

the INDEPENDENT

Class of 2022 celebrates with traditional graduation ceremony

Speeches focus on life goals, future plans

By Hadley Levendusky INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Joined by faculty members for the first time since the pandemic, the 125 members of the class of 2022 finished up their senior year with their graduation ceremony at Hyland Field on Friday, June 3.

The graduation ceremony began with families and friends watching the seniors and faculty walk across the bridge from the elementary school. The seniors were led by junior class marshals Owen O’Leary and Maddie Machain.

Once the seniors and faculty arrived at their seats, the Sound-Waves sang the national anthem.

Principal Patricia Puglisi then welcomed everyone to the graduation ceremony. Puglisi praised the graduating class and wished the best for them in the future.

“As you leave today, I hope



Senior class treasurer Alex Briggs, secretary Theo Brown, vice president Aidan Cunningham, salutatorian Samantha Rosen, and president and valedictorian Lukas Shan stand front row. Foreign language teacher and class adviser Erin Fortunato addresses the class. Learning commons aide Barrett Alston spoke about how the class impacted him and made him feel welcome for his first year.

you follow your passions and find your individual version of success,” she said.

Puglisi then introduced salu-

tatorian Samantha Rosen. Rosen talked about how special the size of Manchester-Essex is.

“Our small size and unique



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTOS

close-knit community have given us an immediate sense of belonging. We are fortunate to be given the opportunity to achieve and to

fail. We have been together our whole lives and have become one big family,” she said.

GRADUATION, page 3

Baccalaureate performances, speeches honor senior class

By Phileine de Widt INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After two years of irregular baccalaureates, seniors were able to have their ceremony indoors in a fully packed auditorium.

The Class of 2022 celebrated their accomplishments the night before graduation at 6 p.m. on Thursday, June 2.

They were presented with awards and scholarships and enjoyed senior performances.

Simon Rubin and Sofia Sarmanian performed “So far Away” by Carole King as a duet.

Charlie Weld sang “Follow Your Arrow” by Kacey Musgraves.

Rubin then played “Romanze,” composed by Johannes Brahms.

The final performance of the night was Luli Bartlett and Dilyn Engelhart singing and playing guitar to a medley of songs by The Strokes and Pink Floyd.



PHILEINE DE WIDT PHOTO

Class of 2022 stands in front of the school with candles in hand, as Principal Patricia Puglisi tells the seniors to make a wish.

The class selected social studies teacher John Mullady to give the faculty address. He used comedy but also gave meaningful advice to the students.

At the beginning of his speech, Mullady said, “I thought that since tonight is your baccalaureate, what I would do is make it all about my son Teddy.”

After comically explaining all the ER visits Teddy experienced, Mullady connected the story to something bigger.

“We can’t label Teddy as being

accident-prone because reality is, he’s not. He’s just a kid ... if we label him now, he’s gonna carry that label for the rest of his life ... it would be just as asinine to label yourself at this stage in your life. Who you are now, at this moment, is not who you will be,” Mullady said.

During his speech, he interacted with students, bringing up to the stage his past class of six girls to have one last cup of tea together. He also brought up a

BACCALAUREATE, page 3

SCORE projects include interactive websites, assisting guidance department

By Jordie Cornfield INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After five weeks of preparation, seniors presented their SCORE projects on May 26 and 27 in the learning commons. Students set up stations similar to a science fair and discussed their projects with students, teachers, and parents.

The SCORE program (Senior Choice of Related Experience) was created 30 years ago, SCORE adviser Margaret Kane said.

“Seniors have an opportunity to learn by doing, to assess possible careers, acquire job skills, clarify what further training they need, and finally put to use what they have learned in their years of schooling,” she said.

Students have full control over their learning and are independent in the execution of their plans, senior Catrina Campbell said.

“I learned how to be my own boss,” she said.

Campbell chose to focus her SCORE project on research regarding nutrition, exercise, and

overall health and wellness.

“I have an Instagram account where I post workout videos and food I’ve made to my followers. I want to learn more about exercise and nutrition since that’s what I’m going to focus on in college,” she said.

Other seniors used the internet and interactive websites as a component of their projects, Kane said.

“We are connecting more through social media and online learning than ever before, and our students have developed skills that are in demand, like social media marketing and web-based presentations,” she said.

Senior Em Cicala interviewed juniors and seniors and created a website for their SCORE project.

“I asked questions ranging from advice to your freshman self to asking how students develop their time management skills. I type up the advice and copy/paste them on a Google sites page anonymously so future generations of students can get advice directly from the

SCORE, page 3

DECA students compete against international teams at ICDC

Senior Aidan Cunningham receives top 10 finalist award

By Mechi O’Neil
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Following successes at regional and state competitions, seven students attended the DECA International Career Development Conference (ICDC) where they competed against students from around the world.

The students qualified for the event based on their performance at the DECA State Championship, where they placed in the top five competitors in their categories.

Dean of students Dan Richards and learning commons aide Barrett Alston served as advisers in place of business and math teach-

er Dean Martino, who was unable to attend.

“The DECA team members were well-prepared to compete because they reached this level of competition,” Richards said.

Senior Aidan Cunningham, junior Doug Pratt, sophomores Liliane Pilaud, Erik Bischoff, Ashley Shell, Gabbi D’Andrea, and Ella Chafe qualified for and attended the event in Atlanta, GA from April 23 to April 26 this year.

“It was cool to see the students bond with each other over a fun academic topic and just have a good time,” Alston said.

Throughout the week, members competed in their events and took an exam to determine their scores.

“There was a lot of added excitement because this

was the first international competition they have had in person in two years,” Cunningham said.

D’Andrea said it was a good experience because she got to ex-



The seven DECA students who qualified for Internationals stand outside of Mercedes-Benz stadium in Alanta, Georgia, where ceremonies for the event took place and where finalists were announced. Sophomores Gabbi D’Andrea, Ella Chafe, and senior Aidan Cunningham all placed within top 20.

perience the international competition for the first time and meet many students from different states and countries.

Students also visited places in Atlanta including the World of Coca-Cola, the Georgia Aquarium, and Six Flags when not competing.

“One evening, we had a reception at the College Football Hall

of Fame where students were able to throw footballs at targets and walk around the museum,” Richards said.

Four students were awarded for their performances in their categories. Cunningham and Pratt were both awarded with a Silver Medal, indicating they scored the highest in their role-play or exams.

Cunningham, D’Andrea, and Chafe were also presented with a Blue Ribbon for placing in the top 20 in their events.

Cunningham finished as a finalist in his event, which ranks him in the top 10 in the world in his category, Personal Financial Literacy.

“It was incredibly rewarding to see three years of work finally pay off,” he said.

Green Team receives honorable mention in Planet Aid Competition, collects 3,670 pounds of items

By Amy Vytopilova
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

The Green Team, taught by Keith Gray, was awarded a certificate of achievement for outstanding contribution in Planet Aid’s National Clothing Drive competition. Planet Aid is a company that repurposes textiles, clothing, shoes and more, Gray said.

“They are a great company because they clean the products, and if they are usable, they forward them onto countries where there is a distinct need for those items,” he said.

Manchester-Essex received an honorable mention for most



AMY VYTOPILOVA PHOTO

Students work on various projects surrounding sustainability to improve the environment and educate other students on the topic.

pounds collected in the Planet Aid competition, Gray said.

“After everything was counted, MERSD came in at 3,670

pounds collected in 4 weeks. Not quite enough to win this year, but a great baseline for contests in the future. It also shows the level of the sustainable conviction that each community has with regard to recycling and repurposing,” he said in an email to the school staff.

In addition to the clothing drive for Planet Aid, Green Team members have worked on other sustainability projects.

Junior Sophie Zalosh has been working with junior Ava Ricci to advance with the purchase of aluminum barrel markers, Zalosh said.

