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Sparky, in Sparky's Place
Photo by Ryan Flanigan

A Place of Her Own

Sparky Still Shines in Fourth Decade at MC

Laura Bakopolus '13
Staff Writer

Her real name is Cynthia Ouellette. About 25 years ago, when she worked in the Warrior's Den (which, she explains, used to be in the basement — you get a gold medal if you already knew that), her manager made up a nickname for her that, as she describes, “just stuck.”

Even after all these years, we still call her Sparky.

What's in a name? This particular nickname carries with it a lot of love and respect, to say the least. Sparky loves her nickname

and is delighted that the name caught on: “There is a worker in the Den whose name is Cindy, so when they would say Cynthia, we would sometimes get confused because the names are so close. But when they say ‘Sparky,’ everyone knows who they're talking about!”

It's true — everyone knows and loves Sparky for her friendly disposition, her willingness to help all the students, and her smile that can brighten up anyone's day.

Coworker Gina Silva affirmed that Sparky

Sparky
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Hotel: MC Student Residence Not Likely

Kristina Williamson '13
Staff Writer

Merrimack has managed to attract 5,000 applicants for the freshman class entering in the fall of 2012. President Christopher Hopey said the current enrollment of 2,100 will rise to 2,300 — meaning at least 200 more freshmen will be on campus.

Because freshmen and sophomores will be guaranteed on-campus housing, the president has said Merrimack will acquire off-campus housing for up-

Hotel
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Holiday Inn Express



Nick Clini

Clini Out-Steps Competition to Take Mr. Merrimack Title

Sara Davies '13
Staff Writer

They came out in Speedos, did their turn in front of the judges, then disappeared backstage. When they re-emerged, one wore a hula skirt; the next sported a cowboy hat, and a third suspenders — all showing a whole lot of skin.

This year's Mr. Merrimack put the swag on display, as five of the school's finest gentlemen — seniors Mike Troy, Sam Brown, Ryan Pinette, and Nick Clini, and sophomore Ben Knox — vied for the coveted crown, competing in the traditional battlefields of

swimsuit, talent, evening dress, and questions and answers. Hosted by students Matthew Kirkham and Yagul Ganendran, the Rogers Center for the Arts certainly drew a great and enthusiastic crowd. The panel of five judges placed three of the five contestants, with the crown going to Clini.

The talent portion included a Whitney Huston memorial sung by Ryan Pinette accompanied by his acoustic guitar and Mackapella toward the end. Brown wowed the audience his freestyle rap, while Mike Troy followed with a rap and dance act to Smith's “Wild, Wild West.” Ben

Knox taught the audience basic self defense methods that put Sandra Bullock to shame. Last but certainly not least was Clini's performance with friends Derek Kane and Ryan Kurtz. The trio put on a dance act with white, faceless masks and matching attire that dazzled the audience with swift moves and coordination.

As the end neared, the gentlemen came out in their finest evening garb accompanied by their escort of choice, girlfriend or mom. They were each asked

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33 Years into MC Career, Sparky Shines

Sparky
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“makes everyone smile, always wants to help everyone, and absolutely loves her job.”

Even the mention of Sparky’s name brought a smile to Silva’s face. “She’s an angel,” Silva added as an afterthought, a statement with which the entire student body would have to agree.

And they do. Junior Kayla Hennigan stated, “Sparky’s always happy, which puts everyone around her in a good mood. She’s such a hard worker, and seeing her walking around the cafe talking to everyone always makes me smile.”

Fellow Junior Brian Lundstrom concurred: “Sparky always asks you how you’re doing, which makes you feel important. She’s always interested in the students and tries to make sure that we’re all happy and content. She’s just so cheerful – it’s contagious.”

Yet another student was in agreement; junior Kala Coleman raved, “Sparky is so genuine and sweet. It’s impossible not to like her!”

Sparky is now 53 years old and as sprightly as ever. She will be turning 54 on April 29, so be sure to say happy birthday when you go to eat at the cafeteria that day.

She has been a member of Merrimack’s Dining Services staff for 33 years, meaning she was a mere 20 years old when she started working here. Imagine applying to work at Sparky’s Place tomorrow — and staying for the next 33 years.

If you felt the same way Sparky does, you would be thrilled.

Sparky explained that she originally trained at Lawrence Rehabilitation, and when she interviewed to work at Merrimack, she was pleased to recall that “they begged me to start working here the next day.”

It is easy to see why her boss wanted her to be a part of the Dining Services team right away. Sparky’s mother works with her here as well, but is currently on a leave of absence since she had developed cancer. Luckily, her cancer is “all gone now,” and she is building up the strength to come back.

Sparky grew up in Lawrence, right near Central Catholic High School.

She knows Central Athletic Director Peter Paladino, since he used to be the assistant director of athletics at Merrimack from 1988 to 1997 after graduating from here in 1986. She also was eager to say that she knows Central’s girls varsity basketball coach Sue Downer, another Merrimack graduate.

It would be safe to say that Sparky is very personable and keeps a close relationship with all those who pass through her life. Two people with whom she also keeps a close relationship are her brothers, ages 58 and 43. They had a wonderful childhood together and even into their adult lives, their bonds remain unbreakable, she noted.

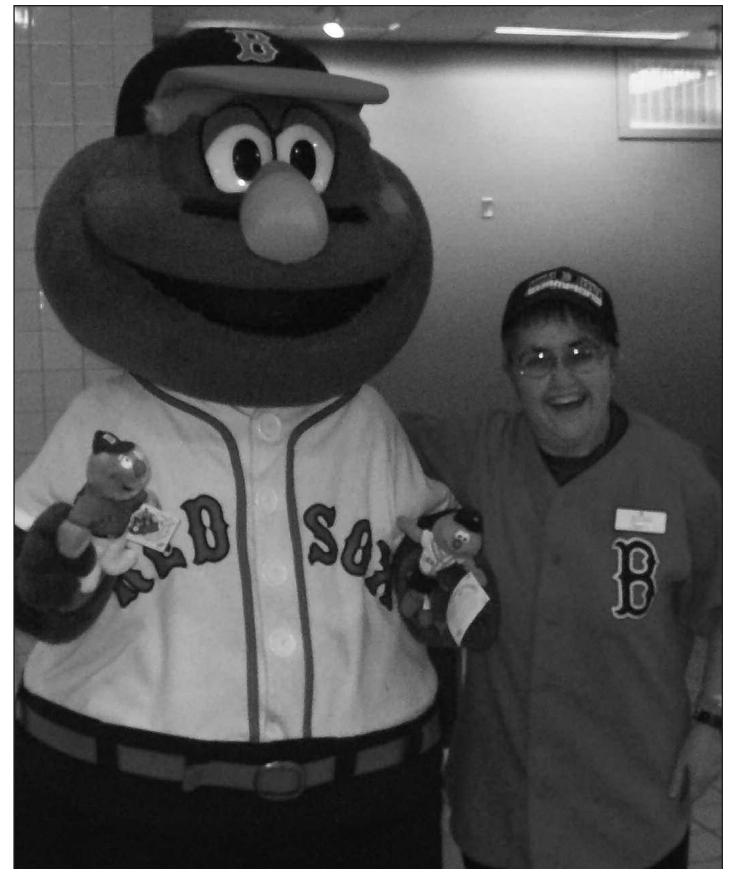
These relationships are what keep Sparky so engaged with life. Her favorite part of working at Merrimack is “the customer relations and the Sodexo people as a team,” since she is good friends with her coworkers and loves to make friends with all of Merrimack’s students.

She declared: “The customers are my favorite part of my job — totally. I love coming in here and doing customer communications.”

Contest
Continued from Page 1

one question ranging from their greatest role model to what they would do with \$1 million.

