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School Committee members vote for mask removal

State removes mask mandate for schools

By Finn O'Hara
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

School Committee members followed the same path as the state by removing the school mask mandate, which elicited mixed emotions from community members.

The state requirement of the regulation was removed on Feb. 9 by DESE. According to their press release, infectious disease physicians helped them come to this decision.

Gov. Charlie Baker said the choice was made because Massachusetts was prepared to take the mandate down with all of the safety precautions they have.

This announcement gave school districts the choice as to whether or not their school continued the mask mandate, according to DESE.

On Tuesday, Feb. 15, the School Committee discussed



FINN O'HARA PHOTO

After the School Committee voted to make masks optional on Feb. 28, sophomores Ian Carlin, Finn McCue, and Corbin Stafford chose whether or not to wear a mask in school.

whether or not to follow the actions of DESE and remove this regulation.

Six out of the seven School Committee members voted in favor of removing the mask man-

date on Feb. 28, putting the state's policy in action; however, there were arguments for each side.

Chris Reed, a member of the School Committee who voted in favor of the mask mandate's removal, said the school is not the place where COVID-19 has been spread.

"Even during the Delta surge and the Omicron surge this year, we didn't have a single confirmed case of transmission within our schools," he said.

Kate Koch, a member of the School Committee who voted against the mandate's removal, said parents who want their child to wear a mask would not be able to ensure they are wearing it following the removal of the mandate, thus making it the child's choice as to whether or not they wear it.

After the return from vacation on Feb. 28, there was a mix of students and faculty wearing and not wearing masks.

Junior Owen O'Leary, a student who wore his mask, said he felt safe socially and from COVID-19 after choosing to wear it.

"While I had worries about
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DECA members compete at States competition

Five students qualified to compete at Internationals

By Carson Komishane
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Students in DECA attended and competed at States at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston from March 10 to March 12. Five students qualified to compete at DECA Internationals from April 23 to April 26 in Atlanta, Georgia.

DECA adviser Dean Martino said that the competition started with an opening ceremony.

Throughout the following day, the students competed.

On the final day, the students attended an awards ceremony.

"Day three is when all the students [found] out who the 2022 Massachusetts DECA State champions [would] be. The top 10 combined scorers in each category are called to the stage and the top six of those 10 qualify for the international competition at the end of April," he said.

DECA members Erik Bischoff,

Parker Brooks, Aidan Cunningham, Liliane Pilaud, and Douglas Pratt won first place in their respective categories and qualified for the international competition, Martino said.

"They will compete against 18,000 students from as many as eight countries and all 50 states to become international champions," he said.

Senior and DECA state officer Lynn Benali said she had many different roles as state officer during this event.

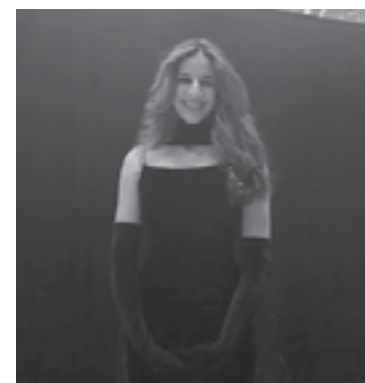
"My role alongside the other state officers was to plan the conference for the 3,000 competitors at the event and also make sure the delegates were signed up for the conference in order to ensure a fair election for next year's state officers," she said.

Benali also said she created an app for attendees.

"One of my specific roles was to create the app and its content that showed students when their role-plays were," she said.

Another goal of the officers was to have engaging activities at the event, Benali said.

"This year's States was very



COURTESY OF DEAN MARTINO

DECA members Liliane Pilaud, Douglas Pratt, Parker Brooks, Aidan Cunningham, and Erik Bischoff qualified for DECA Internationals. State officer Lynn Benali helped coordinate States.

energetic. We wanted to have an amazing States because we were unable to have an in-person conference last year. I loved being able to meet so many people with similar interests and passions that I have too," she said.

DECA member Maddy Curran said that she has spent months

preparing for this event.

"In order to prepare for States, I have been doing practice role-plays, studying for the exam, and reviewing vocabulary terms," she said.

Curran said this was her first year attending States.

"There were so many things

to do at States and I loved it. My favorite part was going to see the hypnotist show. The experience was incredible and it was so fun watching everyone receive their awards on the last day. Also, I loved meeting new people," she said.

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Week of Gratitude allows students, staff to express thankfulness

By Libby Mulry
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Sponsored by peer mentors and the guidance department, The Week of Gratitude, allowed students and faculty to express appreciation for one another.

Peer mentors typically host The Week of Gratitude the week before February vacation, guidance counselor David Conwell said.

Preparation for the week starts in early January.

“A month or so in advance, we start collecting cards from families, and a bunch of people are great about bringing them in, and then we start hanging up posters to get the word out,” senior peer mentors coordinator Charlie Weld said.

Peer mentors were compensated for the time they put in by

‘I think it’s important to show our appreciation to our teachers and other peers.’
-SOPHIE ZALOSH

receiving an hour of community service for every poster made, Conwell said.

The thank-you notes for the Week of Gratitude were accessible to both students and faculty.

Anyone could pick up cards and envelopes from the guidance office, senior peer mentors coordinator Ema O’Neil said.

The cards were placed in boxes around the school made by O’Neil, she said.

This process last year was affected by the pandemic.

“People sent emails, some made cards and dropped them in a dropbox and they were left in teacher mailboxes,” Conwell said.

Because of the challenges of last year, this year’s Week of Gratitude was especially impor-



EMA O’NEIL PHOTO

The peer mentors brought supplies and met in the cafeteria on Feb. 15 during U block to make thank-you cards for teachers, staff, and other students in honor of The Week of Gratitude.

ADL members plan, host sessions with freshmen students to discuss school community, inclusivity

Organization works towards their goal: spreading awareness

By Ema O’Neil
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Members of the Anti-Defamation League visited ninth-grade classrooms to educate underclassmen about identity, stereotypes, and biases.

The overall goal of ADL is to bring awareness to certain issues and make the school more inclusive, ADL adviser Lauren DuBois said.

“We want everyone to be operating from a similar understanding,” she said.

In order to work towards this goal, DuBois said members will hold four sessions with the ninth-



EMMA KETCHUM PHOTO

During a prep block, members of the Anti-Defamation League divided into small groups to discuss ideas for their next session.

graders; each will consist of important lessons and discussions.

To prepare for these sessions,

Olivia Gado said.

“The training days mirrored what we did with the freshmen, so it was really beneficial,” she said.

The goal of the first session, which was held on Feb. 3, was to create a safe space to discuss societal issues that may be difficult for younger students to talk about, DuBois said.

Gado said her group started off with ice breakers and a mini-lesson, which then led to an open discussion.

“It’s really cool to see younger students engage in these types of conversations,” she said.

DuBois said the goal of the second session on March 3 was to explore identity and all of the different types of “-isms.”

Members engaged in various activities and discussions to help

solidify the ninth-grade student’s understanding of certain terms, Gado said.

DuBois said the third session will be held on March 17, and the fourth will be on March 25.

“For those sessions, we are hoping to continue developing the underclassmen’s knowledge on important concepts and discuss what we can do to address certain issues,” she said.

Gado and DuBois said they’ve both seen excellent reactions from the ninth-grade students so far.

Freshman Tori Moulton said she had a very positive experience during these sessions.

“I think it’s beneficial to us as a school and as a community to be able to talk openly about these issues,” she said.

‘It’s really cool to see younger students engage in these types of conversations.’
-OLIVIA GADO

Biden nominates Ketanji Jackson to Supreme Court

By Phileine de Widt
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

President Biden has nominated federal Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to fill Justice Stephen Breyer’s seat, as he will retire at the end of the court’s term this summer.

In response to the retirement, Biden vowed to nominate a Black woman to the Supreme Court to fill the empty seat.

According to “Biden Nominates Ketanji Brown Jackson to be First Black Woman to Sit on Supreme Court” on cnn.com, Jackson, 51, is currently on D.C.’s federal appellate court.

She was also a federal public defender and served on the federal district court in D.C. and as commissioner on the U.S. Sentencing Commission. Biden appointed her to the D.C. Circuit last year.

Jackson comes from a background of public service, as her parents were both educators before retirement. Her father was also a lawyer, the article said.

She was born in Washington, D.C., and studied at Harvard University and Harvard Law School where she graduated with notable distinction, according to the White House website.

Jackson currently lives in Washington, D.C., with her husband and two children.

If the Senate confirms her nomination, she will fill Justice Breyer’s seat and be the first African American woman on the Supreme Court.



WIKIMEDIA.COM

Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer will retire this summer, and federal Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson will take his seat.

AP U.S. Government teacher Jennifer Coleman said this moment is historical, and she will incorporate the news in the classroom.

“This would also mean that we

liberal justice, like Jackson, to be appointed, which will maintain the 6-3 split between conservative and liberal justices.

Breyer is the court’s oldest member at 83 and was nominated by President Bill Clinton. He took his seat at the Supreme Court on Aug. 3, 1994.

According to an NPR article by Nina Totenberg, he had a very successful career filled with decades of teaching at Harvard Law School, being an assistant prosecutor in the Watergate scandal investigation and a chief counsel for the Senate Judiciary Committee, where he helped to make federal criminal sentencing more uniform.

