the Robotics Team, and Project Adventure to buy equipment and paid for the Hooper Fund Speaker Series.

Grant applications are due by the end of March each year, and the board of directors meets in early April to act upon those grant applications.

Rummage sale raises \$1600 for junior class

After holding only bake sales as fundraisers, the junior class held a rummage sale on Feb. 7 and raised \$1600.

The money came from donations because there weren't set prices for items. People picked up boxes filled with goods ranging from old Nintendo games to salt and pepper shakers.

Half the junior class helped out on either Friday afternoon, Saturday morning or Saturday afternoon. More than half donated items to the rummage sale, enough to fill the cafeteria.

Cathy Hunt, the junior class adviser, organized the fundraiser with the class officers.

DECA sponsors benefit concert to aid Cape Ann Animal Shelter

Sponsored by DECA, the 2009 Cape Ann Animal Aid Benefit Concert will take place Friday at 7 p.m in the Memorial School Auditorium.

Tickets, which can be purchased at the concert, costing \$5 for students and \$7 for adults.

All profits go towards aiding the Cape Ann Animal Aid Shelter build a new animal shelter. The concert features bands such as Diptera, Circa '84, Sic Transit Gloria and Lucid Enigma.



STEPHANIE SMITH PHOTOS

Senior Ross Frazier, mentor Tom Chernicki, junior Greg Neff, and faculty adviser Bob Meltz work on the robot at the competition (left). The robot competes in one of seven matches (above). Robots competed in teams of three to try to get balls into the other team's trailers. The team ended with a record of 2-4-1 and placed 39th out of 62 teams.

Robot performs well, team says, but does not advance

By Stephanie Smith
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Despite finishing 39th out of 62 competing teams, the Robotics Team's robot performed well at the March 5-7 competition, robotics president senior Ross Frazier said.

The first day of the competition, which took place at Boston University's Agganis Arena in Boston, involved making final fixes to the robots and practice matches. The second and third days consisted of the ranked matches, with a performance by Blue Man Group on the third day.

In each match, the robots competed in teams of three to get the

most balls, or "moonrocks" into the trailers attached to the opposing team's robots. Each team had one student who could free throw balls into the trailers from the sidelines.

The theme for this year's competition was "lunacy" because of the low-friction wheels and driving surface, which mimicked the moon's lower gravity.

According to Frazier, the team's biggest challenge was not the low-friction environment, but the one-

dimensionality of the game.

"In past years, we've been able to fulfill one role in the game and ally ourselves with teams that fulfilled other roles," he said. "This year, there was only one role to fulfill, and we weren't able to specialize in support roles as we had in the past."

According to senior Max Wooding, the team tried to use their free thrower, sophomore Adam Jackson, to get ahead. While most balls were worth two points, if the

robot brought a certain ball to the free thrower, he obtained a "supercell" worth 15 points if thrown into an opposing trailer.

"We decided we'd go for the bonus points instead of the regular and that has helped us out," Wooding said.

Despite a record of 2-4-1, Frazier said he was satisfied with the robot's performance.

"The design wasn't great, in retrospect. We couldn't tell ahead of time. But it did do exactly what it was supposed to do in every round," he said.

Faculty adviser Bob Meltz agreed.

"I think it worked really well. I think we adopted our strategy to work with its capabilities," he said.

'I think it worked well... we adopted our strategy to work with its capabilities.'
-BOB MELTZ



DJ BALL PHOTO

Faculty toured the school in Nov. (above) and again in March. Work is progressing in the building's interior, including casework.

Work progresses on new school

By Hannah Daley
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

As the completion of the new Manchester-Essex Regional Middle/High School approaches, work is progressing on several aspects of the buildings and several features have been completed.

Workers installed drywall in the gym, the fire sprinkler system, gray metal panels on the outside of the building, and VCT (vinyl composition tile) tiles on the fourth floor. They have also added lights and a catwalk to the auditorium.

They have completed the metal canopy roof over the main entrance and casework, such as cab-

inets, lab tables, and closets.

Work still progressing includes the sprinkler system in the locker rooms, the speakers and clocks in classrooms, first-floor painting, the two natural gas boilers, and the perimeter heat.

As for the furniture in the existing building, functional pieces for the new building will continue forward to the new school; however, the elementary school principal will decide if there is anything that would be useful for students and teachers at the elementary school. Then, other towns will take a look at the furniture, and if any pieces remain, the school will donate them to charity.

Department heads had the opportunity to tour the new school on March 9.

National Nutrition Month:

Cafeteria raises student awareness with posters, activities, food info

By Skylar Coons
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

For March's National Nutrition Month, the cafeteria has planned many activities.

Last year, art students made life-sized fruits, and this year all classes are again expected to get involved in nutrition.

D.E.C.A. students are collaborating with the cafeteria and will be marketing healthy snacks distributed by the cafeteria.

On March 12 and 13, students will be asked to test these snacks either before and after school, or after lunch. Each student will be required to fill out a survey.

Junior Brian Kaneb said he thinks testing snacks is a very positive idea because the cafeteria is getting involved with the students more.

All the food served during lunch from the cafeteria will have nutrition fact sheets. The cafeteria wants to show students why they serve food like whole grain bread over white bread.

Health teachers will be teaching



NICK BOUWER PHOTO

The cafeteria is celebrating National Nutrition Month with posters, activities, and nutrition sheets with lunch meals.

nutrition with four different lessons from www.mypyramid.gov. Other departments are supposed to do their share to give awareness to students by making posters, head of food services, Sheila Parisien said.

Parisien said teachers need to bring students back to where they need to be nutrition-wise every month of the year.

"This will be our fourth year celebrating, and each year is better. Faculty and staff get it more," she said.



NICK BOUWER PHOTO



MOLLY FRIEDMAN PHOTO

Faculty, students, and guests present on foreign countries during International Week. Sophomore Molly Friedman will present on Thailand (left) and sophomore Matthew Bouwer will present on South Africa (top).

International Week teaches students about foreign countries, cultures

March 17-20 event includes foreign dress, food, activities for theme days

By Laurel Edington
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

For over 10 years, foreign language classes have been attending presentations during International Week.

According to Spanish teacher Michelle Magaña, people who have traveled to different countries are invited to talk about their experiences.

This year, foreign language teachers Eric Magers and David Dooley are in charge of International Week.

The presenters can be students, faculty, or anybody else who has traveled to different and exotic places to open the stu-

dents' eyes to new experiences, Magaña said.

This year, International Week runs from March 17-20, with presenters and optional activities each day.

Every day is labeled with a country, students can dress up, and the cafeteria provides food from that country.

Tuesday is Ireland Day, Wednesday is Greece Day, Thursday is China Day, and Friday is France Day.

Clues are given each day about a mystery person and mystery city so students can figure out the answers.

According to Magaña, all of the foreign language classes will be attending International Week presentations, but the attendance of the AP classes depends on if they are far enough along in their curriculum.

Each year different presenters are asked to speak because teachers want a variety of topics.

Sophomore Matthew Bouwer, who has presented about South Africa, said presenters are chosen if they have been somewhere unusual and interesting.

According to sophomore Molly Friedman, Magers asked her to present this year about her time in Thailand.

Seniors Gabi Migdalski and Stephanie Smith will present to French classes in French about their trip to France with the school last year.

Students will need to pay close attention to the presentations.

Magaña said students will receive a packet to use to take notes about important facts. The packet may either be graded as a homework grade or students may be given a quiz.

"It's a wonderful tradition that we really enjoy having every year because we get to see and learn about so many interesting places," Magaña said.

Middleton jail: Seniors tour facility, listen to five inmates' experiences

By Emily Hammond
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Seniors had the opportunity to travel to the Middleton jail on Feb. 23 or Feb. 27.

Each tour began with an in-depth security check to make sure students didn't have anything potentially dangerous.

Major Michael Bachry and investigator Steve Driscoll led the students through the jail, teaching them about the building, the canines on site, and the inmates.

The Middleton jail has 14 canines from all around the world.

According to Bachry, these canines go through intense training to make them some of the best canines in their field. They work on the jail grounds, and they travel wherever they are needed.

"I thought it was really impressive that the Middleton jail has one of the top canine teams in the country," senior Holly Ream said.

'The jail made me see that even if you are such a good kid one bad choice can send you to jail.'
-JORDAN BERGER

"Being able to see the dogs in person made the situation so much more real. Hearing about the canines is one thing, but being in their presence is completely different."

The jail houses 1200 inmates, all serving time for different reasons, including drugs, alcohol, murder,

rape and gang violence, among others.

Seniors listened to five inmates' life stories.

"Having the opportunity to actually sit down and listen to the inmates' stories was incredible," senior Elsa Keefe said. "I don't think there's any better way to teach students what could happen to them if they don't make good decisions. Sitting in front of these five men, who some have been locked up for years, made it reality. Students know that people are in jail, but usually don't think that it would ever happen to them. After this trip I truly think everyone's views have switched."

Senior Jordan Berger agreed "The jail made me see that even if you are such a good kid one bad choice can send you to jail and ruin your life forever," she said.

With the tours, the jail's mission is to educate students about the possible outcome of their choices. Driscoll repeated that the goal of



WWW.MASS.GOV PHOTO

Above is the photo from the Essex County Sheriff Department's website for the student tour program at the Middleton jail. Seniors visited the Middleton jail on Feb. 23 or 27. They toured the facility and listened to five inmates' experiences.

the tour isn't to scare students but to prevent a future in jail.

Students agreed that the trip made them see their lives in a different way.

"I feel that the field trip was very powerful and allowed students to see a new side of the world through the inmates' experiences," senior Tim Jordan said.

Two soldiers inform PALS about items for military care packages

By Emily Hammond
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Two soldiers came to speak with the members of PALS, the middle school mentoring program, on Feb. 25.

PALS is creating care packages to send to the troops in Iraq.

In order to learn more about what the troops need or want, the group invited Command Sergeant Major Bill Davidson and Master Sergeant Steve Buccheri to speak to the group.

"We were so lucky to get to



EMILY HAMMOND PHOTO

Two soldiers advised PALS members on good items for care packages on Feb. 25.

speaking to the soldiers to hear what the conditions are like before we started our project. We will be

sending care packages to the troops filled with all different things they need while in Iraq," senior Annelise Eaton said.

According to Buccheri, soldiers will take anything that is sent. If they don't use it, then they pass it on to the children in Iraq who need it.

Being able to speak with soldiers made the project reality for the younger students.

"I think it was great for the middle schoolers to get to join in on this presentation because they were really able to see where their work on the care package drive will be going. I think everyone involved is now really excited after

the soldiers' presentation," senior Bethy Cunningham said.

PALS plans to make flyers to get the word out about their care package drive and to educate the public on what items are needed.

Once the drive is well known, boxes to collect donations will be put in the main lobby of the high school and middle school throughout the end of March and the beginning of April.