As the tension and nerves started to rise, the judges made their decision and the crowning began. In third place winning a \$25 gift card, was Sam Brown, in second place winning a \$50 gift card was Ryan Pinette, and finally Clini, taking home a \$75 gift card, vintage bicycle, sash, and the crown the new Mr. Merrimack said, “I



Sparky meets her favorite mascot, Wally
Photo courtesy of Merrimack Dining Services

And her great human relations skills have motivated her bosses to consider her the “middle man,” since the students feel comfortable talking with her. She then relays students’ feelings to her superiors, who implement her suggestions as best they can. For example, she once heard that customers like plain chicken patties, so she told the chefs and within a few weeks, they were on the menu.

You might wonder what Sparky does for fun. She loves watching Boston Red Sox games, which was an easy topic to discuss since she was interviewed the day the Red Sox mascot Wally the Green Monster came to visit Merrimack. Sparky was all decked out in a Red Sox jersey and navy Red Sox cap, and was overjoyed to be so close to her favorite mascot. Sparky also loves the Bruins, who she got to see live last year, an experience she could only describe as “awesome.”

Her new hobby is Facebook, which she likes because of the great “communication with friends.” One of her good friends got her an iPad for Christmas, so she enjoys going on Facebook to relax and talk with friends after a long day at work. She likes listening to rap and rock music, and since a fellow Sodexo worker has been out sick for a while, Sparky has taken over radio duty, keeping the station tuned into 106.3 Frank FM, since she likes this type of music but also knows that the customers enjoy hearing the music in the background.

You can catch Sparky working Monday through Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., but eight and a half hours a day is not enough for her — she always comes in early. She explained, “I come early to help out and see what’s going on for the day, and if I need to take care of business, I take care of business.”

She added, “Once I’m on the clock, I’m all Sodexo.”

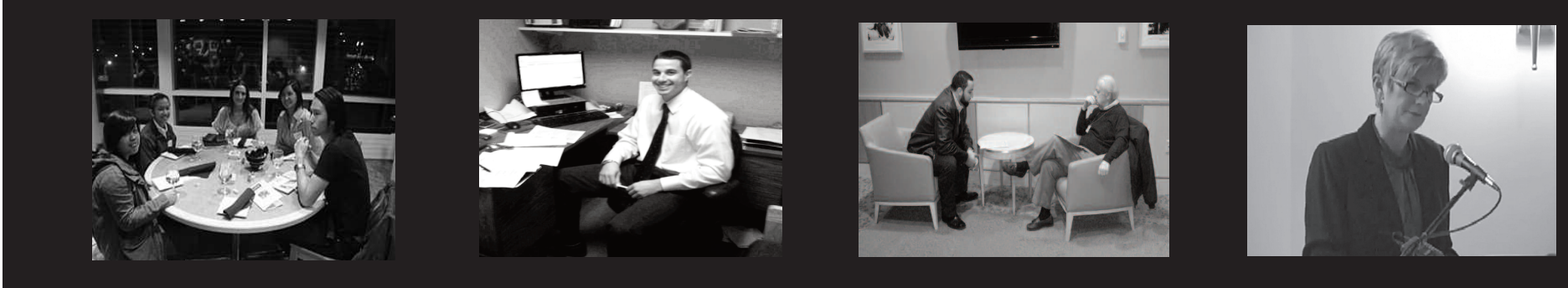
Sparky’s love for her job was obvious when she exclaimed, “I can’t wait to come into work every day.”

had a great time with Mr. Merrimack and wanted to go into it having fun. My favorite part was our dance routine we came up with. We worked really hard on it.”

His hard work certainly showed as many people, including the judges, said the dance routine was the most impressive part of the contest. Clini aspires to take his dancing talent to the next level and be on the hit reality television series America’s Best Dance Crew.

All contestants did a phenomenal job and certainly had the audience cheering and laughing all the way through.

72 Days til Graduation



Walk for the Troops 5k: Building Homes for Injured Veterans

Kayla Morong '12
Sports Editor

On July 8, 2009 in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, Marine Sgt. Joshua Bouchard was in a vehicle that drove over a pressure-plated improvised explosive device (IED). Bouchard, a Granby, Mass., native, was traveling with four other Marines; two on his team did not survive. When he hit the ground his back immediately broke and he suffered a traumatic brain injury.

He was treated at a military hospital in Germany and then airlifted to Bethesda, Maryland, where he spent two weeks at Bethesda Medical Center. After his recovery period, he began intensive rehabilitation at McGuire Virginia Medical Center. He stayed at the center for 11 months doing intensive therapy. Now Bouchard is hospitalized at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

The organization Home for Our Troops is providing injured military men and women like Bouchard a home, helping them rebuild

their lives. A non-profit, non-partisan organization founded in 2004, the foundation strives to help troops disabled by war have a place to live, honoring their dedication to the country. The homes that are built feature a single-level open floor plan with roll-in showers, roll-under cooktops and sinks, as well as other accessible options.

Bill Pennington of Andover decided to raise awareness of Homes for Our Troops throughout his community. He is now helping to raise money for the construction of Bouchard's home.

It is Pennington's second year of promoting Homes for our Troops in the area. So far, he has raised \$110,000 at a big gala event, which was held in October. Now, he has scheduled a road race called Run/Walk for the Troops 5K, which will kick off at 9 a.m. April 1 in downtown Andover. Pennington hopes to reach his goal of \$350,000 with the support of runners and walkers who decide to contribute.

"Troops go under great



stress every day, so days like this help lift their spirits. Everyone who comes to this event will feel that they have helped the people who keep our freedoms and will feel great about that," said Pennington.

Last year, 1,200 people participated in the event. This year, Pennington hopes to see 2,000 people donate to the organization. When racers cross the finish line they will receive a medal for their support and honor. Also, the first to sign up before March 23 will receive a free long-sleeved T-shirt.

With the race around the corner, registration is open online at www.RunForTheTroops5k.com. If you register by March 24, the entry fee will only cost \$20. Those who chose to register after the date will have to pay \$25. On the eve of the race, there will be a fundraising dinner on March 31 for those participating. Dinner tickets can also be bought online.

Once the goal of \$350,000 is met, Bouchard will have the chance to live in a home that allows him to do the things he loves. Looking toward the future, he hopes to learn how to walk again, further his education and spend time with his family.

Bouchard is thankful for what Home for Our Troops has done to help injured veterans throughout the nation. He said, "Receiving this home from Homes for Our Troops will give me a sense of freedom and take away the worry about where I will live and whether my home is accessible to me."

School News



What the Fork?

Dishwasher Breakdown Forces Students to use Plastic

A broken dishwasher took the silverware out of Merrimack students' mouths for a week and left them with plastic replacements—and cost the dining service \$3,000.

The mechanical malfunction forced the cafeteria to use disposable products from February 25-29. According to Jay DeGioia, general manager of Sodexo's Merrimack Dining there was a malfunction with the dishwasher,

which required parts to be flown in.

"It took a few days for the replacement to arrive," DeGioia said. "We regret the inconvenience but are pleased the dishwasher is fixed and operating normally," he said.

"We appreciate Physical Plant for addressing the issue and expediting the repairs," said DeGioia.

-Patrick Coskren '13

15, 35, 50

Hunger Banquet Raises Awareness

Jillian Toce '13
Beacon Contributor

Campus Ministry, Office of Experiential Learning, Office of Student Involvement, Jewish-Christian-Muslim Relations and Sodexo sponsored the Oxfam America Hunger Banquet on Tuesday, March 6th. Over 100 students participated in the eye-opening event. After walking in to Cascia Hall, each student was handed a paper that was one of three different colors. Each color represented a different income. The high-income group sat at tables with white tablecloths on them. The medium income was allowed to sit on chairs without a table. The low-income group sat on the ground, with nothing.