Breyer’s grandson Eli Breyer-Essiam, 15, is a frequent visitor to Manchester.

“He is a very caring grandfather,” he said.

Former software engineer becomes math teacher substitute

Worked first semester at Ipswich Middle School

By Hadley Levendusky
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Long-term math sub Ralph Carrieri has taken over Richard Brown’s two pre-calculus and two geometry classes for the remainder of the school year.

Carrieri, originally from Winthrop, Massachusetts, currently lives in Boxford, he said.

He completed his undergraduate at Northeastern University in Boston where he received his bachelor’s in computer science in 1988.

Carrieri, previously a software engineer, said he worked at UFA

Inc. and Itek Optical Systems.

He said he climbed the ladder in that discipline for 25 years and then for the past 10 years he was a program manager.

“I did system engineering and was basically in charge of projects and customers in the engineering and development aspects of our products where we use to stimulate air traffic controls,”

‘We are now learning some new content and is has been going really well.’

-RALPH CARRIERI

Carrieri said.

In 2021, he completed his masters for teaching at Merrimack College in North Andover, he said.

After completing his masters, Carrieri supported six different math classes with two different teachers at Ipswich Middle School for the first half of the 2021-22 school year, he said.

Carrieri began working at Manchester-Essex towards the end of January.

“Initially it was challenging



MECHI O’NEIL PHOTO

Ralph Carrieri, a former software engineer, took over two pre-calculus and two geometry classes for math teacher Richard Brown, who is on leave for the year.

jumping in at the middle of the school year and trying to pick up where Mr. Brown left off and just trying to pick off where students were [with the content they had previously learned],” he said.

During Brown’s absence, students took an online course called Educere, Carrieri said.

“[I’m] trying to assess [their knowledge] of that. We are now into new content, and it has been good,” he said.

Carrieri said he likes the school community so far.

“All of my fellow teachers and the administration have been great and very supportive,” he said.

Carrieri said he was pleasantly surprised with the students.

“Normally when students see a substitute teacher, they see like a wounded fish, and they want to take advantage of it,” he said.

The students have been very good and have made it much easier to adjust, Carrieri said.

Junior Gwen Hannafin, a student in one of Carrier’s precalculus honor classes, said he has been very kind and understanding so far.

“Starting in the middle of the year is not an easy task...he cares about our understanding of the material,” she said.

FUN FACTS

- **Has an 8-year-old son named Henry who he loves to play with and watch grow up.**
- **Likes to fly fish.**
- **Coaches youth baseball.**
- **Loves to cook.**
- **Likes spending time in nature, in the woods and in the ocean.**

Students, staff members will explore Spain, France in April

By Ella Chafe
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Trips to Spain and France during April vacation will resume after being canceled due to COVID in March of 2020.

Both trips are organized by Education First, which will provide local tour guides and a journey director, Spanish teacher Robert Bilsbury said.

Faculty members Mary Buckley-Harmon, Lauren DuBois, Steve Padovani, and 30 students will be attending the trip to Spain with Bilsbury, he said.

Bilsbury said the group will spend the first three days in



FLICKR.COM

Students and staff members will be visiting the Catedral de Sevilla, located in the city of Seville. The Cathedral is the third-largest church in the world as well as the largest Gothic church.

Madrid, where they will see the Prado Museum and the Royal Palace.

The itinerary covers Southern Spain, with highlights including Seville, home to the Catedral de Sevilla and the Alcázar, Bilsbury said.

The group will also explore Granada, Cádiz, and Córdoba, home of La Mezquita de Córdoba, he said.

Bilsbury said the trip allows students to use all of the Spanish skills they practice every day in class.

“When you go to another country, all the practice really has a point, and you get to connect with the culture if you chose to throw yourself into it,” he said.

Sophomore Anya Bixby said she is excited to immerse herself in the Spanish culture and language.

“It will be very interesting to see all the things that we learn on paper put to use in people’s daily lives,” she said.

Seventeen students, along with French teacher Erin Fortunato and Spanish teacher Margaret Kane, are traveling through France.

Fortunato said they fly into Southern France to see the city of Nice. Some highlights include French castles and museums, the

city of Lyon, and Monte Carlo, she said.

The group will also explore Paris and ascend the Eiffel Tower, Fortunato said.

Fortunato said she’s excited to share the experience with her students.

“It’s great to take students I’ve been working with for years and have them see real people functioning in the language,” Fortunato said.

Senior Izzy Thurlow said the trip will improve her language skills by being exposed to more French.

“Outside of school I’m not exposed to a lot of the French language, so being forced to use it, even if I’m not comfortable, will definitely help,” she said.

‘I’m not exposed to a lot of French language, so being forced to use it...will definitely help.’

-IZZY THURLOW

CONTINUATIONS

COVID UPDATE

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comments against my choice to wear a mask, people have been very respectful,” he said.

Sophomore Andrew Rodrigues, a student who did not wear his mask, said he was excited to take off his mask after two years.

“I feel comfortable now after the state decided it was safe and so I am relieved to finally get rid of it in school,” he said.

At the School Committee meeting, Superintendent Pam Beaudoin said the school faculty is going to help people through the changes that come with COVID-19.

“We have mixed emotions, and I think like every other new adventure we go into we are going to try to be thoughtful and helpful,” she said.

DECA AWARDS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

First Place Awards and Qualifiers for Internationals:

ERIK BISCHOFF
Automotive Services Marketing

PARKER BROOKS
Restaurant and Food Service Management

AIDAN CUNNINGHAM
Personal Financial Literacy

LILIANE PILAUD
Principles of Marketing

DOUGLAS PRATT
Entrepreneurship

Top Ten Exam Awards:

ERIK BISCHOFF
Automotive Services Marketing

PARKER BROOKS
Restaurant and Food Service Management

THOMAS BRUNNER
Retail Merchandising

AIDAN CUNNINGHAM
Personal Financial Literacy

REMSEN DEMEO
Sports and Entertainment Marketing

KATHERINE KUHL
Human Resource Management

CHARLES LATIONS
Automotive Services Marketing

DOUGLAS PRATT
Entrepreneurship

MATTHEW PUCHNIAK
Food Marketing

Top Ten Role-Play Awards:

ERIK BISCHOFF
Automotive Services Marketing

PARKER BROOKS
Restaurant and Food Service Management

JACOB BROWN
Personal Financial Literacy

ELLA CHAFE
Marketing Management Team Decision Making

AIDAN CUNNINGHAM
Personal Financial Literacy

GABRIELLA D’ANDREA
Marketing Management Team Decision Making

REMSEN DEMEO
Sports and Entertainment Marketing

KATHERINE KUHL
Human Resource Management

CHARLES LATIONS
Automotive Services Marketing

CONNOR MORGAN
Marketing Communications

LILIANE PILAUD
Principles of Marketing

DOUGLAS PRATT
Entrepreneurship

MATTHEW PUCHNIAK
Food Marketing

ASHLEY SHELL
Food Marketing

Seniors prepare diverse projects for SCORE Program

By Emma Ketchum
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Seniors have started planning what they will be doing for their SCORE projects fourth quarter, and the ability for students to do independent projects as opposed to internships has allowed them to be more creative with their ideas, SCORE coordinator Margaret Kane said.

Before the pandemic, most SCORE projects were strictly internships, but these past two years, students have been able to

come up with their own independent projects that allow for more schedule flexibility, Kane said.

“The silver lining to COVID was that a lot of those internships turned into independent projects, so the scope of what SCORE is has broadened, so the students have been looking at what truly interests them,” she said.

For his project, senior Andrew Torri is creating an informative cookbook with recipes to highlight the differences between plant- and animal-based eating. He said his cookbook will include several recipes with detailed ingredient lists, instructions, and photos of the food he’ll create. He will also show the carbon emissions, land use,

and water use associated with each serving of the meal.

“My ultimate goal of the project is to motivate people to eat less meat by empirical and

easy-to-understand data,” Torri said.

Senior Jagger Nowak said he is planning on writing a fantasy novel with the help of library aide Barrett Alston as his supervisor.

“I’m really looking forward to working on something that I actually enjoy doing,” Nowak



Seniors Lukas Shan, Jagger Nowak, and Andrew Torri have all created ideas and plans for their individual SCORE projects. Each student will be presenting their SCORE projects after five weeks.

said.

Senior Lukas Shan said he is planning to participate in a pharmacy internship at Sam’s Club Pharmacy, where he will build his knowledge and skills in pharmacy and pharmacology to prepare for employment as a pharmacy technician this summer. He will also be developing customer service skills and prescription organization skills as he works in a retail pharmacy setting, he said.

“Having an interest in pursuing a career involving pharmacy, this internship will definitely pro-



vide me with more direction in terms of finding the ideal career path,” Shan said.

Kane said students participating in SCORE have to share their final product or experience through a presentation after five weeks of working. Students are required to complete 30 hours of work for their SCORE project or internship every week, minus five hours for every AP class they take.

For the future of SCORE, a group of teachers and principal Patricia Puglisi have been creating a plan to align SCORE with



EMMA KETCHUM PHOTOS

the district’s vision of the graduate. This plan would involve a broader picture of the skills students have acquired throughout elementary and high school through a portfolio demonstration, Puglisi said.