“Ava and I are working on a project to make our school more sustainable by switching from plastic whiteboard markers to markers that are made out of aluminum. We thought of this proj-

ect our freshman year and decided to continue with it this year,” Zalosh said.

Ricci said she like to make the school more sustainable with the grant.

“We would love to be able to use it to further expand our project on a broader scale ... the money could be utilized in many places elsewhere throughout the school in order to make it more green,” Ricci said.

In addition, the Green Team has been educating younger students and engaging them in sustainable activities, Gray said.

“We have had one student, sophomore Charlie Virden, go to the fifth grade in Essex elementary and teach them about environmentalism and growing gardens ... They also grew peas,” Gray said.

Students travel abroad this summer on educational trips

By Ella Chafe
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Students are traveling abroad this summer and exploring different parts of the world through educational programs.

Junior Calista Lai is traveling with the program Rustic Pathways for a service trip, she said.

Lai said she will be in Morocco for two weeks and will travel through villages every three days. While helping communities in need with service projects, students will be immersed in Moroccan culture, she said.

Lai said a highlight of her trip will be camping and riding camels through the Sahara Desert.

She said she chose this program because she has always wanted to do a service trip, and it offers a guide to learning how to travel on her own.

“I’m really excited to experience diversity, and I hope to gain more independence while traveling,” she said.

Sophomore Jan Vytopil said he plans to attend the Institute Linguistic Adenet in Montpellier, France.

At the school, students from around the world have the opportunity to pick courses that are taught in French, he said.

He will stay with a host family and use his free time to explore the town, he said.

“I think being in a foreign country by myself will be a really



Sophomores Jan Vytopil, Gabbi D’Andrea, and junior Calista Lai are all traveling abroad this summer. Vytopil will be in France, D’Andrea will be in England, and Lai will be in Morocco.

good experience,” Vytopil said.

Sophomore Gabbi D’Andrea said she is studying abroad at Oxford University in England with the Oxbridge program for one month this summer.

D’Andrea said she will be in school six days a week and take

classes for a major and a minor of her choice. Classes for her major meet daily, and her minor classes are three days a week, she said.

She said she is taking a politics and economics course as her major and an entrepreneurship course as her minor.

D’Andrea said her goal from this experience is to become more independent and learn to travel on her own.

She said she is looking forward to meeting people from all over the world with different backgrounds.

Head of math department retires after 25 years of teaching

Dan Lundergan
watched community
grow over time

By Wyeth Takayesu
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After teaching for 25 years, math department chair Dan Lundergan will retire this year.

Before working as a teacher in Manchester, Lundergan struggled to find a job that fit both his needs and goals in life, he said.

“I worked for three years in a Catholic school out in Springfield, and I liked it, but it didn’t pay very well. I tried something else for a little while ... and it didn’t feel like I was helping anybody. I thought ‘I’d like to do something worthwhile where I really am helping oth-

ers,’” he said.

After working as a teacher in Peabody for seven years, Lundergan came to Manchester and began his teaching position at the high school in 1997.

“When I first came here, it was just Manchester High School, and the building was expanding because the Essex kids were starting to come here instead of Hamilton.

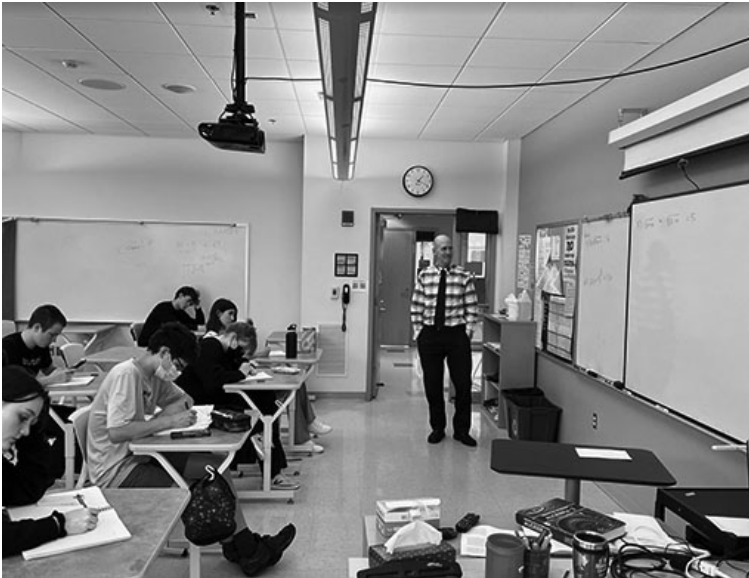
It was small. The building was a bit leaky and moldy, but it was a very tight-knit community,” he said.

Over the 25 years Lundergan has worked in Manchester, watching the community and the building itself change over time has been a defining part of his career, he said.

“It was interesting watching the new building being built while we were in our old classrooms over where the athletic field is now ...

‘As a colleague, he’s been a great resource, in my own personal and professional growth, who was always there for me.’

-JOSHUA WLADKOWSKI



WYETH TAKAYESU PHOTO

Math department chair Dan Lundergan, teaching his Algebra II Honors class, will retire at the end of this year, after 25 years.

we’d look up and imagine what it would be like. It turned out so nice, and there’s drawbacks too to a bigger building, but it was very needed,” Lundergan said.

As he moves on to the next steps of his life, Lundergan said he will always remember all of the time spent with his many students and close friends.

“I always enjoyed being in the walls of the classroom with my students and meeting with my colleagues. I’ve had some very good friends here over the years ... we’d help each other out in any way, and that’s what I’ll think of when I remember my time here,” Lundergan said.

Math and science teacher

Joshua Wladkowski said Lundergan has been an important part of the entire school community.

“He has really represented a point of stability in this community ... a very constant factor always ready to help. As a colleague, he’s been a great resource, in my own personal and professional growth, who was always there for me,” Wladkowski said.

Spanish teacher Robert Bilsbury agreed, explaining that Lundergan helped him and other teachers in any way possible.

“I respect and admire him for everything he’s brought to this school. He’s always had a ‘colleagues first’ mentality and is ready to help out, but where he really shines is in class with the kids,” Bilsbury said.

Junior Faith Ellis said Lundergan has helped her grow as a student in a way she will take with her after he retires.

“Especially with my learning style, math has been a really difficult subject for me, but Mr. Lundergan has helped me understand the subject and get through it all despite that,” she said.

Special education teacher retires

By Charlie Lations
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Special education teacher Anne Landry will retire at the end of this year after working at the middle and high schools for 15 years, having taught in both the old and new buildings.

Landry attended Fitchburg State University, where she earned a B.S. in special education. Following this, she taught middle school in Maryland for three years before returning to Massachusetts, she said.

After working at the Landmark School in 1983 and Beverly High School for less than one year in 1984, she came to the high school as a teaching assistant in the old building for four



CHARLIE LATIONS PHOTO

After 15 years, special education teacher Anne Landry will retire this year.

years.

Upon being recertified as a special education teacher in 2007, she taught in the middle school for five years and has worked in the high school since then.

Landry said one of her favorite

things about working at the high school has been having the opportunity to work with all kinds of people and getting to know her colleagues and students.

Special education teacher Jim Umile said Landry made his job easier by laying the framework for the expectations of students she taught as freshmen. He said the students he teaches after Landry’s class are much more prepared for sophomore year.

“She’s kind of been an exemplar for me, like a role model ... for seven years I’ve kind of looked up to her to know how I should conduct myself,” he said.

Umile said Landry has been a mentor for him throughout his career, and she’s taught him a great deal. “She’s been the epitome of a colleague,” Umile said.

English teacher Elizabeth Edgerton, who co-taught ninth-grade English with Landry, said though Landry will be deeply missed by staff and students alike, she’s

happy that she is able to retire.

“I understand why she’s ready to [retire], but she has been such an asset to this school, and I’ve loved having her here,” Edgerton said.

Edgerton spoke highly of Landry’s attitude towards her work and the students she taught.