These groups represented

the world in relation to incomes. Fifteen percent of students were sitting at the high-income table, 35 percent were in the medium group and 50 percent were low-income. Most of the room seemed extremely surprised to learn that the high-income group represented the 15 percent of the world's population with a per capita income of \$12,000 or more per year.

After learning of that shocking statistic as well as others about hunger, each group received their dinner for the evening. The high-income group received a filling meal of pasta, salad, and bread. The medium-income group was provided with a plate of rice and beans, as well as water. The low-income group was given a tray of rice and plastic bowls, but utensils were not

provided. Two pitchers of water were also given to the last group, but there were only about five cups for the group of over 30 people.

Father Keith, Director of Campus Ministry, described the mission of Merrimack's Oxfam event as, "an opportunity for students to experience poverty and hunger on a personal level to understand the problem on a global level."

After everyone finished their very different meals, a current Merrimack student shared his personal insights and experience of homelessness and living in poverty. It was extremely powerful and brave for this student to sit in front of his fellow classmates and share such a personal story.

Afro-D, a talented musician

and poet from Medford, shared some of his poems with the students that participated in the event. Afro-D used his poems and trumpet to speak of discrimination of all kinds and social justice. During an interview after his performance, he stated, "Hunger is not just global, it's a local issue. People are hungry in our local communities."

The focus of the entire evening was for Merrimack College students to understand that hunger is not an issue that just affects one country. It is an issue that occurs in our hometowns, states, and throughout our entire country, as well as globally.

Join the discussion at
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Holiday Inn

continued from cover

perclassmen.

The Holiday Inn Express on Route 114, near Interstate 495 in Lawrence confirmed to the Beacon that college officials approached the hotel to discuss renting rooms.

However, hotel manager Victor Abramson informed the Beacon that he doesn't see the hotel being taken over by Merrimack students. "It would potentially make our company look good, but our future finances would be at risk," he said.

The hotel has not been without problems. On May 15, 2006, the hotel suffered a flood. It rained for a couple of days straight, causing the Shawsheen River, adjacent to the hotel, to overflow into the building. As a result, the whole first floor was completely covered in water, affecting 10 to 14 rooms, Abramson said.

Asked if that could happen again, putting potential residents in danger, he said, "It is very prone to happen again, but hopefully I won't be working here by then." Aside from flooding threat, transportation is another negative issue amongst the student body if this

plan were to follow through. The lot that the building is set on is shared with a Friendly's, Dunkin' Donuts, and Lee Chen, a Chinese restaurant. It is a very busy parking lot that isn't even an acre wide, sharing one entrance and exit for all three buildings.

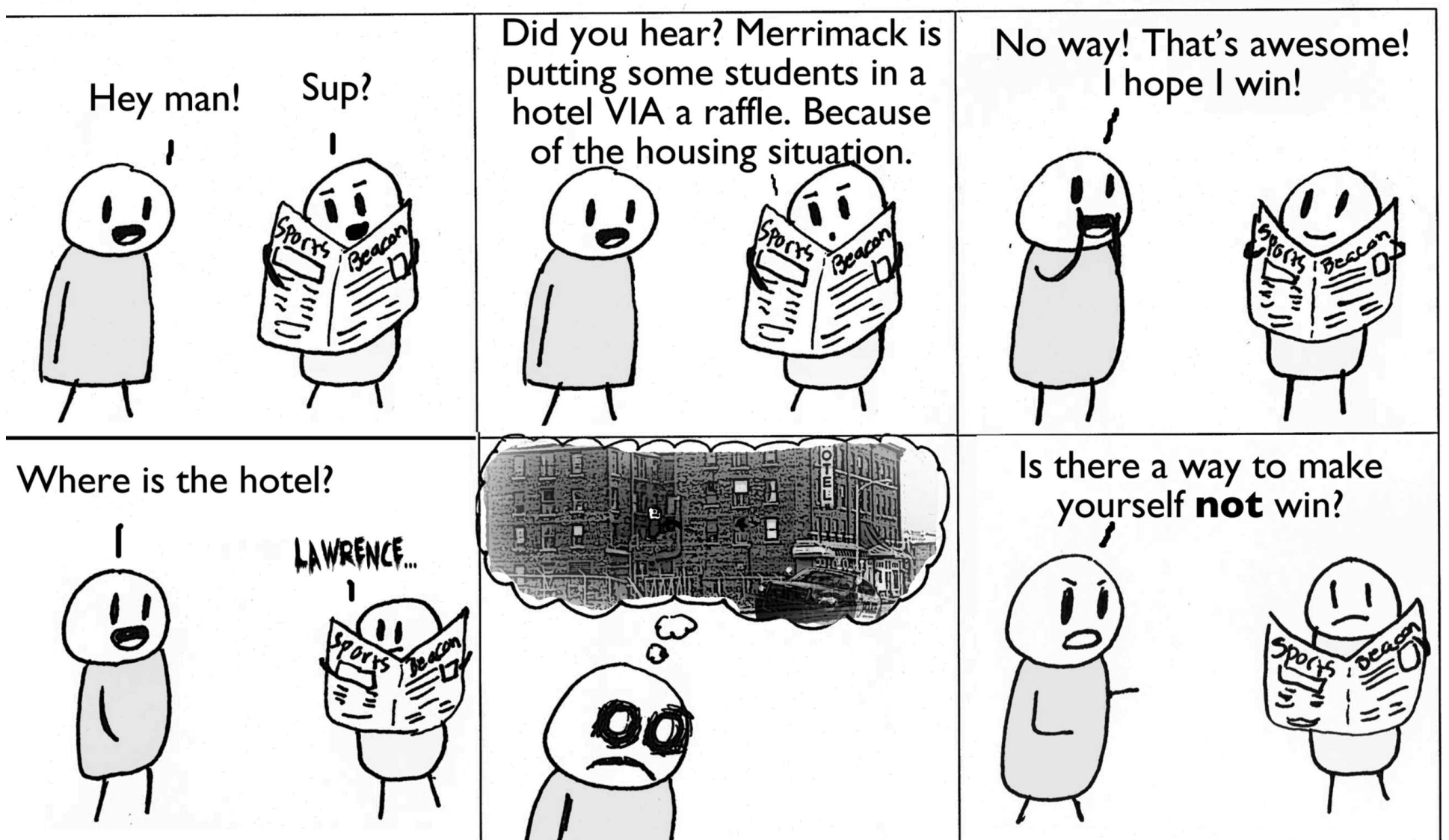
"It takes me at least 10 minutes just to turn left out of that parking lot from Dunkin' Donuts to get back to school," said Rachel Sullivan, a Merrimack sophomore.

"It would create a great image for our hotel, but in the long run we would lose money if we allowed our hotel rooms to turn into dorm

rooms," Mr Jacobson, the assistant manager, answered, when asked if he thought the hotel management would approve of housing plans for next year.

"If anything, we could maybe give up 15 to 20 two- to four-person rooms, but it doesn't look like it's going to actually happen," Jacobson said.

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Cartoon by Robert Perocchi

The Real Problem: ‘Freedom of Conscience’ is Not the Solution

Tim Iannacone '12
Columnist

On Aug. 1, Kathleen Sebelius, the secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, issued a statement that would make it obligatory for all new health-care plans to cover contraception and birth control.

In the past, those who were opposed to this mandate could opt out from offering such services due to what was called a “conscience clause.” However, the new “conscience clause” states: “A religious employer is one that: (1) Has the inculcation of religious values as its purpose; (2) primarily employs persons who share its religious tenets; (3) primarily serves persons who share its religious tenets; and (4) is a non-profit organization...”