“So while students are working on this culminating experience, they’re also thinking about the skills they should have developed during kindergarten through senior year and really being able to highlight things like their communication skills, global citizenship, or any other topic,” Puglisi said.

Green Team students create green projects despite pandemic communication challenges

By Ema O’Neil
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Despite various challenges, Green Team students are working towards creating a more sustainable school by working on in-class projects.

Science teacher Keith Gray said that over the past two years, the COVID-19 pandemic has created difficulties for the Green Team.

In years past, students typically worked on a collaborative project with another organization or company in an effort to improve the school’s sustainability, he said.

“With COVID, it’s been very difficult to reach out to organizations, as they are dealing with their own problems caused by the pandemic,” Gray said.

Before these challenges, students won state-level awards regularly for their work in the

Green Team, Gray said; however, in the past two years, only one student has.

“I think that this is a real indicator of how difficult the pandemic has made things for us,” he said.

Gray said he has guided his students through these difficulties and helped them get started on more individual, in-class projects.

Junior Green Team students Ava Ricci and Sophie Zalosh have been working together to replace Expo whiteboard markers with a more sustainable option called AusPen markers in the school, Gray said.

Zalosh said there are many benefits to these markers: they have an aluminum container, which can be recycled, and the markers can be refilled with ink when they dry out.

“This would be a really awesome step for our high school in

terms of becoming more green,” she said.

So far, Ricci and Zalosh have handed out about 40 AusPen markers to teachers in order to test their durability. They are planning on talking to the School Committee to discuss replacing all whiteboard markers with these reusable ones.

“Hopefully at the beginning of next year, we will have all the teachers using AusPen whiteboard markers,” Zalosh said.

Zalosh has also been writing an opinion piece about the environmental impacts of large-scale fish farming on the coast of Maine.

The article was published in The Ellsworth American in February.

“It was a great experience to write about an environmental issue that directly affects me,” Zalosh said.

Since her first publication,



EMA O’NEIL PHOTO

Ava Ricci and Sophie Zalosh use Auspen whiteboard markers in their effort to make school supplies environmentally friendly. Their goal is to replace EXPO markers with an eco-friendly alternative.

Zalosh said she joined the Frenchman’s Bay United, an organization that advocates for the preservation of local fish habitats, as an independent journalist contractor.

Senior Green Team member Emily Doucette said she is also working on her own sustainable in-class project.

She is currently building a self-sustaining garden wall on the third floor, with the goal of growing various plants, fruits, and vegetables that will water

themselves.

“I’m hoping that the food grown from these gardens can be used in the cafeteria,” she said.

With the help of Gray, Doucette has started building a prototype that consists of a wooden frame, Flora Felt pockets as soil, and a self-sustaining water pump system.

“I am hoping that these gardens will be able to keep running once I am out of the school and that future Green Team students will check on them,” she said.

Faculty learns about trauma sensitivity in new training program

By Avabella Mitrano
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Principal Patricia Puglisi is helping to implement an educational trauma sensitivity program for faculty.

She said the pandemic highlighted the greater need for support and heightened the awareness of the effects of trauma on classroom behavior and academic performance.

Puglisi said staff is working with an educator who has experience with working with trauma-sensitive practices to better meet students’ social and emotional needs.

“It’s the idea that kids have to feel accepted in the classroom, and we really need to meet each individual student’s needs…it may look different for kids on a given day, and that’s how we help them to feel safe, secure, and confident in school,” she said.

As an introduction to the program, foreign language teacher Margaret Kane and special education chair Jean Tarricone held a presentation surrounding anxiety and trauma.

Photography teacher Caroline Epp said their presentation provided novel information.

“They pointed out that sometimes the response that traumatized kids have can seem arrogant, which I think is not something you would realize…I realized I need to not react to the arrogance but to the underlying trauma or crisis that they are dealing with,” Epp said.

School adjustment counselors Holly Brabson and Sarah Heller said a recent professional devel-

opment session on Zoom reviewed various strategies schools implement to help with trauma, such as building a sense of community and identifying students who may be at risk.

“If someone noticed a kid was a little off, a teacher can talk to them right away and say ‘Are you okay?’

You seem a little bit off today, do you need anything? I’m here to help you,” Brabson said.

Although COVID-19 brought to light the trauma students face, the counselors said they agreed that students came into the building every day with family and emotional problems, long before the pandemic occurred.

Sophomore Gavin Davis said he thought the trauma sensitivity focus was a great way to help relieve the stress of trauma that students can face.

“It’s great that teachers can continue to learn how to make a safe learning environment for more students, especially when these issues aren’t brought up often,” Davis said.

‘...we really need to meet each individual student’s needs... that’s how we help them to feel safe, secure, and confident in school.’

-PATRICIA PUGLISI

Viability program prepares students for steps following after high school

By Charlie Lations
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Life after high school can be a difficult concept for students to tackle, but the Viability program at the school aims to solve that problem by giving students opportunities to build their résumés.

Transitions Program lead teacher Peter Tarpinian said the primary function of the Viability program, funded by the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, is to prepare students for transitioning to life after high school, whether students go on to enter the workforce or go to college.

“We work on interviewing, résumés, cover letters, anything to help the students here get ready for working and getting some experience and responsibilities,” Tarpinian said.

Transitions Program teaching assistant Heidi Pallo said much of the program’s function is to give students experience by volunteering and providing them with opportunities for jobs.

Tarpinian said the program has partnered with Beverly Bootstraps, a local nonprofit that focuses on the issue of hunger, to provide students with opportunities to volunteer and build experiences and collaboration skills and learn how to present



CHARLIE LATIONS PHOTO

The Viability program helps students get ready for their lives after high school. They work on life skills that will benefit them.

those skills in a résumé.

He said the program is done on a year-to-year basis, but it can continue all the way through students’ college education,

being present as a resource throughout students’ academic lives.

Pallo said the program doesn’t solely focus on college as the route after

high school, serving to connect students with tech schools, job opportunities, or other training programs.

Tarpinian said the program has been meeting for about a month.

“The kids love it, they keep showing up, there’s nobody not showing up—so that’s good,” he

said.

Sophomore Sam Reissfelder said the program has helped build a lot of social skills that are useful in the future.

Program director Stephanie Pallazola said one of the best opportunities the program has been able to provide to students so far has been experience with volunteering.

“That’s given them a lot more confidence in writing their résumés, showing them that they have skills even if they don’t recognize them right away,” she said.

Sophomore Charles Hultgren said the program has been extremely effective in helping him prepare for life after high school.

“[The program] helps you find community service activities and add them to your résumé if you don’t know how to,” he said.

‘The kids love it, they keep showing up, there’s nobody not showing up—so that’s good.’

-PETER TARPINIAN

SCAR, Humanitarian League collects donations for shelter

By Carson Komishane
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Student Coalition Against Racism (SCAR) and the Humanitarian League are collecting donations for a shelter in Boston called the Women’s Lunch Place, English teacher and SCAR adviser Allison Krause said.

Senior and SCAR co-president Emily Doucette said they are collecting items such as unopened deodorant, lotion, hairbrushes, toothbrushes, shampoo and conditioner, gift cards, and more necessities until the end of March and then donating them to the Women’s Lunch Place.

“SCAR had originally been brainstorming how we could help during the month of March and how we could do something to give back during Women’s History Month, so we decided to collect donations,” she said.

They also invited the Humanitarian League to help them with the idea, Doucette said.

“We thought working with the



CARSON KOMISHANE PHOTO

Students in SCAR and the Humanitarian League are collecting donations of toiletries for a women’s shelter, the Women’s Lunch Place, which is located in Boston.

Humanitarian League would be a great opportunity to collaborate, and they agreed,” she said.

Senior and Humanitarian League president Lilly Marletta said their club focuses on humanitarian issues such as

helping people in need or helping solve problems around the world that relate to that.

“By helping with this drive,

we are helping women who need help by giving them basic necessities that they wouldn’t be able to access otherwise,” she said.

Krause said that this drive will help the large number of women and women of color in shelters. “Unfortunately, women of color are often over-represented in places like shelters, and so we felt like it was a worthy cause for us to get into. It also overlaps with Humanitarian League’s mission, so we thought for Women’s History Month it would be a good chance to collaborate,” she said.

Donations are being accepted until the end of March for this drive, so donate any extra necessities or toiletries to the Women’s Lunch Place through the collection at the school.

THINGS TO DONATE

- Deodorant
- Lotion
- Hairbrushes
- Toothbrushes
- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Gift cards
- Makeup



Freshman Milo Zeltzer:
“I went to Hawaii and explored all over the island.”



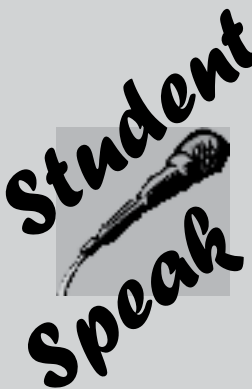
Freshman Stella Straub:
“I went up to Maine with my family and helped my younger cousin ski for the first time.”



Sophomore Nate Gardner:
“I went to the Gordon College woods to go cross country skiing.”



Sophomore Ava Rizzico:
“I learned how to snowboard in Vermont over the break.”



What was your favorite thing you did over Febuary break?



Junior Connor Morgan:
“I biked around all day with my friends before the storm.”



