

School board rules books acceptable

By Amelia McAvoy

Bonny Eagle High School recently made the news due to the ongoing debate surrounding the appropriateness of books in the school library.

It all began last spring when the building principal, Mr. Greg Applestein, received an email containing a complaint form on the book *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe. Since then, the administration has undergone a lengthy process to decide whether the material in the book is suitable for high school students.

Following the original complaint, the district's Material Review Committee looked over the content of that book, as well as that of another book, *It's Perfectly Normal*, and came to the conclusion that the material was not too explicit for its high school audience.

However, parents filed appeals after this review, opening the decision up to the school board. During school board meetings, members of the community were given the opportunity to speak up about the books and make their voices heard to the school board. Also, all members of the board were given copies of the books to read, so they would be better

informed of the material inside. In the end, the school board sided with the Material Review Committee to keep both of the books in the library.

Gender Queer, which the *Eagle Times* reviews on page 7, has stirred the most debate, with critics asserting that the memoir contains explicit sexual content. School board member and advocate for removing the book, Julie Anderson, explains her view, saying there was "written and pictured content in the book that was clear pornography to me."

She believes that "providing books like *Gender Queer* to kids, without parental oversight, could set them up for sexual exploitation." Many parents within the community have echoed this sentiment during school board meetings and expressed the concern that exposure to material such as this could lead teenagers to mimic the unsafe behaviors they read about.

However, many proponents of keeping the book in the library believe that the value students can derive from the story overshadows its controversial material. Bonny Eagle High School English teacher, Ms. Jessica Webber, believes

that there is always value to engaging with media that is challenged because "it forces people to engage their critical thinking skills" and begs of them the question, "Where do I stand on this issue?"

Many are also skeptical of the reason for banning *Gender Queer*. Ms. Webber says, "You can't say this is not about LG-BTQ (issues) and then only try to ban books that have LGBTQ content."

Other books that have been challenged within the district have also included LGBTQ themes. For many LGBTQ students, this has felt "like just one more blow....These kids already feel marginalized," explains Ms. Randa Thomas, the GSA (Gender Sexuality Alliance) advisor. "When they hear that somebody is challenging something that has the word 'queer' in it, they take it personally."

For some, Kobabe's memoir has been important to their own identity journey. Ms. Thomas explains, "A lot of kids don't have anyone to confirm or affirm that what they're going through is normal, that they're not broken or sick or strange."

Ms. Webber also agrees that books that share diverse stories



Above, the two books that were challenged for inappropriate content in MSAD 6 this fall. At left, a panel from the more controversial of the two, *Gender Queer*.

Screenshot photos from WCSH6 via Youtube.

"can be so helpful for kids who are questioning or kids who don't know. They look around and they don't see anyone like them, but they find themselves in a book, and that can be really powerful."

The 2019 memoir has been praised by critics, earning an Alex Award from the American Library Association in 2020 and finishing as a finalist for the Stonewall Book Award for

non-fiction the same year, but it has also been divisive. *The New York Times* called it the most banned book in the country in 2021 and one high school in Maine, Dirigo High School, recently removed the title from its shelves.

So, while supporters of *Gender Queer* may have met the challenge against the book here, there is still a war raging across the country.

Mixed reactions to the new WiFi system at BEHS

By Andrew Plummer, Kaitlyn Reed, and Cordelia Porell

A new, two-tiered system designed to improve internet access for SAD6 students on their school iPads has reduced network speeds for some and is causing discord among some students and staff.

In September, Bonny Eagle's technology department made a decision to create a private network, which only allows devices registered with SAD6 to connect and work on it. At the same time, the tech department created a guest network which allows any device to use it once the user creates a log in ID and a password.

The two leading factors for this new Wi-Fi system were network security and the demand on Wi-Fi.

Technology director, Mr. Scott Nason, uses the term "pipe burst" to make



Creative Commons photo

an analogy for what was happening to the Wi-Fi. There were more requests for networks than there were networks to be used, causing the "pipe" to burst due to such high demand.

However, many have complained that the guest network is too slow, which has resulted in many concerns around communication.

"I would worry it would be more difficult for my children to reach me if they're in trouble," said Mrs. Erin Deprez, the Bonny Eagle High

School librarian.