Since many Catholic organizations serve both Catholics and non-Catholics, they would be forced under federal law to provide coverage. Catholic organizations would be forced to offer contraception and abortion coverage to their employees or close up shop. Bishop David Zubik of Pittsburgh had this to say about the new mandate: “Kathleen Sebelius and through her, the Obama administration, have said ‘to hell with you’ to the Catholic faithful of the United States, ‘to hell with your religious beliefs, to hell with your religious liberty, to hell with your freedom of conscience.”

While Bishop Zubik is absolutely correct in his

assessment of the Obama administration, he fails to realize the true problem. Health and Human Services is simply capitalizing on a disjuncture that has existed in the Church since the days of Charles Curran and other freethinkers. Many Catholics, lay and ordained alike, have decided they aren’t comfortable with the Church’s teaching on contraception, and would rather believe what the Kinsey Report tells them. Therefore, American bishops have appealed to the Catholic American’s “freedom of conscience” in an attempt to ally with their flock, since more are offended by a violation of an Enlightenment-era freedom than Church teaching.

Instead of cheap talk about ‘working to reach an agreement,’ Catholics should realize that this bureaucratic game will only result in muddling the already turbid waters of Church teaching.

This is not a new approach, however. For 50 years the American Episcopate has shied away from saying anything that might upset the marginal Catholic, but now are shocked to find their flock divided by a government policy. They continue to appeal, in predictable vain, to a concept (religious freedom) that historically has never af-

forded U.S. Catholics protection from injustice.

As the cocky Obama Administration continues to meddle in the Catholic Church’s business, it may be time for the Church to finally set itself apart from the secular world. As a universal religious institution that was commissioned by Christ for the salvation of souls, the Church, by its very nature, is forced to reject the dogma of secular society. Instead of cheap talk about “working to reach an agreement,” Catholics should realize that this bureaucratic game will only result in muddling the already turbid waters of Church teaching.

Imagine what condition the Church in the United States would be in if bishops were as quick to defend the Magisterium as they are to the Constitution.

As both the United States and the Catholic Church move forward in history, there are going to be future arguments over moral issues. It is the Church’s duty to encourage its members to stand strong, and not waver in the face of intense secular pressure. Hopefully, American Catholics will strive to reassert moral order in America by their obedience to an order that is higher than the federal government.

Let us then put our trust in Holy Mother Church, who has overcome every single secular obstacle in history, to guide us through these deeply troubling times.

Getting Around the Valley

Dana Hildner '13
Staff Writer

Merrimack has displayed some major changes in ways for students to get around locally. With a majority of underclassman unable to have cars on campus it has become crippling for

underclassmen to go grocery shopping or run simple errands without access to a car or any form of transportation. The college is trying to push students to utilize the Merrimack Valley Regional Transportation Authority—a public bus transportation system operating throughout the Merrimack Valley. The bus system has lines to points of interest in Lawrence, North Andover, Andover and Methuen.



To make things a little easier for students who strictly want to do quick errands around town Merrimack has a second plan in place which is in fact school operated.

“This program is intended as a service for students to help them get around doing routine type things—grocery shopping or general shopping in the area,” said John Gallagher, director of student involvement.

“The way the system will work is we will have two nights per week during which students meet the Merrimack van, driven by students, to request travel to any destination

within a 20 minute drive of campus,” said Gallagher.

“This can help students get into the reaches of Salem, throughout Andover and North Andover, to numerous shopping centers, banks, restaurants and other shops. The van will drop students off at the location, and then provide a number to call in order to request a pick-up,” he said.

This service will be free, and operate between the hours of 4-10 P.M. It will work similarly to a taxi service, vans will be in front of Cascia Hall, and run frequently. The start of this service has not been provided by college officials.

“I do have my car on campus as a freshman. However, I do believe this would be extremely useful for freshman without the opportunity to have a car as well as upperclassman without a car, said Freshman Sam Gurrier.

Unfortunately, Merrimack will not be running shuttles to or from Boston. It is for students to organize on their own, by using public transportation.

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Twitter Tracker
Compiled by @patlawlor

@sarahicks: Reference staff @merrimack #McQuade library was just VERY helpful in finding just what I needed in journal article search! #lovelibraries

@ededdnjake: @Mannyvelezz @amideeee donut city in Merrimack plow truck

@mfbgetatme I feel kinda bad living so close to Merrimack, yet not caring about 99% of the playoffs that happen there

@AmberLegacy thanks Merrimack...for being the only college that doesnt cancel or delay #merrimackproblems

@MikeMcMahonET Good to see Merrimack's Shawn Loiseau getting press at the NFL Combine. Hope to see an NFL team pick him. He's a BEAST & a ferocious worker

@gillysisland78: Taco Tuesdays = diarrhea Wednesdays #Merrimackproblems

@AStince: Who wants to get me food at the den or a toasted bagel with cream cheese from the cafe? #mainstreetproblems

Questions on the Quad

By John Smyth and Ryan Flanigan

What are you doing for Spring Break?



Going home to Philly.

- Kevin Reagan



Going to a campground Pennsylvania with my lacrosse team.

-Casey MacNeil



Going to Florida with my tennis team.

- Mollie Fitzgerald



Going hiking with my dog every day.

-Tiffany Stanton



Going to the Garden to watch some MC hockey.

-Adam DiCostanza



Student teaching.

- Casey Cummins



Studying for the athletic training test.

-Caitlin Kamide



Playing at the Garden.

-John Heffernan

All Hail the King

Merrimack senior Jake Polas crowned Mardi Gras king in Maxim Magazine contest

Andrew Napolitano '12
Staff Writer

As a grand prize is being announced you tend to see grown men and women down on their knees praying for God's mercy; pity and hoping that either they or a friend wins that prize. Contests can be very stressful for a participant, but enjoyable for their friends who reap the benefits of their friend's winnings. Fortunately for myself and Ej Metallides we are friends with senior student Jake Polas who was one of five grand prize winners to win an all inclusive trip to New Orleans during the week of Mardi Gras. Polas entered the contest through Maxim Magazine and it was as simple as writing down his name, address and telephone number.

Polas said of the process, "I entered through a Maxim Magazine back in October and the winners were announced the first week in December. I saw the ad with the chance to win a trip to Mardi Gras and party with Jim Beam and the Maxim models and it definitely sounded like a trip for me."

Polas' winning package included free airfare, accommodation at the Marriot Hotel on Canal Street, V.I.P. access to the Maxim party, beverages while at any sponsored Jim Beam or Maxim event, and of course the invitation of three friends. Myself, Ej Metallides and a childhood friend of Polas' from Pennsylvania were the chosen friends to be accompanying him for the trip of a lifetime.

Although Polas had already won a grand prize there was one more catch. One of the five grand prize winners and his or her friends had the opportunity to be part of the Orpheus parade while being on the Jim Beam sponsored float. The winners had to provide Jim Beam with a two minute video of why they should be the king of Mardi Gras. The winner of this prize would be announced at the Maxim Party the night of our arrival.

As the day to depart for the south arrived, Sunday, Feb. 19, we were more than excited to spend two days with the Maxim models in New Orleans for Mardi Gras, but had no idea what to expect. We quickly acclimated ourselves to the busy city, went to our hotel and then explored the city as we walked to Bourbon Street to attend the Maxim V.I.P. party. As we walked into the party with the other winners we could not believe our eyes. It must have been surreal. This can't be right. We should be sitting in our apartments at Merrimack College.

Those were our reactions to the beginning of the most amazing night of our lives. Models, free beverages and food, access to a balcony overlooking the craziness of Bour-



~Courtesy Maxim Magazine~

bon Street is what surrounded these four young adults.

"My favorite moment of the trip was being at the Maxim party and throwing beads off the balcony down to the people below. It was all you can drink and eat with Maxim models running around everywhere you looked. At one point I actually asked myself how did I ever win this trip?" said Polas.