Junior Charlotte Lawrence:
“I went skiing in Colorado during a blizzard.”



Senior Andrew Torri:
“I traveled to the Back Bay in Boston.”



Senior Daphne Kerber:
“I baked lots of foods over the break like cheesecake.”

Junior organizes poetry club, supports young writers

Student-led club creates space for students to discuss poetry

By Caroline MacKinnon
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Junior Madelyn Officer created the Young Poets Society, which had its first meeting on February 9.

The club is dedicated to poetry and meets two to three times a month on Wednesdays.

“The Young Poets Society is a poetry club where we talk about poetry. We read it, write it, and help people find their literary voice,” Officer said.

Officer has had the idea for the club since the first quarter, she said.

The club is a small and comfortable group that appreciates

poetry, which can sometimes be considered an unnecessary or unhelpful in English classes, Officer said.

“[Poetry] is something that we are not taught as much. Usually we are taught novels, or maybe a play. There’s not a lot of time

dedicated [to poetry] in the curriculum,” she said.

Officer said that each meeting has an assigned poetry prompt due for the next meeting as well as a theme and a specific type of poetry to discuss.

“[Prompts] and themes give a little more structure and expose people to different genres of poetry they aren’t familiar with or haven’t written before,” she said.

Meetings start with reading aloud a poem suggested by group members. Then the group explores the theme for the meeting and the prompt. The meetings close with either writing or sharing past prompts from prior meetings, Officer said.

“It’s important to have a structure because there are goals and intentions I have for the club. I want to make sure I’m educating and providing opportunities as well as creating a relaxed and comfortable environment,” she said.

English teacher Allison Krause, the club’s adviser, said anyone is welcome to join the group to appreciate poetry as well as to get a chance to share their own poetry.

The club is not structured like a class and will be run by the students the way they want, she said.

“It’s going to be very student-centric. I’m just a warm body

‘The Young Poets Society is a poetry club where we talk about poetry. We read it, write it, and help people find their literary voice.’

-MADELYN OFFICER



COURTESY OF ANNABEL SMITH

Young Poets Society members pose for a photo with popular award-winning poetry books, aiming to explore their varied stories and writing styles to learn about modern composition.

in the room, because, again, it’s important to give students the space where they have creative freedom,” Krause said.

Junior Kyra Levasseur said she enjoys being a part of the club so far and is excited to see

how the club progresses. She joined the club because she likes writing her own poetry, she said.

“I like that there are no rules, and you can do whatever you want. A lot of inspiration comes from poetry,” Levasseur said.

Gender Equality Club aims to bring light to sexist issues

Members plan to host more meetings

By Mechi O’Neil
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Members of the Gender Equality Club met on Feb. 5 to discuss their plans for the rest of the school year.

Despite the slow start, senior co-leader Olivia Gado has high hopes for many meetings to come.

“With the end of my senior year coming up, I want to try to have as many meetings as possible,” she said.

All members of the club participated in the meeting and had a very insightful conversation about sexism in the school community, Gado said.

Junior co-leader Grace Gerhardt hopes that everyone can listen to others’ stories and start to understand gender equality issues on a community level.

“I want everyone to feel comfortable to speak and explain their views on the topics we discuss,” she said.

Last year, the previous club leaders worked diligently to have monthly meetings with presentations covering a certain topic for the club to discuss, followed by thought-provoking questions, Gado said.

She also said she learned so much from the two leaders so she wanted to do the same for the people in the club now.



MECHI O’NEIL PHOTO

The Gender Equality Club sit down for another meeting, discussing important gender issues inside the school community and town area.

“I wanted to bring my passion and interest for gender equality and be able to share that with other students,” she said.

Junior Juliana Saunders said

she joined Gender Equality Club to make a difference in the school community.

“I think it’s important for students to recognize sexism and

then collectively figure out how to prevent it,” she said.

Saunders said the meeting was a safe environment where members get to share their experiences and opinions without feeling judged.

Gado said she has noticed that everyone in the club is well-spoken and engaged in the conversation.

“When we have an open discussion, it’s really interesting to hear everyone’s perspectives,” she said.

Both Gerhardt and Saunders said they are looking forward to having good conversations with other members and making great changes in the school.

“It’s amazing to have a group of students who not only recognize modern issues with gender equality, but put in the time to actively work to change it,” Saunders said.

New robotics head mentor leads team into final competitions of the year

By Wyeth Takayesu
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

New robotics head mentor Nicholas Curcuru stepped in to lead the Robotics Team in January as the club prepares for its final competitions of the year.

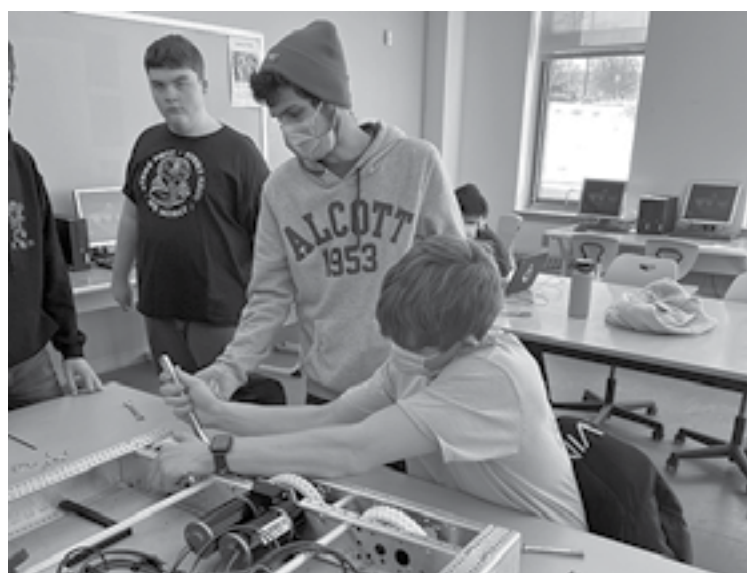
Curcuru, a class of 2017 alumnus of the high school and a former member of the Robotics Team, has mentored the club since his graduation.

After graduating, he went on to major in Plastics Engineering at UMass Lowell to further pursue his passion for technology.

Although initially the adjustment to head mentor was strange, he said his past experiences with the club have made the rise easier.

“It’s more logistical compared to my prior technical role, but I already knew how the team worked and so it wasn’t too hard,” Curcuru said.

Junior and robotics co-captain



WYETH TAKAYESU PHOTO

Robotics head mentor Nicholas Curcuru helps Robotics co-captain Andrew Torri disassemble a robot to reuse its frame.

Ella Warnock said switching mentors midway through the season was stressful, but Curcuru’s guidance has made the change easier.

“It was difficult at first, but

he’s come in and helped us with all the resources he has both machine and shop wise, as well as experience wise,” she said.

To newer members, Curcuru’s aid has been a very helpful addi-

tion, sophomore Adrian Kuehnemund said.

“There’s been a couple times where I’ve been confused, and he’s been perfectly willing to help me out, tell me how something works, and I’ve been able to approach him to ask any further questions,” he said.

Encouragement and creativity have become the focus of Curcuru’s mentorship as he hopes to lead the team as far as they can go, just as he did in 2017 when the club reached the world stage with him as the driver, he said.

“My goal is to get them to

compete at their best level with all the resources I can give them, and from there it’s really all up to the students. From my perspective, it’s just enabling whatever they want to do,” he said.

‘My goal is to get them to compete at their best level with all the resources I can give them... From my perspective, it’s just enabling whatever they want to do.’

- NICHOLAS CURCURU

The club has begun preparing for their final competitions from March 18 to March 20 in Reading and March 25 to March 27 in Revere.

“It’s certainly been stressful, but with Nick I feel much

more confident. Hopefully we can qualify and people will come see our robots compete to scale the ‘robot jungle gym,’” Warnock said.

The College Application Process

Should the school have students start earlier?

Pro

Caroline MacKinnon

Starting the college process as juniors is meant to avoid putting stress on younger students, but starting earlier will ease anxiety. For younger students, becoming aware of what is expected of them will lead to the most success during junior and senior year when applying.

In an article for the Huffington Post called “The Truth About College Prep: Why Students Should Start Early,” Katherine Cohen founder and CEO of Ivywise, an educational consulting company, said students should start the college process as early as possible.

“Students need the time to effectively identify, research, visit, and apply to schools that are best-fits,” she said.

Starting college visits earlier will allow students to know what they want out of a school. This causes applications as juniors and seniors to take less time.

Sometimes students struggle with what should be on their applications and need time to work on a well-rounded application with a satisfactory transcript.

Freshmen and sophomores might not be aware of an academic standard they must reach or types of courses on their transcripts needed to get into a specific college.

“Colleges will also evaluate the rigor of the student’s four-year curriculum, so make sure students are taking courses with increasing difficulty each year, signifying they’re prepared for a college course load,” Cohen said.

Some students may put many classes into their junior and senior schedules to better their GPA or class rigor if they did not do as well as they wanted sophomore and freshman year, which can add anxiety to an already stressful time.

Besides grades, younger students might not be aware of the importance of extracurricular activities. Some might add a lot of extracurriculars to their resume their junior or senior year just for the sake of building a resume, which colleges can most of the time tell is not out of interest. This could harm their chance of getting accepted.

