

the INDEPENDENT

Volume XXIX Number 6

Manchester Essex Regional High School 36 Lincoln Street Manchester, MA 01944

April 11, 2023

First annual STEAM showcase displays student work

Event spotlights local businesses, student projects

By Sam Heanue
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Local businesses and students came together for the first annual science, technology, engineering, art and math (STEAM) showcase.

On March 30 the school hosted its first STEAM showcase, science and math department chair Kristin Umile said.

"There [were] representatives from ... grades 6-12, all focused on different areas of math and science, art and music," she said.

Both classes and clubs were able to present on subjects ranging from remote control vehicles to single use plastics, Umile said.

There were presentations from outside the school as well, she said.

"There [were] over thirty booths, from companies ... businesses from around here ... and

organizations," Umile said.

In the future, the STEAM showcase may expand to incorporate themes and new presentations, she said.

"We're going to stay the course next year and do something similar to this time ... then in the years to come we may try to incorporate grades K-5," she said.

School clubs used the showcase to fundraise and spread awareness to students and parents, said junior Joanna Shan, president of Math Team.

"We were able to reach out to the community to try and make money and teach others about the math we do," she said.

Shan was responsible for running the Math Team booth where she worked with students to organize a fundraiser to help pay for the upcoming competition season.

Participants in the fundraiser were able to pay to guess the number of candies in a jar in order to win its contents. Alternatively, they could answer math problems to win individual pieces of candy.



SAM HEANUE PHOTO

Clubs such as the Math Team and Science Team set up booths at the first annual STEAM showcase on March 30. Students demonstrated projects and labs such as making elephant toothpaste.

"From what I saw and what I heard, it was all very successful," said high school Math Team co-

ordinator Lauren Woodcock.

She said both parents and students seemed to be actively en-

gaged in the showcase, with high participation from all.

STEAM NIGHT, page 3

Robotics team travels to Reading, Revere for competitions

By Avabella Mitrano
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After working together throughout the school year to create a robot, the Robotics Team participated in two For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) competitions.

The team traveled to North Reading on March 18 and 19 for the FIRST qualification competition, where they had their robot participate in a series of activities against 40 other local teams, junior captain Ava Rizzico said.

Rizzico said points are awarded for achievements, such as having three robots balancing on a charging station. Teams also engaged in "gracious professionalism," where participants, while competitive, still aided other teams by lending tools.

This year, they made friends with a variety of teams through lending and were proud to see Ipswich High School winning an award, Rizzico said.

"It's really nice. You don't take



COURTESY OF AVA RIZZICO

The Robotics team traveled to Reading and Revere to participate in two FIRST Robotics competitions and won an award.

into consideration if you're from this background or anything else. We're just a bunch of nerds having fun playing with robots," Rizzico said.

Senior captain Ella Warnock said that they did not do well in the first competition but improved significantly in their second competition, which took place on March 24 and 25 in Revere.

Although they did not qualify for Districts, the team placed 25th compared to 38th in the first competition. They also won the Gracious Professionalism Award, which is based on input from other teams, she said.

"Part of the reason we won the award is that we are a team that

is very accepting of the LGBTQ+ community. To other teams, we exemplify the gracious professionalism that FIRST is built off of," Warnock said.

Rizzico said that the team was overall much better than last year and had improved a lot, especially the new members they had.

"Anyone who is brand new this year has improved the most because they have come from zero knowledge to being able to take apart and put together a gearbox," Rizzico said.

Senior Alex Wolfe said his favorite part of the competitions was how excited and positive everyone was.

ROBOTICS, Page 3

District hires new director of curriculum, instructional technology for next year

Chosen for interest in community, projects

By Phileine de Widt
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After a three-month search, the administration chose Heather Leonard as the new director of curriculum and instructional technology.

The position involves managing the implementation of the school system's educational programs.

Principal Patricia Puglisi said the position plays an essential role in the school community.

"They are a central office district level person who oversees the alignment of curriculum Pre-K through 12 and works with principals and other school-based curriculum leaders to review and adjust the curriculum to ensure student success," Puglisi said.

Angela Crofford-Bik is the interim director until Leonard's first day on July 1.

The administration and the director of curriculum and IT hiring committee started their search on Jan. 13 and chose Leonard on March 17.

Superintendent's administrative assistant Amy LeJeune said while looking at candidates, the district wanted someone who had leadership experience.

Puglisi said she wants Leonard to continue the school's current projects.

'I hope the successful candidate is a collaborative partner.'

- PATRICIA PUGLISI

"I hope the successful candidate is a collaborative partner and really works to support the implementation of the vision

of the graduate and the initiatives such as our new civics project and the portfolio ideas we have," she said.

Leonard also hopes to continue the work of the current administration.

"It is clear that great ground-work has been laid that will support the ongoing efforts across the district, she said.

NEW DIRECTOR, Page 3

News

Features

Opinion

Arts

Prom Preview
- page 2

Student-Teacher Basketball
- page 4

Promposals
- page 8

Memory Project
- page 8

Senior, junior prom to take place at Tupper Manor in May

Food to include buffet-style options

By Mechi O’Neil
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

This year’s junior and senior prom will occur on the evening of May 25 at Tupper Manor, located in Beverly Farms, senior class adviser Barrett Alston said.

The juniors have to pay \$90 for a ticket, while the seniors’ tickets will be free. Students are also allowed to bring people from other schools with a sign-off form, Alston said.

Students also have to sign a contract to attend prom. When they sign it, students agree to random bag checks, random breathalyzer tests, and to attend the prom

substance-free, senior class president Juliana Saunders said.

Tupper Manor caters their own events, and students will be able to choose from the buffet-styled options at the prom, Alston said.

A school bus will take the students from the high school to the venue and then bring them back after prom is over, Alston said.

Saunders said the prom planning process has been happening for almost a year.

“We were looking at the venues early in the summer and finally decided on one late summer,” she said.

Senior class secretary Ceece Carvalho said they had much to figure out financially, considering they have to pay for a DJ, photo booth, and transportation.

“Now that we are done with

‘[The DJ] is very accommodating of the songs that [students] want instead of playing only his choices.’

-CEECE CARVALHO



FLICKR.COM

The junior and senior prom will take place at Tupper Manor in Beverly on May 25. The event will have a photographer present and will include a buffet-style dinner, a DJ, and a photo booth.

fundraisers and we know we have extra money we are looking into extra decorations and stuff that we can spend on prom to make it awesome,” she said.

For prom photos, a photographer will be present for the photos taken at Tuck’s Point prior to prom, and one will be present at Tupper Manor for the majority of

the night, Carvalho said.

“There will also be a photo booth set up in one of the rooms,” she said.

Saunders said she is looking forward to seeing it all come together.

“I and the other class officers have worked so hard planning the prom, so it will be nice for us to

actually enjoy it,” she said.

Carvalho said she is excited for the DJ who will be present at the prom.

“His name is DJ Case, and he was highly recommended to us by other DJs. He is very accommodating of the songs that we want instead of playing only his choices,” she said.

Students view ‘12 Years a Slave’ assignment for interdisciplinary English, history slavery unit

Film depicts harsh brutalities of slavery

By Alessia Omari
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Sophomores viewed the 2013 Academy-Award-winning film “12 Years a Slave,” an assignment for the English and history departments’ unit on slavery.

The film is based on the life of Solomon Northup, a free African American man kidnapped and sold into slavery. The movie was shown in hopes of providing a new perspective to the topic.

“With the film, the idea is to develop some empathy,” said history teacher and head of history department Lauren Dubois. “We read words on a page, but sometimes we don’t really take in the meaning of these words before



IMDB.COM

Sophomores watched the film “12 Years a Slave” to further their understanding of slavery in their English and history classes.

it’s visually shown to us.”

Students were extremely respectful, well behaved, and at-

slave narratives as a primary source to teach students about the experiences of enslaved people prior to the viewing of the film.

One of the narratives was “Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl” by Harriet Jacobs.

“We have selected segments from ‘Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl’ for across the board, which [the history department] then distributes to the students along with guiding questions,” English department chair Debra Isensee said.

Students’ parents were given the option to “opt out” their children from the viewing experience.