Although the night was amazing there was one matter still left unsettled that would just be the cherry on the cake; the announcement of the king of Mardi Gras. As the time approached, the owner of Jim Beam, the grandson of the creator of the company approached the stage. He first announced the queen, who was named "Stevie" and was she gorgeous.

Then, ladies and gentleman the moment we were all waiting for arrived. Can I get a drum roll please and the winner of the Jim Beam video is Jake Polas. At that moment, I am not sure if Polas or we were more excited. It was an unbelievable moment. We were the four luckiest guys on earth. We were going to be sharing a float with 15 Maxim models the very next day.

As the night and party came to an end around 4 a.m. we were high on life. We had just spent hours with some of the most beautiful women in the world, while enjoying one of the best parties of Mardi Gras. Unfortunately, the night had to come to an end, but we didn't worry too much because in just a few hours we would begin floating with these ladies through New Orleans.

It was only six hours since we went to sleep and we were up and moving and let me tell you it was

the easiest wakeup of our lives. We wear scheduled to meet at the New Orleans convention center at 12 with the rest of the members of the Jim Beam float to be fitted for our outfits and lunch before boarding the float.

As I say outfits you must be wondering what I mean. To be part of the float we were told we must wear this costume, which consisted of black pants, a puffy, silky red shirt, a sash that had Orpheus written on it and a black mask. Yes, the outfit was ridiculous, but let me tell you it was awesome at the same time.

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We boarded one of the 33 floats in the parade around 2:30 and departed the convention center around 3:30. Although we departed at this time the parade did not start until 6:00, but it took time with some many floats to arrive at the starting point and o yea we had to stop for an hour to pick up Bret Michaels who was on the float in front of us.

It didn't matter when we got on the float because we had all our necessities; free food and beverages and a bathroom. We were all set to float. As the parade began the crowd was ten to fifteen people deep throughout the entire parade. Although the people were endless so were the beads that were on our float. We were surrounded by millions of beads that were too much to give out by the end of the four hour parade.

Ej Metallides said, "The beads were endless. My arms started getting tired by the end of the parade, but it was definitely worth it in the end it was one of the best times of my life."

As the parade rolled to the end it concluded in the convention center

where the 33 floats were welcomed by thousands of screaming men and women in formal wear. The convention center was now the host of the Orpheus ball were once again there was free food and beverages and a performance by Bret Michaels. The ball lasted approximately three hours. We were dancing, drinking, laughing and just having an amazing time all took place.

As the ball came to a close it was once again time to experience Bourbon Street for one final time as we were scheduled to depart the next morning. We strolled down the street as we owned it. We had a different feel to ourselves after this whole experience; we were standing taller than everyone else on street.

My overall experience at Mardi Gras with Maxim was something I know I'll never experience again. This was easily the best trip I've ever been on and I know seeing my friends have such a fun time that it was their best trip too.

From Bourbon Street to throwing beads off the float, it will always be the most memorable trip of my life and I highly encourage people to experience it once in their life because leaving Bourbon Street you actually realize how normal of life you really live compared to how nuts some people can be. Unfortunately the night and trip came to a close around 5 a.m. after an early morning breakfast at Popeye's Chicken.

In the end as much as we were exhausted it was a trip of a lifetime. We experienced New Orleans like no one will ever experience. We were surrounded by models; free everything, and just an amazing time.

So as I leave you I give you one bit of advice: befriend Jake Polas because he is the luckiest student at Merrimack College and maybe one day you will be as lucky as the three of us and you will be the chosen friend.



Valley Voice

News From Outside Campus

By, Patrick J. Lawlor, Associate Editor in Chief



Conservative Group Angry About Gay Marriage on Locally Created Comic

HAVERHILL — According to a report by the Eagle-Tribune, a conservative group has lashed out against the popular “Archie” comic. “Archie” was created by Bob Montana, a Haverhill native, and his fictional “Riverdale High” was based on Haverhill High School. The group OneMillionMoms has pleaded with Toys R Us, the popular toy store, to ban “Life with Archie Number 16” from its shelves because the comic brings a gay character to Riverdale High to engage in a gay marriage. “Unfortunately, children are now being exposed to same-sex marriage in a toy store, said OneMillionMom’s website. “This is the last place a parent would expect to be confronted with questions from their children on topics that are too complicated for them to understand,” the statement read. The website calls for

Lawrence School Receiver Appoints Key Administrators

LAWRENCE — The state-appointed superintendent of schools in Lawrence, Jeffrey C. Riley has named three new administrators to his staff, two hailing from Boston

schools and one, a Lawrence High graduate, according to the Eagle-Tribune. Dale Libkin, who has served as director of performance management in Boston Public Schools will start this week as assistant superintendent for teacher effectiveness. Marilese Rodriguez-Garcia, a senior project manager for Boston Public Schools will become Riley’s chief of staff, and a non-profit leader Shalimar Quiles will become the school system’s reengagement director.

Riley was appointed by the state to revamp the Lawrence schools after years of mis-management and underperformance. Before Riley’s appointment the school system was being run on an interim basis by an assistant superintendent of schools. The former superintendent, Wilfredo Laboy was indicted and is facing charges related to the mis-management of the school system and using school property and resources to his personal benefit. The city of Lawrence’s school system is nearly entirely funded by the state. When Mayor William Lantigua took office in 2010, he was also a state representative, a post he was hoping to keep even after being elected. The Massachusetts legislature would only fund Lawrence schools of he left the Beacon Hill post.

Grand Jury Investigation Continues as Key City Employees are Subpoenaed

LAWRENCE — An Essex County grand jury investigating Lawrence Mayor William Lantigua handed down another subpoena yesterday to Lawrence’s deputy police chief, Max Bonilla. Bonilla was served the subpoena by a member of the state police and an FBI agent at police headquarters yesterday. Bonilla was Lantigua’s campaign manager, and a sergeant on the Lawrence police during Lantigua’s campaign. After Lantigua was elected he appointed Bonilla to the high-ranking post of deputy chief. Leonard Degnan, Lantigua’s former chief of staff was also served a subpoena. He also testified in Boston this summer after his abrupt May resignation. Personnel Director Frank Bonet, and License Commission Chairman Richard Fielding were also served subpoenas for the Essex County investigation. The case against Lantigua and his administration apparently involves charges against narcotics, weapons, bid rigging, and suspicious out of state travel.

Romney takes Mass., Merrimack Valley

Former Massachusetts Governor and presidential hopeful Mitt Romney came back to his home state to claim a primary victory. Romney took the Bay State with a landslide victory of 72 percent good for 265,100 votes. The closest contender was Rick Santorum only claiming only 12 percent of Massachusetts, good for only 44,255 votes.

North Andover’s eight precincts gave Romney 2,434 votes, with Santorum taking 253 votes, and Ron Paul in a close third with 240. Andover’s eleven precincts were good for 2,538 to their former governor and Paul took 250, and Santorum with 237.

Romney also took Arkansas, Idaho, Ohio, Vermont and Virginia. Newt Gingrich took his home state of Georgia, his only victory on Super Tuesday. Santorum took North Dakota, Oklahoma, and Tennessee.

It takes 1,144 delegates to tip the nomination for the Republicans. Currently Romney is leading with 415, Santorum in second with 176, Gingrich in third with 105, and Paul in fourth with 47 delegate votes.

New Hire for Communication Sciences to Start in Fall

Billy Humphrey ‘12 Staff Writer

The Department of Communication Arts and Sciences has concluded its search for a new professor and hired Andrew Tollison of the University of Texas at Austin.

Tollison will begin teaching at Merrimack in the fall of 2012. In early February three candidates were flown to Merrimack to participate in faculty interviews, student interviews, and present a sample

class. The department recently made its decision, and Tollison accepted the position.

“I am happy that the students were given a voice in the decision. We are all excited for Professor Tollison and believe that he will bring a lot to the department,” said senior Tim Curran, a communications major who sat in on a sample class and was part of the student group that interviewed the students.