"We expect this project to be very rewarding because they spoke to us about how important it is that they have civilian support. I really hope that everyone who contributes gets something out of it," Eaton said.

WHAT TO DONATE

- Books/ magazines
- Board/ video games
- DVDs and CDs
- Long-distance phone cards
- Snacks (popcorn, ce real, granola bars, candy bars)
- Microwavable meals
- Coffee/ tea/ hot cocoa packets
- Sunscreen, antibacterial soap, sanitizers, hand lotion
- Beanie babies/ toys to give to local children

Debate: Students succeed at prestigious invitational tournament

Sophomore qualifies for Grand National Tournament, senior twins reach Tournament of Champions

By Kaitlin McDonagh
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Members of the debate team have succeeded at several major tournaments this year.

Seniors Luke and Max Elder earned their fifth bid to the National Tournament of Champions in January by advancing to elimination rounds in public forum debate in tournaments at Myers Park, Lexington High School, and Columbia University.

In all three of these tournaments, they advanced to the quarterfinal round.

Due to their success, the Elders were invited to a round robin tour-

namment. According to debate coach Jonathan Peele, getting invited to a round robin is an honor.

"It means that the host school's competitors and coaches know enough about your accomplishments that they believe you're one of the top teams in the country," Peele said.

At the Harker Tournament on March 7 and 8 located in San Jose, Calif., the Elders made elimination rounds again. Juniors Matt Hoyle and Jack Kelly also made elimination rounds in public forum.

Both public forum teams advanced to the final round in a closeout. Instead of debating each other, they were declared co-champions.

Juniors Eliza Cody and Jasmine Bailey finished the preliminary rounds with a 3-3 record in their first year in public forum debate.

At the tournament at the University of Columbia, they advanced to elimination rounds and reached the octafinal round.

Bailey and Cody almost made



CONNOR HOFF/ WWW.FACEBOOK.COM PHOTO

Students pose after debating at Columbia University. Both public forum teams advanced to the final round, and instead of having to debate each other, they were both declared champions.

elimination rounds in public forum debate at the tournament at Harvard University, as did Hoyle and Kelly.

At the National Qualifying Tournament on Feb. 7, sopho-

more Brittany Edwards qualified for the Grand National Tournament in Albany, NY.

According to Peele, it's usually harder for sophomores to compete in their first year at the varsity

level.

"Brittany has worked hard to be successful against the older competition and it's paid off for her. It's a great accomplishment," Peele said.



COURTESY OF TIM JORDAN



COURTESY SOF TEPHANIE SMITH

Students who participate in DECA (top left) and Robotics (top right) benefited from the Spaulding trust fund.

Spaulding trust funds DECA, Robotics Team, buys snowshoes for PE

By Kaitlin McDonagh
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Spending approximately \$50,000 on grants to the high school this year, the Spaulding Education Fund provided money for the Student Response System (SRS), and funds to support DECA and Robotics were given to the school from the Spaulding Education Fund.

Curriculum director Scott Morrison requested the grant for the SRS.

Using Microsoft PowerPoint, teachers can ask multiple-choice questions. Each student presses a button on a remote depending on what he/she thinks the answer is. A green light on the remote indicates if it is correct.

According to co-chair of the Spaulding Education Fund Amy Tuttle, "Teachers are interested in increasing their use of formative

assessment in order to target instruction and the SRS provides that."

Morrison said feedback from students and teachers is positive.

History teacher Kyle Grady has used SRS. "It allows me to address questions to the class and adjust my lesson depending on how they answer," Grady said.

The Fund provided the school with two sets of 24 devices.

Physical education classes have used snowshoes funded by the Spaulding Education Fund this winter. Spanish teacher Eric Magers requested the grant.

"They're fun because you can climb up hills without sliding down them," sophomore Abbi Biggar said.

The Spaulding Education Fund provided the DECA team with their annual grant to support travel and competitions and the Robotics team with a grant to participate in a national competition at Boston University.

Citylab instructs biology students through hands-on learning experience

By Bobina Vander Laan
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Biology students went to the Boston University, School of Medicine on Feb. 4, 5 and 25 to participate in Citylab, a hands-on DNA lab.

The National Institute of Health, The National Center for Research Resources, the Science Education Partnership Award and the Boston University School of Medicine fund Citylab, a science outreach program that provides access to state-of-the-art biotechnology labs for Massachusetts students in grades 7-12.

The labs included gel electrophoresis, transformation and PCR. Students learned how to go through each step of the lab and applied the steps to their own trials.

For the gel electrophoresis, students used authentic instruments to pinpoint the correct suspect in an invented crime scene. Apparatuses such as micropipettes and vortexes mirrored what biotechnologists use in modern crime labs.

Biology teacher and science department chair Erica Everett said students easily understood the instructions of the Citylab investigations. The classes had studied the function of bacteria and viruses and how to manipulate them to get an expected result.

"The instructors were impressed that the students knew so much already!" Everett said. "The diligence of the class was wonderful and everyone did well."

Sophomore Jessie Appeltoff said she enjoyed the experience. "It was cool to be in a real lab and get hands-on experience. It's eas-



COURTESY OF ERICA EVERETT

Advanced Placement biology students watch as the instructor demonstrates using a micropipette to transport DNA from one tube to another. Junior AP biology student Amanda Azadian said, "I did Citylab freshman year, and after that I got interested in science. It was one of the reasons I went on to take AP."

ier to understand the process of gel electrophoresis after doing it," she said.

In past years, a Citylab bus, the Mobilelab, traveled to the school, and biology students participated at lab benches inside. This is the first year the school participated at the School of Medicine.

"All-day field trips may be an inconvenience, but there are many advantages," Everett said. "There's a bigger lab area, and the overall experience is more realistic."

Everett, who worked at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute and a clinical hematology lab, said she is amazed that the students have the chance to undergo the labs.

"It's radically different from what I've done, but such a joy to see students implement the steps

learned in class," she said.

"The labs definitely had a positive impact on students. They get exposure to the field, which some may want to pursue as a job in the future. As for the instructors, they are wonderful role models," she said.

Junior and Advanced Placement biology student Amanda Azadian said the labs were interesting.

"I did Citylab freshman year, and after that I got interested in science. It was one of the reasons I went on to take AP."

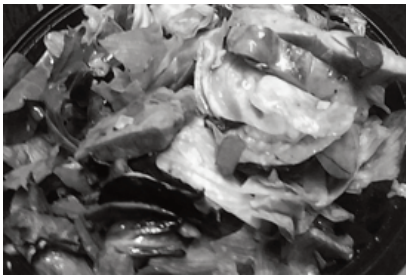
On Feb. 4, 5 and 25, freshman and sophomore biology classes each went for one day to Citylab. The Advanced Placement class attended the first two days to get more experience with the materials.

Health Matters

Fast-food restaurants offer healthful meal variety

By **Hannah Daley**
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Although fast-food stops at places like McDonald's, Burger King, and Wendy's are sometimes inevitable, customers can still choose to buy healthful meals.



FABULIZ/ FLICKR.COM

McD's Asian Chicken Salad \$4.59



VIRTUALEM/ FLICKR.COM

BK's Hamburger \$1.79



WENDYS.COM

Wendy's Ultimate Chicken Grill Sandwich \$4.29

McDonald's

Nutrition.mcdonalds.com suggests ordering an English muffin and grape jam (\$1), a fruit and yogurt parfait (\$1), and an orange juice for a breakfast meal (\$1.29), which contains 490 calories and 5 grams of fat.

For lunch and dinner, they suggest getting an Asian salad with grilled chicken (\$4.59), Newman's low fat sesame ginger dressing, and a 1% low fat white milk jug (\$1.29). This meal contains 100 calories and 2.5 grams of fat.

Burger King

According to Bk.com, the most healthful option for breakfast are the apple fries (\$1.79), which have 25 calories and 0 grams of fat, and a 6.67 oz Minute Maid apple juice (\$1.09), which has 100 calories.

Burger King's healthiest choices for lunch and dinner are its hamburger for \$1.29 (290 calories, 12 grams of fat), a side garden salad for \$1.19 (15 calories, 0 grams of fat), Ken's light Italian dressing (120 calories, 11 grams of fat), and Hershey's 1% Low Fat Milk for \$1.09 (110 calories, 2.5 grams of fat).

Wendy's

Breakfast meal options include a Strawberry Yogurt Squeezer for \$1 (70 calories, 0.5 g of fat), three bacon strips (45 calories, 3 grams of fat) for \$1, a mandarin orange cup for \$1 (80 calories), and a Nesquik low fat white milk for \$1.29 (100 calories, 2.5 grams of fat), according to Wendys.com.

Wendys.com persuades lunch and dinner goers to order their Ultimate Chicken Grill Sandwich for \$4.29 (320 calories, 7 grams of fat), a plain baked potato for \$2.19 (270 calories, 0 grams of fat), and a small Minute Maid light lemonade for \$1.19.

Student

Profile

Jordan Berger



DJ BALL PHOTO

By **DJ Ball**
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Grade:
12

What is your favorite color?
I don't have one; there are too many to choose.

What is your favorite animal?
Dolphins.

What is your least favorite word?
Chunky.

Britney or Beyoncé?
Britney, of course.

If you could be anyone in the world who would it be?
Donna Chung.

What is your favorite Disney Princess?
Cinderella because of the blond hair.

How do you feel about your last name being Berger?
I get made fun of too much about it.

What word best describes your personality?
Outgoing.

What is your biggest pet peeve?
When people make me repeat myself.

If you could be a tree, what type would you be?
A weeping willow like in Pocahontas.

Clues to thoughts, feelings appear in body language

Crossed arms, shuffling of feet, eye contact, and hand movements: These actions speak more than words, and will tell the truth even when the speaker doesn't. Recognizing body language gives insight to what others are thinking, helps detect lies, and improves communication skills. Everybody has individual motions, but general signs apply to most people. The more familiar you are with the person, the easier the language will be to read.

In daily conversation, people who ignore distractions, make and hold eye contact, and tilt their head forward are interested in the conversation. Those who fidget, have a blank face, and don't look at you are bored or impatient.

Happiness includes relaxation and a smile that make the eye corners crinkle. A fake smile won't reach the A smile means they're happy to see you, a blank expression signals they don't care.

Touching the face and a creased forehead represent nervousness or fear.

Liars maintain eye contact to appear sincere and blink often. If they're right-handed they'll look to the right to remember something and to the left to create a lie. Speaking excessively and not using contractions are attempts to make the lie believable.

Open and closed body language can signal whether or not to approach someone. Someone who appears relaxed with their hands at their sides or on their hips is open for interaction while crossed arms and slumping posture sends a closed message that they don't want to be bothered. Closed movements can be misconstrued if the person is feeling shy or uncomfortable.

Hand motions that connect with the content being spoken will emphasize speech.