In addition, many students with their own personal laptops have complained that they are unable to do schoolwork on school grounds.

Students designed and circulated a petition to get back the original, working Wi-Fi.

While that hasn't happened, Mr. Nason has acknowledged the issue. He said that he recently increased the speed of the guest network in hopes of resolving the problems people have been having.

He explains that the Wi-Fi performs at a slower rate during times of excessive use, especially when any device could connect. He also mentions that things have improved since the speed was increased last week.

As for the frustration the changes have brought about?

"It wasn't designed to be punitive," Mr. Nason says. "It wasn't a punishment for people. It was about trying to create the best network we could for our staff and our students."

Time to taste all things pumpkin spice Page 2	New staff profiles Pages 3, 4	Don't drink the water! Page 5	Relevant Reviews Page 7	"We Ask" our exchange students Page 8
--------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------	----------------------------------	----------------------------	------------------------------------------

The Eagle Times Staff

Editor

Amelia McAvoy

Reporters

Kaitlyn Bartash
Héloïse Blanc
Byron Burke
Abigail Cormier
Ava Mae Hymer
Bridgette Libby
Sarah Marisco
Amelia McAvoy
Zachary Myers
Andrew Plummer
Xohiti Pope
Ava Stoddard
Kaitlyn Reed
Cordelia Porelli
Kamryn Mowry
Maja Pultke

Photographers

Abigail Cormier
Charlotte McAvoy

Advisor

Ms. Joanne Lannin

The *Eagle Times* is the student voice of Bonny Eagle High School, published regularly with a circulation of an estimated 800 copies

The purpose of the *Eagle Times* is to:

a.) Present the news, as it pertains to the student body, in a non-biased and tasteful fashion,

b.) Provide a forum, wherein ideas and options, concepts and concerns may be freely and openly discussed,

c.) Provide the student body, faculty, and administration with a circulated medium in which letters, notices of recognition, and other submissions may be published.

The *Eagle Times* welcomes submissions from students, faculty, staff and community members. All submissions MUST be signed by their respective authors. The *Eagle Times* reserves the right to edit submissions based on length, language, or clarity.

Find us online at
www.behsnews.com

Bonny Eagle High School
700 Saco Road
Standish, ME 04084

Can there be too much pumpkin spice?

By Ava Stoddard

The staff of *The Eagle Times* decided to see if snack foods are becoming too "pumpkin-spice-ified" or if that's a good thing! (This was definitely not an excuse to eat a bunch of desserts at our meetings. But you can decide if you believe that!)

WEEK ONE

In week one, we reviewed pumpkin Munchkins and a pumpkin coffee drink, both from Dunkin'.

The Munchkins:

"Delightful," said editor Amelia McAvoy, "but slightly cinnamon-y and very sweet." She gave them a solid 8 out of 10. Ava Stoddard said, "YUM. It's really good. It reminds me of the pumpkin donuts at the apple orchard." She thoroughly enjoyed this and ended up eating the rest of the box by mistake.

The coffee drink:

Amelia said the coffee is not very sweet. It doesn't really taste like pumpkin, but more like caramel. Abigail Cormier said it leaves a sweet taste in your mouth. Ava Stoddard thought it tasted like water but with a coffee flavor. (Ava is not a coffee person) She couldn't taste the pumpkin at all, but that is because she is NOT used to coffee. If you like coffee, you will most likely enjoy this and see how it is different from any other coffee.

WEEK TWO

Welcome back, awesome food critic readers! For week two, we tried more autumn treats, although who knows if they are a treat, or a TRICK! We reviewed Milano pumpkin spice cookies made by Pepperidge Farm (We purchased them at the Hannaford in Buxton with my mother's birthday money. THANKS MOM!)



Clockwise left to right, the Madeleine, the pumpkin roll, and the pumpkin whoopie pie.

Photo by Charlotte McAvoy

Also, we tried Hannaford Pumpkin Rolls, Pumpkin Whoopie pies, Pumpkin spiced pumpkin seeds from Trader Joes (wow!!!), and Pumpkin Spice Madeleines from Limited Time Originals.