“It is a rated R movie, we know that,” Dubois said. “Anybody is able to opt out, and if you make that decision, which is perfectly fine, you will be reading some of the text from Solomon Northup’s ‘12 Years a Slave.’”

Many students said watching the film was an eye-opening experience, sophomore Brian Rosen said.

“I felt very saddened watching the movie,” he said. “It brought a whole new perspective to what we had already learned in class about slavery; it was disturbing to see that people were capable of doing that to each other.”

Students said the movie humanized the enslaved people.

“The movie added a whole other element to the unit that none of the reading that we’ve done could ever reach,” sophomore Josh Cohen said. “The movie returned the human perspective to slavery; it reminded us that they were real people rather than facts and numbers.”

The slavery unit greatly impacted student’s perspectives on the topic, Krause said.

“Everybody was really committed to the experience and understood the gravity and importance of it,” she said. “Contributions to the [post-viewing] discussion in the auditorium demonstrated that people were very engaged ... I think it went very well,” she said.

New students chosen to read morning announcements

By Charles Lations
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With senior Jordie Cornfield graduating, she, with help from the front office, have been holding tryouts to decide who will replace her as the voice of the morning announcements next year.

During the week of March 27-31 and April 3-7, interested students auditioned to replace Cornfield by doing the announcements for one day.

“Every day for the past week ... [interested students] have been doing the announcements to see

how comfortable they are on the mic, [or] if their voice is good,” Cornfield said.

Cornfield said she became the voice of the morning announcements almost by chance when administrative assistant Mary Lumsden was still doing the announcements.

“Ms. Lumsden was doing the announcements, and she just said offhand if there were any students interested in doing the announcements to come on down ... and the rest is history,” Cornfield said.

She said she thinks it’s important for a student to do the morning announcements because other students will be more likely to listen to them and it will build a greater sense of community within the school.

“It is good every morning to hear another student and get your



CHARLES LATIONS PHOTO

Auditions were held by senior Jordie Cornfield to determine which students will read the morning announcements next year.

news from a student,” Cornfield said.

Junior Anneliese Camp said she auditioned for the position

because she has experience sitting in with Cornfield and has practiced the script for what to say.

Lumsden said she wants to see enthusiasm among the qualities exhibited by Cornfield’s replacement.

“[I want to see] interest in the school and what’s going on, and promoting the activities,” she said.

Lumsden said having a student do the morning announcements instead of a teacher helps build excitement for special events.

“I think it shows school spirit, and the kids can get more excited about hearing it from a student. I think this coming year ... we’re going to have a different voice every day of the week, hopefully,” she said.

The students that will be doing announcements next year are sophomores Alessia Omari, Josh Cohen, Libby McKinnon, Sam Heanue, and juniors Diego San-son and Quinn Brady.

SCORE projects help seniors pursue their personal interests

Students gain career experience, real life skills with projects

By Hadley Levendusky
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With the beginning of quarter 4, seniors will start their SCORE projects.

SCORE is a required internship that seniors participate in during quarter 4 until late May.

During SCORE, seniors carry out hands-on learning projects in the career field of their choice.

This year, SCORE is returning to the expectations that were in place before COVID-19. Seniors are expected to find an internship and are not able to create pod-

casts or Instagram accounts focused around cooking or other interests.

Senior Calista Lai is taking the opportunity to further her interest in the medical field.

“I am doing an internship at Beverly Hospital ... I really wanted to get experience in the medical field and see how a hospital works in person,” she said.

Lai said she hopes it will narrow down her ideas for her future.

“If I really do want to go into the medical world, it will prepare me for learning how my job works and give me an understanding if I would enjoy a future in this field,” she said.

Senior Ceece Carvalho is completing her score internship



BALANCE/GORDON.EDU

Senior Ceece Carvalho, who wants to become a physical therapist, is interning at Balance Center for Wellness and Mobility. The center assists people with recent neurological damage.

at Balance Center for Wellness and Mobility in Wenham.

“I want to be a physical therapist when I am older, and this gets me experience in this field to see if it is actually something I want to pursue,” she said.

The center works with people who recently had neurological damage, Carvalho said.

“It will incorporate both psy-

chology and medicine. I hope to gain work experience and some new friends with the patients,” she said.

Some members of the senior class are taking the time to work with high school resource officer Andrea Locke and the Manchester Police Department.

Senior Riley Swerdloff said she chose this internship to help

her in college.

“I want to do something with criminal psychology when I am older, so I thought it would be awesome if I did an internship with the police department,” she said.

Swerdloff also said she is excited to work for Officer Locke.

“She is the best, and I love her,” she said.

International Week inspires student travel

By Phileine de Widd
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

To further student interest in traveling and using their language skills outside of the classroom, the foreign language department celebrated International Week.

On March 15 to March 17, different speakers from the community presented a foreign country through their experiences.

Due to the pandemic restrictions, this was the first time in two years that the school celebrated International Week.

Spanish teacher Robert Bilsbury said he was happy to have the week back again.

“It is a wonderful breath of fresh air ... and I think the kids enjoy it [as] they can relax and listen to something interesting,” he said.

Throughout the three days,



COURTESY OF ROBERT BILSBURY

Students who traveled on the Spain trip last year talked about their experiences to other students during International Week.

there were different presenters during each block.

Tom Daniel, a community member and father to Elinor Zarembo, presented about his three-week trip to Madagascar.

Foreign language department chair Michelle Magaña said she enjoyed learning about such a unique country.

“It’s such a different place ... and it was a wonderful experience to walk through with him,” she said.

Students who went on the trip

to Spain and France last year also presented their personal experiences.

Magaña said she was happy to see student involvement.

“That’s what we live for as world language teachers. We want to see our students take what they learned in the classroom and then take it out into the world,” she said.

Junior Lucy O’Flynn, who went to Spain with the school last year, was one of the students who helped present the trip.

“It was fun to share our experiences with using the language and learning about the culture, and I think it gave the younger students a better understanding of what a school trip is like,” she said.

Sharing their experiences could then inspire other students to go on school trips, such as the trip to Costa Rica next spring, Bilsbury said.

In past years, International Week included trivia questions announced over the PA system and different styles of food in the cafeteria. Now, since announcements interrupt U-block, and the cafeteria company has changed, the week has been more informal and relaxed, Bilsbury said.

Since it is recognized statewide, other schools celebrate International Week in different ways. Magaña said one school brings in Salsa dancers, which could be a fun addition here as well.

Her main focus, though, is to expand interest and get more presenters, as that is usually a struggle, Magaña said.

Despite that issue, she said the week was a success.

“It was a nice change of routine ... and was a way for world language departments to introduce the culture and history of other countries so that students would be inspired to not only learn the language here but also take it out in the real world,” Magaña said.

‘It was fun to share our experiences with using the language and learning about the culture, and I think it gave the younger students a better understanding of what a school trip is like.’

-LUCY O’FLYNN

CONTINUATIONS

STEAM NIGHT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“Public response was excellent parents were even asking when their kids could join ... they were just so happy to see so many [students] helping out and being involved,” Woodcock said.

There was a wide variety of topics covered, said Kia Petrie, eighth-grade science teacher and middle school Green Team organizer.

“There was an amazing blend of community resources and our own personal resources inside the school ... that contributed to the success,” she said.

Booths run by local organizations including the Peabody-Es-

sex Museum, Cape Ann Vernal Pools, and Applied Materials presented on topics related to STEAM.

Students from the middle and high school jazz bands performed music, and artwork was displayed from grades 6-12.

“It was such a beautiful combination of science and art ... the booths on DNA extraction and the live animals ... it was all very beautiful,” Petrie said.

ROBOTICS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“Before even Ella can get back to me, I have team members running to me in the pit, telling me how good we did ... and how nothing broke, and it’s such a good feeling when that happens,”

Wolfe said.

French teacher and Robotics Team adviser Erin Fortunato said the competitions were a fun experience and that it was interesting to see all the robotics students together in one place.

“Being able to figure stuff out under pressure is absolutely amazing ... almost every team member gets to participate. Figuring out how to communicate, figuring out what’s wrong, and figuring out how to work together is pretty neat to do,” Fortunato said.

Rizzico said the they will now mainly focus on fundraising, as it takes \$2,000 to build a robot each year and \$6,000 thousand to enter the competition. Currently, the team lacks sufficient funds.

