

The Blue and Gold

maldenblueandgold.com

Malden High School
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Boys and Girls Basketball Make it to States



Collage by Gabriela Parini Cordova

Ryan Cogswell
Reporter

Bo Stead
Reporter

When a one-win season came to an end against the Somerville Highlanders in 2022, the state of Boys Basketball in Malden looked dim. Just one year later, they were able to turn it around. After finishing with a 12-8 record, the team qualified for

the MIAA Division 1 State Tournament preliminary round, good for their first appearance in five long years.

It has been an eventful year for the Golden Tornadoes. It began with an incredible 38-point showing from senior Justin Bell against Medford and a 75-54 blowout victory. After a loss to one of the state's best at Lynn English, they scored a 59-46 win against Everett at home to top last season's win mark in just the third

contest. After defeating Woburn to advance to 3-1, they dropped two away games at Burlington and Chelmsford.

Then, the Golden Tornadoes rattled off four wins in eight days; a 12-point win against Chelsea, a low-scoring battle against Melrose, a close victory against Lynn Classical, and a double-digit win against Revere to cap off the streak. Malden was at 7-3 and in a prime position to

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Exclusive
Q&A with
Mayor Gary
Christenson

Aiden Luciano
Reporter

Aiden Luciano had the privilege to sit down and discuss some major questions that have risen in the city of Malden, including his own personal opinion on Malden's development. This has been edited for clarity and length.

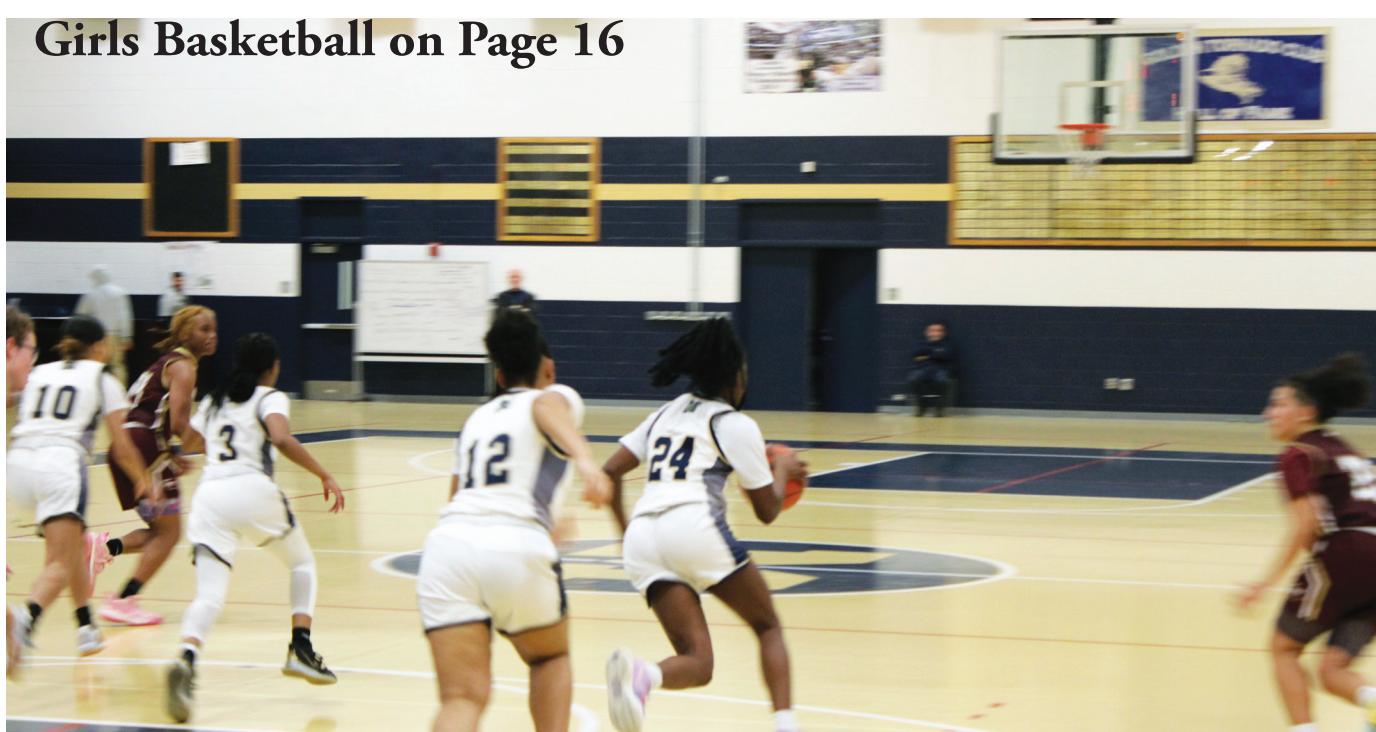
What are some of the new things you added to Malden that are coming up?

The ones that we are focused on, looking forward, are threefold. One is the former Malden district courthouse on Summer Street, which is just past the Pearl Street Station and the Bikeeny Cafe area; we have acquired that from the state. And we are now in the process of converting that building [into] an Arts and Culture Center. So we are working with the City Council architects, as well as a number of residents, and the [artistic] community to come up with a program that will essentially result in a building being available for [everyone]. So, for instance, one night we envision that you might see the sketch group doing their exhibit, then maybe a week from then you'll see a black box theater show, then after that may be a comedy show. And maybe at night, you'll take an adult class. We hope that this will be a place where [people] can do a lot. This is something that has been talked about for as long as I've been in office now, which started in 2012.

What was your overall vision for the city as you took office as Mayor of Malden?

What wasn't the vision? The vision was to do everything I possibly could to help Malden move forward, whether it was having the best constituent services possible, or creating developments that benefit all. One of our first priorities was to demolish the former city hall which was built in the 1970s and closed off Pleasant Street. Our administration tackled this Herculean task as part

Girls Basketball on Page 16



Tori Gammon rushes up the court on a fast break. BO STEAD

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My Summer Trip to Eritrea

Delina Yohannes
Reporter

Over the summer break this year, I visited my home country Eritrea for the very first time. To many, my country is unknown to them due to its small size and the fact it is relatively a very young country. In 1991, my country gained independence from neighboring Ethiopia after a brutal war was fought. Although the war resulted in many casualties and tragedies, it also resulted in freedom. However, this sense of freedom was short-lived due to extremely complicated political problems within the country.

Currently, Eritrean civilians have no access to direct and fast wifi and other necessities which lead to the country given a poor reputation globally.

Traveling to my home country and seeing it for myself made me realize that everything that I had heard prior to my departure was false.

As odd as it sounds, it was as if I had been placed in a time machine and was living in the 60s. Everything was old-fashioned and vintage. To many, not having access to modern living conditions would be seen as a punishment rather than a vacation. But to me, it was the best thing to have ever happened to me. For possibly the first time in my life I felt like I was truly living.

In today's world, our social life stems from social media. Everything seems to be through our phones these days which can be beneficial, but it can also be detrimental.

Due to the political state of my country, wifi and access to social media is something that is almost nonexistent. At first, it was extremely hard for me to adjust to these unfamiliar living conditions. I went from waking up every morning and checking my Instagram feed to waking up without even glancing at my phone. This isolation from social media and society as a whole brought an immense amount of peace to my life and changed the way that I see the world in a way.

What made this trip interesting though, wasn't the fact that I was able to adjust to the lifestyle as quickly and smoothly as I did, but it was the people who reside there who left me in awe.

The biggest observation I made in terms of the differences between life here and in my home country

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was the children. Growing up, playing outside with my siblings along with neighborhood friends was one of my favorite things to do. As I grew older though, I stopped playing outside as much. This was primarily because I was introduced to technology such as my phone.

As someone who has younger siblings and extended family, I've noticed that playing outside and interacting with kids their age isn't something that is intriguing to the majority of children in today's society. When offered the opportunity to go outside and play at family gatherings, the children often deny it and would much rather stay indoors and stay on their electronic devices. In Eritrea however, the childhood that the youth experience is the complete opposite. Electronic devices are almost nonexistent to the majority of children and the desire for social interaction is highly common among the youth. Due to this, the social life over there is something that I feel everyone should experience.

I could go on and on about my experiences in Eritrea, but the biggest takeaway from my time there was that sometimes, less is more.



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The Life of a Working Student

Mack Keating
Lead Reporter

Commitment.

Webster's Dictionary defines it as an agreement or pledge to do something in the future; Oxford Dictionary defines it as an engagement or obligation that restricts freedom of action; I define it as a source of stress.

At the end of every year, students meet with their guidance counselors to discuss their classes for the next academic year. A common strategy, and the one I went for, was to actively choose the hardest classes that were still manageable. For me, that included two AP classes. If I had room in my schedule, I was considering a third. Every other class was Honors-track.

Around that same time, I applied for a job. It was supposed to be a casual job, a few shifts a week, perhaps. To my delight, I was accepted almost immediately. I finished the last month or so of my freshman year, coasting off my new job and the ease of classes ending.

Over the summer, due to my lack of school, I was able to work a lot more shifts. I got sucked into my job, like a moth to a light. I got close with a lot of my coworkers, and work became nearly the only thing I did. And I loved it.

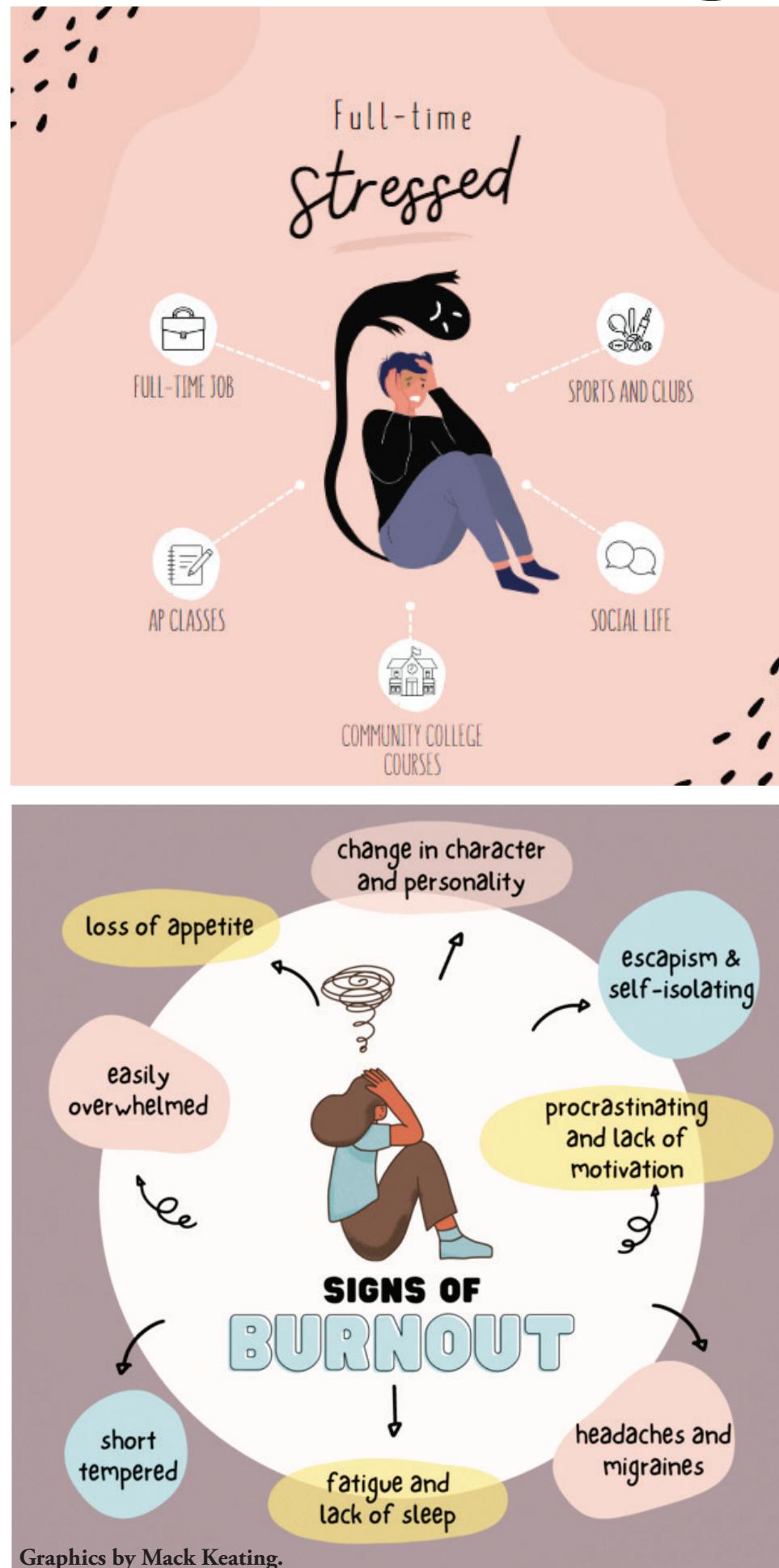
But like with all jobs, there were moments that I hated, moments I wanted to quit, and moments I felt in over my head. With a lot of my job focusing on customer service, I was burning out fast from dealing with ill-tempered customers and hot-headed clientele. Despite my deteriorating energy, I kept the job, holding on to that novelty from the months prior.

As the school year started up again, I cut my hours down at work. I still consistently worked more hours than most students, but work was usually my favorite part of the day – of course I worked a lot of hours.

As the class load got heavier, though, it got harder and harder to keep up with my seemingly infinite shifts. I was pulling all-nighters to keep up with my homework, or coming home from work so exhausted I was asleep on the couch before I even thought about what I was doing.

As someone who has always prioritized schoolwork and grades, I was not ready to let my grades suffer. So, I spent every waking minute working on something. Whether I was at work, in class, or doing homework, there was always something that needed to be done.

By November, I did not recognize myself anymore. My constant cycle of needing to get everything done had completely wiped out my energy. I was snapping at people, running near-exclusively on caffeine, and barely taking care of myself. I lost a good number of friends



during this time because I was blowing everyone off to make sure my work got done.

At the end of the month I hit my breaking point. I was getting home from shifts so exhausted that I was consistently behind on homework, but still was not catching up on sleep, either. I wanted a break

from everything, a week to have no homework, no school, no shifts, nothing. I managed to get through most of December, my grades at an all-time low. I could not commit to everything anymore.

I took a week off of work towards the end of December. Strangely enough, by the end of

the week, I missed it. While I had always loved my job, I did not think I would miss my job to the extent I did after a measly seven days.

And so, I dove head first back into work. I started working the same hours I had before, fully committing myself back into my role.

A week off surely should have been enough to dive back into it, right?