Microexpressions are brief involuntary flashes or twitches that reveal the true emotion. They hint at distress, surprise, and other hidden emotions. Clenched fists and snarling or baring teeth are signs of anger.

MOLLY FRIEDMAN PHOTOS

By Rebecca Lynch, Independent Assistant Editor



Amazon Kindle combines technology with literature

By Emily Hammond
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

New in technology is the Amazon Kindle, a device used for reading electronic books.

The original Kindle was released in Nov. 2007. Due to its popularity, Amazon decided to create the Kindle 2, which was released on Feb. 24.

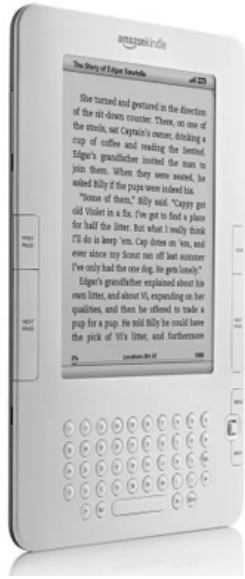
With the Amazon Kindle, books can be directly downloaded to the device where they stay in its library.

According to Amazon, it uses 3G wireless Internet making it possible to download books anytime without a computer. The books generally download within a minute.

Blogs, newspapers, and magazines can also be downloaded.

According to Amazon, the creators of Kindle have worked hard to make the display seem as real as possible. It reads like real paper with no glare, even in sunlight.

The creators take pride in making reading as comfortable as possible with the Kindle. It has adjustable text size, giving the reader six different size options. It



JINGLEFLY/FLICKR.COM PHOTO

The Amazon Kindle 2 is used to electronically read books and is made as realistic as possible.

weighs 10.2 ounces, lighter than a typical paperback, and is as thin as the average magazine. The creators have located buttons on either side of the Kindle for easy page turning.

With the Kindle 2 some changes have been made. The battery life is now 25% longer, making it possible to read for days

without recharging, and there's more storage space—enough to hold over 1,500 books.

Another new feature is the Text-to-Speech feature which lets Kindle read out loud.

Over 240,000 books are available on Kindle's database along with a wide selection of U.S. and international newspapers, magazines and blogs.

The Kindle 2 costs \$359, and each book download is \$9.99. It is currently available through Amazon.

FAST FACTS

- Used for reading electronic books.
- Directly download books to device.
- Reads like real paper.
- Kindle 2 costs \$359.
- Book downloads cost \$9.99.
- Battery life is 25% longer.

Names may influence academic success

Studies show 'desirable' names boost self-esteem

By Julia Melamed
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Have you ever wondered what your life would be like if you had a different name? Studies suggest that a person's name significantly affects his or her personality and success in life.

In 1954, a study conducted in New Jersey took a group of 1,682 boys and examined their case histories. The researchers found that boys with uncommon first names had a higher rate of mild to extreme emotional problems. These children might have been teased for their unusual names, thus leading to emotional issues.

Another study by the Journal of Educational Psychology looked at eight names, four of them girl names, four boy names. Four of them were considered "desirable": Karen, Lisa, David and Michael; while the other four were considered "undesirable": Bertha, Adele, Hubert and Elmer.

The study found that "teachers gave significantly higher grades to the work with more desirable names [on them]," adjustment counselor Karen Lucas said. "The more desirable the name, the higher expectation for achievement."

These tendencies are not limited to teachers, but the researchers studied educators because the grades given were a way to measure the effects of desirable and undesirable names.

FAST FACTS

- 'Desirable' names: Karen, Lisa, David, Michael
- 'Undesirable' names: Bertha, Adele, Hubert, Elmer
- Incarcerated people often have uncommon names.
- Michael is least common name in prison.
- The desirability of a name affects the child's self confidence.
- Unusual names of successful people: Oprah Winfrey, Tiger Woods, Albert Einstein

ure the effects of desirable and undesirable names.

The study suggested that "teachers expect children with

These children might have been teased for their unusual names, thus leading to emotional issues.

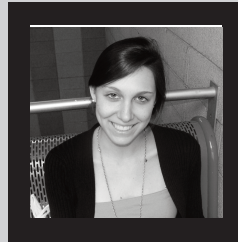
more desirable names to be more successful, and that translates into achievement," Lucas said.

The study by the Journal of Education Psychology also showed that standardized tests also provided evidence that children with desirable names scored higher, implying that the students expected a high level of achievement from themselves.

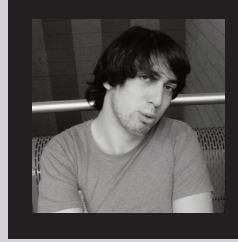
The desirability of a child's name also influences how he views himself. According to the study, "children who had more desirable names felt effective, attractive and valued," Lucas said.

Another study, published in the journal "Social Science Quarterly" in January 2009, found that incarcerated people had a higher rate of having unusual names. Michael is the least common name among those in prison.

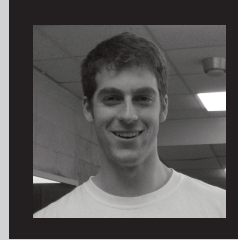
The studies were careful to say that many people who are successful have unusual names. For example, Tiger Woods, Albert Einstein and Oprah Winfrey all have unusual names but experienced remarkable success.



Senior Jen Bishop:
Hybrid



Senior Jake McIntosh:
Volvo



Junior Brian Ciccone:
Ford F150

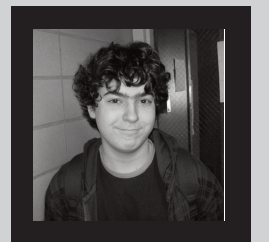


Junior Jasmine Bailey:
An old fashioned convertible

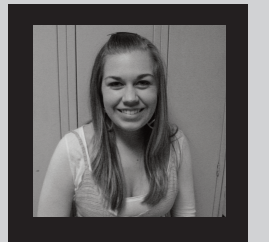


What car best represents your personality?

Sophomore Connor Hoff:
BMW 7 Series



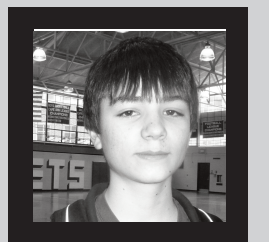
Sophomore Phoebe Thorne:
Mustang



Freshman Marisa Lewiecki:
Jeep



Freshman Ben Scarafoni:
'64 Impala





OBSERVETHEBANANA/FLICKR.COM
BOBINA VANDER LAAN GRAPHIC

Senior's life revolves around love of flying, desire to become pilot

By Annelise Eaton
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Senior Ysee Gedeon can recite the entire flight attendant speech, knows details about every major type of aircraft, and has Jetblue posters and stickers plastered on her binders, locker and Facebook profile.

Her love of flying finds its way into almost every aspect of her life, she said.

Gedeon, who grew up in Trinidad and Tobago, was 3 when she decided she wanted to be a pilot, an occupation she describes as "a glorified bus driver."

Her sister, junior Roisin

Gedeon, said this interest stems from her exposure to flying during her childhood.

"It has been a part of her life since a young age because both my mother and father were involved in aviation," she said, "my mother being a flight attendant and my father being a pilot."

Gedeon said

she fell in love with the feeling of

controlling a plane when her dad would take her for lessons as a child.

"I would sit in the copilot seat and he would let me fly," she said.

Gedeon said her interest in flying has become part of her identity.

"When I was younger, it was something to look forward to," she said.

'You have to find your own thing in life that you like. Boys like robots, girls like Barbies, and I'd just get up and run around the plane. It's just unexplainable.'
-YSEE GEDEON

"You have to find your own thing in life that you like. Boys like robots, girls like Barbies, and I'd just get up and run around the plane. It's just unexplainable."

In order to fulfill her dream, Gedeon applied to colleges with strong flight programs. She has been accepted into her top choices: Purdue University and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

If she chooses Embry-Riddle, she'll study aviation science. At Purdue she would major in aviation management while taking flight lessons to become a pilot.

"I'd have the licensing to become an airline transport pilot, the highest level of pilot, when I grad-

uate," she said of Embry-Riddle.

Her final goal, after working at a smaller airline for several years, is to work for Jetblue because "they treat their customers and their employees with kindness. They just have respect for the industry," she said.

Senior Holly Ream said she finds Gedeon's dedication to her goal "refreshing."

"[Her] commitment and dedication to something that fills her with such...satisfaction has only grown to impress me," she said.

For Gedeon, this commitment comes naturally.

"It's like a sport you really like," she said. "You don't know why, you just really like it."

Community service programs: A broad variety of options are available to aid your community

Restoring your community should be something that betters your surroundings and leaves you feeling as if you helped accomplish a task. Many different groups are always looking for and accepting volunteers.

Homelessness is an ongoing problem across the globe. People are constantly trying to help and avoid this issue, and Boston has many shelters and programs to fix the problem.

The Food Project

The Food Project based in Boston, Lynn, and Lincoln, sells locally grown produce to shelters and residents of Boston's inner city and suburbs. Planting, transplanting, weeding, soil preparation, harvesting, and cleaning up are all parts of the project.

The work is mainly described as challenging, tiring, and fun, but in the end very rewarding. No prior experience is necessary and committing to once or twice a week throughout the season is all to be expected from the volunteer.

The North Shore contact information based in Lynn is 781.346.6726.

Pathways for Children

A more local program is Pathways for Children in Gloucester, a recreational service that offers other supportive programs for kids and families from Ipswich, Essex, Gloucester, Rockport, and Manchester. The program serves kids ages 6 weeks to 13 years. Volunteers help with administrative tasks, projects, field trips, and working one on one or in a group with children.

If you're interested in volunteering for Pathways for Children, call 978.281.2400.



BOBINA VANDER LAAN ILLUSTRATION

Pine Street Inn

Pine Street Inn, located in Boston, offers a variety of community service programs ranging from preparing meals to being a clinic receptionist. Their goal is to help end homelessness in Boston by offering housing, emergency shelter, food, job training, street outreach, and treatment for mental health and substance abuse.

Volunteers are asked to help with all these programs. The program also provides an educational tour, giving the workers a deeper understanding on what they're working for.

Pine Street Inn offers volunteering all through the day and is open 24 hours a day 365 days a year.

To contact Pine Street Inn, call 617.892.9186.

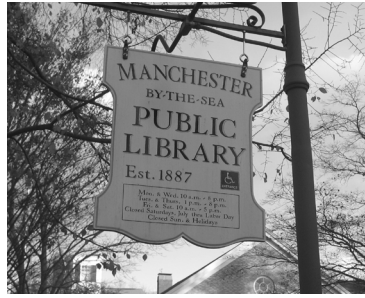
Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels, a program that is based all around the globe, provides meals and companionship for senior citizens who are no longer able to take care of themselves. Some of the clients are rarely visited and look forward to spending time with the deliverer.