“We have a wishlist of stuff people can buy for us as a donation on our Instagram. [If people] can come to places we are at and spread awareness, we would appreciate it,” Rizzico said.

NEW DIRECTOR CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

According to Leonard’s resume, which is shared on the district’s website, she is currently the K-8 STEM curriculum coordinator and grant director/title facilitator of the Reading Public Schools.

She was the principal at Alice M. Barrows Elementary School in Reading from 2013-2018 and the assistant principal at Triton Public Schools from 2010 to 2013, and O’Maley Middle School in Gloucester from 2009-

2010.

Leonard received her bachelor’s degree in Environmental Conservation & Political Science from the University of New Hampshire.

For both her Master of Elementary Education and her doctorate in Leadership in Schooling she attended the University of Massachusetts Lowell.

Leonard said she is looking forward to joining the school.

“The strong sense of community that I felt during the interview process was something that made me eager to join MERSD. It became clear how invested the community is and how deeply Manchester Essex educators love their schools,” she said.

JV soccer coach scores winning basket in basketball game

Fierce environment among faculty, students

By Ella Chafe
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With the students leading the entire time, the faculty ultimately secured the win in the student-faculty basketball game fundraiser for the senior class.

The game took place on Fri., March 24 in the gymnasium.

Junior varsity soccer coach Matt Barney scored the winning three-pointer to put the faculty up by one point in the game's final seconds, Spanish teacher Robert Bilsbury said.

"It was a surprisingly fun and competitive game, and I think there was really good energy on both sides," he said.

Bilsbury said director of facilities, Jason Waldron who plays

in a men's league, and social studies department chair Lauren DuBois stood out for their skills during the game.

"It was fun watching Mr. Waldron go to work, and Ms. DuBois is always amazing and solid from three," he said.

Social studies teacher Jennifer Coleman coached the faculty team and said the depth of the faculty's bench was the key to their victory. They had 14 players on the team and were able to

'With some grit and determination, we were able to pull out the victory in the end.'

-JENNIFER COLEMAN

manage everyone's playing time effectively, she said.

"By the end of the game the student team looked extremely tired, but when it came down to those last few minutes, we had fresh lungs and legs ready to go," Coleman said.

Coleman said she's very proud



COURTESY OF LILY OLIVER

The faculty team holds up "ones" after their win in the student vs faculty basketball game fundraiser for the senior class. The faculty was down the entire game, but scored in the last seconds.

of her team, considering how many people underestimated the faculty at first.

"We definitely started slow and were behind most of the game, but with some grit and determination, we were able to pull out the victory in the end," she said.

Senior Calista Lai said the stu-

dents worked well together, but toward the end, they stopped trying, which led to their downfall.

She said there was high energy around cheering for the teachers, and it was a fun environment to play in.

Lai said she is frustrated with the results since the students were winning the entire time, but

she is also proud of the faculty for coming back and winning.

"The three-pointer was a stellar ending, and even though it didn't go in our favor, it was really fun," she said.

Senior class president Juliana Saunders said the fundraiser was very successful, raising approximately \$550.

New Music Honors Society elects officers, plans events

By Wyeth Takayesu
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Manchester Essex Music Honors Society elected leadership positions to formalize the group's structure and began creating musical events for the school's future.

Following a series of meetings to plan the club's structure, the club began to turn its focus towards increasing visibility in the school community, adviser Ben Icenogle said.

"Our main goal this year is to really establish our presence and really let everybody know we are a thing, so we elected officers to help structure future events," he said.

President and senior Maddie Machain said the new energy the group brings is a benefit to

all musically interested students and the school community as a whole.

"It's just been really exciting to plan out everything that's coming down the line for us, and I'm really excited because it feels like we're making an impact in a new way that our school hasn't had before," she said.

The group currently has two events planned. They performed at the First Annual STEAM Showcase on March 13 and aim to host a Middle and High School Open Mic Night on May 29.

More events are being brainstormed, though the club hopes to gain more students from the music community at the school first, Icenogle said.

"The goal with our officers is to have everything driven by student ideas, student follow

through, student-organized, all of that. We want to create a space that brings in more people from our music community to work together," he said.

The Middle And High School Open Mic Night will be the first event run by the new Music Honors Society. Anyone with any musical capabilities will be invited to perform.

The event will likely include special performances by the Soundwaves and possibly other school student groups, though much planning for the event is still to be decided, Icenogle said.

Secretary and sophomore Josh Cohen said the planning of new events feels like a new leaf for the music department of the school.

"It feels like we're really being recognized and seen now that we have a more formal space to discuss new musical events with one another," he said.

Students interested in par-



COURTESY OF BEN ICENOGLE

Seniors Maddie Machain, Lila Carpenter, and Owen O'Leary perform at the First Annual STEAM Showcase outside of the gym.

ticipating in the organization of these musical events can contact one of the advisers, Icenogle, or

music teacher Joe Janack, to be considered for admission into the group.

Two new turfs await budget approval

By Caroline MacKinnon
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Awaiting budget approval, both Coach Ed Field and Hyland Field in Manchester will be redone this summer for the next school year.

Athletic Director Cameron Molinare said the new turfs will cost \$1.6 million.

Molinare said one of the most exciting things about the proposed new turfs is that they will have lines for all sports.

"Currently we only have partial field hockey, football, soccer, and partial lacrosse. With the



CAROLINE MACKINNON PHOTO

Pending budget approval, new turfs will be built for Hyland Field and Coach Ed Field to fix patches and prevent injuries.

new turfs, every sport will have all of their lines sewed on the fields," she said.

On Hyland Field, the Manchester Essex logo will be sewn

into the middle and will be there year-round, Molinare said.

Another feature that will be added to Hyland Field is a shock pad, she said.

"It's a pad that goes underneath the turf that absorbs the impact. If you fall on the turf it reduces the impact on your body, which is awesome, and will be a great feature to help prevent injuries for our athletes," Molinare said.

Sophomore Charlotte Crocker, who plays both lacrosse and soccer on the turfs, said playing sports on Hyland Field especially is very difficult.

"There are so many bumps. It's not really that functional for sports right now," she said.

Crocker said she wants the new turf to be level with no

divots.

Freshman Abby Kent, who plays field hockey, said it is frustrating to play on the turfs because the ball bounces since they are uneven.

"On a new turf, hopefully there will be consistency. Every

line is a different height," she said.

Junior Henry Thurlow, a lacrosse player said the current high school turf is not very good.

"My standards are very low

right now, and I think we need a much better turf. There are a lot of injuries because of the patches," he said.

Thurlow said he would like improved turfs, all in one piece.

'On a new turf, hopefully there will be consistency.'

-ABBY KENT

AP Spanish Literature students travel to New York, see Spanish performance

By Whitney Turner
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After reading and analyzing Federico García Lorca’s “La Casa de Bernarda Alba,” Spanish teacher Robert Bilsbury’s AP Spanish Literature class took a field trip to see the play performed in Spanish.

The class drove on March 22 to view the performance at the Repertorio Español, a theater in downtown New York City, and traveled back in the same day, Bilsbury said.

He said he is always on the lookout for local Spanish performances of plays the class reads and was excited that the field trip worked out.

“It is a super intense effort to do that, and it was just a whirlwind of super awesome coincidences that moved us in the positive direction to be able to do it,” Bilsbury said.

He said the experience was “amazing” and the expressive performances by the actors allowed everyone to understand the play even more.

“I really felt like for the first



COURTESY OF MARTHA DAVIS
Seniors Wyeth Takayesu, Madelyn Officer, Kevin Adams, and TJ Brunner pose with Spanish teacher Robert Bilsbury in New York.

time ever, and I’ve read this play 15-20 times; it really filled in all of those little areas where I wasn’t quite sure how to interpret it. It just made the entire play come alive for me, and I really thought it was an amazing experience,” Bilsbury said.

Senior Madelyn Officer said she appreciated having studied the play and the language it uses in class before seeing the performance.

“Having read the script beforehand is also helpful because I’m

not working from scratch,” she said.

Since the play is included in the AP reading list for the course, the experience was even more beneficial for students, senior Martha Davis said.

“I think we gained an understanding of the deeper meaning of the play and what the playwright was intending, which is really helpful for the AP test,” she said.