Sure enough, I was already burning out again by New Year. Midterms were approaching fast and I was still pushing through work from the previous week. As my grades ticked down, all I could do was watch.

Finally, I found the courage to limit my commitments. As brief as possible, I told my manager I needed to cut my hours at work; I could not be there as often as I was. I chose not to re-enroll for extra classes at Bunker Hill. Best of all, I started asking for help from the people around me.

Slowly but surely, I started to find pieces of myself I forgot existed. With my newfound time off, I increased my time reading, rock climbing, playing guitar, doing all the things I loved to do again. My relationships with the people around me improved. Small things like going to the mall with friends and going to bed before three in the morning were possible again.

As I started appreciating the things around me again, I also had this building sense of guilt. Why should I be taking these extra days off that I could be using to be at work, doing homework, or anything else productive?

Since then, I have been flipping between having multiple consecutive days off, and working until I physically cannot anymore. Even with the amount of shifts I work, every day I take off comes with that sense of guilt that I should be doing more. I know my brain is wrong about that, that I do not need to be constantly productive, but it is not always easy to tell myself that.

There's not really a happy ending to this story. I have not convinced myself fully that it is okay to take time for myself, or to ask for help. The one thing I can say, though, is to not be afraid to cut out overbearing commitments, and to put yourself first. It might be hard, but sometimes the best thing you can do is to take a break.



Growing Up With Grief-What's Next?

Kayley Glavin
Editor-In-Chief of Print

It's still hard to believe I am sitting here in my senior year of high school almost ready to graduate. Because of everything that has happened over the past four years, I have learned to make the most of things. So, as much as I am excited to leave high school, I also want to try and enjoy the next few months.

Then it will be time for college, at least for many of us. I know that has been almost the only thing many of us can talk about, besides prom and graduation. I still have no idea where I am going to go, so I guess you could say I'm pretty nervous. But I realize that many other seniors are also lost, which makes me feel a little better.

If I'm being honest, aside from being nervous, I am really just thankful that I am going to have the chance to explore a different part of my life, and hopefully have fun. I've been in Malden my whole life, and ever since my dad passed away during my freshman year of high school, I have felt this overwhelming need to get out and make a change—it's almost like I have been trapped in that horrible moment of my life that I can't manage to escape. At the same time, applying to colleges, and being in the process of getting application letters, helped me grasp how much I really wanted my dad here for these moments. Of course, the rest of my family is happy for me, and that's great, but I still have this indescribable feeling that something is missing; the person I wanted here most for this next step of my life is

not here, and as much as my family has stepped in and tried, no one can truly fill that gap. On top of that, being raised by a single mother makes paying for college much harder. I know my mother is going to help me in any way she can, but I really don't want her spending most of her money to help me pay for college. Unfortunately, I know that many others are worrying about paying for college, for different reasons, and it's so sad so many are faced with these financial dilemmas over college.

This college application process has really just been me trying to prove to everyone that I can get into competitive schools because that somehow makes me more capable of success. I never even stopped to realize that I should be proud of myself for just getting to this point. In some ways, it feels like I'm not only trying to fulfill my own expectations, but also my dad's; he was always the one bothering me about school, whether it was my grades, homework, or attendance. Being invested the way he was could make him really annoying, but looking back, I really miss it—he always reminded me that I was capable of great things if I just put my mind to it. After he passed, it took a long time for me to care about doing anything—school, life, relationships. Still, I sometimes ask myself "Am I even going to be able to make it through college without him?" I also struggle with wanting to go to my own graduation without him there, never mind four years of college, without being able to reach out to him. But I will, because I know

that is what he wants. Everything I do today is more for him than it is for myself.

Losing people is hard. Navigating grief is hard, especially when you are young. No one is ever prepared for such a loss, especially a 14-year-old. Growing up can become a really difficult process. You realize that time doesn't magically stop and you have to keep doing all those things you would have been expected to do otherwise. To anyone that is dealing with something difficult, whether that be the loss of an important person in your life, or something very different, it does get better, and I hope that you can make the best of the next stage of your life. I honestly believe college can be part of a wonderful journey and it may even be able to help you get away from the life you have always known, sometimes the life that has endured many hardships. I know that going off to college can mean leaving your family behind, maybe some of you want that. If I attend college out of state, it is going to be hard to leave my mom behind. It has been just as hard for me as it has been for her. We won't be able to lean on each other the way we have over the past few years.

But, overall, I am excited to go to college and get into a new routine. Every day of the past few years has looked the same. Every day, I come home and am reminded of what is missing, and while that did become easier to deal with, it never quite went away. Sometimes, I think that if I just go somewhere I will be happy, that I will no longer feel emotionally trapped. Maybe it

won't fix anything. Maybe it will fix something. Either way, I want to move forward and discover a life I am content with. The past few years have had both beautiful and hard moments, and I am ready to leave it all behind. I want to leave all the grief and heartbreak behind.

Throughout high school, I am sure many of you have dealt with your own fair share of problems, some bigger than others. Many times, it has probably felt like the end of the world. So please, take care of yourself. Take advantage of what is in front of you. If you are not happy with the way your life is going, go a different direction. We are bigger than everything we have been through. I know that moving on can be a struggle, but it is not impossible, trust me. I want to move on, and in many ways, I think I already have. You can only truly move on when you decide to start living a life outside of the mess that has been consuming you. After graduation, I hope all of you find yourself doing something you enjoy. Don't let what has happened in the past hold you back, even if it seems scary to just let go.

Life can feel like a punch in the face sometimes. All we want is for things to get better, and easier to deal with. I promise you that it is possible to move on from this moment in your life, all of them, especially the ones that have hurt you. One of the most important things my dad taught me, was to stop being so hard on myself, and instead learning to be proud of trying. I am still learning that things can always be worse.

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We strongly encourage readers to respond to material printed in the form of signed letters to the editors. No libelous, malicious, defamatory, obscene, or unsigned material will be printed. *The Blue and Gold* reserves the right to edit the letters. Names may be withheld upon request. Not all letters will be printed.

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Mayor's Interview

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of our overall goal of rebuilding the downtown. My vision was and is to be part of the progress and do what I can to help make the City a place where everybody can live, learn, share, and grow. Quickly looking back I know personally, I've been able to do that. I've experienced religions, foods and cultures, and things that I don't think I would in most other cities and towns. So that's why when people ask me, 'Why don't I travel more?' We don't have to when you live in Malden. I get to travel the world in a lot of ways right here in these five square miles.

New shops, restaurants, and businesses added to Malden. Is there any that you would want to specifically highlight that is currently piquing your interest?

I would say all of them, contribute in their own way. Prior to your arrival, we were at a real crossroads in the 60s. From what I'm told and read, this was a really bustling area. I mean, it was actually designated as an "All American City". That had all changed by the 1970s with the construction of the former City Hall. As a matter of fact, I think we only had one restaurant at one time downtown. When we assumed office in 2012, one thing that we heard loud and clear across all four corners of the city is a desire to bring this area back to its former glory, and we always felt that it wasn't going to be any one store or restaurant but it was going to be a plethora of them. And so that's what we've tried to do and I think we're on the right track with that. I mean now people ask where they should eat and I don't have an answer because there's just so many [places]. The list is so long.

Do you think that this stage of gentrification is good for Malden?

No. And fortunately, now, we are working to prevent that from happening. I mean, I've been here just about my whole life. And I've always felt Malden has been a place for all, no matter what your situation is; there's always been a spot for everyone here. And so we are mindful of what impact this could have. That's why we're aggressively trying to make sure that we don't become what some of the cities and towns have become. How we're doing that is through a series of initiatives and policies. For example, now, we just passed our first ever Inclusionary Zoning Policy, which means anybody that's coming in to build eight units or more, they have to set aside 15% of those units as affordable housing. The other thing we're doing is we're starting to buy vacant properties; we're going to buy them and convert them to permanent affordable housing. For as far back as time goes from what I've read, Malden—has just been a place for everyone. We want to keep it that way.

Teen Center Hosts Cooking Classes

Nasuh Esat Kacmaz
Reporter

The Garden Coordinator for the Malden Community Garden Julie Mangan has been hosting cooking classes at Malden Teen Enrichment Center since 2019. This year, she has started to host them again. Her weekly cooking classes have been taking place at the Malden Teen Enrichment Center (MTEC) for the past few weeks.

With the suggestion of one of the workers in the MTEC, the self-proclaimed "Chicken Wing Expert" Jay Ortiz, Mangan had decided to cook three different flavored chicken wings and spiralized vegetables in the last cooking class.

Teenagers liked the opportunity to take cooking classes with all the equipment and ingredients provided by the MTEC. "I thought that it was a really unique opportunity since I never took a cooking class before. But going in with some experience and being able to pick up on some new things or just recognizing different recipes or techniques I can do. I thought that's what kind of made it really interesting," said one of the cooks from the Adobo Pepper Team.

The class started with Ortiz and Mangan explaining the different seasonings and how to use them ef-



Adobo Pepper Team. NASUH ESAT KACMAZ

fectively with the right amount. The teenagers were then divided into three groups, each with their own seasonings assigned to them: the Adobo Pepper Wings Group, the Lemon Pepper Wings Group, and the Barbecue Wings Group.

Then the teens put on their gloves and got to work seasoning the wings. They used bowls with lids and put in the wings and the spice and shook them well. Others decided to work in the spice with their hands. After every group was done with their share of wings, they laid them down onto baking trays.

At the end every group had two trays of wings.

After the wings were put into the oven, the teens started to prepare the vegetables. Mangan had brought a vegetable spiralizer; which is used to make long, noodle-like shapes from vegetables. The teens spiralized the turnips and sweet potatoes and chopped up the onions. After the vegetables were ready it was time to season them too. Every group had their own tray and they seasoned their spiralized vegetables however they wanted.

A person from each group was checking up on the wings, too. "I had fun the whole class but checking the wings every seven minutes was quite annoying actually," said Joe Marcellus, one of the cooks.

After the first batch of wings were done, every cook stopped what they were doing to get a taste of every team's wings. Every person had opinions and criticisms on the wings. "The barbecue wings are too sweet, I think we used way too much brown sugar," said Hasnaat Khan from the barbecue wing team.

"I think the lemon pepper wings are the best," said one of the teenagers in the MTEC. "Why are the barbecue wings so sweet?" said another, "The adobo pepper ones are the best. I know because I made

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Barbecue and Adobo pepper wings. NASUH ESAT KACMAZ

Another more touchy subject I'd like to converse on is the student walkout last year. What are your thoughts on it as mayor?

I've always preferred coming to the table to talk things out. Let's have a conversation. Let's communicate, let's try to work together as best we can. I feel there are better ways to resolve our differences than walking out or strikes or anything of that nature. Someone somehow is always negatively impacted by those [actions] whether it's students learning, or whether it's families at home that have to now take off work in order to be there for their children."

Now more recently with the teacher protests and strikes that had

happened. Do you have an opinion or statement?

It's the same as I just said to you previously about the student walkout. I just felt like that was not the most productive solution. There were other ways. I've always felt that you keep talking, keep trying. And if it can't be worked out in that venue, then you turn to an arbitrator or mediator or someone else to help try to find a resolution. But I don't think stopping work or striking ends up being productive. We should always strive to resolve our differences through communication.



Mayor Gary Christensen. Photo from Staff Directory from CivicEngage

Senior Panel for 9th Graders

Delina Yohannes
Reporter

This past week during Joy Block, an informative panel hosted by a few seniors was held in hopes of answering any questions that any freshman had about senior year and the high school experience in general.

During the duration of three days, these seniors delivered a wonderful presentation that was filled with lots of crucial information for the 9th graders who attended the panel. Information regarding the harsh reality that is senior year to these underclassmen was provided in hopes of preparing them for something in their near future.

Peyton Lightbody, a senior at Malden High School, kicked off the panel by answering Guidance Counselor Ms. Yu's first question.

"Looking back on the last three and a half years, what was your favorite memory, story, or success?" Lightbody answered by elaborating on her softball career throughout high school. "One of my goals was to hit a hundred strikeouts throughout my whole high school pitching career. Last year I actually hit it in one season and I always remembered my coach; she's one of my biggest supporters." Lightbody's experience with sports throughout high school was definitely something that gained the attention of many of the ninth graders since a vast majority of the ninth graders this year have plans to participate in sports. Although working hard constantly to achieve your goals for your sport is important, remembering that being a student before an athlete is crucial.

Absences and tardies were recurring topics throughout this panel. Making sure the ninth graders were fully informed about the strict attendance policy was definitely a point that both did their best of getting across. 12th grader Asmae Sekhri describes unnecessary absences as "something that just keeps on stacking up after the first time."

These two seniors along with every senior who participated in the panel earlier in the week, provided an awesome presentation for the ninth graders who attended. Whether they realize it now or not, the information that was provided this past week is information that will stick with these ninth graders for the remainder of their high school career.

New Engineering Club Off to an Electric Start



Hadjar Yousfi
Head of Local

The entirety of the MHS Engineering Club. HADJAR YOUSFI

This year, plenty of clubs have started up, due to the aspirations and commitment of different students at Malden High School.

Recently, Alejandra Fernandez, a junior at Malden High School, decided to start a new club. MHS's Engineering Club is a club where students can explore the engineering field in depth. "I wanted for a very long time to open a club where students could learn more about STEM and have the opportunity to participate in projects that can help everyone improve their logical thinking, critical analysis, and many other skills," Fernandez explained.

The current treasurer of the club, Susila Wong, has always enjoyed engineering and the prospect of working together. She believes that "thinking for hours, and finally putting those plans into action to solve problems and overcome challenges is fascinating and satisfying."

Wong explained that she especially wanted to be an officer because "I really wanted to do something to contribute and help shape the future of the Engineering Club."

Megyn Ta, Vice President of the club, is excited to "help the club get off the ground somehow. We've had a pretty good turnout so far from the past few meetings, however, for me, I really want to get more people to join who are just into science and want to try something new."

"Engineering Club is a way to bring together a community of like-minded individuals who share a common passion for engineering and provide opportunities to work together in building projects and socializing," Dante Federico, Secretary of the club, explained.

Fernandez has high hopes for the club and hopes to accomplish plenty of things this year: "I hope that we can participate in at least one competition and complete different projects during the meetings. These projects that I hope to accomplish are related to different engineering fields, so everyone can spend time in the club researching and creating things that will be reviewed by Ms. Grillon," Fernandez explained.

Wong is also excited to participate in an engineering competition hosted by any school. "As a club, I hope to put our best efforts into participating in a competition hosted by another school. Of course, I would hope for our school to win, however, what matters the most is that the members of the Engineering Club will be able to get something out of the experience," Wong explained.