First, the Madeleine cookie:

Charley McAvoy said "It's good but kind of dry." Amelia McAvoy agreed, adding that it tasted like a pumpkin candle, but not in a bad way, since those Yankee candles do smell good! (Do you eat candles, Amelia?) Ava Stoddard loved this cookie. She is a pumpkin fanatic and does not care if it's a tad dry.

The pumpkin whoopie pie

Charley thought it did not taste like pumpkin and was just generally bad. Amelia thought it tasted like chemicals and had the consistency of a sponge. That is not a compliment, by the way! Ava agreed with them both, but it contains sugar, so she is okay with it. (Not even kidding)

The Milano cookie

Charley thought it tasted more pumpkin-y than the other things. It is good. Amelia agreed about the harsher pumpkin-y-ness, but said it is still sweet. She

loves it. Ava thinks the pumpkin flavor isn't that strong, but it is good.

The pumpkin roll

"Mmm" was the first reaction. Charley said it was her favorite of the pumpkin treats! Amelia said it was very very good, but towards the end, the amount of cream cheese frosting was a bit much. Ava could not finish it because there was so much frosting, but it was very good!

The pumpkin spice pumpkin seeds

The whole staff thought they weren't very pumpkin-y, which is ironic since they are the seeds of a pumpkin, but they liked the sweet flavor. We also agreed that it can be a healthier alternative to candy corn (We know, candy corn is very snackable.)

And the winners are:

Ava's favorite was the Madeleine, Charley's was the pumpkin roll, and Amelia's was the Milano cookies.

So that concludes our very GOURD review :D We laughed, we cried... well, we didn't actually cry, but it adds drama when you say that. Now you know which pumpkin treats to buy and which ones to PASS by.

Cherish your friendships and the time you've shared

By Ava Stoddard

Warning: This is a lot less light-hearted than my usual stories. Sorry, but this is something that needs to be said.

A few weeks ago, a 14-year-old boy in Freeport went missing. The whole community was involved in some way, like looking for him or making meals for the search teams. When I learned he was a 'missing person' I was so worried. It hurts a lot more when you hear bad news about someone you once knew, rather than when you just hear something on the news about a random person.

The Bad News

He was found five days later, on Sept. 27, but it wasn't the welcome home anyone was hoping for; Theo Ferrara was found dead.

I was so sad. Every time I stopped thinking about it, a while later at random it would hit me that he's gone and it would hurt all over again.

How I Knew Him

Theo was one of my friends in elementary school when I lived in Freeport. He was so funny and was never mean to any of the kids in our class. Everyone appreciated him.

One of my favorite memories of Theo was playing checkers in second grade. Every time we had indoor recess due to

rain, he would come up to me and ask to play checkers, or I would ask him. From what I recall, he was really good at it!

Also I remember he drew maps in elementary school and was super good at it. He was only eight at the time.

I remember in third grade he told a really funny joke that went like this: "Did you hear about the kidnapping in Freeport?" Everyone gasped. Is it someone we know? Oh my gosh! Why haven't our parents told us there was a kidnapping?! Our innocent minds raced frantically. "The kid woke up!" he grinned. It took our eight-year-old brains a minute to realize: The kid was napping! Then we all burst out laughing.

Missing Someone

It makes anyone sad to think about, but it was especially heartbreaking to those who knew him. I know it was quite a while ago that we were friends, but I knew him personally up until fifth grade when I moved to Bonny Eagle.

I just want everyone to remember him for how awesome he was. And, if anyone reading this has grown apart from one of their childhood friends and hears some bad news about them, just remember it's normal to be sad about it, even if it's been a long time since you've seen them.



Missing person poster. WMTW-TV screenshot

In The End

I had not seen him for a long time, but my heart goes out to his mom, his dad, his sisters, and all his friends and peers. While they must be utterly devastated beyond words, I feel a sense of loss as well.

This isn't just about Theo. This has made me realize that this sort of thing can happen to anyone, anytime, anywhere. So cherish the time you have with your friends. You never know how limited, and how precious, the time you have with them is.

Well, I just wanted to say, Theo, that I can't believe you are gone and I will miss you. Again, my heart goes out to his family, and anyone else who has had to deal with the loss of a friend—no matter where you are in life now.