“The thing that I love about Ms. Landry is that she sees the potential in her students, and sometimes when other people don’t, she does,” Edgerton said.

Landry said she plans to visit members of her family she hasn’t seen, explore more of New England, travel, and spend more time doing things in the fall and the early summer-time that

would more normally be spent on the school year.

She said if she had to use one word to describe her time teaching at the high school, it would be “gratifying.”

“There’s never a dull moment. It’s been very varied, [and] that’s what I like about it. There are just so many things going on. It’s been very comfortable.

I feel very at home here,” Landry said.

She said that she has deeply enjoyed working with people from all of the departments at the school and she will miss teaching and her students very much,

“My colleagues have been tremendous,” Landry said.

‘The thing I love about Ms. Landry is that she sees the potential in her students, and sometimes when other people don’t, she does.’

-ELIZABETH EDGERTON

CONTINUATIONS

GRADUATION CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

After Rosen’s address, foreign language teacher and senior class adviser Erin Fortunato introduced valedictorian and senior class president Lukas Shan for his address. Shan began by thanking all of the faculty and staff at school that have been a part of the senior class’s high school experience.

Shan then began speaking about life goals and told a story about a day in his future life where he saw his fellow classmates accomplishing their life goals throughout the day.

Over the past few months, he interviewed each member of the class of 2022 and asked about their personal life goals to include in his speech.

“What I think is important ...

is feeling encouraged to pursue whatever path you have in mind. Or if you’re unsure, feeling empowered to find whatever your calling is,” he said.

Shan encouraged members in the audience to cheer on when they heard their graduate being mentioned. “So by the time this is over, I hope that you all graduate with a sense of encouragement and support from your community as you venture off in the world toward your life goals,” he said.

Next, vice president Aidan Cunningham presented the class gift. The class of 2022 donated money to the Friends of Manchester-Essex Performing Arts, the Open Door Food Pantry, Beverly Boot Straps, and the class of 2023.

Puglisi then introduced library aide and substitute teacher Barrett Alston, who was selected as

the faculty speaker for the class of 2022.

Alston began with an Ernest Hemingway quote, “You’ll lose it if you talk about it.”

“To me, this is essentially saying, it is really tough to talk about something that was so meaningful without devaluing it,” he said.

Alston then continued his speech talking about how much the seniors made him love his job and how he shared fond memories from his time working in the library.

At the end of the ceremony, superintendent Pamela Beaudoin, director of guidance Beverly Low, and school committee member Theresa Whitman passed out the diplomas to the seniors.

Lastly, the seniors threw their caps in the air to celebrate their accomplishments and walked off the field to “Crazy Train” by

Ozzy Osbourne.

BACCALAUREATE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

group of five seniors to represent a Premier League soccer team. Mullady said being a fan is being part of a bigger community and urged students to become one.

After the speech, class president Lukas Shan presented a slideshow that consisted of senior and baby pictures of every student and then showed photos from throughout the years.

At the end of the night, Principal Patricia Puglisi congratulated the class as they prepared for the candle lighting recessional.

“When I say you have been a fantastic class, I’m not kidding. Individually and collectively, you’re awesome,” she said.

The class then exited the auditorium with candles in hand to

their class song, “Crazy Train” by Ozzy Osbourne. Walking outside to the front of the school, they blew out their candles collectively, signifying the end of their high school career.

SCORE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

source,” they said.

Cicala is not the only senior whose project aimed at helping future students.

Senior Izzy Thurlow partnered with the guidance department for her project regarding the college process.

“I’m editing past documents like the student activities booklet and updating the college search guidebook. I’ve been finding new ways through Naviance, which will be helpful for upcoming seniors who are looking into the college process,” she said.



Valedictorian Lukas Shan leads the graduating class to the field.



Principal Patricia Puglisi delivers her speech to the graduating class.



Jacob Brown walking into graduation.



Ema O'Neil and Vaughn O'Leary await the graduation ceremony together.



Nate Kelleher and Charlie Weld pose together before walking to the ceremony.



Cian Doyle.



Alex Briggs' graduation cap.



Maddy Curran smiles with her diploma.



Jules Friends walks onto the field to graduate.



Gus and Theo Brown waiting for the ceremony to begin.



Emalia Collins, Sarah Baker, Jillian Alden, and Catrina Campbell.



Salutatorian Sam Rosen delivers her speech to the graduating class.



Evelyn Sheahan and Xander Everitt



Noella Hadaegh.



Peter Chareas, Jackson Cawley, and Catrina Campbell.



Reese, Mairin, and Ainsley Tully at the elementary school before the ceremony.



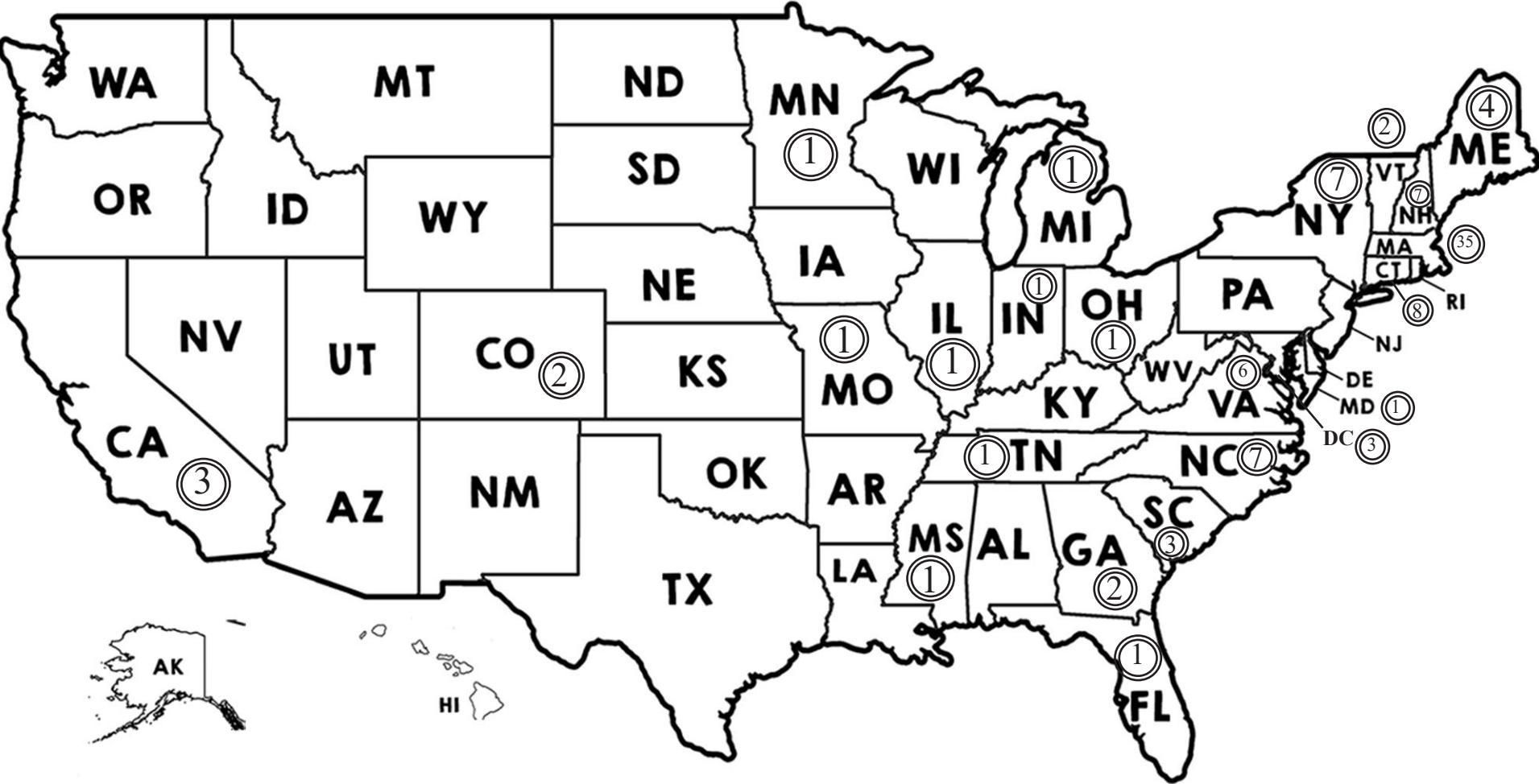
High school faculty pose with room B121 Mr. Worldwide tapestry.