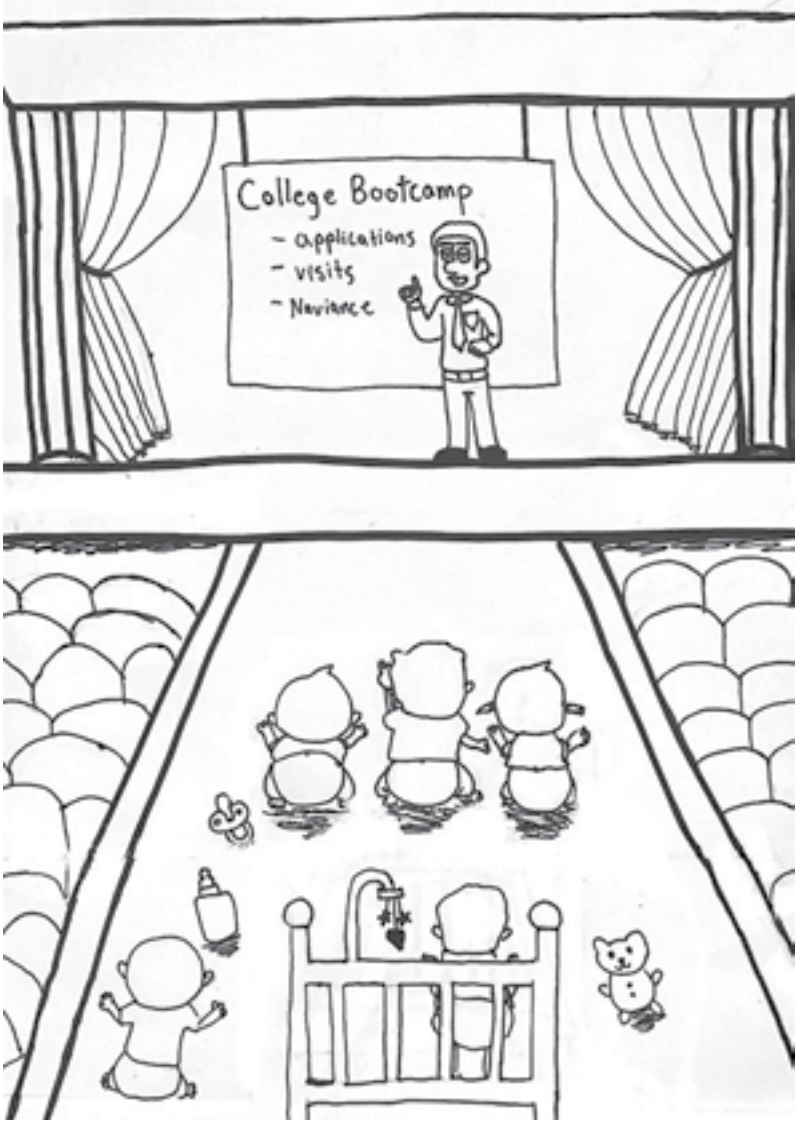
In an article by Khan Academy called “Master Timeline: College Admissions,” the importance of extracurriculars is stressed.

“Freshman year is a great time to try several different extracurricular activities to see which ones are most interesting to you. Once you decide what you like, dedicate more time to fewer activities in order to become deeply involved,” the article said.

Junior Juliana Saunders said students should have a deeper understanding of the college process from a younger age and that placing pressure on juniors in such a short amount of time is detrimental and unhealthy.

“Cramming [the college process] into junior year, the first year where we can take APs, and senior year, the year that most of us take an absurd amount of standardized tests, is not beneficial,” she said.

Spacing out the college process allows students more time to build an adequate resume and alleviates confusion and stress about the college process itself.



CAROLINE MACKINNON ILLUSTRATION

Con

Emma Ketchum

High school students should not start the college process any earlier than junior year.

Junior year is a sufficient time to start thinking about the college process.

Throughout the year, juniors can brainstorm about their ideal school location, what majors they may be interested in, and what type of social atmosphere they’d enjoy.

As they answer these questions, they can research what colleges might be the right match for them.

In an article for US News called “When to Apply to College,” Colleen Newman, the executive director of admissions at the University of Colorado-Boulder, said students should start thinking about college during their junior year.

“I recommend that students start making a list (of potential colleges) and getting organized with the assistance of their school counselors and school community during that junior year of high school,” Newman said.

As summer going into senior year rolls around, students can begin college applications that won’t be due until October or November at the earliest, making for a somewhat stress-free experience if kept up with properly.

Towards the end of the summer, MERHS provides a two-day boot camp that helps seniors come up with possible essay topics and learn how to navigate the Common App website. Counselors are available to answer any questions.

The timing of boot camp is extremely beneficial as it gives students the motivation to begin their applications with plenty of time until deadlines, and helps students with brainstorming ideas that will make their application stand out.

Staff writers for Best Value Schools for an article called “When Should High Schoolers Start Applying to Colleges” said the summer before senior year is the “perfect time” to start the beginning phases of college applications.

Starting this college process any earlier than the end of junior year would be extremely unnecessary and stressful.

The time spent during and out of school during freshman, sophomore, and junior years should be used for students to excel and grow in classes and extracurriculars, which can later be put on college applications during their senior year. If the college process started during these years of growth, it would add stress to daily life that would prevent a student from performing as well.

Senior Alex Briggs said it would be difficult to start the process any earlier because a student hasn’t fully completed all their activities that will be included in their college applications until around junior year, so they won’t yet have a full understanding of what will be the most important items to include.

The college process does take a significant amount of time, effort, and patience, but it can be done in a couple of months before application deadlines; it does not need to take multiple years.

Portugal’s legalization of drugs saves thousands of lives annually

By Emma Ketchum
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Drug addiction and increasing deaths due to overdose have been a significant global problem for decades. In 2001, in efforts to bring down the record-high drug death rates, Portugal decriminalized the use of all drugs, including heroin and cocaine, which caused an 80% decrease in the number of overdose deaths, according to the Drug Policy Alliance. The U.S needs to consider implementing this policy in

order to decrease the country’s extremely high overdose death rates.

The U.S has spent over a trillion dollars on the war on drugs, which hasn’t resulted in any success, given that 841,000 people have died due to overdose since 1999, according to Betsy Pearl in an article called “Ending the War on Drugs: By the Numbers” for American Progress.

In an article for the New York Times called, “How to Win a War on Drugs,” journalist Nicholas Kristof contrasts the U.S and

Portugal’s efforts to combat drug addiction. During his time spent in Portugal researching their drug policy, he said he encountered many vans on the streets that offered addicts free methadone, an opioid substitute that helps subside withdrawal symptoms.

“Methadone and other drug treatment programs also exist in the U.S., but are often expensive and difficult to access. The result is that only 10 percent of Americans struggling with addiction get treatment; in Portugal, treat-

ment is standard,” Kristof said.

Drug-related death rates in Portugal also decreased as a result of decriminalization because drug users were no longer scared to call the ambulance in the state of an emergency regarding overdose. This saves many lives because more people feel comfortable calling 911.

The CDC said in the past year there were 100,306 overdose deaths, which was a 28.5% increase from the previous year with 78,056 deaths.

A change needs to be made regarding the U.S drug policy, and using Portugal’s method of decriminalizing drugs could be the first step.

“It’s not a miracle or perfect solution. But if the U.S could achieve Portugal’s death rate from drugs, we would save one life every 10 minutes. We would save almost as many lives as are now lost to guns and car accidents combined,” Kristof said.

Decriminalizing opiates in the U.S would not only save thousands of lives every year, but also save millions of dollars that could be put towards actually helping addicts recover, instead of putting them in jail.

‘...In Portugal, treatment is standard.’
-NICHOLAS KRISTOF

STAFF EDITORIAL

Seniors in AP courses need alternative SCORE program

Senior Choice of Related Experience (SCORE) is un-beneficial for seniors who take multiple advanced placement courses, making it necessary to implement a new program specific to these students.

According to the SCORE guidebook, SCORE is an internship program that releases seniors from regular classes to carry out interactive projects in career fields of their choice.

“It was originally implemented about 30 years ago, which is pretty amazing that our school was one of the first to

provide an experience like that,” principal Patricia Puglisi said.

She said the requirements of SCORE have changed throughout the years, but now the project consists of an internship, weekly status reports, and a final presentation.

“Seniors are expected to complete 30 hours per week of SCORE to match the number of hours that they are typically in school,” Puglisi said.

There is currently an accommodation for students who are in AP classes, she said. These seniors have their weekly 30-

hour requirement reduced by five hours for each AP class being taken.

However, according to two seniors, this accommodation does not account for the number of hours spent outside of the classroom for these courses.

Senior Sam Rosen said she takes three APs. For her SCORE project, Rosen said she is planning on making video diaries, reviewing bagel stores in the area with her friend.

Rosen is interested in biotechnology and considered doing an internship with New England

Biolabs, but said that she would be too overwhelmed with her AP classes.

Senior Gelsey McCue said she takes one AP class and is planning on volunteering for politician Seth Moulton’s campaign.

“Getting experience on a political campaign is a great way to learn more about the political science field before I enter it,” McCue said.

If she took more AP classes, McCue said she would not have been able to experience this opportunity.