Ms. Bobby Jo Rand displays some words to live by. Staff photo

She's here to listen and to offer support

By Ava Mae Evans
and Kaitlyn Bartash

Right outside of Bonny Eagle High School, in portable number 10, is Ms. Bobby Jo Rand's room. It's quiet, dimly lit by a couple of lamps, and has a couch, pillows, and two rocking chairs. It might not sound like the average Bonny Eagle classroom, but that's because Ms. Rand is not a teacher; she's a social worker.

According to Ms. Rand, there are many misconceptions about social workers.

"I think sometimes people think social workers give you a job and tell you what to do and then you go and do it," she explains. "There may be some out there that do it, but not me.... I just like to listen and offer suggestions and strategies."

Ms. Rand was born and raised in

the Sacopee Valley area. She did not originally intend to become a social worker, but she says she kind of fell into it by working with kids. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Maine at Presque Isle and her Master's degree from the University of New England in 2007. She has been working as a social worker for approximately 15 years.

Moving to Bonny Eagle High School has been a big change for her, but one she sought out when applying here. She says her old school was much smaller and had less support for social workers, so she is excited to be here.

"I came to Bonny Eagle because I wanted a change from my previous school. I wanted it a little bit bigger to be able to help out more kids," she explained.

Ms. Rand has found the atmosphere at BEHS "a little overwhelming because I don't really know any teachers or students, but everyone has been really nice."

In her free time, Ms. Rand enjoys camping, kayaking, spending time with her family, and being creative. In addition to a cat and a dog, she takes care of a bearded dragon—a type of lizard. Her greatest accomplishments include being a mother of four daughters and being nominated for Teacher of the Year at her old school, despite not being a regular classroom teacher.

If you find yourself feeling down or stressed about school or problems at home, feel free to give Ms. Rand a visit. She's looking forward to meeting more people and finding her place at Bonny Eagle.

Helping students feel at home when they don't have one

By Kaitlyn Reed
and Cordelia Porelli

Mrs. Ashley Dyer is Bonny Eagle's new homeless coordinator.

Before coming to BE, Mrs. Dyer founded Farmhouse Floral in Yarmouth, where she grew her career for 16 years. She considers this, and her international experiences as a lacrosse coach to be her biggest accomplishments.

Mrs. Dyer went to Colby Sawyer University in NH and graduated from the University of Southern Maine with a degree in therapy recreation. She has coached lacrosse at the University of

New England, USM, and at Gorham High School.

Through her college coaching career, Mrs. Dyer realized that she enjoyed working with teenagers and young adults. She felt that she could most relate to that age group because she is most familiar with them.

Mrs. Dyer's goal as a homeless coordinator is to provide support to those students who may be couch hopping, those who have an unstable home environment, or in some cases, are homeless. She has been in the process of implementing the federal

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the purpose of which is to minimize the educational disruptions experienced by students experiencing housing instability.

According to the Maine Dept. of Education website, students in temporary housing situations are guaranteed the right to a free, appropriate, public education.

Mrs. Dyer's biggest goal is to see students accomplish and succeed in their education regardless of their situations at home.



Mrs. Dyer has a background in floral design. Courtesy photo

An energizing presence at Bonny Eagle

By Sarah Marisco

Ms. Sarah DeLuca is a new instructional coach at BEHS. She is very excited about working closely with teachers at Bonny Eagle and watching students learn.

After more than a decade as a classroom teacher and administrator in other schools, Ms. DeLuca came to Bonny Eagle because she decided she wanted to be back in the classroom. She says she has really enjoyed getting to know people and that she's energized by what teachers are doing in their classrooms.

The job of an instructional coach is relatively new at Bonny Eagle although it's been around for six to eight years in other districts. Ms. DeLuca enjoys working with the other coaches in the building. She really likes the team aspect that Bonny Eagle has to offer.

Previously, Ms. DeLuca taught high school math (Algebra I and Calculus) for nine years. She also served as an assistant principal for six years, working at Falmouth Middle School for two years and then four years at Edward Little High School. She began her career in Massachusetts. During her time as a teacher in previous schools, she helped implement an advisory program like the one Bonny Eagle calls "SYNC."