Volunteers prepare and package food, organize schedules, make phone calls, load delivery trucks, and deliver the food. When scheduling hours, they accept a more flexible schedule and leave room for adjustments.

To sign up for Meals on Wheels, call the Manchester Town Hall at 978.526.7500.

Avoid procrastination: Easy ways to break the habit

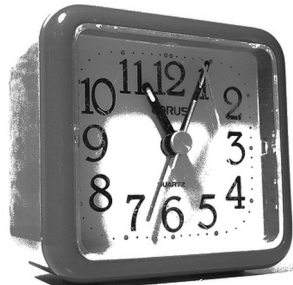


EMILY HAMMOND PHOTO

Find a quiet location.

When doing homework, location is key. You will never finish your assignment if you sit in the loudest room in the house; be sure to avoid the center of the home.

Pick a place to study with few distractions – no people, pets, or televisions. These are all things that can sidetrack you, start conversation, or simply give you a reason to stop working.



ENTONS/ FLICKR.COM

Work near a clock.

Another suggestion is to work near a clock. This will help you keep track of time so you will not waste hours on Facebook.

With a clock close by, you can set time constraints. Try to finish a certain amount of work within the hour, then move to the next task. You will move even faster with a set time limit.



NYCGRAEME/ FLICKR.COM

Keep your workspace clear.

If you are working at a desk, make sure your space is clutter-free. More things in sight mean more distractions. With fewer objects, the temptation to fidget will disappear.



MARIAN.TOMIC/ FLICKR.COM

Set up an award system

If necessary, you can set up an award system for yourself. If you do an hour of work, take a break, then do another hour. To sit down and tediously work for hours is not realistic — you should reward yourself for your hard work.



-NATHAN/ FLICKR.COM

Avoid the computer.

Most importantly, do not have your computer on while doing homework (unless for school purposes). Programs like Facebook and AIM can be huge disruptions; hours of time will potentially be lost before you start any work.

By Kyle Marsh, Independent Assistant Editor

New software allows Facebook access at school

By Sophie Hagberg
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

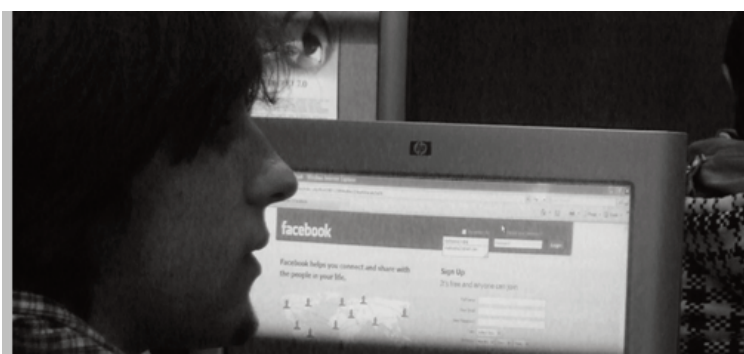
This year, the school's computer systems were updated. Among those updates was new web-blocking software, which has caused confusion among students.

According to principal James Lee, there is no cause for concern.

"This year, the school switched to new software for web blocking," Lee said. "Because this software has different filters, the blocked and unblocked sites are going to be different."

One of the most obvious changes was the unblocking of the popular social networking site Facebook. Although the site has been previously inaccessible, it is now available from school computers.

Although this is generally a good thing, many students are suspicious that the administration is able to gain



MOLLY FRIEDMAN PHOTO

Despite updated web-blocking software that allows Facebook, the administration cannot gain passwords, access e-mail, or do anything seriously invasive.

'We can't just pull up any given page that a student was on in the past. We are only able to look at what a student is doing at the present time.'

-PRINCIPAL JAMES LEE

passwords, access to sites, and generally invade their privacy by unblocking such sites. According to Lee, this is not true.

"We can't just pull up any given page that a student was on in the past," Lee said. "We are only able to look at what a

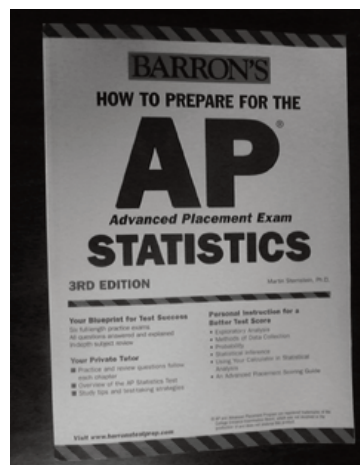
student is doing at the present time."

According to Lee, the school

monitors web use exactly like a home computer would. Each student has a log, like the history sidebar on any given web browser, which lists the sites that the student has visited. The administration cannot gain passwords, access email, or do anything seriously invasive. The purpose of the logs is just to track what students are visiting inappropriate websites from school.

Facebook being unblocked at school is a complete coincidence and a result of the new software.

"It's just like having access to Yahoo! Email or any other site," Lee said. "It seems beneficial for students, so we see no problem leaving it unblocked."



STEPHANIE SMITH PHOTOS

In order to encourage students to do well on the AP exam, the AP Incentive Program is offering a monetary reward for high scores in some schools.

Some Massachusetts schools paying students for high AP exam scores

By Sophie Hagberg
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

AP classes are notoriously rigorous. These classes are known for their extremely taxing study schedules, heavy homework loads, and for presenting a challenge to those enrolled in them. In order to encourage students to do well on the AP exam, some schools are offering a monetary reward for high scores.

According to MassInsight.org, in 2007, 10 schools in Dallas, Texas, received funding through the National Math and Science Initiative to re-vamp their AP programs. This program aims to increase enrollment and raise scores in Advanced Placement math,

English, and science courses across the country. Part of the initiative is the AP Incentive Program, which gives students \$100 for every exam they score a 3, 4, or 5 on using a 1-5 scale.

In addition to improving scores and increasing enrollment, the

program also serves to encourage students who wouldn't normally take APs to participate. Instead of restricting Advanced Placement to the academically elite, it allows students with lower GPAs to enroll.

In Massachusetts, 10 schools were selected from a pool of applicants to try the National Math and Science Initiative, including the AP Incentive Program. The schools are Worcester North, Marlborough High School, Revere High School,

Part of the initiative is the AP Incentive Program, which gives \$100 for every exam [students] score a 3, 4, or 5 on using a 1-5 scale.

Malden High School, Chelsea High School, Milton High School, Northampton High School, Springfield Central High School, the Springfield Renaissance School, and Boston's John D. O'Bryant School of Math and Science.

According to the National Math and Science Initiative website, the schools selected for the trial period had mediocre or below average AP enrollment and scores.

If the program proves effective, the National Math and Science Initiative will most likely expand the program to over 100 schools in Massachusetts.

continued from page 1

DECA International Qualifiers

Name	Place
Amanda Azadian	2
Jordan Biggar	1
Charlotte Cheshire	1
Monique Costello	4
Kyle Donovan	1
Emily Hammond	1
Timothy Jordan	3
Elsa Keefe	3
Eric Kimball	4
Jeffrey Kimball	4
Emily Malik	4
Julia Martz	2
Spenser Peterson	1
Oliver Spalding	1
Erik Walder	1

Smoking

President Obama should break his addiction

Pro

Laurel Edington

President Barack Obama is running the country and is an influence to every American citizen. With people always looking up to him, he needs to quit smoking cigarettes even though it has been a 20-year-old habit.

Obama is powerful, and he can use that in order to be a role model for both adults and children when it comes to quitting smoking.

The public looks up to him, so if he quits, he will prove that anybody can stop. He can help with the public's perception of smoking and smoking-related health problems and save them the cost of buying cigarettes and dealing with smoking-related health issues.

Ironically, Obama has plans to fix America's health care system, but smokers cost the system billions of dollars in health costs.

If Obama keeps smoking, he is going against his plan for the healthcare system because he is contributing to the problem. The cost of doctors and hospitals and treatment that comes with the ailments brought along from smoking are hurting the system that he wants to fix.

Smokers have a higher chance of being diagnosed with cancer, especially lung cancer, and other diseases like emphysema and coronary heart disease than nonsmokers.

If Obama unfortunately develops one of these illnesses, he won't be able to protect our country as well as he should.

Additionally, because Hillary and Bill Clinton banned smoking in the White House or on the grounds, Obama will have to leave the premises to smoke.

His smoking habit isn't only harmful to himself but also to his family and everybody else who lives in the White House. Secondhand and thirdhand smoke also can cause serious illnesses and fatalities.

Cigarettes are toxic, and the smoke that Obama exhales and the smoke that comes off of the cigarettes contains poisons that are harmful to anybody who breathes that air, especially his wife and his children.

His smoking habit goes against his love of staying fit and healthy. Pictures, videos, and articles are in the news that show how Obama loves to stay in shape and keep up a healthy lifestyle for both himself and his family.

Quitting smoking will make it easier for him to breathe while working out and will keep him healthy enough to be able to play with his children while they're still young.



BOBINA VANDER LAAN ILLUSTRATION

Obama is sitting in the Oval Office, unable to focus. He's exhausted, cranky, can't concentrate on current issue, and is overly anxious. Is this how we want our president to be dealing with a crisis? The White House should change its rules or else the entire nation will suffer because the president isn't allowed to smoke in the building.

Con

Julia Melamed

America is focused on banning smoking: commercials bombard the television set introducing new methods of quitting, and the majority of the country made smoking in public buildings illegal. But should the White House change its rules and allow President Barack Obama to smoke in his house?

Smoking is prohibited in the White House and on the grounds. Obama claims that although he hasn't been completely successful, he is trying to quit and promises not to smoke in the White House; however, quitting smoking comes with consequences: the withdrawals are excruciating.

Nicotine, the main ingredient in cigarettes, is highly addictive. When one tries to quit smoking, he or she suffers from symptoms of nicotine withdrawal that do not last long but often drive the person to return to his habit. These symptoms include irritability, insomnia, fatigue, inability to concentrate, anxiety, depression, mood swings, and more.

Regular use of cigarettes has harmful effects on the body, however, continuing to smoke will prevent the above symptoms, which are inconvenient and debilitating. Although quitting smoking will not produce every symptom possible, any one of them could severely affect the president, thus harming the nation.

The current rules don't force Obama to quit smoking, but they won't let him bring his habit into the White House. If he wants a cigarette, he will have to leave the property with Secret Service providing constant security.

The president should be allowed to continue his habit in the White House because his craving for a cigarette will persist when he has to spend extended periods of time in the Executive Mansion. His meetings and appointments can't be put on hold when he needs a cigarette break.

Here's a hypothetical scenario: Obama decides that because smoking is unhealthy and he isn't allowed to pursue his habit in his house, he vows that he will have his last cigarette and then abandon tobacco altogether. Twenty-four hours later, America suffers a severe crisis. The entire nation is shaking and turns toward Obama for help.