The graduating class stands to turn their tassels.



Lydia Berger and Lynn Benali smile together before the ceremony.



California: 3
Jagger George Nowak - University of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA
Samantha Charlotte Rosen - University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA
Andrew Paul Torri - University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, CA

Colorado: 3
Owen Charles Bappe - University of Colorado Boulder, Boulder, CO
Wrede Elisabeth Charlton - University of Denver, Denver, CO
Remsen Joseph Demeo - University of Colorado Boulder, Boulder, CO

Connecticut: 8
Jillian May Alden - University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT
Andrew James Amigo Jr. University of Hartford, West Hartford, CT
Theophilus MacKinnon Brown - Trinity College, Hartford, CT
Isabella Nasrin Hadaegh - Connecticut College, New London, CT
Katherine Love Kuhl - University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT
Nicholas R. MacFarland - University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT
Molly Rose Machain - Eastern Connecticut State University, Willimantic, CT
Elorie Joy Willwerth - University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

Florida: 1
Nathaniel Morgan Tyler - Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL

Georgia: 2
Shea Trinity Furse - University of Georgia, Athens, GA
Emma Lee Ketchum - Emory University, Atlanta, GA

Illinois: 1
Adlai Eleanor Politi - The University of Chicago, Chicago, IL

Indiana: 1
Jackson Timothy Cawley - University of Indiana, Bloomington, IN

Louisiana: 1
Lydia Shona Berger - Tulane University, New Orleans, LA

Maine: 4
John Christopher Alger - University of Southern Maine, Portland, ME
Fausto Luca Blasco-Faller - University of Maine, Orono, ME
Jackson James Davis - University of Maine, Farmington, ME
Ema Cecilia O'Neil - Colby College, Waterville, ME

Maryland: 1
Lukas L. Shan - Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD

Massachusetts: 35
Natalsha Isabelle Akerley - Endicott College, Beverly, MA
Haley Jayden Altieri - Endicott College, Beverly, MA
Alec William Bachry - Bentley University, Waltham, MA
Luli Moon Bartlett - Berklee College of Music, Boston, MA
Lynn Benali - Boston College, Newton, MA
Alexandra Devon Briggs - Boston College, Newton, MA
Jacob Zechariah Brown - Suffolk University, Boston, MA
Gannon Thomas Costello - University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA
Andrew Cole Cressey - Boston College, Newton, MA
Aidan James Cunningham - University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA
Amelia Katherine Donnellan Valade - University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, MA
Hailey Arlene Donovan - Merrimack College, North Andover, MA

MA
Elizabeth May Dunlap - Gordon College, Wenham, MA
Dilyn Coyne Engelhart - Berklee College of Music, Boston, MA
Noella Judith Hadaegh - College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA
Ava Jane Kail - Bentley University, Waltham, MA
Nathan Christopher Kelleher - Suffolk University, Boston, MA
Daphne Kerber - University of Massachusetts, Lowell, Lowell, MA
Jessica Selina Khani - Northeastern University, Boston, MA
Maxwell Capone Kirk - University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA
Carson Lynn Komishane - Tufts University, Medford, MA
Eric Lico - Endicott College, Beverly, MA
Zachary Brian Macdonald - North Shore Community College, Danvers, MA
Edward John Mulry V - North Shore Community College, Danvers, MA
Vaughn Thomas O'Leary - American International College, Springfield, MA
Catherine Jean Parkins - Merrimack College, North Andover, MA
Todd Widmer Rogers Jr. - Springfield College, Springfield, MA
Julia Pierce Rousmaniere - Boston College, Newton, MA
Simon Raymond Rubin - Gordon College, Wenham, MA
Sofia Rosalia Sarmanian - Emerson College, Boston, MA
Beren Jeffrey Schmidt - University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA
Christopher Kirkpatrick Siems - Clark University, Worcester, MA
Isabella Kathryn Thurlow - Suffolk University, Boston, MA
Joseph Wesley Walker - University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth, Dartmouth, MA
Charlotte Elizabeth Weld - Berklee College of Music, Boston, MA

Mississippi: 1
Alexander Hendrix Everitt - University of Mississippi, University, MS

New Hampshire: 7
Sarah Kelly Baker - Keene State College, Keene, NH
Catrina Anne Campbell - University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH
Peter Nicholas Chareas - University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH
Emalia Rose Collins - Colby-Sawyer College, New London, NH
Emily Elizabeth Doucette - University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH
Tristan Wilson Rogers - University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH
Thomas L. Steriti - University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH

New York: 7
Tucker James Bothwell - Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY
Colby John Doane - Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY
Colin Conroy Harrison - Clarkson University, Potsdam, NY
Cameron O'Neill Light - Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY
Lilly Madeline Marletta - Union College, Schenectady, NY
Reese Madeline Tully - The New School, New York, NY
Samantha Rae Turner - Pace University, New York, NY

North Carolina: 7
Hailey McConnell Burnett - University of North Carolina Greensboro, Greensboro, NC
Eli James Cox - University of North Carolina Wilmington, Wilmington, NC

Colin Michael Coyne - Elon University, Elon, NC
Madison Grace Curran - University of North Carolina Wilmington, Wilmington, NC
Sonia Dell Mewkill - High Point University, High Point, NC
Ainsley Catherine Tully - Elon University, Elon, NC
Lily Mae Zschau - Elon University, Elon, NC

Ohio: 1
Christopher Robert Daly - Kent State University, Kent, OH

South Carolina: 3
Emma Grace Fitzgerald - College of Charleston, Charleston, SC
Ambrose Joseph Pallazola - Clemson University, Clemson, SC
Gracie Anna Susko - College of Charleston, Charleston, SC

Tennessee: 1
Parker Nancy Brooks - Lipscomb University, Nashville, TN

Vermont: 2
Julian Carrra Friends - University of Vermont, Burlington, VT
Matthew Puchniak - University of Vermont, Burlington, VT

Virginia: 6
George Angus Brown - William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA
Aiden O'Leary Harrison - George Mason University, Fairfax, VA
William Mowry Mann - Roanoke College, Salem, VA
Gelsey Michele McCue - James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA
Luke Joseph Smith - Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA
Mairin Faythe Tully - James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA

Washington D.C: 3
Emilia Marta Cicala - American University, Washington, D.C.
Olivia Alessandra Gado - The George Washington University, Washington, DC
Sean William Vendt - The George Washington University, Washington, DC

Other: 24
Brian Carter Andersen - Undecided
Ryan Edward Andrews - Undecided
Matthew Aiden Blackman - Gap year
Hayden James Brady - New Hampton School, New Hampton, New Hampshire (PG Year)
Naderson Louis Curtis - Playing soccer in Valencia, Spain
Roemer Lodewijk Florentyn de Widt - Gap year
Benjamin James DiFluri - Employment
Finnegan Porter Doane - United States Air Force
Cian Andrew Doyle - University College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland
Colby Doyon - Employment
Cole Richard Falk - Gap year
Finn Andrew Hawley - Employment
Cecilia Mae Mastendino - Undecided
Thomas Jake Moulton - Bridgton Academy, North Bridgton, MA (PG year)
Moon Rose Notte - Undecided
Theodoros Michael Parianos - Employment
John Thompson Pope - Undecided
Clare Rumble - Undecided
Evelyn Donagh Sheahan - National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland
Monique Marie Souza - Employment
Katherine Eliza Steck - University College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland
Anton Westrick - Gap year
Jane Scott Whitten - University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada
Emma Daniela Wonson - Gap year

Seniors, juniors, attend prom at Danversport

Waterfront venue offers lounge area, fire pit, photo opportunities

By Caroline MacKinnon
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Prom took place at Danversport in Danvers with an attendance of 250 guests.