Ms. DeLuca works closely with teachers, whether it be implementing a new and creative lesson, or brainstorming what could work for various units. She says she "really loves working with teachers and seeing the outcome of the students' learning and so much more."

Currently, she is working on



Ms. Sarah DeLuca is helping teachers help students. Diane York photo

learning what teachers' goals are and how they would like to see students meet their objectives.

Ms. DeLuca feels her role is crucial in seeing that teachers are enabling students to learn to their maximum ability.

"Teachers are resilient professionals, but they too need support," she said.

Ms. DeLuca earned her undergraduate degree and a postgraduate degree from Gordon College in Massachusetts. She also has a Master's degree from Salem State University. She played basketball and softball in high school and college. She also played soccer, was a member of the student council, and was a part of the National Honor Society. She was really involved with the culture of her school and wanted to improve whatever she could.

As for hobbies, Ms. DeLuca describes herself as a "Jill of all trades and a master of nothing." She primarily loves to create. So for her, that means baking, sewing, and DIYing things. She ultimately loves being active with her hands and works out every day.

She is helping students to be their social and emotional best

By Kamryn Mowry and Maja Pultke

"Recognizing that people are trying their best."

That is the motto new special education teacher Mrs. Kendra Volpe lives by. She started out as an elementary school teacher and has come a long way to be the head teacher of the social emotional behavioral program that supports students with disadvantages at Bonny Eagle High School.

Born in Canada, Mrs. Volpe spent her childhood in South Carolina. Later, she started her career at nursing school. Quickly, she realized that she absolutely loved being able to help kids be their best, so she changed her major to teaching elementary education. After that she got her Master's in special education from Drexel University, a private research university in Philadelphia. Mrs. Volpe focused her studies on special ed law.

Mrs. Volpe decided to come to Bonny Eagle because she was really excited about the opportunity to be a part of the community and work with the students here. In addition, she says she "lives pretty close to Bonny Eagle and it just seemed like a really cool place to be."

As a special education teacher, Mrs. Volpe focuses on giving every student access to a great education. She mainly focuses on restorative justice, which is backed by understanding of how behavior works in real situations. She says the methods integrate social and



Mrs. Volpe is a former elementary school teacher. Diane York photo

emotional learning with some acts of commitment therapy.

Outside of work, Mrs. Volpe says she likes to read. Her family does a lot of camping, hiking, and other outdoor activities.

"Skiing is like our favorite thing to do, so we train all summer, and we like to paddleboard on the lakes and stuff like that," she says.

Mrs. Volpe has two little girls - four and six years old. Going to school for her Master's degree while working and raising her two girls was a great challenge she says. For a while she struggled with completing the course work and getting appropriate grades. She was also moving and doing all that on her own, which did not make the time easier.

With that part of her journey behind her, Mrs. Volpe "is really hoping to make a difference with the kids as part of the special education program."

Welcome to new teachers and staff!

New teacher is not all business

By Brody Taylor

Mr. Matt Simmons is the new business teacher at Bonny Eagle High School. Originally from Watertown, NY, he grew up in Albany and received his undergraduate degree in physical education at Suny (State University of New York) Cortland. He earned his Master's degree in secondary business education at Eastern Nazarene University and his educational leadership degree at the University of Southern Maine.

He has been a teacher since 2001, but took an eight-year break to pursue other interests. He has worked in four school systems throughout his career since leaving a sports marketing job. He got his first teaching job as a substitute on the South Shore of Boston. After subbing for a while, he moved on to teach full time.

Mr. Simmons' favorite hobbies are golf, camping, and traveling with his family.

His son is a sophomore at Falmouth High School and is on the baseball team, so Mr. Simmons spends a lot of time going to his son's baseball games.

His son got the athletic gene from his father. At his high school in upstate New York, Mr. Simmons was a star football player. He still



Mr. Matt Simmons. Diane York photo

holds the school record for throwing 17 touchdowns in an eight-game season. He also holds the record at his school for most yards thrown in a season.

Mr. Simmons has a passion for golf, but he doesn't watch a lot of it. His favorite golfers are Bryson Dechambeau or Dustin Johnson.

Mr. Simmons likes teaching business because he gets to talk to his students about current events and topics that they will use outside of high school. In high school, Mr. Simmons was intrigued by business but he valued sports marketing more.