A member of the club, Belen Quispe Almendro explained, "I

hope to participate and win one of the STEM competitions we are planning to do. However, my biggest hope is to greater my engineering knowledge."

Plenty of potential projects have been brainstormed by Fernandez and Grillon "including one from National Geographic, a sustainability project in just Malden High School, and more. We have yet to decide on a specific project and will be discussing our choices together," Wong explained. They hoped to start working on choosing a project and getting officially started quite soon.

"I also hope that we can get a few fundraisers for our clubs this year and also maybe join a few science fairs, potentially state or nationwide, but that's more for future projects that the members might have in mind. Generally speaking,

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The Engineering Club Officers, (L to R) Dante Federico, Alejandra Fernandez, Megyn Ta, Susila Wong. HADJAR YOUSFI

Engineering Club continued from 6

as Vice President, I hope we can fundraise a bit in order to enter those competitions," Ta noted, as she knows they will need lots of funds.

As a member, Almendro encourages others to, "join the club if they have a high interest in engineering or STEM-based careers." She wants others to be able to work on this project and help her and the rest of the club with this goal of developing their Civil Engineering Project, for a competition that they are planning to host with the help of Grillon with other teachers possibly acting as Judges. This project will be worked on in small groups of students from the club.

"One of the projects that we will start to work on soon is a sustainability project related to civil engineering." The goal of this project is for students to design infrastructure and civil structure. Sustainability, materials, energy use, controlling waste management, and limiting materials used all play a factor into the design. Then, a 3D model of their designs will be erected, and they will report their finding. "Students will also get the experience to include something in their most liked engineering field. For example, include lighting in their model as it can be part of the required solar energy use, which is related to electrical engineering." Once all of the designs are complete, STEM teachers will review their work and choose a winner, Fernandez detailed.

Running the club has proved a great and quite exciting experience for the officers. "Now that I'm Vice President of the club, I feel a little bit overwhelmed because it's my first 'official' leadership position. I've been in several others beforehand, but never for a long period of time such as this club," Ta explained enthusiastically. As the Vice President, Ta wants to learn from her fellow officers and club members. "It's the first year this club has been established so I really think that this is just the start of this club as we gradually move onto bigger projects," Ta elaborated.

Federico noted his strong feelings towards the club. He "wanted to be an officer in order to build a strong club and help ideas and feedback be heard." Federico went on to talk about how he looks "forward to building a strong club community and assisting in the creation of club events."

Almendro encourages others to join the club: "the club will not only help you find your engineering passion, but also offers you many more engineering opportunities."

Fernandez hopes that they will be able to work on this project with the students in the club, to help encourage new experiences. She wants others to use this club as a way to learn new skills, and share their passions for engineering and STEM.

maldenblueandgold.com



Lemon Pepper Team. NASUH ESAT KACMAZ



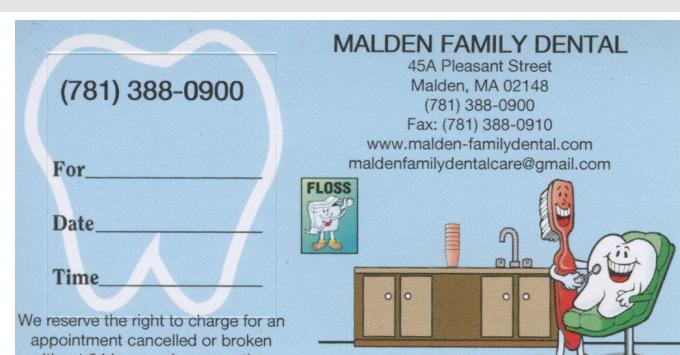
Jay teaching the kids how to season the wings. NASUH ESAT KACMAZ



Spiralizing sweet potatoes. NASUH ESAT KACMAZ



Jay checking up on the wings. NASUH ESAT KACMAZ



them!" said a cook.

"The most fun part of the class, I would say, was the mixing of the spices and the ingredients to the meat and slicing the vegetables with that special vegetable cutter and adding our favorite spices in it. But then I think some of our wings didn't catch enough spice, like the spices didn't go inside the meat. When you took a bite, the inside was bland," mentioned Marcellus.

Around the time everyone was done tasting the wings, the first batch of spiralized vegetables were out too. They were burnt, but that did not stop the cooks from tasting their own creation. There were lots of people that liked the vegetables more than the wings. "The vegetables were awesome. But although the first batch was burnt I think many of the people learned from their mistakes, you know, and I think they mastered it the second time. I think everyone enjoyed the vegetables more than the meat," stated Marcellus.

At the end, everyone had got a taste of their own creation. Some liked the wings more, some liked the vegetables but everyone was proud of what they have had in the end. "Personally, I think the most fun was just being able to work as a group with everybody. Because normally when I'm cooking, I'm just doing it by myself. But when you have three other people with you, I feel like it's a lot more interesting and more collaborative," added a cook from the Adobo Pepper Group.

There's going to be more classes in the proceeding weeks. Mangan said, "There's going to be four more classes this winter, and we're going to be doing hot pot, salmon with asian slaw, a barbecue outside on the grill and a vegetarian meal. These menu items came from the first class we did. I asked everybody what they were really interested in and I heard a bunch of different things. So then I kind of created these meals from the input from you guys."

"I love the opportunity to cook here with teens, because I always want to help kids learn life skills and how they can become a self-sufficient adult. It's really important for me to have the opportunity to be here and be around everybody, it is just really great. I appreciate it," added Mangan.

The cooking classes are still going on at MTEC every monday. If you want to learn cooking skills, new recipes or if you're just hungry, come to MTEC to attend the cooking classes and bring your friends!

Adventure Club Strives to Get Off the Ground



Malden High School group ice skating group. Submitted by Sarah Jones.

Beatriz Oliveira
Reporter

The Adventure Club has been active with events this school year. With a wilderness walk in the Fells on October 14th, a dodgeball tournament fundraiser on November 9th at MHS, and ice skating on January 6th at Flynn Rink Park, the club continues to plan exciting future adventures for students.

According to James Hill, an Adventure Club co-advisor and MHS history teacher, "Adventure Club is something that has been around for a few years," but he believes that "because of Covid and the pandemic, it kind of died out temporarily in Malden."

Hill also added, "This is actually my first year in Malden High School and prior to that, the Adventure Club had branches in Melrose and Medford. I ran the Melrose version for a few years so I've known Ms. Craven has been involved in this as well, so once I started here, it was something I wanted to be a part of and sort of bring back."

The Adventure Club is considered very welcoming to any students who may want to participate in their events.

"I believe that it takes an initiative, it brings you outside. It's not just like a regular school club where you stay after school for 30 or some minutes just in a boring classroom. It takes you outside and you're able to bring your friends along on these fun adventures and not only that but it's not exclusive, it's open to everybody. Half of these people I've never seen before but they've come here from word," said Abdullah Khan, a junior student and Adventure Club member.

This ice skating event on Friday lasted from 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM. It cost \$5 to enter the park and \$5 to rent a pair of skates. Inside the park are two ice rinks, a small rink and a bigger rink. Younger children and people who didn't skate mostly stayed in the small rink while teens and adults mostly stayed in the bigger rink.

People from all grades attended and said they enjoyed this time

together even if they had never ice skated before. MHS students and teachers had lots of fun, and the event was seen as a success.

"It was good, good to get out. Haven't skated before but it was fun to come out, hang out with some friends and hang out with some classmates. It was fun... I didn't fall, first time ice skating but I didn't fall so I consider that an accomplishment," said Junior, Saul Kruckenber.

"It's funny seeing your teachers skating along with you and struggling. It takes them out of this classroom environment on to ice skating or other adventures. It's weird, but the funny kind of weird," Khan said.

"Ice skating was fun. I can skate, but I haven't been skating in three, four, or five years so it took me a little while to get the feel back for it but I was moving along the end. Unfortunately I did fall once but I think I'll survive," Hill said.

Though this event lasted over two hours, students lost track of time. "I was scared to come here at first [because] I don't know how to ice skate at all, but it was fun. I think that's the point of an Adventure Club so I'm glad I got to learn something new even if it was just with the helpers," said senior Asmae Sehkri.

"Then the time ran out and I got sad," she added.

Sehkri continued, "I've been wanting to ice skate for a while, but I haven't found anywhere that's affordable. I know there won't be that many people there [because] I don't want people to laugh at me. Here, I knew that there would be a lot of Malden High students and stuff like that, especially my friends, so they made it easier to not be upset that I fell in the middle of the rink."

When the clock hit nine, Sarah Jones, Adventure Club co-advisor and math teacher, handed out candy



MHS Teacher group picture.
Submitted by Sarah Jones.

with invitations to the Adventure Club's Google Classroom. Students quickly grew interested in joining the club after going on this ice skating adventure.

"I've definitely thought about it a lot, I'm definitely more interested now that I came to this event and we'll see, maybe I will," Kruckenber said.



Left to right: Shuyi Chen and Taylor Lee. Submitted by Sarah Jones.



People ice skating. Submitted by Sarah Jones.

Updates on World Language Department

Haset Tesfaw
Reporter

We are part of a community that has so many different languages," Marta Cabral, Holland House principal, stated. At Malden High, many teachers in this department teach a language because they think it is important to learn about different cultures and that being able to communicate with other people is important.

Learning other languages can really benefit you because you can find new ways to express what you want to say and interacting with different social groups can help you understand why they do what they do. It can also help you feel more comfortable with these differences we all have.

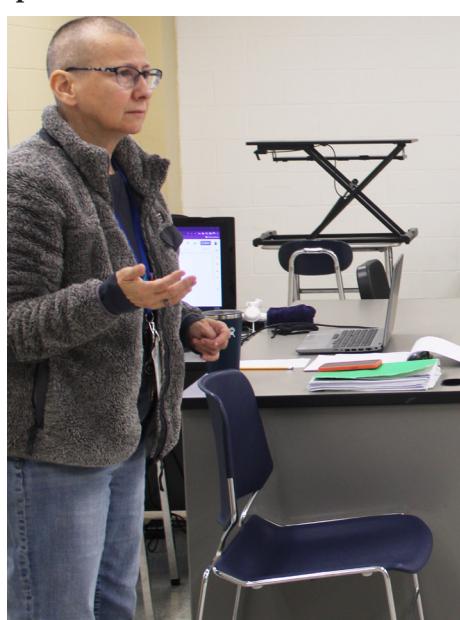
Most teachers in the World Language department were drawn to this school because of its diversity. Robert Grinnell, who teaches the Spanish language, shared that "I came to Malden High School for a few reasons. When I finished my teacher educator program, I looked at different schools to work at, and I knew I wanted to work in a school close to Boston and particularly a school that was as diverse as Malden." This was because "the school I grew up in wasn't as diverse, so I wanted to teach in a place where there were a lot of different cultures being represented and students from a lot of different backgrounds."

He added that "as a language teacher, I find that really exciting when students already come into the classroom with their own understandings, traditions, languages, and practices. I think it creates a more dynamic, fun, and engaging environment. And I felt like Malden was the perfect place for that."

"I think we have a lot of strengths, I think that we get to re-



Spanish teacher Robert Grinnell teaching his class. HASET TESFAW



Teacher Daniela Ioannides teaching her ASL class. HASET TESFAW

ally talk about culture, language, and the importance of understanding another culture like in all of the language classes. And we get kids to share their culture as well. So it's kind of a breeding ground for mutual understanding. So that's one of the things that I like. I also think it's fun to try to speak another language and communicate with people. I think many students see their language

department. "We obviously want to expand, we are part of a community that has so many different languages. I know that there were surveys put out there last year, there was also a student survey that was put out where students were inquiring about what languages they would like to see here, being offered at Malden High School. So we're definitely exploring those, we're exploring what we currently have, and decisions will be made based on that," Cabral stated.

The department's main goal in the future is to provide more offerings in the future for students. They also hope to have higher levels of education for the languages offered. "Right now we only offer Spanish Four, but it would be great to offer Spanish Five, and to offer AP again. And that way students can continue to progress in the language, as well as expand the offerings to allow for students to learn Arabic, or Chinese, or other languages as well," Grinnell said. He, along with the other teachers, hope that in the future, higher levels of more languages could be offered here at Malden High to allow students to learn more.

Malden High School introduced a new requirement for the Class of 2026, which entails that students must take at least two years of another language to graduate. Considering this new requirement, Grinnell thought that "this is a good change because many students in Malden, when they graduate high school, continue their education in college, and many colleges and universities require at least two years of a foreign language. I think it sets students up for success if they want to continue their education."

He added that "I also think that it's a helpful skill to take a few years of a language so that you can interact with people from different cultures. Especially with Spanish, there's a lot of Latinos living in not only Malden but surrounding communities, so to be able to speak Spanish and communicate in that language is a huge skill."

Then, "[Joumana] Salameh-Cafferty, an experienced teacher who comes from Cambridge, knows a variety of languages," said Cabral. "I can't even remember how many she knows, but I want to say it's like five or six languages that she knows."

Cabral and many teachers in the World Language department agree that the staff all have a strong relationship across the department and they really support and learn from each other.

This World Language Department also has many plans for the future to expand and improve the



Students in Italian teacher Alessia Guglielmi's class playing Blookeyt. HASET TESFAW

The American Sign Language (ASL) class is also something new that Malden High introduced at the start of last school year. The teachers and staff of the department are exploring what ASL is going to look like in the future. They were able to offer ASL One last year, and this year they have begun to offer ASL Two. There is strong interest from students for the course, but with Daniela Ioannides being the only ASL teacher, they are looking into their plans for what the class is going to look like next year.

Library's Vending Project and 2023 Bingo Challenge

Ada Zhang
Reporter

The bingo challenge is this year's newest project. Malden High School's librarian, Mary Liberge and the Community Library Teen Advisory Board (LTAB) came up with the latest bingo challenge with the hope of engaging more students to read. Players win by aligning sections they've filled out horizontally, vertically, or diagonally in a row.

The majority of the students who participated in the bingo challenge had

positive feedback towards this challenge. There are eight orand more students that tookaking part, one of the contestants, Darian O'Brien saidsays it was really fun. "There were other people doing it with me too." The Bingo Challenge has shown to bring people together.

Karaoke Club Keychain Sale

Hadjar Yousfi
Head of Local

This year has been racing by, and just as quickly, Valentine's Day hit Malden High School at full speed.

Many organizations, clubs, and councils around the school have done their best to contribute to the school with their own celebrations, including bake sales, flower sales, and even singing telegrams.

However, Malden High's relatively new Karaoke Club had a unique idea on the matter when they decided to sell keychains. But these keychains are most certainly not the kind you buy while touring New York.