Mike Pardi from 360 DJ and Photo Booth Rentals provided a variety of music as the DJ. There was also a photo booth and a 360 camera.

French teacher and senior class adviser Erin Fortunato said the event exceeded expectations.

“The kids looked great and were well behaved, and the venue was better than anticipated. Overall the whole thing was really successful,” she said.

Dean of students Dan Richards said this prom was held at one of the best venues, and it was the best-organized prom that Manchester-Essex has held.

“Everyone was outstanding the entire night. I loved the venue. It provided a lot of variety with the lounge area and fire pit. You could sit outside or be inside. The entertainment factor was also a favorite,” he said.

Richards said Fortunato worked extremely hard while organizing the prom and made it fun for everyone.

“Chaperones did not feel like they were on duty and were enjoying it just as much as the kids,” he said.

Junior Mark Pollock said his favorite part of the night was the entertainment.

“The music was really good. The 360 camera was also cool to do with my friends,” he said.

Ceece Carvalho said a highlight of the night was the buffet and the desserts placed on the table after.

‘The kids looked great and were well behaved, and the venue was better than anticipated. Overall the whole thing was really successful.’

-ERIN FORTUNATO

“There was a good variety at the buffet. I enjoyed eating the bread rolls and cannolis the most,” she said.

Senior class officer Alex Briggs said dancing with friends and faculty was her favorite part of the night.

“It was super fun dancing with Ms. Brown, Ms. Molinare, Ms. Dubois, and all of my friends. There was a big dancing circle and people would run in the middle,” she said.

History teacher Jennifer Coleman said she had a huge smile on her face from seeing people happy after the recent years in the pandemic.

“It was so nice in particular to see the seniors who have had such a disruptive high school experience all in the same place genuinely having a good time,” she said.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Senior Alex Briggs and guest Ryan Clark.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Juniors Faith Ellis and Ava Argento.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Seniors Sofia Sarmanian, Reese Tully, Emily Doucette, and Matt Puchniak.



Seniors Wrede Charlton, Fitzgerald, and AJ Pallaz



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Juniors Cam Hubbard and Michael DeOreo, and senior Lily Zschau.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Seniors Owen Bappe and John Pope.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Juniors Lucia Wendell and



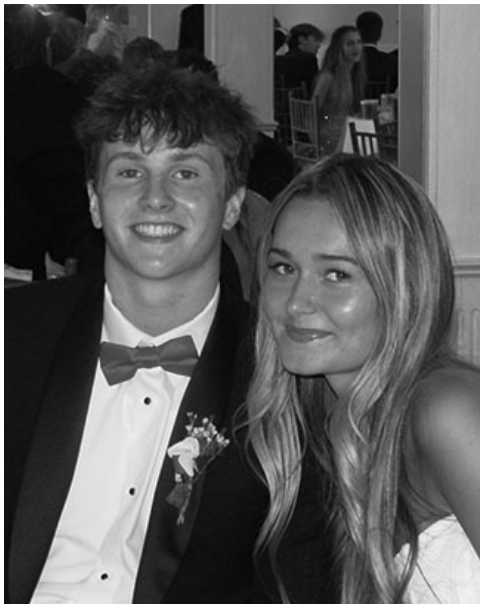
MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Chaperones Sarah Heller, Gillian Polk, and Holly Brabson.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Seniors Amelia Donnellan Valade and Katie Kuhl.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Junior Lila Carpenter and senior Charlie Weld posing for the 360 degree camera.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Junior James Colbert and senior Ainsley Tully.



COURTESY OF SHEA FURSE
Students in the journalism class with journalism teacher Mary Buckley-Harmon. Missing from the photo: Caroline MacKinnon.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Junior Caroline MacKinnon and guest Andrew Coelho.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Dilyn Engelhart, Emma Wonson, Chris Daly, Emma Cola.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Junior Jesse Oliver.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Juniors Abby Taron and Mary Callahan.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Seniors Matthew Blackman.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Seniors Jane Whitten and Ava Kail.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Juniors Finn Lawler, Brennan Twombly, Chase Dickson; sophomore Quinn Brady, and juniors Becket Spencer, Sam Athanas, and Declan Kirk.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Juniors Henry Otterbein, Jude Tomaiolo, sophomore Quinn Brady, and junior Charlie Mann.



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO
Seniors Addie Politi, Maddy Curran, Lynn Benali, Isabella Hadaegh, and Jessica Khani.

STAFF EDITORIAL

Senior editors reflect on their experiences in journalism

By **Carson Komishane, Emma Ketchum, and Ema O’Neil**
INDEPENDENT EDITORS

After some of the most unpredictable and memorable years, we senior editors reflect on our journalism experiences and say goodbye to The Independent community.

The class itself taught us essential skills such as communicating effectively, writing concisely, and how to manage our time precisely. However, more importantly, the people in the class taught us the importance of creating a strong sense of community.

Throughout the years we have been in journalism, it has been a stable and loving environment fostered by Ms. Buckley-Harmon and the rest of the staff. This community has taught us important lessons that will help us throughout college and into our futures.

Emma joined the class as a sophomore because she always had a love for writing and her English classes.

“Journalism is so different from any other class I took throughout high school because I was able to see my growth over the course of three years, not just one,” she said.

She said being in journalism has changed her for the better.

“When I first joined journalism as a sophomore, I didn’t expect it to change who I am, but my experiences that have brought me out of my comfort zone throughout these three years have

shaped me into who I am as both a student and person. I am so lucky to have been part of such a great community,” she said.

Carson had no idea what to expect when joining the journalism team.

“It was an incredible learning experience to be a part of something that we never had a



MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

Carson Komishane, Ema O’Neil, and Emma Ketchum have learned many skills throughout their time in journalism that they will take with them after they graduate and move toward their futures.

chance to do before. Journalism taught me so many life skills and I know I will value this experience throughout the rest of my life,” she said.

Journalism has truly changed us. When joining journalism, we didn’t know what impact it could have on us in every aspect of our lives.

Senior news editor Ema O’Neil joined the class during her junior year to improve her writing and get out of her comfort zone.

The class began fully remote due to the pandemic.

“Although most of my time in journalism was spent on Zoom, the experience I had and the

skills I learned are ones that I will carry with me for life,” Ema said.

She added, “After two years of writing for The Independent, I can safely say that not only did I accomplish these goals, but I also am a part of an amazing community of excellent writers and people.”

International student trips provide opportunity for growth, independence

By **Avabella Mitrano**
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Participating in international student trips before college is an essential experience with a myriad of benefits, including opportunities for students to be independent.

Students are challenged to push themselves beyond their limitations with international student trips, especially when they are apart from family.

According to a 2019 article by Hun School of Princeton entitled “Why High School Students Should Travel Abroad at Least Once Before College,” there is value in being uncomfortable while adapting to new situations and seeing commonalities beyond cultural differences.

Allowing students to adapt to these situations without help from parents or friends can prepare them for when they will have to potentially face new experiences in college alone.

International student trips can also facilitate the development of life skills and contribute to better academic performance.

An Education Week article from 2019 entitled “The Power of Travel for Student Success” referenced a 2016 Student & Youth Travel Association study that found that students had an increased willingness to learn and explore with greater curiosity about the world around them.

Along with new curiosity, students are better able to immerse themselves in a different culture that expands their world view.



AVABELLA MITRANO PHOTO

On a recent school trip to Spain, students visited the city of Cordoba, exploring and appreciating the culture of the city.

Sophomore Alana Martinetti participated in this year’s trip to Spain on April 15. Martinetti said the trip allowed her to gain a better understanding of Spanish culture and language.