“Juggling another AP would



CAROLINE MACKINNON ILLUSTRATION

Seniors in AP classes have to manage time and travel between their SCORE internships and school. An alternative SCORE option would relieve stress and create more opportunities for AP students.

she’s noticed a disengagement from SCORE from seniors who are in advanced classes.

“I think that these students need a condensed version of SCORE so that they are still able to get good life experiences,” she said.

This shortened SCORE experience would theoretically take place during a two-week period after seniors take their AP exams.

“This way, they are able to really put effort into their SCORE projects, without being overwhelmed by their classes,” Coleman said.

Rosen said she would take advantage of these two weeks by doing an internship with New England Biolabs and pursuing her passion for biotechnology.

“Even though this SCORE experience would be shortened, I think it would be more beneficial for AP students because they would be less likely to choose a project solely based on their schedule,” she said.

An alternative SCORE project for seniors in multiple AP courses would allow them to feel less overwhelmed while still obtaining valuable life experiences.

Coffee, tea bar

would positively

affect students

By Phileine de Widt
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Having a coffee and tea bar in school would be more cost and time efficient for students and create a social gathering point.

Instead of having students rush to the nearest Starbucks or Dunkin’ before school, the cafeteria should have a coffee and tea maker, along with all the necessary materials. The bar would offer hot, iced, and decaf options for high-school students.

Though this setup costs money, fundraisers and donations can be used to build a budget, and ultimately the profit of sales can contribute to creating the bar



PHILEINE DE WIDT PHOTO

Sophomores Lily Francoeur and Celia Mann drink tea and coffee together. A coffee and tea bar in school would create a sociable culture and teach responsibility among high-school students.

as well.

Choosing to get coffee at school rather than at a corporate business ultimately saves money, which, especially for students, is crucial.

According to the article “Here’s How Much Money You

Really Save by Making Coffee at Home” by Samantha Rosen on time.com/nextadvisor, making home-brewed coffee rather than buying it from Starbucks can save between \$1,000 and \$2,000 a year, a significant amount. The coffee bar would brew its own

coffee.

Daily coffee drinker sophomore Matteo Sarmanian said he would use a coffee bar.

“It would definitely save me money and also give me more time in the morning to get ready,” he said.

Opening the bar before school would allow students to have more time to calmly get their coffee or tea in the morning. Having it open during U-block and lunch would also be beneficial to students.

“Sometimes, I’m really tired in class, and it would be nice to have that resource to go and get a coffee,” Sarmanian said.

Social Studies teacher John Mullady offers decaf tea to his students, which is a positive and often preferred drink option.

“I have noticed that sometimes tea allows students to refocus or calm down,” he said.

Mullady also said that he enjoys the social aspect of drinking coffee or tea.

“When I first started teaching, they had a coffee club that the staff could take part in, and I think it is a good way to socialize, especially now when it is tough to stay connected. I think it’s a way to build a culture,” he said.

Having students run the coffee and tea bar would teach responsibility, which is a crucial trait. Students would need to make sure that all is cleaned up after themselves.

The class of 2024 has run a hot chocolate bar that was very successful, so there is a groundwork for a coffee and tea bar, Mullady said.

With the correct motivation and participation, a coffee and tea bar in school would be beneficial to students.

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

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

The staff editorial may be considered the opinion of the staff of The Independent.

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

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

Swim team sends eight swimmers to state championship

Senior captain Shea Furse turned in record-setting performance at States

By Mechi O’Neil
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After six regular-season meets and three additional competitions, the varsity swim team ends the season on a high, coach Caitlin Eramo said.

Both the boys’ and girls’ teams attended the Cape Ann League (CAL) meet on Feb. 5, and the girls moved on to Sectionals on Feb. 12 and then to States on Feb. 26.

At the CAL meet, senior captain Shea Furse, who will be swimming at the University of Georgia in the fall, performed incredibly well, Eramo said.

“Shea broke a pair of Cape Ann League Meet records in her events, which was amazing to

‘Shea broke a pair of Cape Ann League Meet records in her events, which was amazing to watch.’

- CAITLIN ERAMO

watch,” she said.

Furse continued to dominate in the pool at the MIAA Girls Division 2 State Championship Meet at Boston University, winning two gold medals.

Furse set a new meet record en route to first place in the 200-freestyle in 1:48.90, winning by more than four seconds.

Later in the day, Furse returned to action in the 500-freestyle, where she blew away the field once more to win her second individual state title of the day, Eramo said.

“Shea’s performance at States caps off an incredible season for her,” she said.

Furse was named the Cape Ann League Swimmer of the Year after setting the CAL Meet record in the 200 and 500-free-



COURTESY OF SHEA FURSE

Senior Shea Furse, with senior Emma Ketchum, received a banner at the boys’ varsity basketball game on March 4 for her performance at States. Furse received two gold medals at the meet.

style.

She then set a meet record in the same two events at the North Sectional Championship Meet, taking home gold in both races.

“I had a lot of fun this season, and I’m really happy with the way it ended,” Furse said.

Senior captain Alex Briggs agreed, saying she thought everyone on the team was always supporting each other at practices and meets.

“It was so great having Caitlin as a coach this year, and I think it was a great season,” she said.

Although the boys did not make it to States, sophomore

Erik Bischoff said he was happy to hear that the girls did well in their individual and relay events.

Bischoff also said he was satisfied with how the season ended.

“I was able to see improvement within myself and my teammates. I can’t wait for next year,” he said.

Two seniors, sophomore participate in figure skating

By Amy Vytopilova
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Seniors Sam Rosen and Izzy Thurlow and sophomore Amelia Costa figure skate at local ice rinks with club teams.

Rosen and Thurlow both skate with the Cape Ann Skating Club in Gloucester, they said.

Thurlow is a two-time national medalist who has been skating since the second grade. She found her love for the sport at a young age, she said.

“I’ve been skating since second grade. My mom enrolled me in learning to skate classes with some other kids in the area, and that’s how I met Sam... I really enjoyed skating and loved my coach, and it all exploded from there,” she said.

Rosen, who has been to Regionals, a competitive skating event one has to qualify for the elite, has been skating for 11 years, she said.

Figure skating gives her a feeling of excitement, Rosen said.

“There is a thrill to being on the ice and landing new jumps. Doing footwork, artistry, and interpreting the music is what I loved. My favorite thing is to be on the ice by myself and listen to my own music,” she said.

Skating at the collegiate level is not Rosen’s first concern, yet she said she would still love to have the opportunity to keep skating.

“A lot of colleges don’t do anything for skating. There are collegiate skating teams that



COURTESY OF IZZY THURLOW

Seniors Sam Rosen and Izzy Thurlow practice together at Cape Ann Skating in Gloucester. They met through skating classes.

colleges will have, so hopefully I will be able to do that, but it is not a huge priority when I’m in school,” Rosen said.

Costa, who skates at the North Shore Skating Club in Reading, won a silver medal at Theater on Ice Nationals, which is one of her major accomplishments, she said.

Costa said she likes performing and being able to spend time



AMY VYTOPILOVA PHOTO

Sophomore Amelia Costa skates at North Shore Skating Club in Reading.

with her peers.

“Skating shows are also something I really enjoy because figure skating tends to be an individual sport, so spending time in the locker rooms and backstage with friends while waiting to go out and skate is fun,” she said.

Boys’ basketball makes deep run in playoffs

By Ella Chafe
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Boys’ varsity basketball earned themselves a spot in the Division IV state tournament, falling in round 8 to Wahconah Regional and ending their regular season with a record of 13-2.

The team had a bye week in the first round, and defeated Whittier Tech 65-39 on Fri., March 4.

Head coach Timothy St. Laurent said the team started Friday’s game low and fell behind by 15 points. They recovered by switching defenses and pushing



ELLA CHAFE PHOTO

Junior Brennan Twombly shoots a free throw in game against Whittier Tech on March 4. The Hornets won the game 65-39.

aside their nerves, he said.

On Tues., March 8, the team played Cathedral and won 47-44, St. Laurent said.

“We said we had to rebound well, be really tough, and handle the pressure and we did all three of those all night long,” he said.

St. Laurent said the playoff atmosphere is new to the entire team and that it’s important to adjust as fast as possible.

“An area of focus is keeping our nerves calm and taking one game at a time but every game we are getting better and better at it,” he said.

Junior Brennan Twombly, an impact player through the playoffs, had 18 points and 15 rebounds in the Whittier game, St. Laurent said.

Senior captain AJ Pallazola and sophomore Cade Furse have also been great, he said.

Pallazola reflected on how “amazing” it was beating Cathedral, especially being the No. 12 seed and Cathedral being the No. 5 seed.

“Year after year I’ve been bounced in the first round, so making it past the second round was a really fulfilling moment for me,” he said.

After getting injured in a game

against Amesbury, sophomore Eddie Chareas still supported his team from the bench.

“I’m giving them information from what I see, helping out my teammates when they are down, and doing whatever I can to be a positive impact,” he said.

On Sun., March 13, the team fell short to Wahconah Regional 58-53, Furse said.

They were winning by 11 points with five minutes left, and some poor calls by the refs got in their heads, he said.

Wahconah Regional took the lead in the last 50 seconds, Furse said.

Furse said this year was his favorite team he has been on and he is going to miss it a lot.

“This team was so much fun, and we had great chemistry,” he said.