The keychains themselves have soft and elegant colors, with a little Spotify QR code attached, to play a specific part of a song of the buyer's choice. Jefferyi Pagulong, social media manager, explained, "Karaoke Club is all about singing along to songs that we love, so making charms with Spotify codes of people's favorite songs was the perfect representation of our club."



Flyer for the Digital Vending Machine.

The Library Vending Machine is a website used for students to pick out a book of their liking. This website allows students to read a variety of books from different authors and post book reviews. Darian O'Brien's thoughts on the library digital vending machine were positive. "I really



Katherine Haskell, a chemistry teacher at MHS who ordered a keychain, expressed that she "loved that you can customize it with a song code!"

The buyer can also include a note to themselves or the person they plan to deliver this keychain to. "I thought it would be cool if people



Officers working on the charm orders. Photo submitted by Isabelle Tan.

like the digital vending machine; it was really cool." and It was "definitely helpful because it was kind of laid out by each category," said O'Brien.

The Ddigidal Vvending Mmachine has been handy over the past years for finding books, while other students like to pick out the book, Ivana Marinkovic and some others prefer searching for books in the library. " I find the digital source useful in discerning the reviews that certain books have gotten, as it increases my motivation to read them," said Ivana Marinkovic.

The bingo challenge lets stu-

dents expand their knowledge and move them out of their comfort zone to try something different. "The bingo challenge exposed me to new topics and genres that I don't usually read, allowing me to learn about different writing styles," said Marinkovic. "It was a bit challenging to find books to fit categories but I went out of my comfort zone," said Ash Culity.

O'Brien's resolution was to read more but, she said, "once I saw this I was like oh this is the perfect reason to like reading more and after I just slowly got more into reading so it became kind of like a hobby."



wanted to give them to a loved one as a gift, it would come with a handwritten letter if they wanted one," Sienna Hoang, vice president of the club, explained.

Isabelle Tan, president of the Karaoke Club, expressed that the main reason they wanted to host this fundraiser was that they "didn't really do anything for Lunar New Year." Tan also explained that they really wanted to donate money "towards Direct Relief, a nonprofit that has a goal of expanding people's access to medical care and just health equity in general, all around the world." Tan continued that they also hoped to save some money for other future fundraisers, in order to raise more money for other nonprofits.

Pagulong worked hard to pro-

mote the event. "We created an Instagram post and promoted the charms to all of our friends and anybody who was interested in buying. We had a Google Form for people to pre-order the charms."

But of course, Tan was proud of all of the officers. For example, Derek Lam, the historian, "made a lot of the Spotify charms that will

Continued on page 13



Example of the keychain. Taken from @mhskaraokeclub

The Cupid Shuffle

Gabriela Parini Cordova
Reporter

Haset Tesfaw
Reporter

The Cupid Shuffle, a name known worldwide for its memorable dance, was brought to Malden High as a Valentine's dance on February 10th for all to enjoy.

Tickets were sold for five dollars at lunch but would be seven dollars if purchased at the door. After the first announcements on Instagram, students fled to the tables at lunch buying tickets left and right.

The first ideas of the dance came up when the seniors were thinking about prom. It's only four to five months away and tickets costing \$80 per person is expensive for high school students but understandable for the amount of work and dedication put into it. They needed a way to lower the costs and the Cupid Shuffle was one of their many ideas.

Saura Rathore, the class of 2023's class president, stated, "we organized this event so that we have more money and can lower the ticket cost. We knew we wanted to do this, but we thought we were going to do this over the midterms or in the spring but we thought to postpone the event as Valentine's day was coming up."

As noted above, this dance stemmed from the many other options the seniors had. They wanted to "plan on having it in the spring like a spring soirée, like the juniors did last year but we decided to have it sooner instead because we thought Valentines day would be a great time to do it," stated Rathore.

The night before the dance there was a hiccup in the road as the dance had to be rescheduled into the cafeteria instead of the gym like originally planned. Rathore explained the original plans for the event, "the lights are going to be LED lights in the gym and there's going to be photobooths and music obviously. So overall it's just like how a typical dance would be."

The location is said to have been changed due to the fact that the gym lights were unable to be turned off without it getting too dark. The cafeteria was a better space as they reserved a third of the cafeteria to have the lights fully on while the other half was in darkness illuminated by those lights.

The night starting at 6 was the perfect time. The sun has just gone down yet the air is full of anticipation. Upon walking in you could see the cafeteria beautifully decorated like you've never seen before. Streamers hung from the ceiling and hearts could be seen everywhere you turned. It was as if Cupid had



Left to right: Hayley Seeley, Moon To, Sarah Fontain, Rashmi KC, Fiona Youmell, Gabriella Lemus, and Sydney Gordon. JESSICA LI

shot his arrow into the cafeteria filling the room with all the love he had in his heart.

Students were enthusiastic about the dance as they came dressed to impress with all their friends.

Throughout the night many remarkable and well known songs

played that united everyone on the dance floor. Songs like the Electric Slide by Richard Silver, Cuff It by Beyoncé, Wobble by V.I.C., Tití Mi Preguntó by Bad Bunny, and the song of the night, the Cupid Shuffle.

Even though the music jumped from genre to genre you could tell that love was in the air. The dance

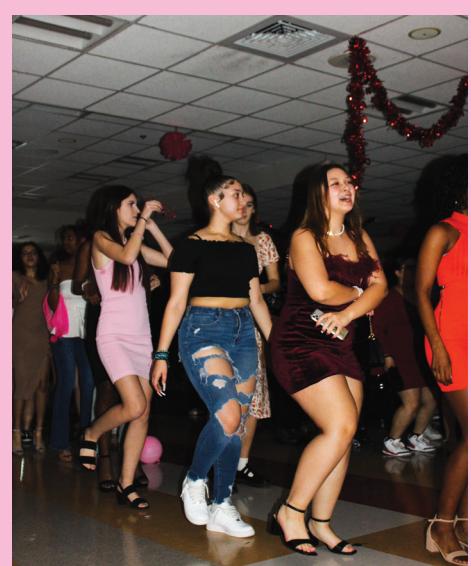
seemed to get everyone ready for Valentines but still ready to party through the night.

As the night came to an end

Students overall agreed that they had enjoyed the night and would come to another dance if given the opportunity.



Juniors Salma Lqamar, James Jose, and senior Nikolas Cataldo in front of the photo booth. JESSICA LI



Attendees on the dance floor. JESSICA LI



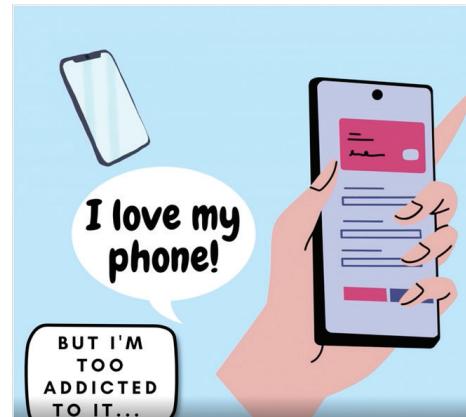
Attendees in a huddle, laughing together. JESSICA LI



Juniors Alexander Rodrigues and Alyssa Chung posing for a photo. Haset Tesfaw

I Didn't Use My Phone For a Week

Haset Tesfaw
Reporter



GIF by Haset Tesfaw.

When I say my phone is a huge part of my life, I'm sure many others can agree with me. It's the first thing I think of when I wake up in the morning, and the last thing on my mind when I go to sleep at night. It's almost addicting. Since I've gotten my phone at just 10 years old, I just can't spend a day without it.

What's weird about it is that I never feel good after I'm done but I still continue to use it. Scrolling on TikTok for hours, liking people's posts on Instagram, it's the same routine every single day and it has completely ruined my confidence and self-esteem. Overall, I'm not as productive as I could be if I didn't have a phone.

So I made a decision to try and stop using my phone for a week and see how it affected me and my life. To be completely honest, I failed to not use my phone. There were some days that I didn't use it much, and one day I even got my screen time to 6 minutes for one day (which I was really proud of). And most of the other days my screen time ranged from 4-8 hours.

The first day was a little tough and I didn't know what to do once I got home from school so I got really bored fast. I would constantly pick up my phone while working and I wasn't that good at keeping it away from me. It definitely didn't get easier as the days went by because I wasn't used to not using my phone much, which is why I would keep picking it up.

These phones are little but they've definitely made a big impact on many people's lives, especially teens. According to a study by the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, on average teens spend 9 hours on their phones every day which is not good at all. Many people feel disgusting or lazy because of how much time they spend on their phones and not being productive, but they don't do anything to try.

Lily Nguyen
Lead Reporter

Even after the passing of Valentine's Day, many seek chocolates and flowers as a classic, fragrant gift to give to their special someone. Celebrating love with these gifts, student organizations like the Garden Club hosted bake sales providing chocolates and other sweets while the Malden High School band provided the flowers: red carnations.

The sale was hosted at a booth near the cafes from January 30th to February 6th. There, during all lunch periods, band members took preorders for carnations at \$3 apiece. Students and staff could preorder as many as just one or a complete bouquet.

This was not the first time the band hosted a special fundraiser for Valentine's Day. "Last year, we sold fresh roses, and it was really successful," said Lyra Gold, senior President of the band. "But, we realized carnations would be greater of a choice as they're more durable and have a better shelf life." She emphasized that carnations are "just as beautiful and will last even longer."

Senior band member Meryem Hakkaoui, who proposed the idea of and helped realize last year's rose sale, agreed with the switch in flowers: "I think it's really cute; it's new. I think everyone usually buys roses and it ends up being expensive, but carnations are cheaper and they're still perfect for Valentine's Day."

One buyer at the sale, who preferred to remain anonymous, expressed her approval of the carnations. "I boughta bunch of carnations for people and I'm re-



Fresh carnations purchased by the band from Martin's Flowers. Photo submitted by Meryem Hakkaoui.

ally excited. The idea is just really cool, telling your friends and maybe even teachers how much you love them." She also found that despite the switch from roses to carnations being rather untraditional, "it's different—I mean, I like it—and they're still pretty."

The carnation sale is not only provided for Valentine's Day givers but for the band as well. As the president of the band, Gold appreciated that the profits they received from the sale will go towards the band essentials, which include transportation to competitions, band sweaters, and instrument repairs. The sale was only one of more initiatives to "help make the band more successful."

While hosting the sale, the band also enjoyed the opportunity of helping the community. "Sup-

porting our local vendors is really important," Hakkaoui emphasized, "and because our carnations are being bought from Martin's Flowers in Malden, we get to do just that while still supporting our band."

Ultimately, the band found the carnation sale to be a huge success, having sold roughly 250 carnations in total to teachers, administrators, and students. "For the first time, some people even asked if they could give us their flowers to sell," Hakkaoui said. "So I was like, 'sure, why not?' and I see the sale has just been a big hit." With many orders to fulfill, Gold finally expressed that the band is "very much looking forward to delivering them on Valentine's Day."

Not finishing your homework or getting enough sleep because of your phone can lead to consequences that many young people won't understand until they learn for themselves. I was, and still am a person that uses my phone too much. But phones are here to stay and we need to learn how to control ourselves around them and to manage our time correctly.

Alecia Louigene, a student at Malden High, who also believes that phones are bad for our mental health said, "Social media is a toxic thing because people tend to believe everything they see on social media. I feel like we don't see the real world as it is, because our world now is basically technology. We're literally living our lives through technology and we're addicted to it."

Although these little devices can be big distractions in our lives, there are so many positive things about phones too. You're able to

stay connected with friends and family even if they live all the way across the world, you can capture all your memories in it, and you can set reminders and alarms to remind you to do things.

But for most people the negative things about phones outweigh the positives. One of the big problems is the lack of sleep people are getting because of their phones. I know that it's hard to not use your phone before you go to sleep, but it's always better to pick up a book and read instead. The blue light that the phone beams right into your eyes, can lead to a disturbed sleep and can ruin your sleep quality for the rest of the night. Plus reading before bed can give you a break from your screen and social media, and help reduce your stress.

The second and third day was when my screen time got higher. When I looked at the screen time I was definitely shocked that it went

over four hours because it honestly didn't feel like I used my phone that much. Honestly I was close to giving up by the 3rd day because even though it seems like a very little amount of time, it felt like forever for me.

The rest of the days went by and I continued to constantly use my phone but not as much. It was obvious, looking at the screen times that I gave an effort into trying to not use it. Obviously I failed because the whole point of this is to not use it at all. I was glued to my phone just like before this week. At times I would even get headaches because of how much time I spent on screen, but I still wouldn't put it down.

At the end of the week, I reflected on how much my phone affects me and how much I plan to use it in the future. Hopefully I can learn to control myself around my phone and use it less so I can enjoy every day to the fullest.

SNHS Resumes Peer Tutoring

Zachary Nedell
Lead Reporter

With COVID-19 cases declining, many programs and events are resuming at Malden High School, including peer tutoring by the Science National Honor Society (SNHS). This initiative will benefit fifth to eighth-grade students across Malden Public Schools.

Saura Rathore, a three-year member and current president of SNHS, mentioned "We weren't able to continue it last year, but we think that coming back in person this year, with things being different now than they were last year, we thought that we should continue the program."

Remembering how everyone had to be a peer tutor back in her sophomore year, Rathore remarked on the significant uptick in members this year as the SNHS has not decided on the logistics of where to send its members this year as not all 50 students may be required to be a peer tutor.

Back when Gregory Simone ran the club during virtual learning, the peer tutors and students would meet via Google Classroom and go into breakout rooms to work with

two peer tutors per two to three middle school students based on subject and grade. With the program being in-person this year, the format will be different as SNHS members are communicating with Science and Math teachers across Malden to plan the timing and location of the tutoring sessions. Some students may still participate virtually if they are unable to attend after-school sessions as the program is expected to have hybrid opportunities.

Rathore sees peer tutoring as a way for students to prepare for high school and life. "I feel like students don't understand that there's always going to be a support system in middle and high school, and there's always going to be people that you can go ask for help. By putting them into that mindset, when they go on to high school and even beyond, they can understand that there are people that can help them."

As the topic has already been taught to the peer tutors, no training is necessary and tutors can choose which topics they will feel most comfortable teaching. If a tutor is confused, they can always reach out to their peers for help and to re-

educate themselves in certain areas and topics.

Katherine Haskell, the new advisor to SNHS mentioned how the students have fully driven this tutoring program with their own ideas. "They decided they wanted to reach out to the lower schools and start to talk to some of those kids and stuff like that." Haskell continued mentioning how most students have peer tutored before, but anyone new that would like to re-familiarize themselves could pair up with someone who has done it before.

"They're incredible, and they do so much on their own and I'm really just here to support them, but their officers are really good and work really hard." Haskell continued, saying, "I'm just really excited. I think the kids are so motivated and it's such a good thing that they really want to do."