However, Obama can't provide the urgent help needed because he's undergoing his own crisis. His body is in turmoil, craving for more cigarettes, but he can't leave the White House to smoke because he needs to make serious decisions affecting his nation, and there's no time to waste.

Increased permit test difficulty benefits driver safety

By Maura Driscoll
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Recently, the Mass. Department of Motor Vehicles' permit test has increased its requirements.

Traditionally, the first step in receiving a permit in Massachusetts was answering 14 out of 20 questions correctly on a test. But a few weeks ago, the DMV altered the test.

Instead of being allotted six incorrect answers on a 20-question test, teens are now expected to answer 18 questions correctly out of 25. The added questions on the exam are also more difficult.

On my 16th birthday, I took the permit test for the first time. I was unaware of the requirement changes then, so I didn't anticipate such a struggle to pass.

Unfortunately, I had to learn these modifications the hard way. No one had told me that the test was longer or that it was more difficult. I discovered those changes on my own when I failed my permit test the first time I took it.

At first, I was enraged with the RMV. How could they have changed the test a week before I was scheduled to take the exam? It was so unfair. But the more I considered it, the less cheated I felt.

Failing was my own fault. Then

again, I had been given an especially difficult test. After I had calmed down, I realized that the longer test wasn't such a bad idea after all.

Passing the previous test was not a guarantee that the successful test taker even knew the basic rules of the road. With 25 questions on the new test, those who receive a permit are proven to have a better understanding of driver safety.

Despite the fact that teenagers across Massachusetts are probably annoyed with the newest development, this change does more good than it does harm. The more knowledgeable our young drivers are, the better.



NICK BOUWER CARTOON



Presidency requires support from both parties

DJ BALL

Since we have a new president, aren't all our problems supposed to disappear? Although this is a cheery and optimistic outlook on the presidency as a powerful mechanism for eliciting change, this belief is naïve.

I always shared the same optimism and beliefs about the incoming president, but it only took me one class of AP Government to realize how wrong I was about the president's ability to make change.

President Obama will have to be a leader of both Republicans and Democrats, which is a good thing.

From working with Congress to gaining public approval, the presidency is a pit of disappointment if the incoming president does not know how to play the game of politics.

I call it a game because no presidents, unless they hold the majority in both houses of Congress, are able to get any legislation through without knowing how to play.

They not only have to pull strings, but they might even have to cater to the opposing political party like we have seen in the recent passing of the Economic Stimulus Package.

Although President Barack Obama came through as the leader who would act swiftly and effectively, he met great opposition from Republicans when trying to pass this gigantic stimulus bill. Though the Democrats in the House were able to pass the bill with no Republican support, in order to make the bill a law, the Democrats needed some Republican support in the senate.

When three Republicans decided to support the bill, they in turn made themselves the most important people in the Conference Committee because without their support, the bill would fail when newly designed, which allowed these Republicans to get some of their incentives into the bill.

Although most of the administration's opposition says there is little bipartisanship as the president had promised during his campaign, in order to get his job done, President Obama will have to be a leader of both Republicans and Democrats, which is a good thing.

STAFF EDITORIAL

March vacation would cause undue stress

In last month's Independent, Rebecca Lynch wrote an opinion against a potential proposal to eliminate February and April vacations and create a March vacation; this change was thought to be for the distant future.

Although the School Committee considered consolidating the one-week February and April vacations into a one-week March vacation last year, it was too late in the planning process to make the change for the 2008-2009 school year, according to the Gloucester Daily Times.

Now they're reconsidering the idea. School Committee members said having vacations in February and April makes the academic schedule choppy, and having one vacation would increase students' focus on academics.

Increasing time between vacations will elicit the opposite effect. Forcing students to concentrate on their studies and on winter and spring sports from the beginning

of January to mid-March and from mid-March to the end of June will backfire.

These long stretches of endless work will wear students down. The current schedule is not disruptive; students welcome the breaks as opportunities to rest and refresh their minds and return to school more willing to work and more able to concentrate.

Also, placing a vacation right before MCAS tests in late March and early April would disrupt preparation for the tests.

The School Committee also said having two weeks off is hard on working parents who need to provide care for their children during vacations.

While this may be true for some parents, many parents enjoy taking time off to take their children on family vacations. If parents

have children in other school districts with the traditional February and April vacations, they will never be able to take a family vacation without pulling at least one child out of school.

For teachers in this district with children in another, the switch to a March vacation would cause teachers to be on vacation at different times than their children. This places financial stress on teachers who would have to find childcare during February and April breaks.

The School Committee also said a one-week break would allow school to end earlier in the year. Due to a late Labor Day, a two-week Christmas vacation and two snow days, school will end on June 25 this year.

Shortening Christmas break

while keeping both vacations would also allow school to end earlier.

Another concern is the potential conflict with sports schedules. If other schools have February and April vacations, student athletes will be unable to travel during March because they will have sports practices and games.

Additionally, semi-finals for Dramafest always occur in mid-March. Students who have a vacation during semi-finals are forced to choose between a vacation and competition.

Clearly, sacrificing February and April vacations to create a single March vacation will cause confusion with schedules, conflicts for families who want to vacation, and added stress for students and teachers.

Students, teachers and families should make their thoughts known now, before the School Committee makes a final decision on this important schedule change.

These long stretches of endless work will wear students down.

Students feel judged by college request for career plans

By Annelise Eaton
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Forget the dreaded college essays. While writing leaves room for explanation, college applicants often feel they are being judged without room for justification when filling out the box titled "future career plans."

In less than a sentence, 17-to18-year-olds are asked to tell the admissions committee how they envision themselves spending their lives, which is a lot to ask of students who have not yet taken most introductory level courses.

High school merely sets the groundwork to help students decide which area of study they most enjoy or find least challenging, but it does not prepare them for specialized study.

For example, economics may

seem a realistic possibility for a student who excels in mathematics, but one can never be sure until he has taken at least economics 101, which is not a class offered at many high schools.

Although "undecided" is a choice at some schools, students may steer away from this option in fear of appearing to possess a lack of ambition or foresight.

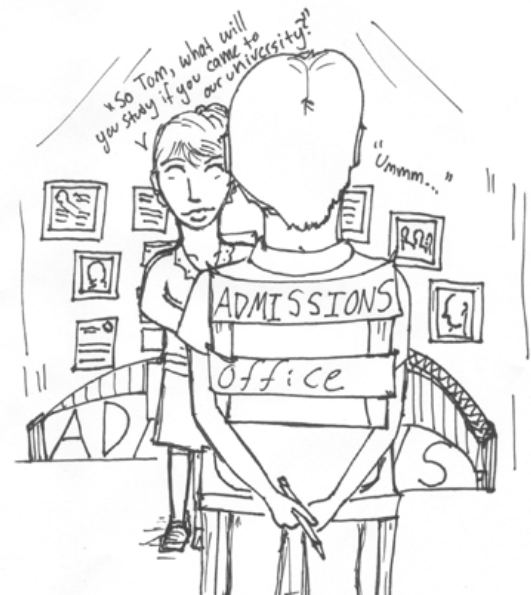
While admissions committees have the right to ask students about their career plans in order to round out the class, they should combat students' fears of being judged by leaving room for explanation and allowing students to state how set they are in their plans.

This would tell the school much more about the applicant's personality by explaining which aspects of the field the student finds most appealing.

Many colleges, in their numer-

ous letters to prospective students, state the importance of entering college with an open mind. In forcing students to state their career plans or choose a specific

school to apply to, such as the school of engineering or business, colleges limit students' ability to shape their plans based on their college experience.



DJ BALL CARTOON

the INDEPENDENT

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The Independent is published monthly throughout the school year. It is a product of the Manchester-Essex Regional High School Journalism class.

Editorial space is available to all MERHS students, faculty, and community members.

All submissions must be signed and put in the newspaper mailbox in the front office of MERHS.

The Independent reserves the right not to print letters and to edit the content for clarity and length. While letters can be critical of an individual's actions, they cannot slander or libel.

The staff editorial may be considered the opinion of the staff of The Independent. By-line opinions are written by individual staff members and should not be considered representative of the entire staff.

The Independent staff hopes that all Manchester and Essex citizens will take advantage of this forum. The paper is meant to serve the school community, and we are open to suggestions to help it better serve its purposes.

New coffee rule leaves students frustrated, confused

By Sophie Hagberg
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Recently, a school rule which seemed to be forgotten is being enforced with a new fervor. The rule dictates that students may not have any beverage other than water in classrooms.

Although this regulation was previously only enforced by a few teachers, the "coffee rule" is now much more strictly enforced.

There doesn't seem to be any point to why we are forbidden from drinking coffee in the morning.

According to Assistant Principal Paul Murphy, the recent tightening up on the policy is to train students to not bring beverages

that stain into the new school.

The handbook does not specify a penalty for breaking the rule.

The coffee rule is different for each class. While some teachers completely ignore students with coffee cups or travel mugs, others will enforce the rule stringently.

There is even variation among the teachers who punish students.

Among the teachers who enforce the rule, there are various responses when a student ignores it. Some teachers simply remind the student that only water is allowed in

classrooms, without taking any action. Others will ask the student to put the drink away, and either give a detention or take no action.

In the most extreme cases, teachers will give a detention and force the student to throw away or

pour out the beverage.

In addition to being nonspecific, the coffee rule seems pointless. Coffee is no more distracting to drink than water.

As for spilling, clumsy students will upend their water bottle just as often, regardless of the liquid. Coffee is less likely to be spilled because a travel mug will not pop open if dropped or shaken.

Teachers are allowed to have whatever beverage they want whenever they want—all students are asking for is a few minutes to finish their morning caffeine so they can get through the extremely early morning.

An effective solution would be to allow travel mugs during the first 15 to 20 minutes of the school day.

Collectively, students are not crying out for eating in classrooms, or longer lunch periods, or anything extreme.

All we want is time to finish our drinks before finishing the rest of the school day.

All we want is time to finish our drinks before finishing the rest of the school day.



DJ BALL CARTOON

AP foreign language students should attend International Week

Weeklong event provides exposure to other cultures, supplies break from heavy, stressful workload

By Stephanie Smith
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

International Week allows students a unique opportunity to learn about foreign cultures and is a valuable part of the foreign language program, yet AP foreign language students cannot attend the event because of the material they must learn before the AP test.

This exclusion is unfair to the language program's highest-level students.

Attending International Week means missing four classes, but the benefits of hearing the speakers makes up for the lost time by giving students a look into a new culture.

This exposure is refreshing and interesting as Manchester and Essex lack cultural diversity; according to the 2000 U.S. census, 98.9% of Manchester's population is white, and 98.5% of Essex's population is white.

Further more, AP teachers could assign homework during the week to help keep on schedule, and the school could find speakers to present in the target language so the students would still be learning and absorbing the language they are studying.

AP students should also be allowed to attend International Week to relieve some of their stress.