“I think he was the best fit candidate for the job opening, he seemed to have a great background,

and was very easy to talk to which I think will benefit his students,” said junior Alan Pastryak, also a communications major who participated in the interviews.

Tollison focuses on interpersonal and health communications.

*Join the discussion at
merrimacknewspaper.com.
Share your thoughts and
comments*



Police Log

February 24, 12:20 p.m. suspicious odor:

Caller reports odor of marijuana in Ash. Officer reports odor in the main lobby but not elsewhere in the building. Source undetermined

February 24, 9:30 p.m. motor vehicle crash:

Officer reports apparent two-vehicle accident in Lot 6. One vehicle belongs to resident student but neither operator is present.

February 26, 2:55 a.m. disturbance:

Monican resident student makes noise complaint. Officers ask stu-

dent to keep noise down.

February 26, 2:48 p.m. fight:

Officers remove two subjects from the baseball field. Both leave willingly.

March 3, 1:22 a.m. group dispersed:

RA calls for an officer for crowd control. Officers disperse small group of students, some using snowballs.

March 3, 8:32 a.m. vandalism:

Officer reports finding broken exit sign on second floor of Deegan West.

March 4, 1:11 a.m. arrest

Brandon Spinofa, born April 25, 1992, charged with assault and battery and disorderly conduct. Taken by sergeant to Andover Police Department.

March 4, 2 a.m. unwanted guest

Resident student requests removal of another student from residence. Student removed.

March 4, 2:04 a.m. disturbance

Resident student complains about two males peeping at her while she was in the shower. Officers report two non-students trans-

ported off campus.

March 6, 7:12 p.m. intentional damage

Physical plant observes a male possibly operating a blue Volvo cut the chain off the gate by Physical Plant. Officer speaks with complainant. Vehicle located on campus.

March 6, 7:46 p.m. suspicious activity.

Officer finds four males at the rear of Ash and sends them on their way.

Senior Trip is No Gamble

Justin Delaney '12
Staff Writer

The Merrimack College graduating Class of 2012 recently embarked on a trip to Mohegan Sun in Connecticut as part of a series of events put together in order to make a few more lasting memories that Seniors can take with them after graduation. The trip took place on Friday, March 2nd and tickets were purchased by students for a mere \$20. Each ticket included bus transportation to and from Mohegan Sun, a food voucher worth 15 credits and 20 credits for betting in the casino.

The event was a lot of fun for the school's Seniors by providing a fun night of activities that most students do not generally come

across.

Brendan Sullivan, a Merrimack Senior, exclaimed, "I had a great time."

Merrimack Senior Mike Kent was especially glad he took the trip, commenting, "I had a lot of fun. I won \$80."

The vouchers that Merrimack provided also proved worthy as Senior student Andrew Teahan reported, "Merrimack gave everyone credits for food and gambling. I had chicken fingers and fries. They were pretty good."

Sullivan added, "I thought it was a great deal because the \$20 you paid for was given back to you in vouchers."

On the other hand, however, there were some mixed reviews due to a couple of weak points in the

night. Teahan stated that, "It was alright. It was really packed so it took a while to get a seat at different tables". Waiting around for open spots to gamble was not the only issue as Teahan continued, "We left for Connecticut during rush hour and then began our ride back in the middle of a snow storm, so it took a while. We were probably on the bus longer than we were inside of Mohegan for crying out loud!"

In the end, this event was surely deemed a success as students left for Mohegan excited and returned pleased with their trip. The senior class was able to hang out amongst each other in a great atmosphere while enjoying all of the benefits that Mohegan Sun has to offer, and all for a great price.

Teahan finished his review of the evening with interesting advice for those attending future trips to Mohegan, saying, "Sometimes doing the right thing loses you money and the wrong thing gains you money. The trick is figuring out the right time to do the wrong thing and the wrong time to do the right thing."

Next up for the Senior class is the Senior Formal on Saturday, April 28th. The Formal will be held at the Seaport Hotel Boston and students will be able to purchase hotel rooms for the night through the Seaport Hotel. Additionally, students have a great opportunity to receive discounted rates by booking rooms in the Merrimack College Block.

Stories From Abroad: Getting Adjusted to Europe

Joan Corcoran '13
Editor from Abroad

Time flies. I still pinch myself every once in a while because it's hard to wrap my head around the fact that I live in Rome.

I have been here for about four weeks now and it still seems surreal. I have started adjusting to the full swing of things at school, and actually started to cook my own meals. It is definitely a bit of a struggle with the gas stove and my lack of experience in the kitchen.

I've been enjoying my Italian diet of Nutella, tons of carbs, mounds of mozzarella and tons of Prosciutto. There are still some American things that we all miss.

Last week Robbie Carbone '13, Chris Indrisano '13, Brianna Trabucco '13, and Anastasia Gallardo '13 came over with a few of our new study abroad friends to my apartment where I live with Agata Adamczuk, '13 (Beacon photo editor), we had "Taco Tuesday." Bri, Robbie, and Chris all brought along the ingredients and we began cooking. I have never made tacos before, which actually is not that hard, but was very pleased with the outcome.

Throughout the past few weeks we've all been going through such a huge life change and it's nice to have some sense of home — whether it's 'Taco Tuesday' or just a few of us talking about funny memories from school.

While still adjusting and adapting to the Italian culture, I decided to take a trip. Where did I decide to go for my first European excursion? Well, no other place then Prague! Prague is the capital of the Czech Republic and is also one of the coldest places I have ever been to in my entire life. Though the cold was anything but enjoyable the city itself was beautiful. It feels as if you have been placed back into medieval times.

Also, it was interesting to see how this "Central European" society functions compared to Italy. Their meals have three main components — meat, potatoes, and beer. Every meal on every menu is described as "hearty" and the variety of beer that is offered stems

from levels of bitterness to levels of fruitiness.

The currency is also very strange, because their bills start at 100 crown and can go up to 1,000 crown. You feel as if you are carrying around insane amounts of money when you are actually only carrying 50 American dollars.

After spending three days in this extremely cold country I was looking forward to the 35-degree weather that was awaiting me in Rome. For our next trip out of Italy Agata and I will be heading to Budapest, Hungary, to explore a new culture and to further engulf ourselves in our surroundings.

Arrivederci, Merrimack!



St. Patrick's Day

☘ GIVE GREEN A NEW MEANING ☘

**Get Green Today!
Come Celebrate**

St. Patrick's Day In A Responsible Way!

Join us for an earth-friendly promotion full of delicious food, fun activities and added surprises.

Take part in our Get It Green event where you can try your luck at winning some awesome prizes while enjoying selections from our special "green" menu.

Our Earth-friendly celebration takes place on:

Thursday, March 15th

Sparky's Place for Dinner

Late Night at Augie's

For more details, contact the Dining Services Department
at J.Degioia@merrimack.edu.



Devereaux Shines at New Englands

Places 7th in 800m

Kyle Singleton '12
Staff Writer

During the New England Championships on Friday, February 23rd at Boston University, seven runners represented the Merrimack track and field team. Ethan Weaver and Jesse Fowler represented the men's side, while Briana Devereaux, Fiona Colman, Christine Manfra, Kayla Morong and Anne Bajor competed on the women's side.

Weaver ran in the 500-meter dash posting a personal best of

1:06.64 and placed 15th overall. His time set a school record in the 500-meter dash.

Jesse Fowler participated in the 60-meter dash as well as the 200-meter. In the 60-meter dash Jesse posted 7.15 seconds and was a hundredth of a second away from qualifying for the second round.

The distance medley relay team, made up of Colman, Manfra, Morong and Bajor, were a second shy of their Northeast-10 Championship time, finishing in 12:45.