College recruitment recovers after pandemic-era shutdown

Showcases, digital aids give athletes new opportunities

By Wyeth Takayesu
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

College sports recruitment has recovered after the pandemic diminished student athletes’ abilities to hold competitions and previews, athletics director Cameron Molinare said.

During the pandemic, the college recruitment process was hurt when events that gave coaches the chance to connect with players stopped being held, junior field hockey player Amy Vytopilova said.

“Before COVID, there were showcases for sports where all these college coaches could come and watch you play and email you. When everything got worse in 2020, it all shut down

and made recruitment nearly impossible,” Vytopilova said.

In order to build and maintain college connections, athletes assembled their own portfolios with film footage of their matches to send out to coaches, she said.

“I started recording my games to send it out to coaches, and there wasn’t much else to do since it was all so new for coaches and players,” Vytopilova said.

As conditions continue to improve and showcases return, athletes have access to more options to aid their recruitment process, Molinare said.

“[There are] a lot more virtual aspects, I know a lot of athletes have started using different recruiting software to get their

name out there while also trying to go to conventions,” she said.

With conventions and virtual portfolios, athletes should try to focus on finding the best conventions with schools that fit their athletic and academic needs, Molinare said.

Film has continued to be helpful to athletes during the return of showcases, allowing players to share their backlog of game film with coaches faster, soccer and tennis coach Robert Bilsbury said.

“Kids are putting together their own videos, and there’s so much film now since we film all our games. We’re sharing them all through Hudl, so all their film is accessible to coaches quickly,” he said.

‘It’s awesome to see that the talent level in my 20 years of coaching has grown tremendously.’

-ROBERT BILSBURY



COURTESY OF AMY VYTOPILOVA /ELITE SPORTS

Junior Amy Vytopilova plays field hockey at a showcase in Delaware, an opportunity that wasn’t available during COVID.

Despite the difficulties brought on by COVID-19, the effort by players to get themselves seen was inspiring, Bilsbury said.

“We have so many kids that are just so dedicated to their sports. It’s awesome to see that the talent level in my 20 years of coaching has grown tremendously,” he said.

Senior plays polo, competes in tournaments around country

Plays in competition throughout world, builds connections

By Charlie Lations
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Senior Addie Politi said she became interested in the sport of polo after asking a friend who played if she could try it and then discovering an interest in it.

Politi said she has been riding horses for most of her life but has only been playing polo for about two and a half years.

Most of those two and a half years have been spent learning the rules of polo and how the game works, she said

There are two types of polo: arena polo, which is played indoors, and outdoor polo. Politi



COURTESY OF ADDIE POLITI

Senior Addie Politi competes at the International Polo Club in Wellington, Fla., where most of her tournaments take place.

plays outdoor polo at the International Polo Club in Wellington, FL. Politi keeps her horses in Florida, and uses a rotating group of horses called a “string” in competitions. While she’s away from her horses, one of her regular teammates takes care of them until she travels there to compete.

“Your horse is your teammate [...] There are four players on the field, but my horses are my teammates,” Politi said. She also said much of the work of polo comes down to animal care and building a connection with her horses.

Politi said polo gives her a great opportunity to meet new people and build connections around the world and visit parts that she normally wouldn’t be able to see.

Polo has given Politi an opportunity to play in various exotic locations, she said. “I’ve been

included in a lot of good opportunities; I can go play in Rome in a couple weeks, [and] I’ve been invited to play in Pakistan.”

She said one of the only issues she has with the game of polo is its high cost and its tendency to be “more business than sport.”

Politi said the sport carries with it a lot of responsibility because of the task of maintaining not just the player’s fitness, but also the fitness of the horses.

Politi’s team won the final round of a tournament at the International Polo Club the weekend of Feb. 19-20 and the week of Feb. 21, she said.

‘Your horse is your teammate [...]. There are four players on the field, but my horses are my teammates.’

-ADDIE POLITI

Alumnus plays Division I lacrosse for Georgetown

By Amy Vytopilova
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Former high school athlete Lily Athanas said she hopes to improve with every practice throughout her collegiate career. Athanas graduated from the class of 2021 and is currently a freshman at Georgetown University and plays Division I lacrosse.

Athanas, a tri-sport athlete in high school, said she knew she wanted to continue her athletic career at a collegiate level.

“I absolutely love being part of a team, and I knew that along with the competitive aspect of sports, that was something that I didn’t want to end with high

school. I knew I wasn’t finished with lacrosse yet, as it has been a huge part of my life for so long, so it was a very natural choice for me to go through with the recruiting process,” she said.

Gg Huet, a freshman at York College of Pennsylvania who plays Division III lacrosse, was Athanas’ close friend for four years.

“We played lacrosse and basketball together in high school, and she has a natural talent for sports. She is a leader on and off the field and is always there for others. I am glad we became friends,” Huet said.

Athanas said she enjoyed her time playing midfield for

Manchester-Essex.

“My favorite part about ME lacrosse was the team. Everyone gave everything they had to the lacrosse season, and had each other’s backs. Not only were we competitive and strong, we had so much fun, laughed all the time, and lifted each other up,” she said.

Senior Wrede Charlton, a captain for the upcoming lacrosse season, said Athanas was the definition of a great teammate.

“She was a big impact to the team. Not only was she incredibly talented, but she was a great teammate who always wanted those around her to improve and succeed,” she said.

Athanas is glad she chose Georgetown University, saying that the lacrosse program has been a good fit for her.

“I absolutely love Georgetown. I couldn’t be happier so



COURTESY OF JOHN HUET

Class of 2021 alumnus Lily Athanas plays field hockey as a Hornet in a game she played against Hamilton-Wenham.

far. I really enjoy my classes and find them very interesting and challenging. Lacrosse is a blast.

I’m so lucky to get to hit the field with my best friends for a few hours a day,” she said.

School literary magazine includes diversity with creative expression

Teacher planning to produce more copies in future

By Caroline MacKinnon
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Produced by the creative writing classes since 2018, the Inkling, a literary magazine, publishes two issues a year, one in January and one in June.

English and creative writing teacher Allison Krause created the idea for the Inkling to allow students to express and showcase their creativity through writing.

“[The Inkling is] a collection of writing and artwork primarily from students who take creative writing, but we also solicit and accept from students outside the class from the wider student body,” she said.

The most recent issue of the Inkling released in January, was the first issue with printed copies since before the pandemic.

Students used the program Canva to design the magazine, Krause said.

“It was really exciting for the class to go through the whole design process and see the fruits of their labor in printed form,” she said.

Funded by the school with assistance from

Principal Patricia Puglisi, the creative writing class was able to create 40 paper copies of the magazine through Printing

‘The Inkling is a great way to express your creativity. I wrote a six-page story.’

- MALLORY HUPPE

Center USA.

Krause hopes to print more copies of the Inkling in the future so more people can see it, she said.

“We’re thinking of maybe doing some fundraising this spring semester to be able to print more copies to give them out, maybe



COURTESY OF ALLISON KRAUSE

Students work together to design pages using Canva for newest issue of “The Inkling,” which includes poetry and short stories.

in the cafeteria,” Krause said.

Krause said she does not interfere as much with this process and she instead allows students to have the main control over the issues.

“I let the class take creative control, let them decide how it looks. [Students] design the

cover, they design the back cover, and they decide the template and font. It’s really hands off for me,” she said.

Freshman Mallory Huppe took creative writing during the first semester.

She said she enjoyed the class and submitted her work in the

recent issue of the Inkling.

“The Inkling is a great way to express your creativity. I wrote a six-page story about how it’s good for kids’ imaginations to believe in Santa Claus,” Huppe said.

Junior Isak Gustafson, who is enrolled in creative writing for the second semester, said that he is looking forward to submitting work to the next issue of the Inkling.

“I’m excited to be able to explore different types of writing because we are allowed to submit multiple pieces, like short stories or poetry. Being able to do the page layouts is cool,” Gustafson said.

Gustafson likes that the Inkling can include everyone, even people who are not in creative writing.

“It’s a great opportunity for the student body,” he said.

Many students have taken the opportunity to submit their work to the Inkling, and Krause said she hopes that more students will consider submitting their poetry, short stories, artwork, and other expressions of creativity to the magazine.

Seniors make, sell necklaces, rings, bracelets, incorpoate into SCORE

By Hadley Levndusky
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Seniors Luli Bartlett and Alex Briggs use their artistic abilities to make and sell jewelry.

Bartlett said she makes and sells rings, bracelets, and necklaces, but started out just making rings.

“Then I started making necklaces, wrapping crystals, and making bracelets,” she said.

The rings and bracelets normally cost \$10, and the necklaces cost \$20, she said. Bartlett officially sells her jewelry off of her Instagram account called lulimoonjewelry.

“Honestly most of the time people will ask me at school or text me [to make jewelry as well],” she said.

Bartlett said when she first started selling her jewelry, she used an Etsy account.

“I had a few orders that went across states, and [the Etsy account] was fine for those,” she said. “But when people would order in Manchester or Essex, they would have to pay an extra dollar or two for shipping.”

She later stopped her Etsy account because most of her orders were local, and people would ask her at school to make jewelry, Bartlett said.

She said she then made her Instagram account to make it easier for her local orders. Customers can also reach out to her on her personal Instagram account.