AP foreign language courses are demanding. Although students chose to take on that heavy load, the slight relaxation provided by International Week would actually help

them to learn and perform better.

International Week falls during March, the only month of school without long weekends or vacations.

March already seems to be the longest month, with weather too dreary to venture outside and only the weekends to brighten long weeks of work.

Combine that with the added pressure of finals in April and AP tests in May, and frustrated, nervous students result.

Students can't work as well when they're burned out.

Having a weeklong reprise from one class each day would let students refresh themselves and renew their interest in their studies, and it would expose them to different traditions and ideas.

Although students chose to take on that heavy load, the slight relaxation provided by International Week would actually help them to learn and perform better.

College junk mail is more detrimental than helpful to application process

By Bobina Vander Laan
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

As the second half of the school year begins, every junior must acknowledge what looms ever closer: college. The most notable indicator is the huge amounts of college mail.

If one was unfortunate enough to check the yes box on the PSAT, he may notice the sudden onslaught of mail coming his way from hundreds of colleges.

Mail comes both through the mailbox and inbox without restraint, and schools have even started to call students' home phones.

The obvious goal of these schools is to convince the potential applicant to go to their school; however, this cascade is detrimental instead of promotional.

In opening any piece of college mail, one may notice it fol-

lows the same basic format as others.

First comes the compliment. The school will praise the students' PSAT score, honor their grades, and possibly comment on how the college search has begun in earnest. If the students are confused, the college says they are there to help.

Second comes the connection. The college claims to fit perfectly with the potential applicant's personality, forgoing the fact that the college knows nothing on the student's actual personality. Perhaps the admissions committee has a feeling, or perhaps they are desperate. The colleges will try to convince the students to apply, but they know students are skeptical of investing time into the research. Which leads to the final part, the offer.

The colleges consistently end with, "Why not take our quiz/read our guide/receive a packet? We're



NICK BOUWER CARTOON

making the college process easier!"

Even the most oblivious of students will notice the transparent offer. If one takes the quiz, the answer will always be that particular school. If one gets the guide, it will convince him to go to that college. If one receives a packet about starting the college process, the last step will surely lead him to applying to their school.

One could understand if the mail was helping to find the perfect college, but the sheer number of letters makes it impossible to choose.

The best advice is to forget the college mail. Recycle that mountainous pile of mail and clear that inbox. Other ways to research colleges, from books to the Internet, are available to students. Colleges should save resources and most importantly, the student's remaining sanity. At least until college follow-up letters appear.

Boys' basketball team loses by 1 against Snowden in quarterfinals

By Maura Driscoll
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

At the end of their season, the boys' varsity basketball team had a record of 13-9 after losing to Snowden in the second round of the state tournament.

Because of their high position as sixth seed, the team received a home court for both of the playoff games.

The first game against 11th-seeded Trinity Catholic High School ended well for the boys. At the half, the team led Trinity Catholic 35-28.

Sophomore Joseph Mussachia was the highest scorer of the game with 19 points. Senior captain Kyle Donovan trailed behind Mussachia with 14 points, includ-



DJ BALL PHOTO

The boys' basketball team gathers before continuing their quarterfinals game against Snowden, who defeated them 53-52. Sophomore Joseph Mussachia was the high scorer with 25 points.

ing three 3-pointers. Junior Brian Ciccone also scored high, accumulating 12 points for the team.

In the end, the boys took home a 66-51 win and advanced to the next round.

Again awarded a home court game due to their higher seed, the boys were matched against 14th-seed, Snowden High School.

At the half, the boys led 26-24. By the end of the game, Snowden had pulled ahead by a single point, winning 53-52.

High scoring team members were Mussachia with 25 points, Ciccone with 10 points, junior Willie Baun with 8 points, senior captain Zeke Gillette with 8 points, and Donovan with 7 points.

Coach Duane Sigsbury told the Manchester Cricket, "Alex Carr, Jim Finn and Pat Orlando stepped up and played to a different level of intensity."

Sigsbury described the game to the Cricket, "With 14 seconds left the Hornets stole the ball and

quickly called a timeout with nine seconds to go. Coming off the timeout, Pat Orlando passed to a wide-open Brian Ciccone who went straight up to the hoop. But a Snowden defender made the play of the game, leaping up to block the winning shot with no time left. It was a great game and one that will not be forgotten in Manchester for a long time."

According to sophomore Alex Carr, it was a tough way to end the season. "It's definitely hard to come this far and then lose such a close game, but we had a great team this year that worked hard and improved a lot," he said.

Returning team members aren't losing hope. "We're going to have a great team next year, too," Carr said.

Girls' basketball

Team reaches quarterfinals in Div. IV state tournament, loses to Matignon

By Hannah Daley
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With a final record of 16-6, the girls' basketball team won their first Div. IV state tournament game 77-47 against Maimonides and lost in the quarterfinals against Matignon 47-44.

Coach Lauren DuBois said the team did a great job in the first round of States.

"The girls did a tremendous job. The whole team contributed offensively and defensively," she said.

According to sophomore point guard Lizzy Ball, the team came together during the first game.

"Everyone stepped up to the plate, and we worked as a team," she said.

Although DuBois thought the girls did an incredible job, she said the crowd also helped.

"It's so fun to have a packed gym. Just knowing you have the support of the school always helps," she said.

DuBois said the team struggled to get the offense going in the quarterfinals against Matignon.

"We played hard, but we just couldn't get enough points. We played hard and never counted ourselves out," she said.

DuBois and Ball both said the team played well defensively and got a lot of rebounds during the game.

Ball was the high scorer of the game with 18 points, and junior Sam Christopher scored 13 points.

The high school basketball season may be over for the girls this year, but they improved a lot

since the beginning of the season, according to DuBois.

"The girls improved their confidence and character. We never gave up. We were always in the game to win, whether we were up by a lot or down by a lot," she said.

DuBois said the team did not achieve their main goal of getting all the way to the Garden; however, they are still proud of what they accomplished.

"I have many fond memories of the season, and the girls grew closer and closer. I'm going to miss the seniors the most next season," she said.

Senior captain Jordan Biggar and Ball enjoyed having DuBois as a coach this season.

"Ms. DuBois is a great coach. She knows a lot about the game through her experience playing,



COURTESY OF HANNAH DUMONT

Members of the girls' basketball team gather for a team photo after the first round tournament game. The girls lost in the quarterfinals to Matignon 47-43, but finished with a record of 16-6.

but she is also very close to the team. We can all go to her if we have any kind of problem," Biggar said.

"She has definitely been the best coach I've ever had. She's fair and fun, but strict at the same time. She's awesome," Ball said.

Hockey meets goal to play in state tournament, loses in first round against Marblehead

Team looks forward to playing next season, wants to work on improving defensive line

By Nick Bouwer
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Ending its season with a loss, the Manchester/Rockport hockey team still accomplished its goal to play in the state tournament. The team ended the season with a record of 8-8-3.

In the first tournament game, Marblehead defeated the team 10-1.

According to junior Pat Hofmann and sophomore Cam Smith, the game was an accomplishment but also disappointing.

"We met our goal for the season, but still when you play, you want to do some damage, and in the tournament game we practically did nothing, so it wasn't a great end," Smith said.

'We had come a long way, and I think we did really well, but with the tournament game we just had zero intensity and zero desire, so it wasn't a good showing'
-PAT HOFMANN

had zero intensity and zero desire, so it wasn't a good showing," Hofmann said.

"It was a great season. Everything besides the tournament game was great. We had come a long way, and I think we did really well, but with the tournament game we just



COURTESY OF MATT GRAVES

Junior Matt Graves fights for the puck against a Marblehead defender in the first round of the state tournament. The boys' hockey team lost 10-1, but met their goal of making it to States.

Coach Dereck Papalegis also said it was not such a great end to the season, but he didn't think it

was a complete loss.

"The tournament game was not how we expected it to be. Marble-

head is a very strong team, and I think we were just kind of nervous to start out, so we didn't bring our best game in and that's what caused us to lose. However, we had a great season, and we met our goal so the season didn't end too badly," Papalegis said.

Even though the season just ended, Papalegis and Hofmann think the team has a good future.

"We have a lot of young sophomores, and even though we are losing a few seniors, we have promise. I definitely think our goals will be the same if not higher for next year," Papalegis said.

"We have to work on our defense next year because we'll be short a few players, but overall I think if we try hard enough next time around we can go beyond what we accomplished this year," he added.

Opinion

Complaints to officials fail to help team

By Rebecca Lynch
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Jeers, yells, and boos in sports are mainly directed at the officials, who in most cases, are not deserving of the verbal abuse they receive.

An official's purpose is to provide a fair and justified competition for the players of the game. Often, one side seemingly receives unfair calls when in reality, the referee or umpire made a poor judgment.

Officials are required for any organized sport, and without them, there would be no order in the game. Penalties and fouls are restrictions they enforce to create a fair system of play.

Poor calls and missed fouls are ultimately the referee's fault, but they receive more grief than they should. Officials can greatly affect a game, but most teams should be



MARK6MAUNO / FLICKR

Poor calls and missed fouls are the referee's fault, but they receive more grief than they should.

able to play past the poor play calling. The worst officials position an obstacle, but they can't stop a team from winning.

Players, fans, and even coaches want someone to blame when losing. After one seemingly bad call the referee is disliked, and after a

few more poor calls, that dislike is solidified into hatred and a reason for the outcome of the game.

Complaints come from players on the bench and to a harsher extent, the fans. The play in question is over, and only in professional levels can the call get reviewed.

Instead of channeling anger towards the officials, players should focus on their opponent, while fans should encourage their team's effort.

Officials are often people who don't play the sport anymore. They have been around the game

After one seemingly bad call the referee is disliked, and after a few more poor calls, that dislike is solidified into hatred and reason for the outcome of the game.

their whole lives and have experience with observing and playing. If they did play, they had numerous poor officials themselves.

Play calling may be an important factor in the game, but along with the opponent's defense, poor officials are obstacles that must be overcome in order to win.

Featured Athletes

Junior travels to States and Sectionals at Harvard

Moore places ninth at States for diving

Plans to make dives 'bigger and more difficult' next season

By Brittany Edwards
INDEPENDENT STAFF



MOLLY FRIEDMAN PHOTO

Junior Caroline Moore qualified for States and Sectionals at Harvard University. Depending on the judges, she usually scores a 6. Moore, who has been swimming since sophomore year, was driven to join the team by a family friend.

One of the three-person diving team, junior Caroline Moore qualified for States and Sectionals which were held at Harvard University on Feb. 22.

Moore, who has been swimming since sophomore year, was driven to join the team by a family friend.

"She taught and used to dive, so I heard a lot about diving from her," Moore said.

Maddy Huleatt noted Moore's improvement from practicing throughout last spring and fall.

"The whole team has gotten better this year, and Caroline has really improved," Huleatt said.