“It felt like a completely different world ... it was so cool

to talk to natives, try new foods, and experience the place that we had studied in school for years firsthand,” she said.

However, the challenge of students participating in school trips is that they are cost-prohibitive. An international student trip can

cost several thousand dollars per student.

Although paying for a trip is a challenge, the long-term benefits justify the costs. A 2013 survey entitled “Educational Travel in Youth Linked to Academic, Career Success” studied 400 American adults who took educational trips between ages of 12-18.

Eighty-nine percent of the adults reported that the trips had a positive impact on their education or career. The survey also showed that they made 12% more annually.

With these long-term benefits, there should be more of a reason to reduce costs for financially troubled students. Costs could potentially be reduced by school fundraisers or by scholarship offers.

As the world becomes more connected as a global community, it is important to know and appreciate other cultures from personal experiences. International travel in high school affords students these transformative opportunities.

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the
INDEPENDENT

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.

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Girls’ lacrosse team holds No. 1 ranking in Division IV playoffs

Claims CAL Baker Division title

By Avabella Mitrano
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After a prior season impacted by the pandemic, the girls’ lacrosse team’s first game of the playoffs will be the Round of 32 on June 9, athletic director Cameron Molinare said.

The current record is 15-2.

Varsity coach Nan Gorton said it has been a winning season and they did well against their rival team, Ipswich, winning 9-6. She said the game was special to the team because of a tailgate with both teams after the game.

“It just showed a lot of sportsmanship on both sides and a lot of camaraderie around the sport of lacrosse, and making it really about the game and less about the

‘Readiness to play with any team is really about controlling your focus and emotions...there are times when we struggle with this.’

- NAN GORTON

adversarial relationship between the two teams,” Gorton said.

She also said one of the team’s toughest and most memorable games was against Pentucket. Manchester won by one goal in a close match.

“Readiness to play with any team is really about controlling your focus and emotions...there are times when we struggle with this. So it’s really looking at managing the focus and emotions in our practices that can carry us through into our games,” Gorton said.

Assistant coach Linda Moore said she is pleased with this season as every person who played midfield or attack scored a goal.

She said that their one loss was against Newburyport, a



COURTESY OF ABBY LEVENDUSKY

Freshman Charlotte Crocker clears the ball up the field from defense in the game against Essex Tech. The Hornets won the game 14-2 on April 27 which contributed to their 15-2 record.

fierce opponent.

Senior team captain Emma Fitzgerald said it has been a good season overall. Although the team lost to Newburyport, Fitzgerald said they were the hardest team.

“It was the least amount of goals that the team scored all year, so it definitely gave us a confidence boost to play them

again, and we have become so close as a team. I think we are going to make it all the way,” she said.

Fitzgerald also said her goal is to get the team to work together cohesively and not try to get someone to win the game by themselves.

“We also want to play a fast-paced game and play to our

abilities and not have to settle the ball,” she said.

Gorton said Fitzgerald was instrumental in making goals and demonstrating team leadership. She also said senior team captains Amelia Donnellan and Wrede Charlton are valuable players with Donnellan playing as backer and Charlton being the unsung hero behind the scenes.

Boys’ lacrosse team improves record, makes the Divison IV playoffs

By Hadley Levendusky
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With an overall record of 7-10 and ranked 19th in Division IV, the boys’ lacrosse team is playing in the Round of 32 against 14th-ranked Abington in the playoffs.

Coach Jon Siderewicz said he is very excited that the team has made it into the playoffs this year.

“The first half of the season was kind of rough. We lost a few games that were kind of out of our control, and we couldn’t bounce back. But we won some good games at the end of the season that gave us some confidence,” he said.

Siderewicz said the team’s defense has been playing very well.

“We have only been allowing seven or eight goals per game,”



COURTESY OF MARK DIPASQUALE

Junior captain Declan Kirk runs up the field in game against Gloucester. The Hornets won the game 6-5.

he said.

On the other hand, he said their offense has been struggling a bit.

“We have been finding our

groove at times, but consistently our defense has been the ones executing what they are supposed to do all year,” he said.

Siderewicz said senior captain Andrew Amigo has been playing defense very well this season, marking opponents’ best shooters very strongly. Amigo was named a first-team Cape Ann League All-Star, he said.

Junior captain Declan Kirk also received first-team Cape Ann League All-Star, Siderewicz said.

“He takes face offs, plays offense, plays defense. He has been doing it all for us,” he said.

As captains and All-Stars, Siderewicz said that they have been game changers and really helped lead the team.

Kirk said they have been trying to be motivational this season and have been having good team chemistry at practices.

Additionally, Siderewicz commended the team’s two goalies, junior Jack DiPasquale and senior Hayden Brady.

“That gives us a huge confidence having two goalies who can really see the ball well and give the defense and offense good transitions,” he said.

‘We have been finding our groove at times, but consistently our defense has been the ones executing what they are suppose to do all year.’

- JON SIDEREWICZ

Sailing team wins second place at Sharon High School Invitational

Places sixth in Zimba Mass Bay League Fleet Race Championship 420 A Fleet

By Caroline MacKinnon
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Finishing with a 4-6 record in regular season regattas, the sailing team placed 6th in the Zimba Mass Bay League Fleet Race Championship 420 A Fleet on May 23 and 24 with a score of 39 after finishing 2nd at their last invitational the previous week.

Coach Tony Leggett said the Sharon High School Invitational

was the highlight of the season.

He attributed the second place title out of 18 other teams to sophomores Ian Carlin and Matthew Graeter in the B division, who have been standout team members during this season, he said.

“They’re a great combination because Matthew is out there aggressive, and Ian is quieter and more thoughtful,” he said.

Other standout team members

this season include junior captain Anna Brzezinski and senior captain Aiden Harrison, he said.

Overall, Leggett said the team did well at taking in new information in a short amount of time, especially because the majority of the team was underclassmen.

“Sailing is an incredible sport that requires tremendous physicality. It combines tremendous physical exertion and a requirement of knowledge. It’s been a pleasure seeing them gain confidence and pickup skills,” he said.

Next season Leggett wants to

focus on boat handling skills, specifically team racing, he said.

“Team racing is rather arcane, combining knowledge of the basic rules and tactical sense of how to use the rules to delay your competition and help your teammates move ahead. This will be crucial for success next year,” he said.

Harrison said everyone on the team made great strides to improve this year.

“We had a small team this year, so individual improvement went a long way. Personally I fell short of a couple of things I wanted to achieve, but I’m proud of the overall team improvements,” he said.

Brzezinski said the Sharon Invitational put the team and their skills to the ultimate test.

“It was a difficult event, but we definitely improved throughout the regatta and had a great time talking to the other teams,” she said.

‘Sailing is an incredible sport that requires tremendous physicality. It combines tremendous physical exertion and... knowledge.’

- TONY LEGGETT

Girls’ tennis advances to third round of playoffs

Team continues to work on winning strategy, technical improvements

By Ella Chafe
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With their 3-2 win against Stoneham in the round of 32 on June 6, the No. 6 ranked girls’ varsity tennis team advanced in the Division IV state tournament, and will face No.11 Bourne on June 8.

The team’s overall record is 12-7 and they are the No. 6 seed, head coach Ed Conway said.

He said the team is still developing their singles players, but has a very strong doubles team. Conway said they are a very tight team that isn’t afraid to talk about things that aren’t going their way.

“We are a team that plays, works hard, and travels well together,” he said.

To continue to be successful in the playoffs the team is going to

work on their strategy for singles and doubles, Conway said. They are also going to work on their groundstrokes, he said.

Junior Emery Weber-Provost said the atmosphere on the team is very fun, but they also bring a lot of focus and energy to every practice.

One of the team’s strengths is working hard after a loss and being able to improve after it, she said.

Weber-Provost said junior Vanessa Gregory, the 3rd singles player, stands out for skill on the team.