Davis said the overall experience of the trip was positive for the students.

“It was really fun. It was a really good day, it was a really good experience for the class, and we spoke a lot of Spanish,” she said.

‘It was really fun. It was a really good day. It was a really good experience for the class and we spoke a lot of Spanish.’

-MARTHA DAVIS

Sophomore lacrosse athlete creates fundraiser for Beverly Bootstraps, hopes to spread awareness

By Amy Vytopilova
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Sophomore girls’ lacrosse player Libby McKinnon has collaborated with Beverly Bootstraps and spring sports teams to collect food, bathroom products and cleaning supplies for those in need.

McKinnon said she often volunteers with Beverly Bootstraps and was inspired to create a fundraiser with the school.

“I started volunteering with them in January, and they briefly mentioned it would be fun to do something with Manchester,” she said.

McKinnon reached out to athletic director Cameron Molinare, who has been helping her organize and plan the fundraiser.

Molinare said McKinnon approached her in February with her idea and was excited to start a community service project with the athletic department.

“As a student-athlete, she was hoping we could run the food drive with all of our spring teams. I absolutely loved this idea since it provides our athletics programs the opportunity to give back to our surrounding community and immediately jumped on board,” she said.

Senior girls’ lacrosse captain Paige Garlitz said the fundraiser helps spring sports teams to bond.



AMY VYTOPILOVA PHOTO
Sophomore Libby McKinnon is collecting donations for people in need. Each spring sports team has an assigned item to collect.

“I think it’s a great fundraising idea that can bring spring sports teams together ... It’s nice to see all the items everyone has donated so far,” she said.

Molinare said each athletic team has a specific item to collect.

“Each program has been assigned one of Beverly Bootstrap’s top 10 items to donate to the food drive. These items are the highest in demand at their food pantry ... All teams have also been asked

to donate hygiene and bathroom products, as those are some of the most highly requested items at the food pantry,” Molinare said.

McKinnon said she hopes the fundraiser continues in the athletic department, even after she graduates.

“My goal is to bring awareness to people in need and to make it an ongoing thing until after I graduate. It would be great to keep it going,” she said.



Freshman Suvi Saunders:
“The time in between classes is really important, so make sure there’s free time for students to let people socialize and have fun as well as learn.”



Freshman Owen Olivier Meehan:
“Don’t get rid of U-Block.”



Sophomore Hayden Remington:
“Take into account the needs of the students and listen to what they want as well.”



Sophomore Brian Rosen:
“Be on the side of both the students and the teachers, not just the teachers.”



What is your advice for the new principal?

Junior Grayson Crocker:
“Interact with the student body.”



Junior Samuel Reissfelder:
“Get to know the teachers and staff.”



Senior Lila Carpenter:
“Be open and communicative with the staff and student body.”



Senior Jack Newton:
“Continue the expansion of better lunch options.”



Students search for prom outfits, post on student-run Instagram page

Social media account features different styles, store brands

By Caroline MacKinnon
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Students have begun their prom outfit search. Senior class president Juliana Saunders reinstated the prom outfit Instagram account for any student to showcase their outfits that will be worn May 25.

Senior Anna Brzezinski said she is looking to purchase a suit.

“I’m probably going to wear a black suit so that I can re-wear it later. It won’t be a dress everyone will recognize from my Instagram as my prom dress; therefore, it is worth the money a tailored suit will cost,” she said.

Senior Lexi Hano said after a difficult search, she found the perfect dress on Ebay.

“I ordered a few dresses that didn’t fit me, so I was sent back to the drawing board. I found a dress that was sold out everywhere. It was lilac with pink

and blush straps. I then found it on Ebay in my size, which was perfect, but it was from another country. I finally got the dress and love it. Sometimes you just have to take a chance,” she said.

Junior Greta Gado said she didn’t expect to find her dress while just looking online.

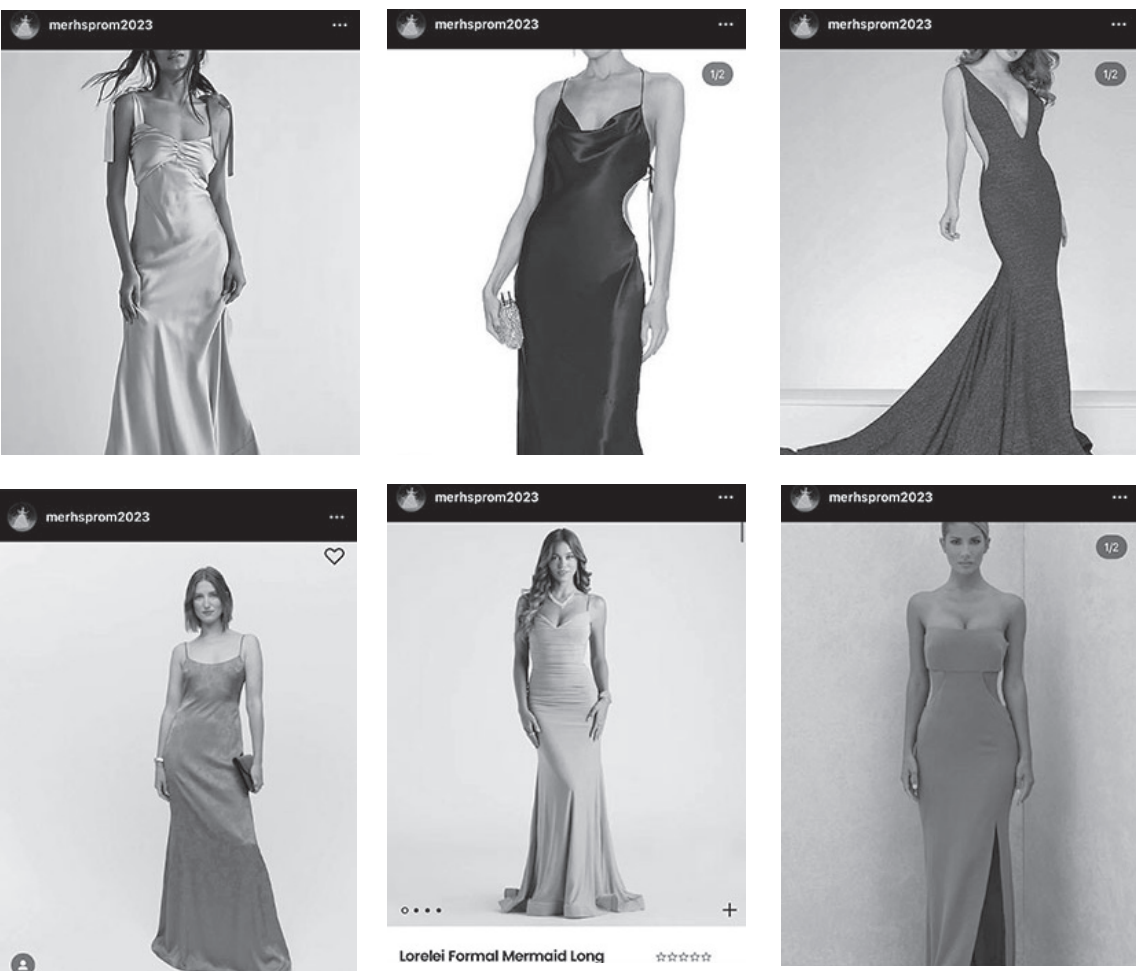
“I wasn’t looking for a dress, just browsing, and I stumbled upon the perfect dress. My dress is green and very minimalistic with an open back,” she said.

Junior Lucy O’Flynn said she had outside help finding her black prom dress with an open back.

“My grandma was searching online because she knew how excited I was. She came across it and sent me the link,” she said.

Junior Allie Delaney said she thought she found her prom dress on Revolve but ultimately decided on a different one.

“I had a first dress that was light blue and strapless, but I didn’t really like it. I found the perfect dress from Windsor that’s a turquoise but a much better option,” she said.



COURTESY OF MERHSPROM2023 VIA INSTAGRAM
Students submit photos of their outfits to an Instagram account run by senior Juliana Saunders.

NHS elects five new officers, holds first co-led meeting

By Hadley Levendusky
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

National Honors Society voted on new officers at their past meeting on Tuesday, March 7.