All diving meets are away during the week although some are held on weekends. Each competitor dives six times at each meet.

'Generally people get fives, but dives are considered more difficult if you add in flips and twists.'

-CAROLINE MOORE

Divers are scored by a panel of three judges on a scale of one to 10 with variables such as degree of difficulty.

Moore said that depends on the judges, but she usually gets around a 6.

"Generally people get fives, but dives are considered more difficult if you add in flips and twists. My favorite dive is the Inward dive which has you land backwards in the water head first,"

Moore said.

Moore also swims competitively.

"I do whatever they need people in. I mostly do the breast stroke," Moore said.

To qualify, divers need to have a certain score at two meets. For sectionals, divers have to score at least 165 twice, and the States requirement is 172 twice. Moore qualified for Sectionals and the State diving tournament specifically at the Ipswich and CAL diving meets. At States, Moore advanced to finals and placed ninth.

"You get a sense of what you are doing in the air after a while," Moore said.

Divers can sometimes watch video clips of themselves in action when a camera is available. Team members have to provide a camera.

Moore looks forward to next year's season. "I am diving next year. In general, I want to make my dives bigger and more difficult," she said.

FAST FACTS

- Started swimming as a sophomore.
- Qualified for States and Sectionals at Harvard.
- Usually scores a 6 on her dives.
- Wants to make her dives bigger and more difficult.
- Placed ninth at States.



COURTESY OF CHRISTINE WALDER

Eighth-grader Alex Walder dives at the Cape Ann League competition. Walder placed 13th at both the state and sectionals meet, competing against a total of 16 high school students.

Eighth-grade diver wins at CAL

By Molly Friedman
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Eighth-grader, Alex Walder, is both a swimmer and diver on the high school team and has already won awards.

Coached by Grover Cronin, Walder has been diving for almost four years.

Being the only eighth-grader on the diving team and one of the few younger students on the swim team, Walder said he is not intimidated by the high school level competition. "Diving with all older kids doesn't change how I dive, it's as if I were diving with all eighth-graders," he said.

"For a young diver, he shows much poise on the board, and his efforts come about because he practices very hard," athletic di-

rector Hardy Nally said.

Walder is the only middle school student on the team to have won Cape Ann League for diving and to finish 13th at both the state and sectionals competition. He competed against a total of 16 high school students and placed 13th in both competitions.

Along with diving, Walder plays soccer during both the winter and spring time.

"Alex dives year round and is able to practice more difficult dives, which adds to his talent and achievements," junior Caroline Moore said.

"Practice is usually productive, but we have fun at the same time," Moore said.

According to Moore, Walder is more advanced with his diving techniques than most competitors in the Cape Ann League.

Dramafest: Original play to compete in semifinals

By Laurel Edington
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Students in the cast of "Who Brought the Cool Kids?" competed in the preliminary round during the annual Massachusetts High School Drama Guild Festival, or Dramafest, and are moving on to the semifinals.

"Who Brought the Cool Kids?" was one of the three plays that moved on to compete in the semifinals on March 14 at St. John's Prep. The play was performed during the preliminary round at Wellesley High School. Out of eight schools, only seven were competing because St. Sebastian's School was non-competitive.

Theater director and English teacher Gloria Tanner is looking forward to the production. "It is very age appropriate and funny and I thought it would be fun for us to do," she said.

Sophomore Olivia Peterson agreed. "We worked hard to be ready for game day, and we just had a blast! We got to be really goofy and dorky, and we got a lot of laughs," she said.



COURTESY OF HOLLY REAM

Junior Tyler Helton, senior DJ Ball, and freshmen Katerina Eichenberger, Margaret Henry, Morgan Kennedy, and Allie Freed all participated in Dramafest at Wellesley High School on March 14.

Eight years ago, a group of Manchester-Essex students wrote the play. An original cast member suggested the play to a brother who is a current cast member.

'Who Brought the Cool Kids?' is a spoof on the 1950's instructional videos that were shown to children to help them deal with the special awkwardness that comes with being a teenager in general.

being a teenager in general," Tanner said.

Freshman Margaret Henry said, "It definitely helped set us apart from other schools because it is such an original piece."

According to Tanner, over 100 schools perform a one-act play at the 14 hosting high schools.

The competing schools must

present a play that is no longer than 40 minutes. The play is judged on a range of aspects, including acting, sets, or costumes, she said.

Each host school sent two comedies and one drama to the semifinals. These schools compete at other host schools, and two plays per host school move to the final round. During the final round, only 14 schools compete in Boston.

The judges weren't the only ones who enjoyed the performance; the audience did as well.

Sophomore Olivia Dumont, who watched the performance, said, "Every individual character worked together to make a really great and funny show."

AWARD-WINNERS

- Sophie Hagberg-- Enid
- DJ Ball-- Davie
- Isolde Decker--Lucke--Model
- Maura Driscoll-- Marcia
- Tyler Helton-- Vlad
- Kara Thomas-- Gertrude

Alumus and teacher's daughter, Sprague Grayden joins cast of '24'

By Maura Driscoll
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Manchester-by-the-Sea native Sprague Grayden has landed a role on the critically acclaimed television show, "24."

Though she has been acting since she was 5, her role as the President's daughter, Olivia Taylor, has gained Grayden more exposure than any other show.

Grayden has also been on other television shows such as "Jeri-cho," "Sons of Anarchy," "Over There," "Six Feet Under," "One Tree Hill," "Joan of Arcadia," and "John Doe."

Special education teacher Lois Grayden has mixed feelings regarding her daughter's newest accomplishment.

"I have a little concern, but I'm thrilled of course. It's a big show and she'd have a better chance of getting her own show. But, we notice when she's in a show and the audience is bigger, people start recognizing her more," she said.

Considering herself lucky for having a good balance between her private life and her public life, "I don't really live the Hollywood lifestyle," she said in an e-mail conducted interview.

But, just like any job, being an actress can be rough. "I think any job can be difficult, but when you love it, difficulties become chal-



COURTESY OF LOIS GRAYDEN

Alum Sprague Grayden now plays the president's daughter Olivia Taylor on "24."

lenges, and overcoming challenges is rewarding and fun," she said.

Working on the set of "24" is a great experience for Grayden. "I feel like a Canadian action hero! Seriously, there are many Canadians involved in the show and I got to run around the White House," she said.

Getting an education would be both Grayden and

her mother's advice to any aspiring actors or actresses. That way, a person has options in case his or her theatrical dreams don't come true.

As for Sprague Grayden's hopes for the future, she said, "Somehow, some way, it would be great if one of my characters was immortalized as an action figure or a Pez dispenser."

'It would be great if one of my characters was immortalized as an action figure or a Pez dispenser.'
-SPRAGUE GRAYDEN

Two seniors snag leads in Neverland Theatre's 'High School Musical 2'

By Julia Melamed
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Disney turned millions of America's youth into fans of Zac Efron and Vanessa Hudgens with "High School Musical 2," and it's coming to the North Shore.

Two seniors, DJ Ball and Abby Burke, hold the lead parts of Troy and Gabriella in Neverland Theatre's production of "High School Musical 2." The play, directed by Andrew Diskes, will be held for four nights at the end of March and beginning of April. Depending on ticket sales, extra nights may be added.

Approximately 30 kids are acting in the play and two casts: an

older cast (high school-age) and a younger one. When one cast is putting on the production, the other acts as part of the ensemble.

Burke, who has acted before but focuses on singing, has never been in a Neverland production. She participates in chorus and the a cappella group at school. Burke found out about Neverland Theatre through her singing teachers, the music directors for Neverland's High School Musical 2, who encouraged her to audition for the production.

Ball, who has also never been in a Neverland production, started acting in the third grade and found out about the play from Burke. He participates in Dramafest and in the a cappella group.



COURTESY OF DJ BALL

Seniors Abby Burke and DJ Ball portray Troy and Gabriella in Beverly's Neverland Theatre production of 'High School Musical 2.'

According to Burke and Ball, the Neverland production is similar to the original, but it will not have a pool or a golf course to use as settings and will use props for those scenes. The dances are also by different choreographers.

Both actors are looking forward

to the play. "I think it's really upbeat and an energetic play that everyone will enjoy. The actors are getting into their characters," Burke said. "I think it'll all come together and be a really great show."

Ball agreed. "It's a lot of fun,"

he said. "It's a great experience meeting new actors and trying different roles that are more challenging."

The play will be at Bani Temple in Beverly and tickets cost \$20.

FAST FACTS

- Seniors DJ Ball and Abby Burke to star as Troy and Gabriella.
- Burke participates in chorus, a cappella.
- Ball participates in Dramafest, a cappella.
- To be performed for four nights at the end of March and beginning of April at Bani Temple in Beverly
- Tickets cost \$20.

Artist invents, innovates with stainless steel sculpting

By Nick Bouwer
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

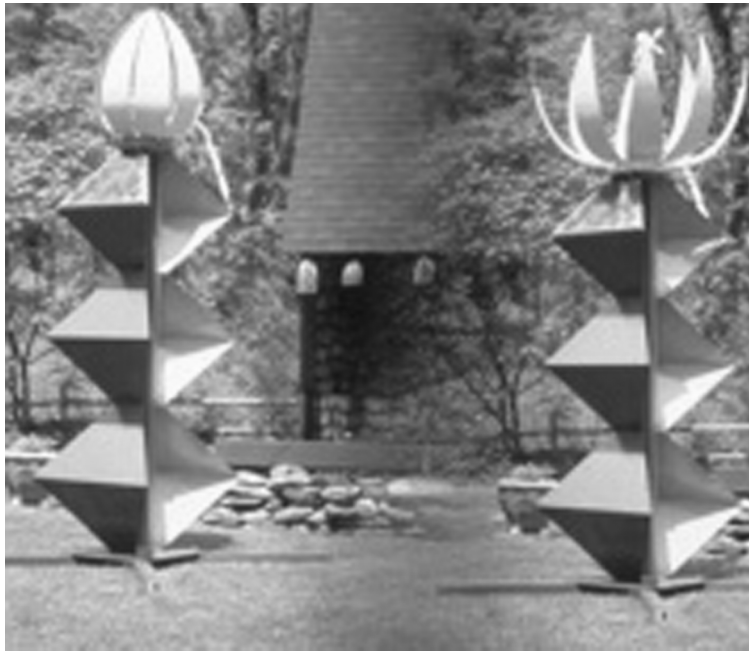
Sculptor Gregory Curci's work is found around Boston and in the homes of many private art collectors in Massachusetts.

Curci grew up in Ludlow, a small town in Western Massachusetts. "It was very rural, kind of like a Tom Sawyer story. I was never really exposed to art when I was young because of this upbringing, and so my career as an artist only began when I went to college," he said.

Curci originally went to college to become a civil engineer; however, in his freshman year he took a drawing class which he discovered interest in.