Bartlett started making her own jewelry when she wanted to buy a wire wrapped ring that was made

by a girl in London, she said.

“I didn’t want to pay that much shipping for just a ring, so I was like, ‘How about I just make them myself?’” Bartlett said.

Similarly to Bartlett, Briggs has been making jewelry. Briggs is taking multiple AP classes this year, so she wanted to find a SCORE project that she would have time for, she said.

She was talking with photography teacher Caroline Epp when she decided that she wanted to make her own jewelry and sell it for her SCORE project.

“I have always made my own jewelry, and I thought it would be fun to do as a project, and I can work on [the jewelry] in between blocks,” Briggs said.

Epp, who minored in metal smithing, said she would help



COURTESY OF LULI BARTLETT

Senior Luli Bartlett designs and sells rings among many other jewelry pieces on her Instagram account, @lulimoonjewelry.

Briggs’ with her SCORE project and be her adviser.

Briggs said she would mainly focus on making necklaces.

“Necklaces would be fun for summer,” she said.

Since SCORE has not begun

yet, Briggs has not sold her necklaces, but she’s said the owner at Laughing Gull in Manchester has said that she can sell them there, and she will most likely make an Instagram account like her classmate.

Wordle gains popularity in community

By Phileine de Widt
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Wordle, the online word puzzle, has rapidly become a popular game in the school community and around the world.

The five-letter word puzzle, created by Josh Wardle, a British software engineer located in Brooklyn, New York, was bought by the New York Times.

According to the article “Wordle is a Love Story” by Daniel Victor on nytimes.com, the game was released in October 2021 and has since reached millions of daily players.



PHILEINE DE WIDT PHOTO

Sophomore Caroline Doucette solves the newest Wordle online.

Wardle created the game for his wife because of her love for word games. He named the game after himself and created it for mere pleasure, Victor wrote.

“There are no ads or flashing banners; no windows pop up or

ask for money,” he wrote.

The game gives players six chances to guess a five-letter word. When a letter turns green (orange in high contrast mode), it means it is the correct letter in the right spot. When the letter

turns yellow (blue in high contrast mode), it means it is the correct letter in the wrong spot. When the letter turns gray, it means the letter is not in the word.

After guessing the word, the website saves the player’s progress and keeps track of their win percentage and streak.

English teacher Allison Krause incorporates Wordle in the classroom.

“I love the Wordle community and competition among my classes. It’s fun,” she said.

Since each day’s puzzle only has one word that is the same for everyone, players must withhold sharing the word to those who have not yet played.

“I enjoy the unspoken social contract that exists both in school and on the internet at large about not ruining each day’s puzzle. I’ve

literally never seen anyone give it away, which is just kind of pure and refreshing,” Krause said.

Junior Kendall Newton said that she participates in the puzzle every day alongside her classmates.

“I think that if I could play more than once a day, I would get addicted to it,” she said.

Wordle’s one word a day makes the website unique, but has also inspired many apps to copy the game in a more addicting manner.

The app Wordus follows the same procedure as Wordle except allows for endless words per day.

There is also another website, Quordle, in which there are four wordles at once. Another spin-off is called Nerdle, and uses math.

Second season of ‘Euphoria’ is anticlimactic, disappointing

HBO renews acclaimed show for third season

By Jordie Cornfield
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

“Euphoria,” the HBO series which centers around a group of high school students as they navigate the highs and lows of teenagehood, wrapped up its second season on Feb. 28 in an anticlimactic hour-long finale episode that spent more time on banal flash-back scenes than on advancing the storyline. After it originally came out, the series was met with varied reactions. Many hailed “Euphoria” as the defining television show of Gen Z, while others chastised the program for glorifying unhealthy and dangerous behaviors, such

as heavy drug use and addiction. However, the second season of “Euphoria” makes sure to counteract the negative reviews it got in its first season. Drugs are far from glorified. Instead, creator Sam Levinson said in an interview that he wanted the second season of “Euphoria” to show the harmful effects of drug abuse, both on the user themselves and on their family. Season one of “Euphoria” was the “high” of drug addiction, and season two is the “low.”

Aspects of the show were disappointing and flat, as if they were without life or substance.

While Levinson’s portrayal of teenage drug addiction is well-written and beautifully shot, other aspects of the show were disappointing and flat, as if they were without life or substance. This is unsurprising, considering that the writer’s room is made up entirely of writer/director/creator Levinson and no one else, despite the fact that “Euphoria” is about the



HBOMAX.COM

In HBO’s hit show “Euphoria,” Emmy award winning actress Zendaya portrays Rue Bennett, a California high schooler who tries to navigate drug addiction, grief, and unstable romantic relationships.

struggles of a diverse group of teens. Filled with unanswered questions and unfinished storylines, the finale left many audience members unsatisfied, but not due to exciting cliffhangers. None of the episodes connected with each other, as if the consequences of characters

actions disappeared along with the credits. This season felt as if all the action was saved for the final episode. Even the finale was slightly boring, featuring a dull serenade by Elliot (musician Dominic Fike) that seemed to go on longer than Taylor Swift’s “All Too Well” (the 10-minute version).

However, season two wasn’t completely anticlimactic. Zendaya, who plays main character Rue Bennett, gave yet another Emmy-deserving performance. Her extreme highs brought the audience along with her, and her lows took the audience down to her most depressing moments.

‘The Fallout’ follows wake of shooting

By Ella Chafe
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

“The Fallout” has been gaining popularity since its release on HBO Max on Jan. 27, earning itself a 93 percent Rotten Tomatoes critic score. The drama was written and directed by Megan Park, known for portraying Dalia in the movie “What If.” “The Fallout” was Park’s directorial debut. Filmed in Los Angeles, the movie follows the life of 16-year-old, Vada Cavell (Jenna Ortega) after she experiences the trauma of being in a school shooting. “The Fallout” begins in the girls’ restroom with Vada and



HBOMAX.COM

16-year-old Vada Cavell and Mia Reed played by Jenna Ortega and Maddie Ziegler process a traumatic school shooting together.

Mia (Maddie Ziegler), a 16-year-old dancer and influencer. The girls then hear gunshots and hide in a stall along with a classmate Quinton (Niles Fitch).

In the weeks following the event, Vada’s experience causes her to become depressed as she withdraws herself from her family and best friend Nick (Will Ropp).

At the same time, Vada gets closer to Mia, as she is someone who understands how she is feeling. The tragedy forces Vada to change the way she sees the world and reevaluate her previous relationships. Vada starts moving away from what feels comfortable and goes through a transformation, redefining herself through her experience with Mia.

the movie is rated R for language, content matter, as well as drug and alcohol use. The movie’s running time is 92 minutes. All of the music in “The Fallout” is by American singer-songwriter, Finneas.

All of the music in ‘The Fallout’ is by American singer-songwriter, Finneas.

Everyone can learn from watching “The Fallout,” as it covers the consequences of a school shooting, which is a reality for teenagers today. This movie is ideal for people who enjoy dramatic and melancholic movies that take the viewer on an emotional rollercoaster. Viewer discretion is advised while watching “The Fallout,” as

The film premiered on Mar. 17, 2021, at the South by Southwest Film Festival. It earned the Narrative Feature Competition Grand Jury Award and the Narrative Feature Competition Audience Award. Park received the Brightcove Illumination Award. The movie is streaming exclusively on HBO Max by Warner Bros. Pictures and New Line Cinema.

Now streaming on Netflix, ‘Love Is Blind’ Season 2 creates brand new sets of relationships, connections

By Carson Komishane
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Returning for a second season, the Netflix series “Love is Blind” introduces an entirely new assortment of younger adults looking for love in this experiment. The show initially became popular at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic after its release in early 2020. The question “Is love blind?” is explored as individuals meet others through pods separated by a wall. This prevents them from seeing each other and allows them to build on an emotional and intellectual connection as opposed to a physical one. Netflix.com describes this process as

finding love and getting engaged before ever meeting in-person. This idea is explored in 10 hourlong episodes, which show chronologically the process from first meeting to the wedding days. The quick turn around between friends to engagement allows these people to test their emotional connection. According to a review by writer Chrissy Boric on distractify.com, the fast-paced schedule allows couples to either get serious or find out that their connection won’t work out in the future. After engagement, there are four weeks between leaving the pods and the wedding day. Once the four weeks are over, the couples decide at the altar whether to

get married or not. After the exciting first season, the second season left much to be desired. Most of the men and women did not seem ready for commitment. According to a review on buzzfeednews.com by reporter Scaachi Koul, this group of individuals was more bland than the previous batch. This season felt like more of a comical show rather than a reality show about love. For example, one of the men in the pods continually mixed up the two girls he had a connection with, and he still ended up in an engagement. Another difference from this season and the last season is that the final decisions did not seem to match up with footage that was



NETFLIX.COM

Without seeing eachother before, “Love Is Blind” contestants wait to meet their fiances before going on a honeymoon together.

shared to the audience, and it was almost frustrating to watch. The individuals would tell the cameras one thing, but their opinion didn’t seem to match up with their decisions at the altar, and the show would have had more value if the individuals voiced their

opinions more. Despite the flaws of this season, the drama and stupidity of some of the individuals made this season more enjoyable to watch. Many of the fights were ridiculous and made for an entertaining season.