With the return of peer tutoring following the Christmas toy drive and a bike path clean-up, SNHS plans to do more projects like beach clean-ups and even a scavenger hunt to finish this year at Malden High and prepare for what's to come.



Left to right: Treasurer Ngan Nguyen Rachel Lin, President Saura Rathore, Secretary Chaimaa Assli, and Historian Edmond Chen. ZACHARY NEDELL.

Karaoke Club Keychain Sale

Continued from page 10

be attached to the charms in three days which was no easy feat." Tan is really proud of her friends for how they came together to make sure that this event was a success, "everyone really outdid themselves with this event," she explained.

The charms themselves are cute and nice. Pagulong really loves "how cute the charms look and how personalized it is for the people buying."

To Julie Grillon, a physics teacher at MHS, this keychain "seemed like a cute Valentine's Day gift for my wife." She especially loved how it could act as a physical reminder of their wedding song, which would always be with her wife. "I would definitely recommend these keychains to others," Grillon emphasized.

Cheyanne Tobin, a student at MHS, recently bought a keychain for her significant other and explained that "it was one of the ways I could express my love." She loved the idea and considered it to be incredibly unique and cute.

Haskell agreed, as she "thought the idea was very cute and thoughtful!"

"It was something sentimental and cute for a gift," Haskell went on to explain. Naturally, Tobin felt the same way and remarked that she "really did appreciate the club for doing that."

As Valentine's week comes to an end, so do the amazing variety of fundraisers, which filled the school for the past week. But of course, it is always great to consider joining some of these organizations, like the Karaoke Club. Michael Berman, the advisor, invites those who "are looking for an inclusive group of kids who like to have fun and sing together!"

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Photo collage of some of the finalists, from left to right: Jessica Li, Nourudeen Mossalam, Ryan Cogswell, Emma Martinez, Alyssa Littlejohn, Lyra Gold, Vincent Thai, Kenneth Luu, Kimberly Grace De Souza, and Allison Yu. BEATRIZ OLIVEIRA

Beatriz Oliveira
Haset Tesfaw
Reporters

Math teacher Murphy Page's love for a Walt Whitman poem inspired them to get a tattoo on their arm. "It says Yawp," Page explained. "One of the lines is 'I sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world.' So, it's one of my favorites,

obviously, since I got a tattoo for it!"

Although Jadelini Mora does not have a tattoo of her favorite poems, she committed some poetry to memory and gave a winning performance for the Malden High Poetry Out Loud (POL) competition.

POL has been a yearly tradition at Malden High School. This year's competition has had many hard-working contestants starting in an individual classroom competition, advancing to a grade year competition, and ending with a finals competition.

The finalists this year were Jadelini Mora, Makeila Scott, Thomas Conti, Rashmi KC, Kenneth Luu, Kimberly Grace De Souza, Lyra Gold, Henry Fan, Emma Martinez, Allison Yu, Vincent Thai, Nourudeen Mossalam, Alyssa Littlejohn, as well as The Blue and Gold's Lead Reporter Jessica Li and Reporter Ryan Cogswell.

The event started with all of the finalists sitting on the auditorium stage waiting to be called up, with Yahaira Marquez as the host. Marquez called each contestant on the stage up to recite their chosen poems one by one. At the end of the competition, Marquez announced all of the winners, with the aforementioned Senior Mora in first, and Junior Scott and Freshman Conti tied for second place.



Left to right: Math teacher Murphy Page reciting a section of "Song of Myself" by Walt Whitman; Student English teacher Isaac Wilde reciting "The Snow-Storm" by Ralph Waldo Emerson.

With so many finalists this year, there was a mix of emotions between the winners from when they won their class competition all the way to the finals. Mora explained, "I have a lot of feelings about [winning] because, from the other side as a senior, I have a lot of things to worry about, not that poetry is not important to me. I love poetry, but I have to worry about scholarships, I have to worry about college, and

having another thing added to my plate was a lot of anxiety but at the same time I might as well just go through with it and I'm like 'okay I'm getting that this is another really great opportunity, why not just continue this?'"

Scott shared, "After winning the class competition was when I felt the most nervous because I just didn't know what to expect moving forward." She continued, "There

was a part of me deep down that didn't want to win and move forward but after winning the semi-finals competition and remembering again how good it feels to be up there is what really gave me that confidence boost that I needed for finals."

"When I won the class competition it was just amazing because you can tell that all the work that everyone put in paid off. It was one of the most fun things I've ever done, and everyone in the class competition did great and everyone in the finals did great," said Conti

POL is a competition that gives people the opportunity to express themselves and speak up about who they are as people. Public speaking, especially on a stage, can





be intimidating to many students which is why POL can be so helpful. "Going up there originally is nerve-racking right? You see everyone in the crowd and you realize that this is the moment when you have to perform. When you actually get up there, everything just goes away and you just live in the moment instead of paying attention if you mess up," said Conti.

Many other contestants felt the same way. "I've done POL a few times before and freshman year I got to the semi-finals as well so it's not too bad, you get nervous obviously but it's not as bad as it might seem like," Gold said. When asked about her first experience with POL, Gold explains, "It was a lot more difficult because I was a freshman and that was four years ago and that was a very nerve-racking experience but I knew the poem just as well that time

and I wasn't worried."

Preparing for POL can be a challenge, which is why all contestants were dedicated and worked hard to memorize their poems. They put their all into the competition so that they could give their best interpretation. "I think I would memorize the poem or I would recite the poem in my head and then act it out," Mora explained. She continued, "Just kind of test out which main rhythms fit with each stanza best or which tone of voice I should use because I think the voice is a very powerful tool to display what you want that phrase to come out as."

Other contestants shared a similar process. "The process of getting

ready was reading my poem out to my mother and brother every day, all day, nitpicking the finest details," Scott said. She continued, "I would even skip lunch some days and head to 1st floor Jenkins to recite it over and over again, safe to say my priorities may have been a little bit out of balance but I don't regret it."

When picking out poems, teachers recommended students pick a poem that interested them so that it would be a more enjoyable experience. Conti first chose to memorize the poem "The Conqueror Worm" by Edgar Allan Poe. "I think it really connected with me, it spoke to me in a way I couldn't really explain in words and it showed a lot about myself as a person," he explained. Conti continued about his second poem choice, "Contraction" by Ravi Shankar, "My second poem I think I just really looked at society as a whole and I was like 'this is something that I feel as though needs to be changed' where people are forced in school to change themselves as people to fit in where they could just be themselves."

POL is not only a student experience in Malden High, because teachers are also invited each year to have their own competition and recite a poem of choice. In between the teachers' competition, only one winner was announced, Isaac Wilde, but everyone had a great time.

"It was really fun, I like being on stage performing in different ways. It is fun for me. I've done poetry readings before, I did theater when I was in High School so I like that kind of thing," said Page.

Spanish teacher Robert Grinnell said, "I was feeling a little nervous, anytime when it's just presenting in front of a large audience it is a little

intimidating but I enjoyed it. I felt like the students enjoyed it and it was a very fun event."

With teachers participating in POL, they also had to prepare beforehand which took a lot of work as well. "To prepare for it, I read it out loud a few times and was just going through it in my head constantly. Walking to the bus, walking home from school, and from class to class. It was just the poem over and over and over in my head until it was very much muscle memory. I did a few out-loud presentations before the event but not too much," student teacher Wilde explained.

Public speaking is not easy which is why contestants of all grades have advice for those who may struggle with speaking up. Mora said, "You will never understand your potential unless you just go for it. It gets easier over time and although you may be scared within that moment you will never really conquer those fears of public speaking if you never try to face them. You're going to have to deal with it for the rest of your life and so although it might be intimidating at first, just understand that your life requires you to speak up and use your voice to advocate for yourself and others."

Conti said, "For people who struggle with public speaking I think you have to look at it from the terms of nobody is judging you, at the end of the day when you go up there you're already doing enough. You're already up there, and you're already showing how far you've come, so when you have that opportunity just take it and realize that no matter if you mess up or if anything happens while you're up there you already have exceeded everyone's expectations."

Teachers also shared their advice: "The more fun you have with it, the better you are and the less nervous you will be. I would say find the thrill of it. No one in the audience is judging you. They're there to support you. If you mess up they're there to cheer you on even harder." Wilde continued, "I know it's scary, I know public speaking terrifies some people but there's also a joy in it. It's fun to be loud, it's fun to gesture wildly and make funny expressions. If you can find what makes you happy in public speaking."

"I would say that you kind of have to just move through the discomfort that trying to avoid that feeling isn't really going to help but just kind of acknowledging 'okay yeah this is scary and I'm nervous and whatever' but choosing to do it despite all of that. I think when you get to the other side and you realize 'okay, I can do that,'" Page motivated.

POL is here to bring people together and create a safe space for those to show their emotions through literature, gestures, facial expressions, and tones of voice. It's an opportunity for people to be themselves and have fun.



From left to right: Superintendent Dr. Ligia Noriega-Murphy, Jadelini Mora (1st place), Makeila Scott (2nd place tie), Thomas Conti (2nd place tie), and English Teacher Leader Yahaira Marquez.

Girls Basketball Season Closes Off at the Massachusetts State Tournament

Nathan Dean
Managing Editor

This season has been another successful one for the Golden Tornadoes Varsity Girls Basketball team, having finished the regular season 11-9 qualifying them for the State Tournament for the second year in a row. However, the team was not able to continue the streak and lost to Reading 61-13 in the first round of the tournament.

Going into the 2022-2023 season, the team had lost 4 starters from the previous season but managed to turn out even better than last year, beating their previous season's record of 10-10. But winning 11 games had more significance than just beating the previous year's record: it marked the first time in 20 years that the team surpassed the 10-win mark.

Coach Scott Marino attributed much of the team's success to its strong defensive play which is in part due to efforts from senior Anna Yak, who led the Greater Boston

League in rebounds. He did, however, notice shortcomings on the offensive side of things: "we definitely lacked a consistent scorer and 3-point shooting," he explained.

Marino also highlighted the other senior on the team, Maritza Ramos Perez. "Maritza's leadership was pivotal during the off-season and the first 15 games of the season," he said, "Many of the underclassmen looked up to Maritza and Anna for guidance both on

and off the court."

Junior co-captains Angie Colon and Tori Gammon have also been significant role models both on and off the court; both players are high-honor students. "They both lead by example and I'm proud of both of them for being able to balance their



Anna Yak looks to grab an inbound from the baseline. BO STEAD.

academic lives with their basketball lives," said Marino proudly.

Moving on to next season, the team hopes to win the Greater Boston League and advance in the state tournament to compete for the title. With only two seniors leaving the team and 28 returning players,

"the future is bright for Malden Girls Basketball" added Coach Marino, "We will be a better team during 2023-2024, that's a fact!"

With a Clap and a Shout, Winter Cheer Heads Out



The cheer team performing a prep. ZACHARY NEDELL.

Hajar Azegza
Reporter

With the basketball season ending, so is the cheer season. We were introduced to the first-year cheer coaches, head coach Jasmine Dessert, and assistant coach Cassandra Gammon during football season when they struck the school with their new dances and choice to not focus on competitions. They stuck with the same decision for winter cheer. Coach Dessert says this is because "high school cheer is supposed to be fun and not so competitive."

With the free time, the cheer-

leaders had found without having to compete, they've been able to work on their dances, routines, and cheers, which audience members have seen become more unique and louder from football season into basketball season. The cheerleaders have eleven chants total, but the five they have done the most so far this season seem to be a big hit with the crowd, showing Malden's pride at home. The chants that have been the most popular have been "Pick it up", "Let's Go Malden", "HYPE", "Shoot the ball", and "We got what you looking for".

It's hard to miss the cheer team when walking into a Malden High School boys varsity basketball game

with fourteen cheerleaders, plus their two captains, Senior Ava Conroy, and Junior Giselle Dessert, taking up one section of the bleachers. They put on quite a show during the game.

When sitting on the bleachers you can feel the vibrations of their cheers moving through the gym, like the rhythm of a song. It's hard not to bob your head with it. Along with all the energy they bring, they are also really good with reciprocating it to the crowd and getting them going while the boys play for extra support. Even the players resting on the bench like to join along in the defense chant while the guest team has the ball.

Sophomore cheerleader Isabella Troung says she feels the support from her coaches this season and feels that they really push her saying, "My coaches will always find a way to support me, they've also given me a safe space to be myself," and not only have these coaches brought so much energy into the gym but many more opportunities for cheerleaders to improve the skills they started with.

So much so that coach Dessert and coach Gammon have made sure that their cheerleaders are practicing, even during the off-season, signing up their cheerleaders for tumbling clinics. They plan on having many clinics and captains practices themselves, not only to improve their current cheerleaders but to build and improve newcomers.

The team can all agree that this season was a great run, but many

are saddened with having to send off their senior cheerleaders with whom they grew a bond on and off the court. Sophomore cheerleader Saniah Charles said "the hardest part of this season would have to be senior night. It was hard for me to basically send off these people I've grown a strong bond with, and connected with to the point that we've grown a big sister bond."

Although Senior Night was saddening for some of the cheerleaders they did not let that get in the way of their performance throughout the whole game and their halftime special, where Head Coach Jasmine Dessert even joined in with the girls, which shows you the bond these cheerleaders have grown with their coach in such a short time. With the boys' varsity basketball team winning their senior night, and the outstanding performance from the cheerleaders keeping the crowd hyped and loud, the season couldn't have ended better on either side.

The season ending is just the start for Malden's cheerleaders. They gave it their all this season, and plan on giving that and more next season. They brought so much more than their cheers into the gym this season, the support and love they spread through the bleachers and onto the court led the Malden Varsity Boys Basketball team right into states. Hopefully next year Malden will be cheering their very own Cheer team as they plan to compete in states. As the cheerleaders say, "Let's Go Malden!"

Indoor Track Reaches Finish Line

Bo Stead
Reporter



injuries." She thinks this because she has "been through a few injuries" herself. Rodriguez ran the 600 meter, and despite being part of the team for only two years, she fulfilled her role well enough to be a leader and role model to younger runners.

Sophomore runner Slade Harding was pleased with how the captains performed: "I think the captains did a great job," remarked Harding, "They held everyone accountable and did a great job leading the team.". Addison McWayne noted, "The captains were there for us when we needed them and helped me and supported me a lot throughout the season, I am super close with some of them."