"When I took my first drawing class in college, my mind just seemed to click into it. I found I liked it so much that soon after the beginning of the year I had switched from becoming a civil engineer to becoming an art major," he said.

According to Curci, although he has experimented with many subjects in art, he is most inspired by abstract three-dimensional shapes as well as solar powered works.



COURTESY OF GREGORYCURCI.COM

Gregory Curci's "Sunflower" (above) and "Amaryllis" (right) are solar powered pieces that open and close with the sun. Their source of power represent hope for the future.

"I have dabbled in many things. I carved stone in college, making representational pieces like figures and that sort of thing; however, now my work is more abstract but it is connected to nature. So I'd say in a way they are realistic, even though they are visually different. My emphasis has

been to show energy with solar power in my works to create movement for the eye to observe instead of forcing the eye to move around it," he said.

One of Curci's most known pieces is "Amaryllis," a 15 foot tall stainless steel solar powered white flower, which opens and



COURTESY OF GREGORYCURCI.COM

closes with the sun. Amaryllis is located in Porter Square in Boston.

As an artist in all senses, Curci loves his job. "Once I started making art and especially when I started selling it it was kind of like a dream to me. When somebody will pay you \$25,000 for some-

thing you just dreamed up, it's kind of fun," he said.

Of the many pieces Curci has created, his latest, "Sun Birds," is located in Drumlin Farms. It stands in the middle of the outdoor nature center there. The piece is painted stainless steel, solar powered, and moves with the sun.

Curci has not been working on any projects lately but hopes to in the near future.

FAST FACTS

- Curci grew up in Ludlow.
- Went to college to become a civil engineer.
- Wanted to become an artist after taking a drawing class.
- Most inspired by abstract 3-D shapes, solar powered works.
- One of his most famous pieces is "Amaryllis" in Boston.
- Latest piece, "Sun Birds," is in Drumlin Farms.

ALA honors children's, YA books

Authors of children and young adult literature received awards from the American Library Association on Jan. 26 for their outstanding work.

The John Newbery Medal: 'The Graveyard Book' by Neil Gaiman



THEGRAVEYARDBOOK.COM PHOTO

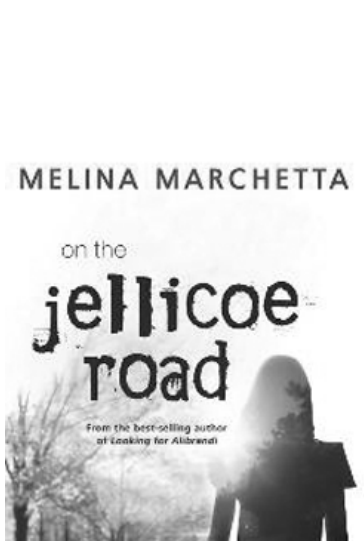
The John Newbery Medal, named for the 18th-century British bookseller, is annually awarded by a division of the ALA, the Association for Library Service to Children. The award is given to an author who writes an exceptional children's book.

"The Graveyard Book" is a story of a little boy who escapes into a graveyard from a group of assassins. In the graveyard he is protected and raised by the spirits that reside there. Named "Nobody" because he looks like nobody but himself, he grows up in a somewhat unusual community safe from harm, but those failed assassins lurk right around the corner.

Gaiman is an accomplished author and has won over 30 awards for his book. An adaptation of his novel "Coraline" recently came out in theatres.

Books that won Newbery Honors include "The Underneath" by Kathi Appelt, "The Surrender Tree: Poems of Cuba's Struggle for Freedom" by Margarita Engle, "Savvy" by Ingrid Law, and "After Tupac & D Foster" by Jacqueline Woodson.

The Michael L. Printz Award: 'Jellicoe Road' by Melina Marchetta



MELINAMARCHETTA.COM.AU PHOTO

The Michael L. Printz Award, given for excellence in young adult literature, is named after a librarian from Topeka, Kansas, who was a long-time active member in the library community. Sponsored by Booklist, it is awarded annually.

"Jellicoe Road" by Melina Marchetta is set in Australia, it tells of the story of Taylor Markham, who leads the students of Jellicoe School into a territory war against the Townies and Cadets. Taylor, who was abandoned at 11 years old by her mother on Jellicoe Road, struggles to find the truth about her past and what is held in her future. Romance and mystery abound in the novel.

Marchetta lives in Sydney, Australia, and has won awards for two previous novels. She accomplishes a authentic teen voice from her years of teaching at a high school.

Honors for Printz awards were "The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation, Volume II, The Kingdom on the Waves" by M.T. Anderson, "The Disreputable History of Frankie Landau-Banks" by E. Lockheart, "Nation" by Terry Pratchett and "Tender Morsels" by Margo Lanagan.

By Bobina Vander Laan, Independent Assistant Editor



BLOG.THEFRAY.NET/US/NEWS PHOTO

The Fray's first album in four years combines light, catchy tracks with moodier songs.

The Fray returns with strong lyrics, emotion

By Rebecca Lynch
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Four years after their debut album, "How to Save a Life," the Fray return with a second self-titled album that consists of amazing lyrics and emotional performances.

The Fray continue to produce songs that are clever and memorable but require a few listens to be fully appreciated.

The band focuses on piano and guitar riffs while relying on vocalist Isaac Slade's emotional style to pull everything together.

Past hits "Over My Head" and "How to Save a Life" are hard to match, but "You Found Me" has already appeared on radio and television. Slade translates the song as a struggle to maintain faith.

The broad writing in this and other songs allow a personal inter-

pretation for listeners, enhancing the enjoyment of the songs overall.

"The Fray" kicks off with "Syn-dicate" and "Absolute," two light, catchy tracks.

The album turns a bit darker in "Say When," when Slade declares loyalty and love for a friend: "You say the word and I'll be your man, your man/say when."

Throughout the album the moodiness continues, but the instrumentation brightens the depressing lyrics.

"Enough for Now" is about Slade's grandfather and mother. His grandfather's death brings about bitterness: "That's enough for now, he should've never left you broken/He should've held you, things your father never could do."

A quiet finish in "Happiness," has thoughtful but sad lyrics: "Happiness was never mine to hold/Careful child, light the fuse and get away/Cause happiness throws a shower of sparks."

CD REVIEW

Girls' Fashion Review: Spring 2009

By Kaitlin McDonagh
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR



AE.COM
One-shoulder dress, \$34.50, American Eagle.

Spring is a season full of clean air, colorful flowers, and new breezy fashion trends. This season the fashion is about loose fabrics, bright colors, and girly accents.

This past winter skinny jeans were a staple in every girl's wardrobe, but with the new season comes the more comfortable style of loosely fitted denim.

Try a boyfriend fit like Alloy's Bubblegum boyfriend carpenter jean for \$32.50 for a more relaxed feel.

Pants aren't the only clothes that have taken a breezier feel. Loose dresses and blouses were a common sight on the catwalk during New York's Fashion Week.

Gap's flutter-sleeve tie-waist top for \$29 is a great option.

Another trend seen at the fashion shows were eye-popping colors. According to Glamour.com,

hot pink is the must-have color this spring. Pops of color showed up on jewelry, clothing details, and sometimes the entire outfit.

Ruffles and bows add a girly feel to fashion this spring. Designers like Dolce & Gabbana and Chanel adorned their clothing with these pretty accents. Many blouses and dresses had a bow or a ruffle as a small detail while other clothing articles were enveloped in them.

Victoria's Secret Pink floral tiered skirt is a subtle way to incorporate ruffles into your outfit for \$39.50.

The quirky style of asymmetry appeared on runway shows such as Ralph Lauren. Many dresses and tops had sleek asymmetrical necklines. American Eagle Outfitters' one-shoulder dress for \$34.50 is a nice way to incorporate asymmetry.

Another peculiar trend is mix-

ing different patterns and prints. Polka-dotted shirts were paired with floral skirts and striped accessories, but they still went together well. This trend is a fun way to experiment and be bold with clothing.

Some smaller trends include big jewelry and sheer fabrics. Bright oversized bangles reflected new color trends while sheer fabrics added to the fresh spring feeling. Forever 21's neon bangle for \$5.80 and floral cluster top for \$15.80 are two picks that reflect these styles.

Light breezy scarves have become popular this spring. Stores like American Eagle Outfitters, Gap, Urban Outfitters, and others all carry this fun accessory with prices from \$14.99 to \$42. Scarves are a great way to make a plain outfit more interesting.

Another trend many women have been wearing is boots paired with dresses or skirts. This was always a common style, but this season more teens are dressing in this casual yet sophisticated look.



FOREVER21.COM

Neon bangle, \$5.80, Forever 21.



VICTORIASSECRET.COM

Floral tiered skirt, \$39.50, Victoria's Secret.



ALLOY.COM

Bubblegum boyfriend jeans, \$32.50, Alloy.com.



THEFRYECOMPANY.COM

Harness Boots, \$218, Frye Boots.



URBANOUTFITTERS.COM

Silk Scarf, \$28, Urban Outfitters.



FOREVER21.COM

Cluster top, \$15.80, Forever 21



GAP.COM

Flutter-sleeve tie-waist top, \$29, The Gap.

Boys' Fashion Review: Spring 2009

By DJ Ball
INDEPENDENT ASSISTANT EDITOR

A sad misconception about the world of fashion is that girls are the only ones who can be fashionable. Though this belief about fashion is partially true, guys have come a long way in refining their style.

This spring, guys have taken tips from European styles. From cardigans to neon T-shirts, spring styles will make guys just as stylish as their female counterparts.



URBANOUTFITTERS.COM PHOTO

Ray Bans' sunglasses have made their way back. Now more than ever you will find a substantial increase of Ray Bans out this spring. These sunglasses are extremely costly at \$125 per pair, but one can save an arm and a leg by going to Urban Outfitters and getting the same design for only \$18.

Guys can find any of these neon T-shirts at American Apparel or Urban Outfitters, both great stores where anyone can find a shirt to add to their spring look. Although Urban Outfitters is pretty pricey at \$21 per shirt, American Apparel has them at just \$15 per shirt.



AMERICANAPPAREL.COM PHOTO

If one is wondering where to find a good pair of pants that are affordable and in style then H&M is for you. From corduroys to skinny pants, all the styles can be found at H&M. Corduroys run for \$28 and skinny pants, only \$20.

WHERE TO SHOP

- H&M
- The Gap
- Urban Outfitters
- The Salvation Army
- American Apparel
- Rugby
- Polo
- J. Crew



GAP.COM PHOTO

Another good look for the spring is the simple cardigan. From Gap to Urban Outfitters, this style can be found in a wide variety of stores. Cardigans are also pricey at \$34 at Urban and \$59 at Gap, but they are worth the price. If one is not willing to spend that much money, I have recently found the Salvation Army to have great cardigans for under \$20.



H&M.COM PHOTO