As for Briana Devereaux, she

topped the night off on a high note for the Warriors as she contended in the 800-meter run. She finished in 7th place with a time of 2:15.87 seconds. Devereaux was the first runner in the program's history to qualify for the NCAA Division II Championships. Her time was the fifth fastest in the East Region this year.

With an exciting finish to the indoor season, the team looks to keep improving as they enter the outdoor competition. The first meet will be held at Bridgewater State Univer-



MIAA Super 8

Tournament Returns to Merrimack

Matthew LaMalfa '12
Associate Sports Editor

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association has partnered again with Merrimack this year to bring the states premier high school hockey tournament to Lawler Arena. All games, except for the finals, which are held at TD Garden, will be hosted here in North Andover.

"We are excited about hosting such a historic and talented tournament," said Merrimack Director of Athletics Glenn Hofmann. "We feel the renovated Lawler Arena is the perfect venue for a premiere high school hockey tournament, and we look forward to welcoming back the elite high school hockey teams in Massachusetts to our campus."

In action this week, Hingham High downed Saint John's in overtime 3-2 behind sophomore Sam D'Antuono's first goal of the tournament. In the second game of the night perennial powerhouses BC High and Malden Catholic squared off. The Lancers jumped out to a 2-0 advantage after one pe-

riod, but BC High bounced back with a dominating second period. They managed to get one past Malden goaltender Connor Maloney and draw closer with the period ending with a score of 2-1. The score stayed the same until halfway through the third when the Lancers knocked in a power play marker to make the score 3-1. BC High appeared to have closed the gap to 3-2 late in the third, but officials ruled that the net had come off its pegs seconds before. "I think we deserved a better fate," said BC High coach John Flaherty. "I just don't understand why we don't have video replay in this league, everyone else has it."

A full slate of games is on tap for this weekend with games on Sunday starting at 12 noon, 2:15 PM, 4:45 PM, and 7:00 PM. If you're interested in seeing a day of exciting hockey admission is \$5 and is donated to charitable endeavors sponsored by the MIAA and its partners.



Loiseau Stumbles at

Combine, Next Step BC Pro Day

Michael Romanella '13
Interim News Editor

How does a Merrimack College football player get invited to the NFL combine? Its something that no one would ever think could happen. 1.4 million High School athletes play football each year; 56,000 are lucky enough to be granted the opportunity to play in college. Only 360 of players are invited to showcase their skills at the NFL combine, Senior Shawn Loiseau was one of those players. "Being in Indianapolis was a great experience. To be able to stand next to players like Andrew Luck and Robert Griffin III (Projected top ten picks in this year's upcoming NFL draft) was something I will never forget," said Loiseau

"There were 15,000 Division II athletes who were eligible to be selected to the NFL combine, Shawn was one of only 2 Division II players that were granted the opportunity," said Merrimack's Head Football Coach John Perry "This is the stuff you see in Hollywood movies like 'Rocky' and 'Hoosiers'," he said.

Shawn spent four long days in Indianapolis. He arrived on Friday February 24 and did not leave until Monday. Loiseau's first two days were comprised of countless tests and interviews with many NFL teams. He spent countless hours taking X-rays, MRI's and blood work for NFL team doctors. The rest of the first day was spent going through orientation and interviews with coaches from various NFL teams.

The second day was spent doing more of the same. Shawn woke up at 3:30 in the morning to take a drug test and then it was off to receive physicals from all 32 NFL teams.

Day 3 marked the moment Shawn had been waiting for; the workouts were finally here. He was able to participate in just the measurement and bench press. Loiseau

benched 19 reps at 225 lbs. He measured at 6'0" tall and 244 lbs. Shawn also partook in the 'highly profiled' Wonderlic test. The Wonderlic test is given to all 320 athletes at the combine and measures each player's psyche (form of an IQ test).

Day 4 was the running and drills portion of the combine. Shawn was able to take the field at Lucas Oil Stadium where only three weeks prior the Super Bowl was played. Shawn completed such drills as the broad jump and the vertical jump. Loiseau lined up for what he thought would be just another test, the 40-yard dash. He started off strong but strained his hamstring towards the end of the 40 yards. Shawn finished with a 4.75 time in the 40-yard dash but was unable to finish any of the other tests and drills that were scheduled for that day. His combine had a bittersweet ending to it. "Several NFL coaches were excited about what they saw from Shawn and hope to see him perform at full strength when they come to the BC pro day at the end of the month," Coach Perry explained.

Loiseau will get some time to heal up and rest before his Pro Day on March 21 at Boston College. Many NFL scouts will be there to see Shawn finish the running drills at full strength and also partake in some positional drills. There is also another Pro Day scheduled for March 27 at Merrimack where any scouts can come to see Loiseau workout more if they need him too. Shawn emphasized how he, "will be able to showcase what I was unable to at the combine and perform at my highest potential at the pro days this month."

Loiseau expressed he is expecting to be at full strength and running by weeks end and start preparing for March 21. The NFL Draft is dated for April 26-28.

Hockey Splits Regular Season Finale

Heads to Maine for Hockey East Quarterfinals

Matthew LaMalfa '12
Associate Sports Editor

Going the final weekend of the regular season, Merrimack needed three points to secure a home ice position in first round action of the Hockey East playoffs. After a disappointing loss to the UMASS Minutemen in Amherst on Friday, the Warriors had to hope New Hampshire would beat or tie Maine on Saturday afternoon. This would give the Warriors another chance to clinch home ice with a win. Unfortunately it just wasn't meant to be, as the Black Bear prevailed 1-0 on Saturday afternoon and clinched the final home ice spot just minutes before the Warriors took the ice for what would become the season finale at Lawler Arena.

It would've been easier for the team to mail it in at this point since there was no movement in the standings possible from the result of this game. There was motivation though since it was the last home game for the most successful senior



Merrimack Fan Buses head up to Maine this weekend to cheer on the Warriors

class in Merrimack's division one history. Honored before the game were Simon Demers, Karl Stollery, Carter Madsen, Elliott Sheen, Jesse

Todd, Ryan Flanigan, Jeff Velleca and Joe Cannata. After falling behind early, the squad rallied to finish their senior's home career with a win. Josh Myers, Shawn Bates and Ryan Flanigan all scored within six minutes of the third period and Rhett Bly tacked on a late empty net goal to give the Warriors a record of 17-10-7 to finish the season.

The Warriors will now head to the University of Maine in Orono for the best-of-three Hockey East Quarterfinal games. This is a rematch of last year's quarterfinals though the sites are reversed. A year ago Merrimack swept Maine out of Lawler Arena to reach the TD Garden but if the Warriors are going to get by the Black Bears this season they will have to do it in the hostile environment of Alford Arena. Merrimack came home with a victory in their only other visit to Alford this season, downing the Black Bears 2-1 on opening night.

Softball Throws a Change Up

Carter Madsen '12
Staff Writer

As the softball season rapidly approaches, adjustments have been made to the women's softball spring break trip.

In previous years the women's softball team has started off their season in Florida, spending seven to nine days playing approximately 14 games. However, due to Merrimack's unique spring break schedule, the team would miss the opportunity to play many of their usual opponents this spring. So softball is shortening the players' time in Florida to five days and travelling to New Jersey and then Long Island to finish their trip. This change will allow Merrimack to play more games and more teams

they would not have a chance to play if they stayed in Florida their entire trip.

"I wish we were staying in Florida longer, but the teams we are playing in New York will help our regional rankings," said senior Alex Gallant.

On March 22, Merrimack will play nationally ranked C.W. Post, which will greatly affect Merrimack's overall standings.

"I'm excited about the trip this year," said Gallant. "We are playing a lot of good teams, some of which are nationally ranked. When we go to New York we will be playing a lot of teams from our region that are going to be good competition."

The team leaves March 14, and is matched up against East Stroudsburg on Friday, March 16.