After getting out of the sports marketing field and seeing there was an opening for a business teaching job, he pounced on it and hasn't looked back

Being nursed back to health caused a change in course

By Andrew Plummer

Darcy-Jo Tarr, also known as Mrs. Tarr by the students at Bonny Eagle High School, is the new school nurse. Born and raised in Baldwin, Maine, she didn't always think she was going into nursing.

Mrs. Tarr began high school thinking she was going to go into business. However, after tearing her ACL during an incident her senior year, she had to have surgery. Because of the care she received, she decided to change course and go into nursing school to pursue becoming a nurse.

After nursing school, Mrs. Tarr became a pediatric nurse in the Intensive Care Unit at Maine Medical Center. She said she decided to become a school nurse because she loves kids.

"I have three small children of my own," she says, adding, "I like working closer with families, and children, and to help better the health in the community setting."

Mrs. Tarr doesn't get a lot of alone time; however, she enjoys spending what free time she does have outside with her family, riding bikes, and doing stock car races. She also enjoys hanging out with her six-year-old German Shepherd Maggie.

Reflecting on her busy schedule, Mrs. Tarr said, "There is always stuff going on behind the scenes. Checking



Mrs. Darcy Jo Tarr is our new school nurse. Courtesy photo

immunizations, medications, parents calling in to talk about their kids, and a lot of paperwork."

Despite her busy schedule, Mrs. Tarr seems to be flourishing at Bonny Eagle in her new position. She says she enjoys that "something different happens every day no matter what."

Being new in such an important job can be intimidating, but Mrs. Tarr says, "[Bonny Eagle] is extremely welcoming...I can always ask someone a question and get help from someone whenever I need it."

Encouraging students to find and achieve their goals

By Bridgette Libby, and Héloïse Blanc

For Mrs. Sara Otis, the new school counselor for the class of 2026, becoming a school counselor fulfills her dream.

"I had an amazing high school counselor who helped me through a really tough situation, and I wanted to support kids in that same way," she explained. "Plus I love working with students. I don't think I'm cut out to be a teacher, but I've always been someone that friends have gone to for advice. People have said I'm really trustworthy."

Mrs. Otis started school counseling 13 years ago, first at an elementary school, and then at the middle school level for the last nine years. High school is her final stop. Eventually, she wants to become a professor of counseling education.

"It would be important for me to have had experience at all the different levels," she said.

Born in Maine, Mrs. Otis spent her



This is the 13th year as a school counselor for Mrs. Sara Otis, and her first at the high school level.

Courtesy photo

middle school years in Montana and then returned to Maine for high school. She went to two different colleges: the University of Maine in Orono and the University of Southern Maine. Before starting school counseling, she worked at a preschool for children with autism and developmental disabilities.

Mrs. Otis also worked in graduate admissions at USM, helping people make sure they had everything they needed to pursue their education.

This experience helps in her current job because she does those things with every student she counsels. Her goal as a school counselor is to help kids in three different domains: social/emotional, career, and academic.

She explains that she is here to help students with feelings and relationships, with exploring interests and skills, and with making sure that they have what they need to succeed in classes, including a schedule that will support them and give them the skills needed for the future.

Her advice to students is to get involved, not just in sports, but in many activities. When she was in high school, she was captain of the cheerleading team and was on varsity all four years. However, she was mostly part of many clubs.

"Some of my best memories were in the clubs that I did: the band, French club, and the student council," she reflected.

Outside of school, Mrs. Otis likes reading, going to the beach, hiking, watching fake reality shows, trying new restaurants, playing with her kids, and cooking. She also loves live music and going to concerts. The most important things in her life are her two boys, Sam, 10, and Oliver, who is 7.

Mrs. Otis is enjoying her time at Bonny Eagle High School so far.

"I've only been here a few weeks, but the staff and students have been amazing," she said.



Mr. Brandon Pierson. Diane York photo

Putting his own life skills to work to help others succeed

By Byron Burke

Mr. Brandon Pierson has worn many hats in his work life so far. He has been a basketball referee, a salesman at Best Buy, a blueberry picker, and a game store tournament host, among other things.