“She is very consistent and dependable and helps our team as a whole,” Weber-Provost said.

Senior captain Parker Brooks agreed that Gregory makes an impact on the court.

“She has had a lot of hard and

‘We are a team that works hard, plays, and travels well together.’

- ED CONWAY



COURTESY OF MOLLY MACHAIN

Junior Vanessa Gregory plays in a match against North Reading on May 2, where the team lost, 3-2. Gregory was described by two of her teammates as a standout performer in singles matches.

long matches and has won most of them,” she said.

Brooks said sophomore Sienna Crocker and sophomore Grayson Crocker stand out for spirit on the team.

She said they always bring a

good attitude to the team.

Brooks said she is going to lead her team through the tournament by continuing to encourage her teammates.

She plans to keep a positive team dynamic and give everyone

more confidence going into their matches, she said.

Brooks said she wants to have a good run in the playoffs and hopefully make it to the final round like the team did last season.

Boys’ tennis team advance to third round of state tournament after 5-0 win

By Wyeth Takayesu
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

The No. 3 ranked boys’ tennis team advanced to the third round of the Division IV state tournament after beating Southbridge on June 6, and are preparing to face No. 14 Bromfield on June 8.

Varsity coach Robert Bilsbury said the team has put up a strong fight against a numerous strong teams all season.

“I think this year has gone really well. We’ve had such amazing senior leadership, and I feel like we’ve been battling a lot with good challenge matches that keep us in a competitive mode,” Bilsbury said.

No. 3 singles varsity player

and senior Roemer Dewidt agreed, saying new senior John Pope has helped lead the team through a number of difficult matches.

“It’s been a really good season so far...I think overall the team is looking really good, especially John Pope. He’s really helped us out by scoring a point every game and boosting us up,” Dewidt said.

Pope, the No. 1 singles player, came to the school this year.

Throughout the season he has managed to score a point for his team in every match, boosting morale and securing multiple victories, Bilsbury said.

“The team is doing very very well. We’ve lost very few match-



WYETH TAKAYESU PHOTO

Senior captain and No.1 singles player John Pope prepares to serve in a match against Hamilton-Wenham, which he won.

es this entire season. I think we have the possibility of winning the state title,” Pope said.

Performing well in the State-wide Division IV Tournament has been the end goal for the team this year.

“We have a chance to do well and go far in the tournament. We’re pretty high up in the rankings, but we have a couple of good competitors we’ll need to overcome,” junior varsity coach Barrett Alston said.

As the season winds down and seniors graduate, the tennis team is looking for underclassmen to step up and help lead the team next year, Bilsbury said.

“I’m excited for next year; we have some good younger players, and those players will get their shot now... turnover is always sad, but it’s also really exciting to see what these younger kids are going to do,” he said.

No. 1 varsity doubles player and senior Owen Bappe said the rising players have given the upperclassmen a lot of hope for the future despite a large number of graduating seniors.

“We have a lot of underclassmen stepping up for second doubles and positions like that ... I have no worries. Jack Cummins, Jack Lawler, and Charlie Virden are all coming up and they’ve all shown they’re powerful players who could do a lot with a little work in the off-season,” Bappe said.

Track sends one individual runner, one relay team to All-States

By Mechi O’Neil
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With an final record of 4-0 for the girls and 3-1 for the boys, the co-op track team with Gloucester High School qualified several runners for All-States and Nationals.

The girls were able to secure a win of the Northeastern Conference Lynch division, the boys just having missed that, losing to



COURTESY OF DAWN ENOS

Sophomore Mackay Brooks competes in a relay at Gloucester High School. She and her 4x800m relay team made the All-State meet.

Danvers in the final Lynch Division meet.

“The season has gone really

well for both the boys and the girls,” Coach Steve Whittey said.

Senior and captain Sarah Baker said one of their biggest accomplishments was placing well as a team at the conference championship meet. Both teams came in fifth place with plenty of strong individual performances.

The girls’ 4x800m relay team of freshman Whitney Turner, junior Kendall Newton, sophomore Mackay Brooks, and sophomore Caelie Patrick also won the conference championship, finishing with a time of 10:32.06.

“The NEC meet is always a great race bringing together the best of the best from the area,” Patrick said.

Baker said that even though track and field is a team sport, it’s really about beating personal

records.

“Each person on the team contributed everything they had, and it made the team stronger,” she said.

Baker said she is planning on throwing javelin at Keene State College next year.

“My goal for the end of the season is to continue working on techniques and beating more personal records,” she said.

The Division IV State Meet was hosted at Notre Dame Academy in Hingham on May 30 where the girls recorded a top 10 performance as their 30 points were good for 10th place overall. The boys finished 13th overall with 21 points.

Junior Caroline MacKinnon set a new school record in the 800m (2:17.48) en route to a sec-

ond place finish at the Divisional meet. MacKinnon placed 13th in the 800m at All-States.

The girls 4x800m relay team also competed at the All-State Meet on June 4 at Westfield State University, placing 20th out of 22.

Junior Jack Newton competed in the MIAA decathlon meet from June 6-7 in Burlington.

MacKinnon and the relay team, comprised of Turner, Newton, Brooks, and Patrick, qualified for Nationals, which will be held from June 16-19 at the North Carolina A&T Irwin Belk Track in Greensboro, North Carolina.

“I want to beat my record at nationals in the 800m and use this chance to really bond with my teammates,” she said.

Baseball team advances in state tournament as fifth seed

Players, coaches aim to make strong playoff run through focus and hard work

By Charlie Lations
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

As the postseason begins for baseball, the team put up a strong 9-6 win against Monomoy at home, setting themselves up for a second-round game against Monument Mountain Regional High School.

Coach BJ Weed said junior Michael DeOreo has stood out on the field, with the second-best batting average of .472 and the most RBIs, with 15.

Sophomore third baseman Matthew McKenna credited senior AJ Pallazola as a standout performer for his fielding ability.

“AJ has always been a go-to. [He’s] a solid center-fielder. All of our outfielders have been playing really well,” he said.

Junior third baseman Isaac Porat said sophomore Kevin McKenna has been a leader in

the locker room for the team this season and that he creates an atmosphere of brotherhood wherever he goes.

Weed said the team’s senior captains have also impacted team chemistry throughout the season. “Our senior captains have done a great job bringing the team together,” he said.

Weed said as the team moves through the postseason, his main expectation is to continue playing strong, get hot at the right time, and take the playoffs one game at a time.

McKenna said the team’s goal for the postseason is to keep playing like the pressure is off.

“We’re playing like we have nothing to lose. We’re playing loose and playing the way we should be, the way we did at the beginning of the season,” he said.

Porat named a similar goal, saying the team’s goal in the



COURTESY OF GRACE PALLAZOLA
Captain Vaughn O’Leary congratulates freshman catcher, Connor Heney, after an inning. Teammates praise O’Leary for leadership because of his positive attitude with the underclassmen.

postseason is to not get too comfortable.

Weed said a significant challenge the team has faced and had to play through has been a lack of depth due to injury: sophomores Troy Flood and Matteo

Sarmanian were both sidelined for the season with injuries.

He said the team has dealt with this adversity well and won in spite of their challenges, and he’s seen people step up to fill roles they wouldn’t normally

Combined softball team displays team connection

Players improve, work hard, despite losing record

By Phileine de Widt
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Despite their overall record of 0-19, the co-op softball team has created team bonds and shown improvements from last season.

For the second year, Manchester-Essex players have merged with Hamilton-Wenham to create the team, which George Shapiro coaches. Four players are from Manchester-Essex.

‘When Manchester-Essex plays against Hamilton-Wenham, it will be a friendly match. Everyone will have a great time playing.’

- GEORGE SHAPIRO

Though the players are from different towns, “watching a practice or a game, you wouldn’t know the team was combined. Everyone interacts with everyone, and it’s just one big team,” Shapiro said.