Those who applied ran for president, vice president, secretary, community service director, and communications director.

The current officers are seniors and will have their last meeting before SCORE begins on April 10.

Current secretary senior Ceece Carvalho said they had a lot of junior members running for positions this year.

“There were at least three to four candidates running for each position,” she said.

Each person running had to give a speech in front of all members at the meeting, no longer than one minute, current vice president of NHS senior Amy Vytopilova.

“In their speeches, [candidates] had to explain why they thought they would be a good NHS officer and talk about the qualifications they believe they have,” she said.

After listening to everyone’s speeches, members voted on who they thought would best uphold the principles of NHS next year.



HADLEY LEVENDUSKY PHOTO
Juniors Charlie Virden and Aiden Brown; seniors Charlotte Lawrence, Grace Gerhardt, and Ceece Carvalho; junior Ella Chafe and senior and Wyeth Takayesu hold the final NHS meeting of for seniors.

Junior Finn O’Hara won president, junior Ella Chafe won vice president, junior Aiden Brown won secretary, junior Kate Bappe won community outreach director, and junior Charlie Virden won communications direction.

Chafe said she hopes to create an inclusive environment and work well with the other newly elected officers.

“I am really excited to start planning ... making the meetings more exciting and interesting,” she said.

In her speech, Chafe said that she was an organized person.

“I think I can use my organizational skills to make the NHS better in general, motivate people to do better in school, and find

new community service opportunities,” she said.

At their next NHS meeting, the new officers will co-lead the meeting with the current NHS officers, Vytopilova said.

“It will be a sort of trial run where we can show the new officers how to run a meeting ... also a way to prepare the juniors for what is to come,” she said.

Cafeteria staff brighten students’ days

By Libby Mulry
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

By providing students with healthy and free meals, the cafeteria staff brightens students’ days, junior Morgan Laspesa said.

Dining services team leader Carin Grimes said she hopes that more people take advantage of the universal free breakfast and lunch, which began during the pandemic and has endured throughout the 2022-23 school year.

“My immediate goal is to bring participation up,” Grimes



LIBBY MULRY PHOTO
Junior Morgan Laspesa punches in her four digit code and converses with dining services team member Carin Grimes.

said.

Lead cook Laura Hamm said she not only wants to increase the number of students eating school lunches, but she also wants to make an impact on

students’ lives.

“We like to try and make their day,” Hamm said.

Grimes said that students also have an impact on her.

“There are definitely kids that

have made an impact, whether it be their personality or how they dressed,” she said.

Grimes had two children in the building and one at Essex Elementary when she first accepted the position in 2009 in the cafeteria, she said.

Many students, not just her own children, have significantly affected her life, Grimes said.

“The things that the kids do themselves, not just my kids, but it’s the things that they do when they stand out, good and bad, that you tend to remember,” she said.

Grimes worked with the oldest and youngest parts of the population in nursing homes and preschools before finding her way to the middle, she said.

“I never thought food would ever be my career. I thought I

would be heading to nursing school, but then I ended up staying home for 13 years with kids, and then I came here,” Grimes said.

Hamm first came here in the fall of last year after being a deli manager for Shaws for 22 years, she said.

“I like to come to work every day,” Hamm said.

Hamm also sees her work of being a grandma as very important, she said.

She often helps with her granddaughter’s fifth-grade plays, and last year she even ordered the costumes for Shrek the Musical Jr, but she was unable to help this fall due to staffing needs in the cafeteria, she said.

“They are very nurturing and compassionate people,” Laspesa said.

Stuffed Animals

Should adults still own them?

Pro
Wyeth Takayesu

Stuffed animals’ ability to provide company and comfort is a near necessity in stressful modern lives, making owning one a must for people of all ages.

The benefits of stuffed animals are numerous. Besides just being cute and cuddly companions through all of life’s troubles, they also possess psychological benefits rooted in human nature.

Children from a very young age naturally seek out something called “contact comfort,” which the American Psychological Association defines as “the positive effects experienced by infants or young animals when in close contact with soft materials.”

Because of this, stuffed animals are often hugely important to children. Children form attachments to their cuddly friends because they provide a break from the stress that comes with often necessary separation as the mother goes about their own life.

In a 2019 study performed by the National Sleep Foundation, it was found that stuffed animals actually help children form healthy sleep habits as the sense of safety they provide helps kids fall asleep on their own earlier.

Benefits like this don’t stop at some arbitrary age either. Stuffed animals often act as what pediatrician Donald Winnicott described in his stuffy-focused research as a transitional object, meaning an object that aids in the transition into independence.

Winnicott viewed these objects as necessary elements to growing up because they take something that reminds us of a loved one and makes it into something meant for ourselves, allowing us to cope with loss and separation in a healthy way.

For many adults these feelings are persistent, allowing them to find comfort in the safety of youth despite even the heaviest moments of stress. According to an article on Sleep.com by Jonathan Bender, 40% of adults sleep with stuffed animals due to their ability to create calm and relaxed feelings.

These transitional objects can also be created later in life, especially during moments of trauma and loss.

Connecting a struggle that’s hard to accept, like losing a loved one, to a stuffed extension of the issue helps us create a greater sense of control and security in our lives just like children do with their first stuffed animals and their mothers.

No matter somebody’s age everybody goes through stress. Why should stress relief and healthy coping mechanisms be limited to children if there is no growing out of the struggle that is life?



ALESSIA OMARI ILLUSTRATION

Con
Gwendolyn Berger

Stuffed animals are special to adults and children alike; however, the millions of plushies in the world, although cute, play a key role in destroying the environment.

Stuffed animals are terrible for the earth. A majority of stuffed animals are made from non-sustainable materials, in a time where most American adults try to be environmentally conscious.

A 2022 South West News Service article titled, “Why majority of Americans make daily efforts to be more eco friendly” wrote that “71% [of Americans] believe adults have a responsibility to care for and protect the environment.”

In order to be more environmentally friendly, adults should consider not buying stuffed animals. Adults are no longer children and should be emotionally mature enough to cope without one. So, if they are wishing to help the environment, they should abstain from purchasing stuffed animals.

The three main reasons why stuffed animals are so bad for the environment are the production process, the waste factor, and the toxic chemicals in stuffed animals.

Rinkesh Kukreja, an environmentalist, wrote in the article “Can You Recycle Stuffed Animals?” for Conserve Energy Future that, “[Stuffed animals] go through long production processes that require fuel consumption and the release of harmful substances into the environment.” Textile production requires high water consumption and utilizes chemicals that leak into the atmosphere or bodies of water, he wrote.

Moreover, toys in general can be toxic and harmful to humans. “The World Counts” writes that 90% of toys on the market are made from plastic which can contain heavy metals or harmful chemicals like dioxin. In fact, toys may contain harmful hormone disrupting material.

Clearly, no child nor adult should be playing with these as the heightened risk of miscarriage, liver/ kidney cancer, and other risks make toys, albeit cute, not worth it.

Besides all of the environmental impacts and chemical dangers, adults also need to learn to cope without their stuffed animals. A key part of growing up is learning how to let go. Adults that hold on to their long-term stuffed animals aren’t doing this.

By learning to let go, starting with one’s old stuffed animals, one can let go of old emotional ties. Of course, this method doesn’t apply to everyone, but there’s certainly a good feeling that comes with decluttering one’s space and mind.

Tiktok reinvents music industry using unique sharing methods

Music platforms follow changes made by popular social media app to share artists

By Alessia Omari
INDEPENDENT STAFF

TikTok has greatly affected the music industry, positively changing the way that people find the songs that they enjoy listening to.

TikTok has become a means to promote music outside of both streaming and radio, one of the first of its kind since MTV.

In the Dec.18, 2020 article, “Can TikTok rival MTV’s Hey-day for Gen Z” by Andrew Unterberger for Billboard,

music labels are described as having recognized TikTok’s unique potential to promote music, providing a unique way for music to be found and commercialized.

“Just as MTV forced labels in

the ‘80s to respond to its success by creating music video divisions out of their promotions departments, labels [such as EMPIRE] have now shifted their focus to TikTok,” Unterberger said.

Songs from various genres and decades have found themselves gaining popularity through the app, helping to expand the commerciality of different kinds of

music across the board.