Last year he worked as a long term sub here at Bonny Eagle High School and substituted

at the Bonny Eagle Middle School as well.

This year, Mr. Pierson is a self-contained, functional academic teacher. In this program he helps people develop the skills they will need to be contributing members of their community.

Mr. Pierson went to high school in Gorham, but his

family moved around often.

He chose to teach because, for him, it's fulfilling. He also enjoys the performative aspect of teaching, feeling like he is an actor playing an important role on stage.

For his first two years of college he was at Southern Maine Community College. Then, he transferred to the

University of Southern Maine where he earned his degree.

In his free time he likes to garden and to play games, such as Dungeons and Dragons. He also is a big fan of the Boston Celtics, and he has a cat named Coco.

Mr. Pierson says that so far all the staff have been super kind and incredibly helpful.

Timeline for solving water quality problems is murky

By Ava Mae Hymer

While results from many school districts are still pending, MSAD6 has recorded the highest levels in the state so far of so-called "forever chemicals" in its drinking water.

Four MSAD6 schools, including the high school, failed state-mandated tests for polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), which have been linked to fertility issues, weaker immune systems, and various types of cancers.

As a result of the tests, officials are pursuing treatment options, but finding solutions is expected to take months. In the meantime, students and staff are forbidden from using the water that comes out of faucets and fountains. Bottled water has been provided to the schools by Poland Springs.

PFAS have become the subject of much statewide and national debate, as more and more states have found them in ground water and industrial areas throughout America. They have been called "forever chemicals," because of how long they can remain in water despite filtration systems.

Although they have been linked to

multiple cancers, birth defects, and other health issues, there is no national regulation for the level of PFAS allowed in drinking water. However, the state of Maine enacted new regulations that state that drinking water in schools and health care facilities can not exceed 20 parts per trillion (ppt).

Public schools and health care facilities do not have to complete testing until December, according to Superintendent Clay Gleason, but he said in August that MSAD6 wanted to get results before school started in the fall. The high school came in at 34.2 ppt, the middle school came in at 822 ppt, and Frank Jewett and Hollis Elementary School came in at 155 ppt and 82 ppt, respectively.

Results from the tests came back in August, less than a month before school began. Given the short notice, the high school had to come up with a quick fix. All water fountains have been turned off, and new water coolers can be found on most corners.

Principal Mr. Greg Applestein spoke about this solution, saying, "The remedy is that we've worked in conjunction



Water fountains are off limits at BEHS. Charlotte McAvoy photo

with Poland Springs who landed us [...] 5 thousands gallons of drinkable water."

Five thousand gallons might sound like a lot, but it's not just for students. Ms. Susan Porter, the food services

director, says, "We have to use bottled water for everything: rice, pasta, steaming vegetables. We don't even wash the food with it."

Ms. Porter estimates that the cafeteria uses around 10 liters of water a day, at least. "It's made this year challenging for us, but we're still trying to put out good food." Luckily, Poland Springs has agreed to supply the school with water for as long as it's needed.

Mr. Adam Thibodeau, the MSAD6 facilities director, says that it is "unlikely" that a solution will be found before the end of the school year. The school has employed Sevee & Maher Engineers (SME), an engineering firm from Portland, to evaluate the systems in place and figure out the best solution for the district. Mr. Thibodeau stated that although the school will not have to dig a whole new well, SME's observation phase alone will take months.

"We'll be looking at all options with the understanding that bottled water is not the best solution," said Supt. Gleason in August when the PFAS levels were reported. "We definitely keep the safety of our students at the forefront."

Come learn about other cultures

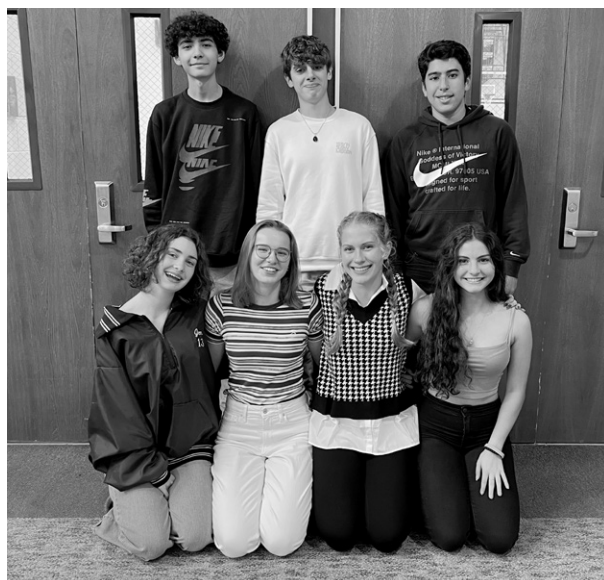
From staff reports

On Nov. 16, our international students will be hosting a multi-cultural night in the BEHS cafeteria from 6-7:30 p.m.