Sophomore Celia Mann agreed that the team’s bond is a strong point..

“We have developed and gotten closer as a team, and I have enjoyed playing with the Hamilton-Wenham girls,” she said.

Mann, who plays second base and outfield, has been a valuable



PHILEINE DE WIDT PHOTO
Sophomore Celia Mann plays in the team’s last game of the season against Swampscott at their home field, Miles River.

player, said Shapiro and teammate junior Kyra Levasseur.

Levasseur, who plays right-field and backup pitcher, has also been important to the team, Shapiro said.

“She has been hitting consid-

erably better and with a lot more confidence. I have elevated her on the batting line-up,” he said.

Junior Abby Taron plays as a designated hitter because of a recovering injury but still impacts the team, Shapiro said.

“She is getting stronger every day and has an incredible attitude,”he said.

Sophomore Morgan Laspesa plays catcher and outfield and has improved throughout the season, showing her potential, he said.

“She got a hit against Amesbury, who was ranked as the number one team in the state. It was the only hit for us, and it was really a big deal,” Shapiro said.

Contrary to last season, this year had some competitive matches, including close games against Ipswich and Pentucket. The team also won two scrimmages against Pingree and Penguin Hall.

Despite only playing with Hamilton-Wenham for two years, Manchester-Essex has enough players to create their own softball team next year, Levasseur said.

“I’m very excited to play for Manchester next year with Kyra, Morgan, and Abby and have a chance to represent our school,” Mann said.

Ultimate frisbee team finishes 7-1 despite age disadvantages

By Finn O’Hara
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Leaders on the ultimate frisbee team are pleased after a season filled with winning, team bonding, and training the younger players.

The ultimate frisbee team finished the season undefeated with a record of 7-1.

Freshman captain Charlie Rubens said that although he was sad they lost the final game of the season to Beverly, he was still happy with their overall record.



COURTESY OF XANDER EVERITT
Senior captain Finn Hawley grabs the frisbee from freshman captain Charlie Rubens after a score so he can start a new drive.

“Beverly was a great opponent and we played our best. I am nothing but proud of the team,” he said.

Senior captain Chris Siems said the team’s record is even more impressive than it seems because it is a young team, with

students from grades 6-12 allowed to play.

“Even the youngest kids aren’t afraid of the competition, and that bravery is what has helped us get as far as we have,” he said.

Rubens said that the most impressive win they have had this year was in their second game against Pingree.

“Finn Hawley’s leadership and skill led us to a big win,” he said.

Hawley, a senior, said a portion of this success can be attributed to the relaxed environment that has been created.

“We all play ultimate frisbee to have fun and so without that stress that may come from some sports, we can perform better,” he said.

Siems said one of the best parts about ultimate frisbee is meeting new kids.

“With kids joining from

middle and high school, there are many unfamiliar faces at the start of every season,” he said.

Hawley said the team has gotten along well throughout the season. Players spend time together and bond outside of practices, he said.

This season the captains have focused a lot on helping the younger players, Hawley said.

Siems said the younger players are very talented, especially when considering the fact that they are less experienced than the competition.

One of the biggest goals for future years is to convince more players to join, whether they’re from middle or high school, Rubens said.

“With lots of seniors graduating [this] year, captains are going to need to focus on recruiting,” he said.



LIBBY MULRY PHOTO

Junior Luca Capotosto created art with a variety of natural materials in his AP Studio 2D Art class.



LIBBY MULRY PHOTO

Junior Lexi Hano painted an interesting and unique landscape featuring an eye for her AP Studio 2D Art class.



LIBBY MULRY PHOTO

Sophomore Ava Doane depicted the trials of addiction in their AP Photography portfolio.

Show exhibits students’ art

By Libby Mulry
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Displayed in the first-floor main hallway, the latest art show held on May 20 showcased a variety of pieces from both art and photography classes.

The art department wanted to have the pieces displayed before Baccalaureate and other senior events because the showcase is made up of work from AP and senior students, photography teacher Caroline Epp said.

Last year the COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted how the department displayed work, Epp said.

After school moved online, teachers quickly pivoted to having an online art show, which allowed a large variety of people to view the students’ work, she said.

There is still a virtual art show, and it displays all of the graduating class’s artwork throughout their high school careers.

This year, teachers readjusted

to having an AP and senior-only art show in-person, Epp said. It is the first year the art department has put on the senior and AP show.

“It’s something new we’re trying post-pandemic, and it feels right to be showing our graduating seniors and our students that have been working tirelessly in AP,” art teacher Tamera Burns said.

The art department now has a goal of getting more entry-level work displayed throughout the school year.

“Starting next year, we would like to continue keeping it as a senior and AP art show, but then try to get more of Photo 1 and Art Lab work up during the year,” Epp said.

AP and senior students helped organize the art show. AP photography juniors and sophomores went through everyone’s portfolios and decided what should

be in the art show, and then they printed the pieces out and put them up, she said.

The process is similar in AP art classes where students are given a board and are allowed to fill it with any work they want, Burns said.

However, students who physically sent in work to the College Board would have to reprint pieces for the showcase, which is costly, said junior Olivia Royle, a student in Burns’ AP Studio 2D Art.

Some students had to display work they didn’t initially see as their best.

‘It’s something new we’re trying post-pandemic, and it feels right to be showing our graduating seniors and our students that have been working tirelessly in AP.’

-TAMERA BURNS



Luli Bartlett
AP Photo

LIBBY MULRY PHOTO

Senior Luli Bartlett displayed her photography skills in this print.

“It gave me the chance to see the beauty in the art that I didn’t fully love at first,” Royle said. Every student was responsible

for displaying their own work. “It’s nice that students have ownership of their own show,” Epp said.

Drama Club students perform comedic musical

By Wyeth Takayesu
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Members of the Drama Club performed the comedy musical “The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee,” featuring audience participation and improvisation earlier last month, and was met with raving reactions.

The show ran from May 6 to May 8 and followed the story of multiple spellers competing in a local spelling bee tournament, all vying for the elusive trophy.

The bee was run by host Rona Lisa Peretti (junior Lila Carpenter) and vice-principal Donna Panch (senior Gelsey McCue), who gave words and occasional jabs to the contestants.

Some of the spellers on stage were audience volunteers, brought on to compete against the actors directly, adding another layer of comedy to the show, director Gianna Baglioni said.

“I thought it would be a big challenge for the cast, especially



MADDIE MACHAIN PHOTO

The cast of “The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee” smile and pose for a photo in front of the set of the comedy musical.

because we didn’t have many rehearsal volunteers to practice with ... but, as always, I was incredibly impressed by this cast,” she said.

Much of the on-stage interaction and improvisation fell on actors McCue and Carpenter as

they called up the volunteers and improvised jokes in real-time.

“It was definitely a challenge, but it was really fun to just figure things out along the way ... we had to scout out people before each show in the lobby who we could pick fun at without bully-

ing or going too far,” Carpenter said.

Another issue the actors faced was maintaining continuity as spellers began to be eliminated one at a time.

“The most difficult part for me was judging what words people can and can’t spell because I need to get people out in a specific order so the show can progress the way it does ... you expect people to be able to spell religion, or Catholic, or telephone, but with the pressure of being on stage you just don’t know,” McCue said.

Audience volunteer Barrett Alston said that the audience interaction was a hilarious addition that should be continued in future productions. “The show was amazing, and I think this should definitely be continued in future shows. I’ve seen this show before when it first came out, and these actors are making me laugh as hard as I did back then,” Alston said.

English teacher Elizabeth Edgerton, another audience volunteer for the show, agreed that the show was a great experience

“I thought this was so incredibly fun and unexpected: especially with all the actors playing along, the characters felt so real.”

‘It was definitely a challenge, but it was really fun to just figure things out along the way ... we had to scout out people before each show in the lobby who we could pick fun at without bullying or going too far.’

- LILA CARPENTER