In the Feb. 21, 2021 article, “How TikTok is changing the music industry” by Stacy

Anderson for Quartz, songs such as the 1977 release “Dreams” by Fleetwood Mac have reentered the Billboard Top 100 through viral videos featuring the song.

“Usually, such a dramatic spike in an artist’s popularity



WYETH TAKAYESU PHOTO

Junior Charlie Lations uses the social media application TikTok to find new music artists to follow the app’s constant feed of new videos that are tailored to match the artists he already likes.

would result from a deliberate promotional push,” said Anderson.“All it took was one [man’s TikTok] and Fleetwood Mac was storming the charts again.”

Recent updates on Spotify have attempted to capitalize off of TikTok’s role in popularizing music.

In Jonah Kruger’s March 8,

2023 article, “Everything We Know About Spotify’s Vertical Discovery Feed,” Spotify has reinvented its recommendations in order to be more similar to TikTok.

“New suggestions will pop up as long as your fingers can scroll,” Kruger said. “That’s where the TikTok comparisons come into play; think of it as

your Spotify “For You Page.”

TikTok will only increase in relevance when it comes to how people find and interact with music.

Music from various genres and decades will rise in popularity due to the effectiveness of TikTok’s algorithm and will help to expand the music tastes of many people across the world.

STAFF EDITORIAL

Students should do prom invitations in person, not over text

Promposals should be in person rather than over a text or Snapchat as it makes the event more memorable. A text is too easy; you can make it more sincere in person.

A promposal does not have to be huge or extravagant. The only rule there is when asking someone to prom is that it cannot be over text.

Senior Ava Magnuson said that asking someone in person is a nice and easy gesture that will guarantee a yes.

“People should try to do a promposal if they can. It doesn’t take much effort and it would make their date happy, even if you’re just asking someone as a friend. Also if you buy flowers for someone, there is no way they will say no to you,”

Prom is a memorable event that students look forward to all year, so a personalized invitation is important.

Magnuson said.

Prom is a memorable event that students look forward to all year, so a personalized invitation is important.

Junior Caelie Patrick said promposals have slowly faded throughout the years, and people have resorted to asking each other over text.

“Promposals are a part of the high school tradition that has sort of disappeared. There are endless opportunities and ways to do it ... sending a simple text or Snapchat is not as memorable as getting asked with flowers,” Patrick said.

Promposals do not have to be grand gestures.

Math teacher Courtney Brown said that promposals are great, yet some students are scared to

Today 7:50 PM

Hey I don't have a date to the prom, would you wanna go with me? 🙏

Read 7:50 PM

no that's so lame. u should've asked me in person 🙄

Students have slowly begun turning to text messages as a method of asking other students to prom.

do them.

“I think that promposals are cute, and kids are optimistic that they will get one, but I definitely agree that they are better received in person. But I also think some people are intimidated to do a grand gesture like that in person,” Brown said.

Promposals allow students to be creative and make the person being asked feel more appreciated.

Magnuson said any sort of in person invitation to prom is better than a text message.

“It’s nice to have someone put in the effort to ask you in person rather than texting you. I feel like some people are scared to prompose, but if one person does it, it will inspire their classmates to do the same,” she said.

When asking someone to prom, make sure to do it in person to make the experience more memorable for you both.

Silicon Valley Bank collapses due to Congress’s deregulation

By Libby Mulry
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Deregulation and increasing interest rates led to the preventable collapse of Silicon Valley Bank.

In the wake of the financial crash of 2008, the Dodd–Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act was passed. The Act subjected banks with more than \$50 billion in deposits to routine capital and liquidity stress tests that evaluate a bank’s ability to respond to emergencies in the market.

In 2015, Silicon Valley Bank CEO Gregory W. Becker began lobbying the federal government to change this threshold to \$250 billion.

“Given the low risk profile of our activities and business model, such a result would stifle our ability to provide credit to our clients without any meaningful corresponding reduction in risk,” Becker said in a prepared



President Obama signed the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act into law on July 21, 2010.

statement to Congress on behalf of Silicon Valley Bank.

In 2018, regulations were rolled back, and the threshold for this enhanced regulatory program was raised with the support of 50 Republicans and 17 Democrats. Supporting big business at the expense of American consumers seems to be the only issue Congress can agree on.

In the following years, the bank had incredibly insufficient risk strategies in place.

Silicon Valley Bank operated without a chief risk officer for more than a year and was with-

2020 to \$190 billion in 2022 due to the boom in venture capital funding from consistently low interest rates.

The bank then began investing \$120 billion of “their” money into bonds, like mortgage back securities, treasury bonds, and held to maturity bonds.

They were putting this money into bonds when interest rates were low, essentially betting that interest rates would stay low.

When the Federal Reserve raised interest rates to combat inflation, their investment fared worse and worse.

According to The Office of Investor Education and Advocacy, “A fundamental principle of bond investing is that market interest rates and bond prices generally move in opposite directions. When market interest rates rise, prices of fixed-rate bonds fall. This phenomenon is known as interest rate risk.”

As interest rates rose, the once reliable steady stream of venture capital money dried up too. SVB

was then forced to sell their available for sale bonds at an incredible loss.

No one wanted to panic, but no one wanted to be the last person in line at the bank to get their money out.

Depositors initiated \$42 billion in withdrawals from SVB, leaving the bank with a negative cash balance, Maria Heeter wrote in “Silicon Valley Bank Experienced \$42 Billion in Attempted Withdrawals” for media company The Information.

Banks, when repeatedly unregulated and mismanaged by executives, will fail. The solution must be public banking.

Public banks are owned by the government, meaning they don’t have a responsibility to their shareholders but rather to the American public.

Public banking provides a stable banking source that is free from the whims of the market and private capital and can help finance ordinary people and their communities’ needs.

[Public banks] don’t have a responsibility to their shareholders but to the American public.

Faculty Adviser
Mary Buckley-Harmon

Editors-in-chief
Phileine de Widt
Charles Lations

News Editors
Avabella Mitrano
Mechi O’Neil

Features Editors
Ella Chafe
Caroline MacKinnon
Amy Vytopilova

the
INDEPENDENT

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

We welcome letters to the editor from MERHS students, faculty, and community members. All submissions must be signed. 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.

Manchester-Essex Regional High School
36 Lincoln St, Manchester MA 01944
978-526-4412 newspaper@mersd.org
online at <https://www.mersd.org/domain/702>

Opinion Editors
Stella Straub
Wyeth Takayesu
Whitney Turner

Sports Editors
Isabelle Donnellan Valade
Sam Heanue
Hadley Levendusky

Arts Editors
Jordie Cornfield
Libby Mulry

Staff
Gwen Berger
Hannah Davis
Summer Demeo
Alessia Omari

OUTDOOR TRACK



Caelie Patrick



Caroline MacKinnon



Jack Newton



Kendall Newton

Coaches: David Coleman, Steve Whittey, and Nina Sargent
Captains: Junior Caelie Patrick, Seniors Jack Newton, Caroline MacKinnon, Kendall Newton,
Record last year: 4-0 (girls’) and 3-1 (boys’)
Current Record: 1-0 (girls’) and 1-0 (boys’)
Rival: Danvers
Impact athletes: Sophomore Megan Hurd, Juniors Mackay Brooks, Finn O’Hara, seniors Caroline MacKinnon, and Jack Newton
Coach’s quote: “We have a hard working team who know what training it takes to prepare for these championship level meets.”
-David Coleman
Captain’s quote: “I think we really want to work on practicing hard, also a lot of team encouragement, team bonding.” -Caelie Patrick

SAILING



Ian Carlin

Coach: Anthony Leggett
Captain: Junior Ian Carlin
Record last year: 2-2
Current record: Placed 17th overall
Goals: Train the newest recruits and strengthen the team’s basics for the next season.
Impact players: Junior Ian Carlin and sophomore Cole Cote
Coach’s quote: “We’re going to be out on the water every day working on those basic, fundamental skills.” -Anthony Leggett
Captain’s quotes: “I want to make sure that everyone’s learning, having fun, and in general having a good time.” -Ian Carlin