Rodriguez also explained the experience in running track as being "enjoyable" explaining that and "the team members are very welcoming.". This was a very common narrative among several of the team members, junior Rolando Mejia described the team to have an amazing chemistry and that "everyone is always nice to each other.". Addison McWayne who is a sophomore described it as a "Very warm and safe community" adding, "you don't get that in a lot of sports" and that "Everyone gets really close during the season.". McWayne also noted

The Boys and Girls track program at Malden High School this season, continued to be one of Malden High's most popular sports, gaining lots of athletes each year. The Boys team put up a record just under .500 sitting at 3-4 at the end of the season on the season. The Girls team, likewise, put up a record of 3-4.

What is unique about track, is that instead of teams having separate girls' and boys' practices, they compete and practice as one whole team, so this makes captains work a lot harder as they have to try to connect with both sides of the team. Senior, and Captain Leyla Rodriguez was tasked with being a captain this season and believes that she helped "Guide the freshmen that were just starting out though some of their



Runners from Malden, Everett, and Lynn Classical warming up. HAJAR AZEGZA.

that "Even if you don't know their name you can always hear someone cheering you on as you run".

While discussing who wowed her the most with improvements, Leyla Rodriguez made a note that "Addison [(McWayne)] impressed a lot of us because last year she was just a runner and this year they tried



ers and Coach Ferrara did a good job coaching distance even though he does not know as much about it, we still improved from Ferrara's workouts."

As next years season, is already already is on the horizon for many of the runners, Addison McWayne

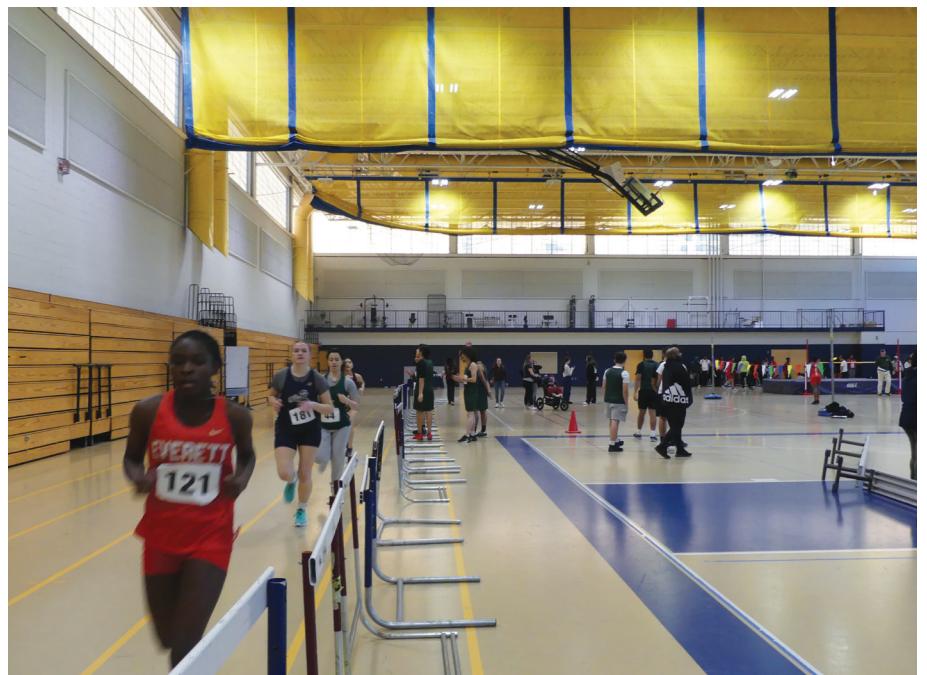
expressed lots of hope for the group of new student athletes coming up: "I know a lot of the eighth graders coming up, and I think they will bring a lot to the team, and even though we will be missing some seniors, I think the juniors are ready to step up into that role." The team hopes to develop more runners and continue to be able to compete in the GBL next season., Despite the departure of some seniors, a large group of juniors, (soon- to- be seniors) will be able to lead the team next year.



Malden runner, Alex Rodrigues coming in first in relays. HAJAR AZEGZA.



Lynn Classical and Malden running before events start. HAJAR AZEGZA.



Everett, Malden, and Lynn runners prepare for events. HAJAR AZEGZA.

BOYS



Ethan Phejarasai handles the ball at the point. RYAN COGGSWELL

BASKETBALL

Continued from page 1

hit the .500 mark and qualify early for the tournament. Momentum changed quickly, however, and Malden took two blowout losses to Medford and Lynn English. Their next game was a thriller in Everett with an on-court brawl and ejections, but the Crimson Tide took it 63-59. Another heartbreaker happened just two days later with a one-point loss in Somerville. All of a sudden, they were back to 7-7.

Fortunately, a 36-point decimation of Chelsea and a solid win over Lynn Classical put them a win away from the tournament. Their next matchup would be with the Revere Patriots at home and things never looked better.

After a solid first half, the Golden Tornadoes jumped out to a 39-23 lead over the Patriots. Then, Revere's Domenic Boudreau nailed three consecutive threes, helping them close the gap to five entering the final quarter. Malden trailed by one point with thirty seconds to play when a Revere inbound hit the referee and deflected into the hands of Ezechiel Noelsaint, who then missed two guarded layups. Jonald Joseph got the next rebound, missing his attempt. Finally, Bell shockingly missed an open jumper in the paint and Revere survived the mistake. Addissu Tsige's desperation three-pointer was blocked and the Golden Tornadoes would have to wait for another day to celebrate.

Six days later, the Highlanders would travel back to the Finn Gym to take on Malden for the second time this season. Somerville claimed that game, but the Golden Tornadoes

knew they had a lot left in the tank that night.

Malden got off to a good start once again. A solid first quarter featured a Joseph putback dunk and a 13-10 lead. Despite a hilarious save by Peyton Carron that deflected off of his teammate into their own net, Malden held on to a 31-23 advantage after two quarters. They continued their strength out of the half, with big plays from Bell, Joseph, Noelsaint, and Ethan Phejarasai bringing the Golden Tornadoes out to a 50-34 lead. With just eight minutes to go, the lead was nearly insurmountable.

But, once again, the momentum took a quick shift. Malden made plenty of mistakes and a few costly turnovers that allowed the Highlanders to get right back in the game. Still, they held a 56-54 lead with 19.7 seconds left when Bell went to the free throw line for two shots. The pressure did not phase him and he knocked down both to give the Golden Tornadoes a four-point advantage that held up. For the first time since 2018, the boys from Malden would get a shot in the Division 1 Tournament.

To top it off, the Golden Tornadoes blew out Melrose and Woburn (on senior night) to finish at 12-8. It was their best record in five years and the perfect way to cap off an amazing season. Carron said that this year's difference maker was leadership. "We hold people accountable. This isn't last year anymore. We made sure everyone knew what they were a part of going into the season, a winning program."

Malden qualified as the 45th seed in the tournament and would face the 20th-seeded Lowell High Red Raiders in the preliminary round. Bell noted that "intense defense" and "accountability" would be the keys to victory in the Mill City.

It started smoothly for both sides. After four minutes, the score was tied at nine each. Then, everything went downhill. The Red Raiders went on a devastating scoring run over the next ten minutes. By halftime, Lowell held a 43-16 lead. That lead hit the 30-mark entering the fourth quarter at 57-27. But, Malden wouldn't die so easily. Senior Aiden Tham took over off the bench in his potential final game to spark

a rally with seven quick points. For the first time all night, the Golden Tornadoes were truly outplaying the Red Raiders. Although they outscored Lowell 25-4 in the last quarter, Malden's season ended in a 61-52 hard-played defeat.

For Joseph, Bell, Carron, Tham, and Andrew Louis, high school basketball was in the past. They had played their final game. The success of this season must have satisfied them plenty.

Tham believes that "offseason work" was a large part of their success this season. Like Bell, he thinks that "intense defense" is a factor in every win and that the team is "defensive-minded".

Both Tham and Bell applauded Coach Don Nally for his work. Bell mentioned, "he has moments when he can be very motivating and he does it with positive and negative energy." Tham thinks that the coach has "connected with the team" more than in previous seasons and "seeing him as more than a coach really helps on the court."

The 2022-2023 season showed the world that Malden basketball is back in business. Despite a few down years, the program is looking to return to prominence in the coming seasons.

Principal Christopher Mastrangelo is excited with the result, especially since this was the first time the school's boys and girls basketball teams have qualified for the tournament in the same year since 2006. "All I care about is that these kids go out and represent themselves and their school. Luckily, these are all awesome kids."



Ezechiel Noelsaint blocks a shot from Somerville's Ian Born. RYAN COGGSWELL



58



54

Boys Basketball Fights for State Tournament Against Revere

Gabriela Parini Cordova
Reporter

Delina Yohannes
Reporter

Malden's Boys Basketball team stepped out onto the court with a 9-7 record and in fourth place in the GBL (Greater Boston League). They had high hopes and determination running through their veins as they faced off against Revere because a win would have insured their place in the state tournament.

The stands were full of thrilled fans waiting for the game to begin. They started off by announcing the names of the players on each team, and then the tip off began the first quarter. Malden gained possession of the ball putting them at a head-start but it was hastily taken away by Revere.

Alejandro Hincapie scored for Revere within the first 20 seconds. This didn't put Malden down as they racked up six points before Revere scored again. Revere could only get so many shots before Malden stole the ball from under their feet.

Justin Bell started off with a strong lead as he made the first three pointer of the game. His

shots seemed supernatural as they always made it in the hoop. He almost never missed a shot and even when he did Malden grabbed the rebounds and scored.

The first quarter ended with Malden leading 20 - 9. At this point the enthusiasm of the fans cheered Malden's 11 point lead. There seemed to be nothing that could stop their flow.

The second quarter began and Revere stepped onto the court eager to make a comeback. Malden fouled Domenic Boudreau, who made one of two free throws, and then built on this momentum.

Revere stepped up their game and made quick, seamless passes to each other evading Malden's defense. Revere still couldn't quite close the gap as they trailed behind Malden with an 11 point difference.

Throughout the game Malden's guard Ethan Phejarasai maneuvered through each defender like a snake and was defended closely by Hincapie who was playing man on Phejarasai most of the time, but this didn't intimidate him as he broke through the wall and still scored points in back-to-back possessions.



Ethan Phejarasai passing the ball as Domenic Boudreau tries to gain possession alongside Ezechial Noelsaint and Joshua Mercado playing man. HASSET TESFAW.



Jose Ferreira defending the ball from Alejandro Hincapie. HASSET TESFAW.



Joshua Mercado and Vincent Nichols blocking Addisu Tsige's pass to Jonald Joseph. HASSET TESFAW.

The crowd shouted out the starting freshman guard's nickname "President E", praising him after each made basket.

In the third quarter, the game started to amp up. Ezechial Noelsaint was Malden's best player of the game, scoring 22 points. It seemed like every chance he had he made a jump shot. Even though he faced double teams all night he still made shots and kept a valiant attitude.

Midway through the game, Revere subbed in undersized sophomore Joshua Mercado at 5'7". He showed his true potential with a three pointer. He stunned the crowd and silenced it for a few seconds.

The rest of the game played differently, as each team kept missing their shots. Malden started slowing down and Revere took their opening, stealing the ball. Finally the ball migrated back into Malden's possession where Jonald Joseph took a jump shot and scored two points.

In the 4th quarter Malden was still fired up but Revere, determined to win, started to catch up, closing the score to a five point difference between the two teams.

Revere went out with fire in their eyes and determined looks on their faces. They started to rack up points until they tied the game 43-43 with only six minutes left. Malden needed to catch up with Revere and scored whenever they saw the opening to do so.

The score started to switch back-and-forth. It was as if the players were playing hot potato and the ball was on fire. Still, Malden racked up enough points to take the lead with a three pointer from Bell.

Hincapie tied the game up once again with a three pointer. The stands were riveted and grew with anticipation seeing such a close game in action.

Malden's Jose Ferreira stepped out onto the court after subbing in

for Phejarasai, leading Hincapie to find his new target. Ferreira scored two points and put Malden in the lead once again with a score of 50 - 48. Revere was set on closing this gap.

Back-to-back fouls were called as Malden and Revere butted heads, tying once again at 52 - 52. Phejarasai was put back onto the court to hopefully save this game. The crowd screamed out "President E" as he stole the ball from defenders.

Within the last minute of the game Malden held possession of the ball yet missed a few of their shots as Revere took it into their own hands to keep themselves in the lead. The score turned upside down as Revere took the lead 59-56.

Malden gained possession of the ball once again but seemed to be afraid of missing and kept passing to each other with no one willing to take the shot. Revere's Hincapie saw his opening and stole the ball from under their feet scoring a final 3 pointer for the game.

Most of the game Malden held their lead but Revere's mentality and never backing down slipped them up. Revere held strong and kept pushing which was intimidating yet Malden still powered through with each of their plays. It was a great game with a beautiful display of each team's capabilities.

With the game coming to an end and an outcome nobody predicted, the players and coaches wanted to reflect on themselves and this game.

"The boys had a very strong first half, they played well and then I'm not sure what happened...we let our foot off the gas," stated Daniel Jurkowski, the assistant coach of the boys varsity team. "After half time, after we came out of the locker room, we came out with a different

Continued on page 24

The State of Co-Ed Field Hockey

Ace Showstead
Reporter

Field hockey at Malden High School is currently the only fall co-ed sport, but what if that changes? The school is contemplating whether to split it up into separate girls and boys teams.

Since more boys are joining field hockey, the team may have to separate. "There have been trends in the country, not just in Massachusetts, but across the country over the last few years with the participation rate in field hockey," Christopher Mastrangelo, the principal at Malden High School, said. Students that identify as male have increasingly participated in this sport. "20 years ago, there might have been two teams in the league that had one or two boys," Mastrangelo continued.

Unfortunately, the co-ed field hockey teams from other schools are shutting down as well. "There's really going to be no opportunity for a co-ed sport so we'll be caught in the middle somewhere. Male teams and female teams will be set, but the co-ed teams will only be able to play other schools that have co-ed teams. And those numbers, from my understanding, are dwindling," Mastrangelo stated.

Matthew Garcia, a sophomore on the team, is not a fan of the idea. "The change from co-ed to boys and girls is really unfortunate. I met a lot of people during my time during the season and really got to know them. Now we're getting split up and it sucks," said Garcia.

Positive memories were made throughout the time they were there, and those memories and the team should be kept together. By tearing the team apart, you take away more memories to be made. Garcia shares one of his favorite experiences throughout his time with everyone: "My whole time on the team was really fun, but if I had to pick one memory, I'd say our banquet would be my favorite one."

In co-ed sports, people of all genders can have time to bond and create new experiences together. Everyone can be a part of the same sport and not worry about being judged for it; it reassures people that their identity is not being invalidated.