Basketball

Continued from page 12

scoring, led the team in eight statistical categories, and attained first team all-conference status, and maybe player of the year honors in the whole conference, no big deal. Simply put, Mack proved he was the most dominant and multifaceted player in the conference. And yep, you guessed it, he easily notched the 1000 point plateau this year.

These five seniors were a joy to watch over the last four years, and more than made their mark on the Merrimack tradition of excellence, and setting the bar almost out of reach for future athletes to replicate their success. These five men are the example for the future Merrimack athletes. They would work with the Lawrence Boys and Girls

club, sometimes have lunch or dinner with the kids the day before games. These men would talk to the kids before and after the games, give them advice, truly living like role models. The relationships formed not just between the athletes and the kids but amongst the cohesive group of players will last a lifetime, and those kids, lives will be forever impacted

. When you see Merrimack alum constantly show up for games, return every year for the alumni game, and witness 50 plus alum in the stands, you can feel the brotherhood and sense of family that is passed on through the years, almost like a never ending tradition. And that is what separates Coach Bert Hammel and Merrimack itself from any other basketball experience or school in America.

That being said the junior divi-

sion 1 transfer from the University of Buffalo, has the future looking bright for Merrimack. In his first year here Clifford was an absolute force on both ends of the floor, racking up a mind blowing nine double doubles on the year, was first in the conference in boards per game, second in offensive boards, and fourth in total boards. Clifford was a board shy of averaging a double double a game, showing his utter ability to consistently dominate a game. Junior Tyler young might be the most athletic raw talent on the warrior roster, a talented shot blocker, who can extend defense with his deceptive range. Junior Kevin Regan is a lock down defender, who can shoot lights out, and a reliable player with experience for next years' squad. Lastly watch out for Dante Thompson who didn't much action this year, but has raw talent you

can't teach, can jump out of the gym, and might be the best dunker on the team, and a highlight reel waiting to happen. He is young at barely 18, but if molded, has the potential to be a problem for the next three years for opposing defenses, and can alter an abundance of shots defensively.

With Bert Hammel heading into his 33rd year next season, the Warriors have the experience at the helm, and the athletic ability down low to make a run next year. Though Merrimack graduates five key seniors this year, the future seems bright beyond the horizon in the upcoming years for Merrimack basketball.

*Join the discussion at
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A Season To Remember

Lynden Ostrander '12
Staff Writer

The 2011-2012 Merrimack Mens basketball campaign for a NE -10 tournament championship came to an unfortunate end in the quarterfinals at the hands of eventual tourney winners, the Stonehill Skyhawks by a score of 85-66. In Wayne Mack's last game in a Warrior uniform, Mack had a game high 26 points to move into 17th on the all time scoring list, and a team high seven boards, in a valiant effort to say the least.

Commentary

Coming into the pivotal matchup against the Skyhawks, Merrimack was scorching hot, winning five of their last six in the month of February. Merrimack was tabbed at number seven in the East region, and needed a win against Stonehill to make noise in the NE-tourney, and to look worthy of an NCAA bid in the eyes of the NCAA selection committee. Only the top eight teams in the region make the "big dance." With the loss, Merrimack finished their remarkable season with a 15-12 overall record, and posted a 12-10 conference record for the year.

When it came time for the NCAA selection show this past Sunday, the Warriors sadly learned they would not be joining the Madness this year. Surprisingly, Philadelphia University was chosen instead of Merrimack for the last seed in the East region, the same squad the Warriors had beaten head to head earlier in the year. Nonetheless, in a season filled with ups and downs, Merrimack finished with a winning record, won seven consecutive home games to garner a playoff berth, yielded a conference first teamer in Mack, induced a whopping nine double doubles from Mike Clifford and for only the second time in school history, produced an illustrious senior trio of 1000 point scorers, in Mack, Aaron Strothers, and Roland Davis.

Coach Bert Hammel commented after the crushing loss to Stonehill .

"We all feel for the seniors, and know how much they mean to our program." The five seniors graduating from this year's ball club are fiends and lifelong teammates who care more about the name on the front of the jersey than on the back. One can't possibly fathom five better human beings than Wilfredo Pagan, Wayne Mack, Roland Davis, Aaron Strothers, and Juan Carlos Rosich.

Pagan is the epitome of a hard worker. He earned the Lawrence Boys Club scholarship from nearby Central Catholic high school and is the nicest guy you'll ever come into contact with off the

court. On the court he leads the team in charges drawn this year and has increased in playing time each season, culminating in becoming a starter this year averaging almost 30 minutes a game. Since high school he's had a knack for coming up big in big time games. In the state championship, he dropped 21 points this year he had multiple double-digit games, including a career high 14 off the bench to spur a win against St. Rose this year, and always seemed to hit clutch three or draw a momentum swinging charge, when his team needed a spark. He will be deeply missed by Coach Hammel.



Senior Wayne Mack
~Photo Courtesy of Merrimack Athletics~

Next up the vocal leader and rock of the team is Roland Davis. Davis hails from Deer Park, New York, but transferred from the College of Charleston. He immediately proved he was a winner, dropping 22 points in his first game in a Warrior uniform. Davis is a flat-out scorer, a consistent threat from beyond the arc, and creates his own shots. Couple that with ankle-breaking handles, playmaker ability, and superior court vision, and you've got yourself a heck of a player. He appeared in all 30 games, and had 17 double-digit games. If Davis hadn't already proved he was a force to be reckoned with, last year he had two 30-point outings and was second on the team in points per game. Fast forward to this year, and the success just kept mounting. Davis had a career high 33 points this year, and earned conference player of the week the first week of the season. Furthermore he finished the year fifth in the conference in total assists, led the team in assists per game, and had an astounding team leading 50 threes from downtown. Topping it off he was the first senior of the 2012 class to amass more than 1000 points in his career, becoming the 37th member of the elite club, he capped off his impressive

career averaging 12.5 points an outing.

When you talk about the word consistency, the Wareham Massachusetts native Aaron Strothers comes to mind. Consider this: in only his sophomore year Strothers shot 71.5 percent from the floor, led the team in rejections, and averaged double digits. Last year he almost averaged a double double, led the team in blocks again, had a career high 32-point performance and had an astronomical field goal percentage of 64.6, which tied the school record. This year he led the team in blocks three years running, third in the conference in field goal percentage, fifth in field goals, seventh in offensive boards, and second on the team in points per game at 13.5 a game. Strothers nickname of "Smooov" says it all: he's smooth with the ladies, an outgoing loveable kind of guy, and always has a smile on his face. On the court I have watched him blossom into one of the most consistent players in Merrimack history, polishing his interior moves from the blocks over the years, shoring up his defensive ability, and more importantly becoming the last but not the least of three seniors to collect 1000 points in his career this year.

Then there is the unspoken leader, Wayne Mack. Mack hails from Paterson, NJ, where he was a four year quarterback and dual athlete who turned down multiple football scholarships to showcase his skill at Merrimack. Mack is a special talent that doesn't come around all too often. His freshman year he made the conference rookie team and started all but one game. Sophomore year he started every game, averaged double digits again, and poured in 19 in the NCAA semifinal against rival Bentley. Last season Mack averaged 14 points and five boards a contest, and still somehow led the team in assists and steals. Mack is arguably one of if not the most complete player in the Northeast conference. He has the rare ability to light a team up for 20 plus, and shut down the other team's best player night in and night out. He can create his own shots, beat you in multiple ways, sky for boards with the biggest of bigs, has unmatched court vision, is a consistent career free throw shooter. He always wants the ball in his hands when the game is in the balance, and most of the time when the chips are down he comes through.

This year Mack took his game to a whole new level. He just averaged the most minutes in the conference, was first in charity stripe percentage, was third in steals and fourth in the conference in

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