GIRLS’ LACROSSE



Hadley Levendusky



Ella Chafe



Paige Garlitz

Coach: Nan Gorton
Captains: Junior Ella Chafe, seniors Hadley Levendusky and Paige Garlitz
Record last year: 19-3
Current record: 4-0
Rivals: Newburyport, Ipswich
Goals: Form connections among players, go deep into the state tournament, work hard
Impact players: Sophomore Brigid Carovillano, junior Ella Chafe, seniors Paige Garlitz, and Hadley Levendusky,
Coach’s quote: “Everyone wants everyone else to be a superstar, and that’s a great culture on our team this year. It’s an extremely unselfish team, which is nice.” -Nan Gorton
Captain’s quote: “I want to make sure we have that bond and that connection because we did lose a lot of players ... obviously, my goal is to make it as far as we did last year and win it this time. But you can’t do that without the connections.” -Paige Garlitz

BOYS’ LACROSSE

Coach: Jon Siderewicz
Captains: Junior Quinn Brady, seniors Declan Kirk, Jack DiPasquale, and Mark Pollock
Record last year: 8-11
Current record: 2-0
Rivals: Hamilton-Wenham, Gloucester
Goals: Having a home playoff game, top 16 seed in tournament
Impact players: Seniors Jack DiPasquale and Declan Kirk
Coach’s quote: “Going into a game, we want to take one play at a time, and with that mindset, we try to win every whistle.”
-Jon Siderewicz
Captain’s quote: “I think being a top 16 seed and having a home playoff game would be really big momentum going into the playoffs.” -Jack DiPasquale



Declan Kirk



Jack DiPasquale



Mark Pollock



Quinn Brady

BOYS’ TENNIS

Coach: Robert Bilsbury
Captains: Sophomore Jack Cummins, juniors Charlie Virden and Sander Breuker, and senior Finnegan Straub
Record last year: 16-4
Current record: 1-2
Goals: Finish season at higher level than the beginning, work every day to improve.
Impact players: Sophomore Jack Cummins and junior Charlie Virden
Rivals: Hamilton-Wenham, Lynnfield
Coach’s quote: “I can tell right away this is going to be a good, solid group of boys that care about each other and are cheering for each other in the matches.” -Robert Bilsbury
Captain’s quote: “I’m looking forward to a team that’s closer together. We had a massive team last year, but this year with a smaller team I’m thinking there might be a pretty close bond between players.” -Finnegan Straub



Charlie Virden



Finnegan Straub



Sander Breuker



Jack Cummins

GIRLS’ TENNIS



Emery Weber-Provost



Sophie Zalosh



Vanessa Gregory

Coach: Barrett Alston
Captains: Seniors Vanessa Gregory, Sophie Zalosh, and Emery Weber-Provost
Record last year: 14-8
Current record: 2-1
Goals: Improve individual skills, last year’s record, maintain a strong team
Impact player: Senior Calista Lai
Coach’s quote: “Our team overall is just super strong, and that’s going to be our advantage. We don’t really have any weak spots.” –Barrett Alston
Captain’s quote: “We’re all just trying to focus on our individual strengths and improving on that, focusing in on what we can improve instead of just our overall game.” –Emery Weber-Provost

BASEBALL

Coach: B.J. Weed
Captains: Seniors Michael DeOreo, Henry Otterbein, and Zak Porat
Record last year: 15-9
Current record: 0-1
Goals: Qualify for state championships and win against teams that gave them difficulty last year
Rivals: Hamilton-Wenham and Amesbury
Impact players: Captains, junior Matt McKenna
Coach’s quote: “I’m looking forward to this season ... we have a lot of strong players this year ... and a lot of guys that will make a difference.” -B.J. Weed
Captain’s quote: “We have a lot of new guys this year who haven’t played before, so it’s a little crazy ... right now.” -Henry Otterbein



Henry Otterbein



Michael DeOreo



Zak Porat

SOFTBALL



Abby Taron



Kyra Levasseur

Coach: Frank Sarro
Captains: Seniors Kyra Levasseur and Abby Taron
Record last year: 0-19
Current Record: 2-1
Goals: Bridge the gap between grades, learn more skills as a team
Rival: Ipswich
Impact players: Captains, juniors Celia Mann and Morgan Laspesa
Coach’s quote: “Our freshmen clearly have some talent, and then we have the upperclassmen providing leadership. I feel like we can have a pretty good season.” -Frank Sarro
Captain’s quote: “Everyone has had a positive attitude and we have definitely seen that it is possible for us to win as a team.” -Abby Taron

Art classes sent video from The Memory Project

Shows Nigerian children receiving portrait drawings

By Stella Straub
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After the school participated in the Memory Project last November, a video was recently sent back from the organization that showed the reaction of the artwork being received in Nigerian schools, art teacher Tamera Burns said.

The Memory Project aims to help build cultural understanding and kindness by providing handmade, heartfelt portraits to children, according to memory-project.org.

In the video, Nigerian teachers unpack and hand students portraits of themselves drawn by American participants. They each get their portraits and run back to show their friends, excited over the drawings.

“It was so touching to see those kids have that reaction. It

was something that to many of our students here wouldn’t be a big deal, but that was such a big deal for them,” Burns said.

Sophomore Libby McKinnon said the video was incredibly impactful for her.

“We put our information with our handprints on the back, and at the end of the video, they said to touch your friend’s handprint with your hand. That was a big moment for me,” she said.

After being given a small amount of information on each child, such as their age, favorite color, and what they wanted to be when they grow up, students were able to choose who they wanted to draw, McKinnon said.

Sophomore Joshua Cohen said he chose a boy named Bello, whom he was drawn to because of his serious expression.



COURTESY OF THE MEMORY PROJECT

Children from Nigeria show the camera the portraits that students from Manchester-Essex created.

America want.

“All the jobs were along the lines of a police officer or soldier or doctor. That is, jobs that allow you to help and give back to your country, whereas here, people want jobs that are more self-beneficial or more in the self-actualization realm than helping

and healing people,” he said.

Cohen said the viewing of the video was a moment of unfettered happiness that pulled on everyone’s heartstrings.

“At times it can feel like there’s this big divide between us here in Manchester-by-the-Sea and people in African countries and

whatnot, and it’s just good to both learn about other countries and also make connections with them,” he said.

Burns said she thinks the school will participate in the project again, as it helps students to think about other people in a meaningful way.

Three students’ pieces recognized in 2023 Congressional Art Competition

Earn awards for photography, drawings, artwork

By Whitney Turner
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

In this year’s Congressional Art Competition, three students from the high school were recognized for their photography or artwork.

All of the high schools in the sixth congressional district of Massachusetts submit six student pieces each to the contest, photography teacher Caroline Epp said. The pieces are shown in an art show and awards are given to outstanding pieces, she said.

“It’s a big honor because only six kids get their work shown,” she said.

The winners of the grand prize in each of the country’s 435 congressional districts have their work sent to Washington D.C. to hang in the Capitol building for a year, Epp said.

Art teacher Tamera Burns said she attended the awards show in March.

Junior Alana Martinetti, who received an honorable mention for her artwork, said she enjoyed attending the art show.

“It was nice to see everybody’s pieces there, and it felt great having my own piece hung up there,” she said.

Martinetti said her honorable mention was for a charcoal and

watercolor piece of a family heirloom from her grandmother.

“I thought it was something important to do an art piece on, and I wanted to give recognition to my grandma,” she said.

Sophomore Clara Grant said she received the “Best of School” award for her self portrait done in photography class.

“I was very shocked that I actually won. I was not expecting that,” Grant said.

Epp and Burns each submitted the work of three students. Epp said she is proud of them regardless of whether they received recognition in this contest.

“I think all of them, whether they won prizes or not, are amazing artists, which is why I picked their work,” she said.



COURTESY OF CAROLINE EPP

Sophomore Clara Grant’s photo won the “Best of School” award.

Junior Quinn Brady said that his photo, which shows him meditating, examines how we value intrinsic

goals. He said it was a good feeling to receive an honorable mention for his work.

Student groups perform at spring concert

By Hannah Davis
INDEPENDENT STAFF

After working hard over the past couple of months, the jazz band, concert band, concert choir and SoundWaves performed in the annual spring concert in the auditorium on April 7.