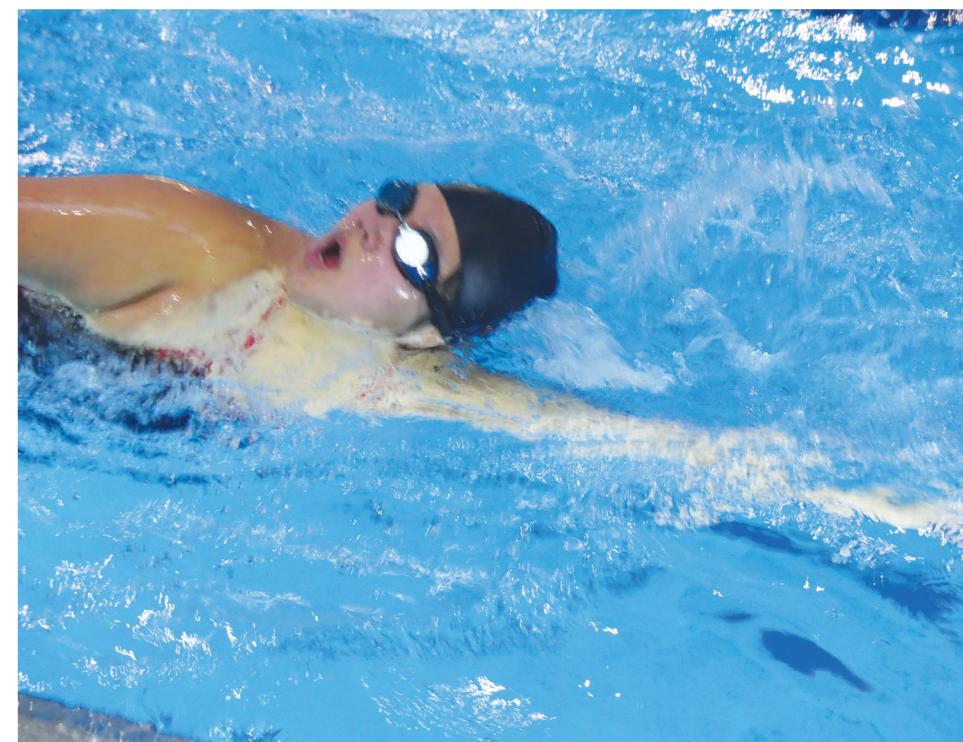
People who do not associate with a certain gender or identify as something different from birth should not have to feel awkward or uncomfortable. Co-ed sports help people with those feelings. It might already be bad enough playing a sport in a body that does not feel like yours, but adding the gender labels onto everything makes it worse.

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Swim Team Finishes



Swim team celebrating the accomplishments of players in their first meet, including making sectionals and states. JESSICA LI.



Freshman student Marie Cheng swimming freestyle. HADJAR YOUSFI.



Senior student, and Captain Molly Sewell swimming breast stroke. HADJAR YOUSFI.

Nathan Dean
Managing Editor

The Malden High School Swim Team has done it once again: they have gone undefeated for two seasons in a row. In the past five years, the team has lost only one meet: a virtual meet in 2021 to Hopkinton.

For Coach Jessica Bisson maintaining this incredible record can "add to the pressure of coaching," but she stresses that her "ultimate goal is for the swimmers to have a solid competition," adding, "if we lose a meet, but the kids swam their hearts out, I will never be disappointed in a loss." She went on to say that there are even some benefits to losing, "Sometimes losing is the best way for athletes to push harder and not get complacent."

This year, the team had members make it to both Sectionals as well as the state tournament: Nathan Nguyen, Liam Bloom, Nimon Jusufi, Kyle Lee, and David Xu all made it to Sectionals while Joslyn Nguyen, Hailey Tran, Sophie Tran, and Tiffany Pham all made it to Sectionals as well as States.

During sectionals, the team had some amazing performances: Hailey Tran managed to set a personal best in the 50 free finishing fifth in the race and qualifying for States; the girls in the 200 Free Relay cut 6 seconds off their time narrowly missing the qualifying time for States by less than a second; and the guys swam very well in both of their relays.

Later, at States, the girls continued their strong performances. Most notably 7th-grader Sophie Tran achieved her new personal record in the 100 Yard Butterfly and sophomore Hailey Tran was able to finish eleventh out of 36 swimmers in the 50 Yard Freestyle.

Bisson added that these feats

Undefeated Season



Sophomore Hailey Tran during 200 free relay. JESSICA LI.

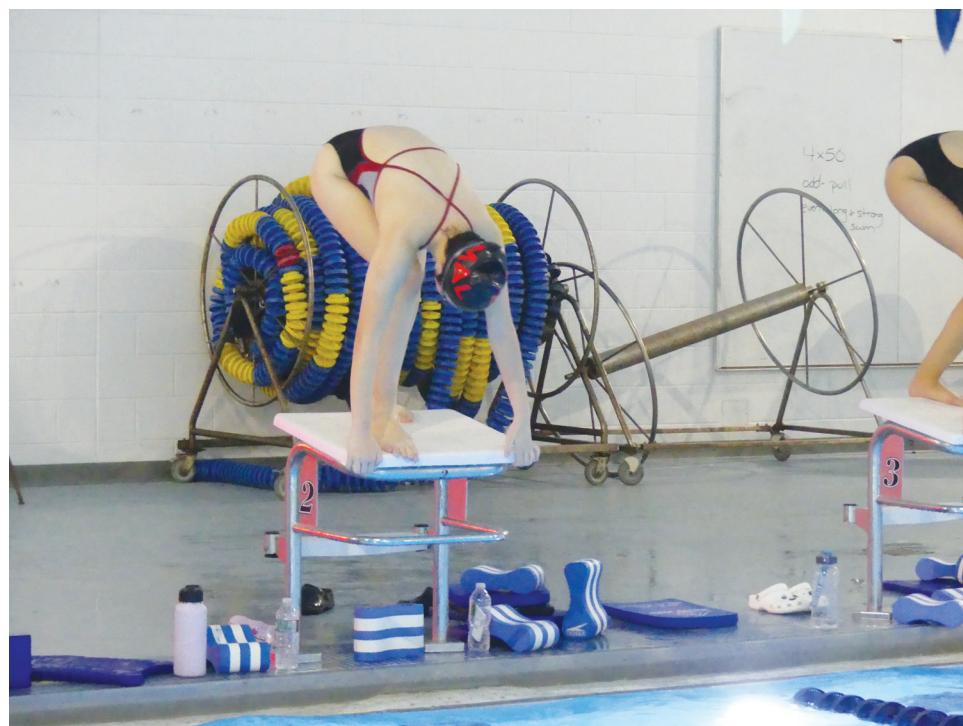
were especially hard because of the three week gap between the end of the regular season and States. "It is always difficult to keep up with the stamina when the taper for the post-season lasts for three weeks," she explained. Moving onto next year she hopes to fine-tune the training process and make sure the postseason taper is individualized for each swimmer.

She attributes the team's success to the overall bond of the team. "Supporting one another in and out of the pool really helps the swimmers." Senior Leo Chen also felt the supportive atmosphere of the team: "I came into swimming with a fear of the water and a fear of going to the deep end. All I knew how to do was flail around with freestyle. I didn't know how to breathe properly... [the captains] helped me overcome my fear," adding, "they were the reason we kept winning." He also said simply, "the coach is the best coach."

All in all, it was another great season for the Golden Tornados Swim Team and with so many talented young swimmers it can only get better from here.



Swimmers preparing to dive into the water and begin their race. JESSICA LI



Sophomore student Joyce Zhou, ready to dive into the water. HADJAR YOUSFI.



Ayman Ali, a Senior swimming break stroke. HADJAR YOUSFI.

New England Patriots Finish Season Just Shy of 7th Seed

Edmund Kam
Reporter



The New England Patriots ended the 2022 season with an 8-9 record, just missing the playoffs after a season filled with ups and downs and injuries. The team ended up in third place in the American Football Conference (AFC) East division. After a 47-17 blowout defeat to the Buffalo Bills in the Wild Card round last season, they hoped for playoff success this year, as their previous playoff win was in the 2018 season.

Earlier in 2022, during the offseason, former offensive coordinator and quarterback coach, Josh McDaniels, left for the Head Coach position at the Las Vegas Raiders. This was not the first time McDaniels left the Patriots for a Head Coach position. During the 2009 off-season, he joined the Denver Broncos. After two unsuccessful seasons, ending with an 11-17 record, McDaniels was eventually fired in the middle of the 2010 season.

When McDaniels took the job at the Raiders, he brought three Patriots assistant coaches with him. They were wide receivers coach Mick Lombardi, offensive line coach Carmen Bricillo, and quarterbacks coach Bo Hardegree.

In February, former head coach of the New York Giants, Joe Judge, was hired back by the Patriots after coaching two unsuccessful seasons. Judge was a former special teams coordinator before the Giants hired him. Judge became the offensive assistant and the quarterback coach.

Matt Patricia was given the role of senior football advisor and offensive line coach. Before the start of the season, Patricia became the de facto offensive coordinator, given the responsibility of calling plays. Patricia started his coaching career in the league with the Patriots as an offensive assistant. He then moved to defensive coaching positions like linebackers and safeties before becoming the defensive coordinator that helped win two Super Bowl championships. He rejoined the Patriots after a couple of seasons as head coach for the Detroit Lions.

Long-time coach Ivan Fears announced his retirement in June after

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24 seasons with the organization and was the running back coach for the past 19 seasons.



During the free agency period, some players the Patriots signed were strong safety Jabrill Peppers from the Giants and cornerback Malcolm Butler. This would be his second stint with the team as Butler signed with the Patriots as an undrafted free agent in 2014. Butler is known for his goal-line interception against the Seattle Seahawks during Super Bowl 49 that sealed the victory for the Patriots. Butler was released before the start of the regular season after being placed on Injured Reserve (IR).

On March 17th, 2022, the team parted ways with 2019 third-round pick defensive end Chase Winovich by trading him to the Chicago Bears in exchange for linebacker Mack Wilson. On that same day, guard Shaq Mason was traded to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, reuniting him with former Patriots quarterback Tom Brady, with whom he won two prior Super Bowls during their tenure together.

Leading to the draft, some of the most significant needs for the team were at the cornerback position and the offensive line. Some key players from the 2021 season who departed were All-Pro cornerback J.C Jackson, linebacker Dont'a Hightower, and linemen Ted Karras and Mason.

In the 2022 NFL draft, the Patriots selected offensive lineman Cole Strange from Chattanooga with the 29th pick after trading down with the Kansas City Chiefs with their 21st pick. Some other notable selections were the second-round wide receiver (WR) Tyquan Thornton, third-round cornerback Marcus Jones, fourth-round quarterback Bailey Zappe and cornerback Jack Jones.

Before the start of training camps, former first-round pick N'Keal Harry got traded to the Bears for a late-round pick in 2024. This came as Harry struggled to find success for the past three seasons. He was also injured a lot during his Patriots career, having missed several games during his rookie season and his last season with the team. The season prior, also during the summer, Harry's agent announced that he had formally requested a trade from the team. Harry wanted a fresh start, but he ultimately stayed with the Patriots for the 2021 season.

The Patriots had three pre-season games before the start of the regular season. They faced the Giants on August 11th, the Panthers on the 19th, and the Raiders on the 26th. Before the games, joint practices were held with the Giants and the Panthers. Later in the season, the Patriots will visit the Raiders in Week 15.

Head Coach Bill Belichick explained why he preferred joint practices. He said, "in some respects you

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American Football's Problem

Coach Exhilhomme on Injuries in Football and How This Can Have an Impact on Malden



Ryan Cogswell
Reporter

Damar Hamlin, safety with the Buffalo Bills is taken off the field by an ambulance after collapsing on the field due to a cardiac arrest from a tackle to the chest during a game against the Cincinnati Bengals at Paycor Stadium on January 2, 2023.

On Sunday night, 113.1 million people tuned in to watch the Kansas City Chiefs take down the Philadelphia Eagles in Super Bowl LVII. This was the third most-watched program in US television history, and it sits behind two previous Super Bowls. American football is clearly premier entertainment. Unfortunately, the sport itself has the potential to be very dangerous. Just over a month ago, Damar Hamlin had found this out the hard way.

Hamlin is a safety for the National Football League's Buffalo Bills. During a primetime Monday Night Football game against the Cincinnati Bengals, arguably the biggest game of the entire regular season, Hamlin took a hit to the chest while tackling Bengals wide receiver Tee Higgins. After completing the tackle, Hamlin stood up for a moment before fainting to the

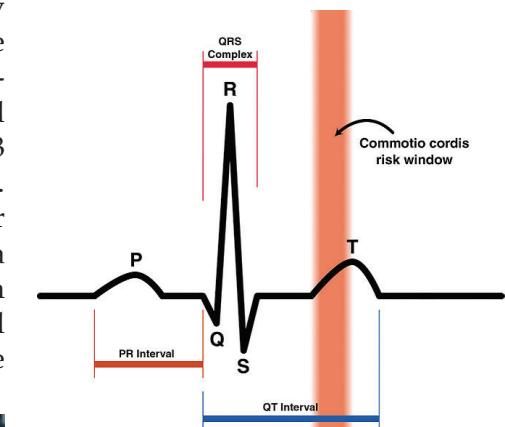
ground. For the next 19 minutes, athletic trainers and medical staff administered CPR; he had suffered cardiac arrest. Just under 45 hours after the year began, Hamlin's new year had turned into a total nightmare.

The game would be suspended and later canceled by the NFL as players on both sides were emotionally shocked. At that point, nobody wanted to play a football game. The life of a teammate and friend was on the line. The story quickly broke national headlines across the country and was trending on Twitter. All teams changed their social media profile picture to a Bills #3 with 'Pray for Damar' underneath. Fans and spectators showed their support for Hamlin by donating to a GoFundMe he runs for a hometown winter toy drive. The donation total was under the \$2,500 goal before the



game started. At 12:30 pm the next day, just about 16 hours after the incident, the fundraiser had reached just over \$4 million. 8 days later, the total was at \$8,700,000.

On January 9th, just one week after his terrifying collapse, Hamlin was released from the University of Cincinnati Medical Center and returned home to Buffalo. The initial belief by many experts in the field is that Hamlin suffered commotio cordis, which is sudden arrhythmic



Miami Dolphins quarterback, Tua Tagovailoa, fumbles the ball against the Tennessee Titans on January 2, 2022.

A simple diagram showing the portion of normal sinus rhythm in which a blow to the chest may induce commotio cordis

death following a blow to the precordial region that lies right over the heart during a short, specific time in the heartbeat cycle. From 2006 to 2012, this condition had a survival rate of just 58%. Luckily, the prayers were answered and Hamlin's life was saved.

The injury to Hamlin is not the only serious injury to strike this sea-

son. Tua Tagovailoa, the young starting quarterback of the Miami Dolphins, suffered his second recorded concussion of the season in Week 16. Concussions have been an issue in gridiron football since its origins in the 19th century, but the NFL has done significant work over the past few decades to curb the problem. However, the life-damaging injury that can lead to chronic traumatic encephalopathy, or CTE, still haunts the league.

In the third week of the season, Tagovailoa hit his head after being hit on a sack against the Bills. He was tested for a concussion but the Dolphins staff found him to be negative, later catching slack for the deci-

"There's not a thing in life that doesn't present any danger."

Coach Witche Exilhomme

sion because of the quarterback's obvious concussion-like stumbling when he stood up after the play. The next week came around quickly with the Dolphins playing in Cincinnati. On a violent sack, Tagovailoa was slammed to the turf and landed unconscious. He was finally diagnosed with a concussion after being hospitalized and ruled out for a few weeks.

If that wasn't scary enough, he hit his head hard off the ground again in Week 16 against the Green Bay Packers. Concussion spotters did not see the hit, and he remained in the game. The prolific stat line that Tagovailoa had before the hit came to an abrupt halt as he threw three interceptions during the rest of the game. It was obvious that he had a concussion the next day when he could not remember many plays during the contest. This was his second diagnosed concussion during the season, leaving him out heading into the first round of the postseason. Some even think that the young star should consider retirement.

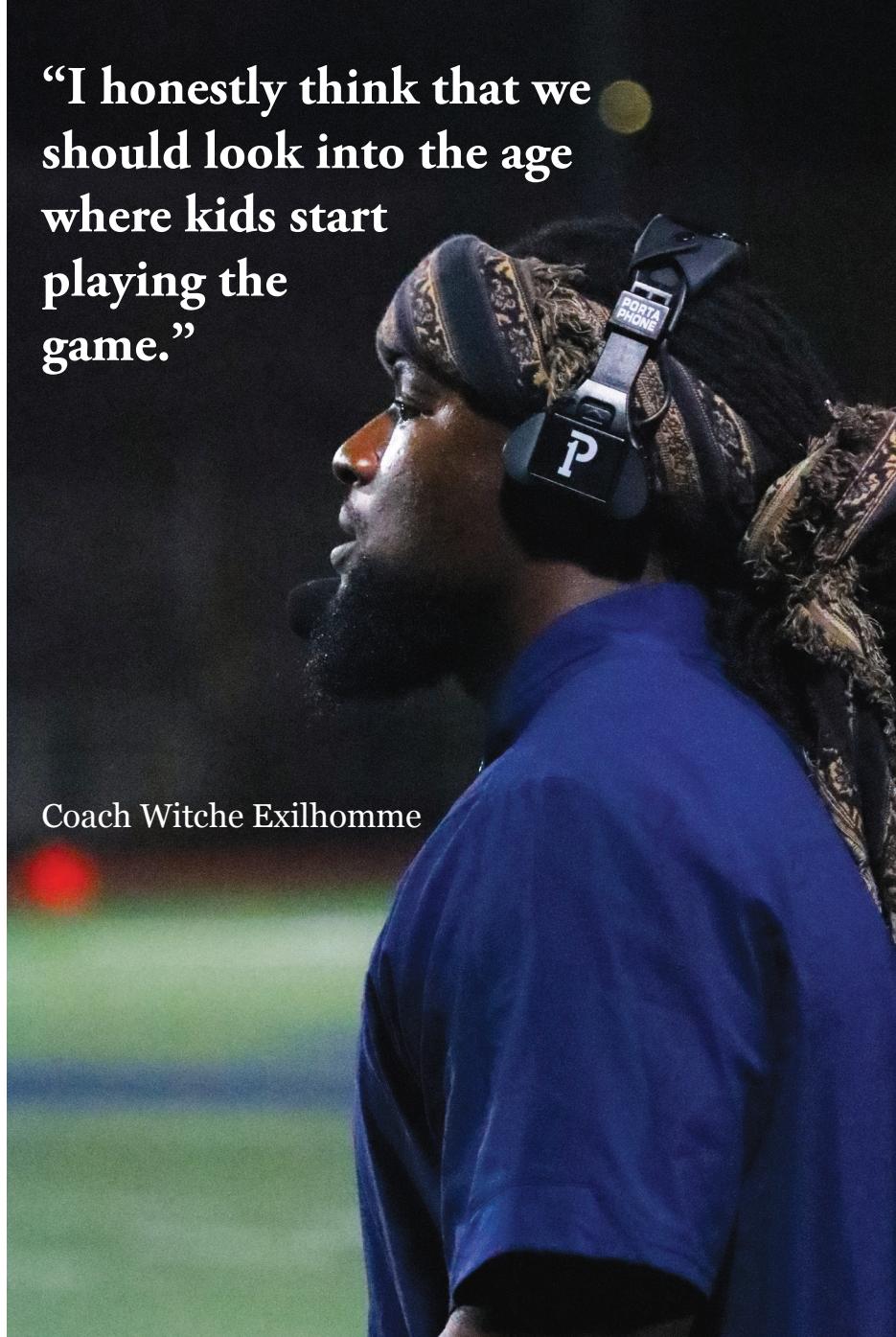
With both stories breaking national headlines, parents of football players around the nation are seeing the real dangers of football first-hand. This obviously brings the safety of football into consideration. Should these parents allow their young kids to play tackle football?

If anyone can answer that question, it is Malden High School football's head coach Witche Exilhomme. As a former player himself, Coach Exilhomme is well aware of the dangers of the game. However, as a coach, he must rely on the parents to allow their kids to play.

Should parents allow their young kids to play football? Coach Exilhomme thinks so. "There's not a thing in life that doesn't present any danger," he mentioned. "Kids get hurt driving all of the time. A kid

"I honestly think that we should look into the age where kids start playing the game."

Coach Witche Exilhomme



can play soccer and get hurt. A kid can play baseball and get hurt. A kid can play hockey and get hurt." He is not wrong about any of this. People get hurt in other sports frequently, especially soccer, which has one of the highest concussion rates in youth sports, and motor vehicle accidents are the most common cause of death for teens in the United States. "If they want to pull their kids out of football, it is a safe bet. But, at some point, they are going to have to let the kid go out there and chase their dreams."

'Practice makes perfect' applies to plenty of activities, and football is definitely one of them. A kid that has practiced and played football since the age of four is likely to be far better than someone who began in high school. The problem with this, however, is that young kids taking hits to the head throughout their childhood development is a recipe for health issues down the line.

Coach Exilhomme believes that this needs to be investigated. "I honestly think that we should look into the age where kids start playing the game." He first began his playing days at the age of 13. "I think that I got into the game at a good time. It's better than having four or five-year-old kids running around and hitting their heads when they are so susceptible to brain injuries and bone injuries that affect their future." The coach supports other options like flag football for younger kids so that they can sharpen their skills while protecting their heads.

Aidan Brett, sophomore quar-

terback, drowns out any of those thoughts. "I don't even think about getting hurt. I just go out there and play." Many players likely share this philosophy as it allows them to play fearlessly. However, Exilhomme was always aware of the danger. "I always knew what could happen to me. But, being one of nine kids from an immigrant family, football was one of those options for me to be successful, go to college, and make something of myself."

It seems that the injuries at the professional level have slightly affected Malden's football environment. With Exilhomme mentioning that "numbers are down" and that the "majority of academically talented kids are not progressing" in football, the fear of bodily harm has made a clear impact on the students who choose whether or not to play.

Every player certainly has their own story. They all have different motivations to play the game and face different challenges during that process. Regardless, every player that suits up on the gridiron steps right into the path of injury. While most players manage to avoid them, some lives are ruined by the football injury bug. Still, American football remains the most-watched professional sport in the nation by a wide margin. Although numbers are slightly down at the high school, American youth are constantly exposed to the competitive fun of the game. With the glorious life of a millionaire athlete at the end of the tunnel, the football dream will continue to thrive.

get a lot more out of them."



Thornton suffered a fractured clavicle injury in the preseason finale against the Raiders. He was then placed on IR to start the season, which means he is mandated to miss four weeks before being allowed to return. His expected return was estimated to be around 6-8 weeks, early or late October.

The Patriots started the season by visiting the Miami Dolphins for their week one matchup. This was the third consecutive season where their opener was against the Dolphins. After losing the two matchups last season, the Patriots had hoped to avenge their losses by coming out of the game with a win.

Unfortunately, the Dolphins' defense completely dominated the entire game. Out of nine offensive series, the Patriots turned over the ball four times, punting three times, and only scored once after time expired during the first half. Tua Tagovailoa, the quarterback for the Dolphins, became the first quarterback to start against the Patriots to be 4-0 against Belichick.

On the road against the Pittsburgh Steelers, the Patriots got their first win of the season in week two.

In their first home game, hosting the Baltimore Ravens, the Patriots were down 11 points during the fourth quarter before scoring a touchdown to cut the lead down to only five. The team attempted to mount a comeback, but their last three offensive drives ended with two interceptions and a fumble that sealed their fate that day with a loss.

Late in the fourth quarter, Patriots quarterback Mac Jones left the game with a leg injury that appeared severe as he limped off the field in agony. It was later determined to be a high ankle sprain that was said to sideline him for several weeks.

Following Mac Jones' injury, Brian Hoyer started the week four game against the Green Bay Packers. Hoyer suffered a head injury halfway through the first quarter, forcing Zappe in for his debut. With 19 seconds left in the first half, cornerback Jack Jones intercepted Aaron Rodgers, returning it for a 40-yard pick-six, his first career interception, and touchdown. Throughout the rest of the game, both teams scored multiple touchdowns before going to overtime (OT).

After the Packers won the toss during OT and decided to receive, they were forced to punt because they failed to convert a third down. New England failed to capitalize on this, ending up punting the ball back to the Packers. This time, they were able to march down the field using almost 7 minutes before the kicker made a field goal with four seconds left to give Green Bay a 27-24 OT win.

In the following week against the Detroit Lions, Zappe made his career debut. Against a top-ranked offense at that time, the Patriot's de-

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fense did not allow a score. They had an interception and a fumble recovery that led to a touchdown. New England prevailed 29-0.

New England's first season primetime game came in week 7, against the Bears, on Monday Night Football. Mac Jones returned from his injury and started the game before being replaced by Zappe after tossing an interception in the second quarter. After the offense found success immediately, scoring two touchdowns in consecutive drives, the Bears scored 23 unanswered points the rest of the game, ending at 33-14.

Over the course of the next three weeks, the Patriots defeated the Cleveland Browns and the New York Jets twice before a close loss to the Minnesota Vikings. Against the Vikings, Mac Jones threw a career-high 382 yards in what was perhaps his best performance of the season so far.

In consecutive weeks, weeks 15 and 16, New England suffered two devastating losses within the game's final minutes. Against the Raiders, both teams were tied at 24 points in the last minute of the fourth quarter. The Patriots received the ball at their 25-yard line. They ran a few plays hoping to get within field goal range to get a last-second score. With 10 seconds left, running back Rhamondre Stevenson ran up the middle before he lateraled the ball back to receiver Jakobi Meyers. He then passed it backward, intended for Mac Jones, but was intercepted by Chandler Jones, a former Patriot, who ran the ball for a Raiders touchdown.

Facing the last season's AFC champions, Cincinnati Bengals, in week 16, New England faced a 22 points deficit late in the third quarter. Marcus Jones returned an interception of Joe Burrow to put the first score of the night for the Patriots. New England's offense found momentum for their next two drives, scoring touchdowns and closing the lead down to four in the fourth quarter.

With about three minutes left in the game, edge rusher Matthew Judon forced a fumble on WR Ja'marr Chase that was recovered by Marcus Jones on Cincinnati's territory, giving a good position for the Patriots' offense.

As the game neared the end, the offense tried to drive down the field for a touchdown while running some time off the clock. The offense had the ball on Cincinnati's 5-yard line when Stevenson ran the ball but was hit and fumbled, leading to a recovery by the Bengals. This incited some reactions from fans as they thought he should have been ruled down because of forward progress.

New England lost their two matchups against their division rival Bills in an effort to avenge their Wild Card loss last season.

During week 18, Nyheim Hines of the Bills returned the opening kickoff for a touchdown. After



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Ethan Phejarasai waiting for Alejandro Hincapie's play. HASET TESFAW.



Vincent Nichols getting ready to steal the ball after Jonald Joseph shoots during the foul. HASET TESFAW



Jonald Joseph after scoring. HASET TESFAW.



Players waiting for the ball with anticipation. HASET TESFAW

the touchdown, emotions were tense among the crowd and players as Damar Hamlin, a Bills player, had suffered a cardiac arrest on the field days earlier. Hines returned the second kickoff touchdown within a couple of hours, becoming the first player since 2010.

As a result of these special team's errors, the Patriots lost the game by two scores, 35-23.

Despite missing the playoffs, there are plenty of offensive and defensive talents the team can build around for next season.

Seven defensive touchdowns, a new franchise record, were some accomplishments during the season. They also accumulated over 50 sacks, the most ever under Belichick.

Judon was selected to his fourth consecutive Pro Bowl and attained a

Continued from page 19

mentality. Revere wanted the game and it showed on the court," he continued.

The players of the team also agreed as it had become one of their weaknesses. "We always seem to lose our momentum after the first half of the game. We get lost in the points at the beginning and it changes our mentality," Joseph, a captain of the team, explained. "When things don't go our way we tend to not be able to hone ourselves back in or finish off strong," added Peyton Carron, another captain of the team. Bell, the third captain of the team, also added on, "we started off really good but we really just slipped up and let them take over."

Through these weaknesses the team also has many strengths: "With their leadership and their ability on and off the court, the captains help to encourage the team to stay together," Jurkowski noted.

"We need to improve on our ability to keep the lead and not to let up deep in the game," added Bell.

From last year things have also improved within the team itself. "Definitely the energy level because last year, I'm going to be honest, there was no energy and it was harder to be motivated in that atmosphere," Joseph said. "We're closer as a team this year and we work harder in practice and outside of practice," Bell stated.

There were moments the players could have improved on and there were moments that really showed their true potentials. Overall the boys took this as a learning experience and took into account that they still performed admirably. "I think this game, even though the outcome was not as we had originally wanted, was one of my best. I got 19 points and double doubled which I'm really proud of," Joseph stated.



Justin Bell defending the ball from Alejandro Hincapie. HASET TESFAW

career-high 15.5 sacks. Marcus Jones was chosen to the All-Pro Team as a punt returner.

New England has a lot of work to do before the new season starts if they want to get back into the playoffs. Namely, hiring an actual offensive coordinator and upgrading the offense.