The concert choir, directed by choir director Alan MacTaylor, performed “Animal Crackers,” a piece composed of several shorter songs by Eric Whitacre; “Irish Country Dance” and “Celtic Dance” by Kirby Shaw; “Loch Lomond,” arranged by Jonathan Quick; and “Another



HANNAH DAVIS PHOTO

The jazz band, concert band, concert choir, and SoundWaves all performed multiple songs at this year’s annual spring concert.

Day of Sun” from the movie “La La Land” by Benj Pasek, Justin Paul and Justin Hurwitz and arranged by Jacob Narverud.

The SoundWaves, directed by

elementary school music teacher Fiona Dooley, performed “Something That I Want” by Grace Potter and the Nocturnals and arranged by Dooley; “Breakin’ Up

Is Hard to Do” by Neil Sedaka and arranged by Dooley; “Linger” by The Cranberries and arranged by senior Annabel Smith; and “As It Was” by Harry Styles and arranged by Dooley.

The jazz band performed “Tank” by Japanese composer Yoko Kanno, which is the theme song from the television show “Cowboy Bebop”; “Brick House” arranged by Michael Brown; and “Ain’t No Sunshine” by Bill Withers and arranged by Rick Stitzel.

The concert band performed “Voyager” by Soon Hee Newbold, a piece inspired by themes of space travel; “Jungle Dance” by Brian Balmages; and “To Soar With Broken Wings” by the Wingert-Jones Wind Band. The piece was written in memory of a band student who passed away from cancer.

Junior Chloe Lilly said the

concert went really well for the concert and jazz bands and everyone put a lot of effort into preparing for the concert.

“We definitely worked really hard, [and] we took lots of time to rehearse everything,” she said.

Jazz band director Joe Janack said the jazz and concert bands had a great deal of time to prepare for the concert and had a good time while doing it.

“The students seem to enjoy the music, and that makes it a little bit easier. They love to perform, and they love being together to play music,” he said.

Senior Lila Carpenter said the concert also went well for the concert choir and SoundWaves.

“[The concert] was the last concert for the seniors, and I’m very happy with how it went,” she said.

Yale a cappella group visits, performs self-arranged numbers

Group teaches students songs

By Summer Demeo
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Mixed Company, an a cappella group from Yale, came to the school to perform for and work with the high school and eighth-grade chorus on March 20.

The group came to the Boston area on their spring break and reached out to middle school chorus teacher Ben Icenogle to ask if they could perform and do a workshop, Icenogle said.

He said they reached out because they fund their spring break by touring and performing at schools in the area they are visiting.

“I liked the idea because it was something I did in college.

I was in an a cappella group, and we did the same things on spring breaks ... so it felt just like a cool full circle thing to be on the other side of it,” Icenogle said.

Senior chorus member Lila Carpenter said Mixed Company first performed a few of their songs, then introduced themselves and talked about their majors.

The group then split into sections with the students to teach them one of their arrangements, and at the end, everyone came together and sang the song, she said.

Icenogle said he liked getting to see his students learn from others and get a different perspective on those he usually teaches. He also said he hopes to get eighth-graders interested in doing high school chorus.

The music Mixed Company performs is student-arranged, so



COURTESY OF BEN ICENOGLLE

On March 20 an a cappella group from Yale University named Mixed Company performed their self-arranged songs and worked with high school and eighth-grade chorus students in small groups.

members of the group write the way each song is sung and performed, said Allan MacTaylor, high school chorus teacher.

He said it was a good experience for the students because they were able to learn a song in a style of music that they haven’t

gotten to do yet this year with very skilled musicians.

Carpenter said, “I just enjoy watching a cappella groups, and I think being in an a cappella group and being a leader in my a cappella group, I like to take in stuff from other groups ... and try to

implement some of [it].”

It gave students the opportunity to see the potential of the chorus and Soundwaves. It also helped show people what college a cappella is like, for those interested in continuing music in college, she said.

‘A Man Called Otto’ film shows importance of friendship

By Isabelle Donnellan Valade
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Directed by Marc Forster, “A Man Called Otto” is a thought-provoking look at the value of friendship, the importance of living, and the effects of love.

The movie is a delightful comedy drama full of joy and hilarity but also moments of heartfelt emotion.

It was adapted from Swedish author Fredrik Backman’s novel, “A Man Called Ove.”

The film began as a limited theatrical release in New York



SONYPICTURES.COM

Director Marc Forster’s “A Man Called Otto,” featuring Tom Hanks as the lead role, tells a story of grief and companionship.

City and Los Angeles on Dec. 29, 2022, before a nationwide release on Jan. 13, 2023.

It stars actor Tom Hanks as Otto Anderson and actress Mariana Treviño as Marisol, his new

neighbor. The film follows 63-year-old widower, Otto, who is attempting to end his life in order to join his late wife, Sonya, who had passed away from cancer.

Their love story is retold through timely flashbacks and shows glimpses of the man Otto was before Sonya’s death. He said “My life was black-and-white before I met Sonya. She was the color.”

The story is both powerful and touching in its frank and unapologetic exploration of suicide.

Otto has given up on life without Sonya, and the fact that he is emotionless to this fact makes the film a bit more bittersweet.

He helps people and begrudgingly begins to care for them, but the air of his suicide is still evident in the narrative and the overall feel of the film.

As the film goes on, Otto and his new neighbor, Marisol, eventually become friends, and Marisol helps to revive Otto’s passion for life.

The other residents in Otto’s neighborhood contain people from all stages of life who look out for each other in good times and bad.

“A Man Called Otto” sends a worthwhile

message about everyday people who treat those they care about with patience and acceptance.

The film moves from comedy to drama seamlessly, and it packs an emotional punch that makes it memorable and rewatchable.

The story is both powerful and touching in its frank and unapologetic exploration of suicide.

‘Euphoria’ director Sam Levinson’s ‘Assassination Nation’ retells classic American story with plot twist

By Jordie Cornfield
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

“Assassination Nation,” the 2018 film directed and written by the creator of the critically acclaimed TV show “Euphoria,” retells the Salem Witch Trials through a modern point of view, demonstrating the universality of the story.

Rather than being accused of witchcraft, the film’s protagonist, Lily Colson (Odessa Young), is blamed for being the anonymous hacker behind the data leak.

The film opens with a list of flashing tongue-in-cheek “trigger warnings,” including the “fragile male ego.” Levinson explores the difficult themes of transphobia, homophobia, sexism, and violence through highlighting what “could” happen if the events of the movie were to take place in

real life, opening viewers’ eyes to our digitally-focused reality.

“Assassination Nation” follows high school senior Lily and her three best friends Bex transgender activist, model, and actress Hari Nef), Em (indie pop artist Abra), and Em’s sister Sarah actress and singer Suki Waterhouse) in the aftermath of a data leak from an anonymous hacker in their town, Salem, that exposed countless illicit relationships and secrets through texts, photos, and direct messages.

The hack begins with Mayor Bartlett (“One Tree Hill”’s Cullen Moss), revealing his multiple affairs with other men despite his “homophobic policies.” Soon after, the high school principal, (Tony-nominated actor Colman Domingo), gets hacked as well, and the data of the rest of the townspeople follow.

After everyone’s data is leaked, a rumor spreads that Lily was the anonymous hacker behind the scandal, which her boyfriend Mark (Bill Skarsgård) accepts as the truth. Believing this rumor, many male townspeople assemble into a mob, armed with assault rifles and other weapons, and begin a witch hunt to find and kill Lily as well as her three best friends.

This leads to clashes of violence between the two groups: four teenage girls versus the entirety of their town’s male population. The movie itself serves as an eye opener into how quick society is to blame women.

The dialogue within the movie is very realistic to the way teenagers actually speak, which is expected as Levinson’s “Euphoria” has received the same accolades.

A stand-out line is from Bella



HULU.COM

“Assassination Nation,” directed by Sam Levinson, brings the historical events of the Salem Witch Trials to younger viewers.

Thorne’s character, Reagan, in which she says, “There’s two types of people in this world: people that have come to terms with the fact that privacy is just dead, then there’s the old people that are still trying to fight it.”

Similarly to “Euphoria,” the cinematography of “Assassination Nation” features colorful strobe

lights and panning cameras paired with electronic synth music, which creates a dreamy atmosphere that brings you into the confusing yet familiar world of the film.

The film, which is rated R, features gore, drug consumption, and sexual violence, all involving high school students.