The sponsor of the event is Judy Farwell of Greenheart, who is the exchange student program coordinator.

If you want to learn about other cultures or think you might be interested in being a host family in the future, feel free to stop by.

Our seven exchange students, pictured at right, are left to right in the back row, Mario Pineda Poveda, Robin William, and Gabriel



Holanda. Kneeling in the front row are: Héloïse Blanc, Maja Pultke, Il-aria Messa, and Irene Ruiz Buceta.

You can read more in this issue about our exchnage students on page 8.

Students show lots of enthusiasm for Spirit Week and pep rally events



By Abigail Cormier

Homecoming Week has been known to be busy, but this year both students and staff went over the top to make sure this week was one for the books.

Everyone showed spirit in the classrooms by following the spirit themes. These themes included; pink out, surfers vs bikers, anything but a



At left, students cheer for one of the relay races. Above, Connor Cormier and Ashleigh Walker are ready for green and white day. Abigail Cormier photos

backpack day, and green and white day. In the end the freshman came out on top with their school spirit, but that does not mean participation wasn't rather impressive for all four grades.

The week ended with the infamous spirit assembly where many games were organized by Mrs. Dawna Cyr and the senior class officers. These games involved all grade levels and even a staff team! The relay race using multiple sports balls and acrobatic skills really put all the students to the test.

To get into the Halloween spirit, the traditional spoon egg run was replaced with a candy corn alternative. This event had two cups, one near the contestants and one near the finish line. The goal was to use a spoon to collect candy corn from your cup and run it to the cup across the field. The first to fill their cup would win.

The judging for these events was quite difficult as not everyone played completely by the rules. Despite this, everyone had a great time either participating or watching their classmates.

To finish off the assembly, the sports teams were announced and the cheer teams provided multiple performances that included a combination of stunting, dancing, and tumbling.

It was the grand finale we were all expecting to a great Spirit week!

She's hoping to pass on her passion for languages



Ms. Hajduk is a Maine native.

Photo by Diane York

By Xochitl Pope

Although Spanish 1 teacher, Ms. Micaela Hajduk, is new to Bonny Eagle High School, she is not new to our state, having grown up in Winthrop.

After college at St. Michael's, near Burlington, Vermont, Ms. Hajduk furthered her studies by traveling to Argentina. She also joined the Peace Corps and traveled to Ecuador where she taught English for a year before having to be evacuated due to COVID.

Ms. Hajduk says that the Peace Corps experience showed that she really loved working with students of all ages and prompted her to share her passion for speaking a second language with others. After leaving Ecuador, Ms. Hajduk then joined Americorps, which got her even more interested in being an educator.

"I had a great mentor and he just showed me how amazing it is to be in education," she said. "Getting this job at Bonny Eagle was an incredible opportunity and I just love the atmosphere here ... All the teachers are really nice."

Outside of school Ms. Hajduk occupies her time by doing yoga, reading, paddleboarding and hiking. She is also the coach for the JV field hockey team. She says it's been a few years since she's been back in the sport, but she is excited to be part of the team. So far she says it has been a really cool experience.

Overall, Ms Hajduk has felt very welcomed and says that, "I'm happy here and I think it's going to be a good year."

New store makes collecting sports cards easier than ever

By Zachary Myers

Over the last year, I've started collecting sports cards, especially football and baseball. And luckily, I've found a great local sports card store to help me build my collections.

Maine Sports Cards Plus, which is located at 111 Ossipe Trail East in Standish, is exactly how it sounds. The store, which is open Wednesday through Sunday from 12-6 or from 10-6, is 2,500 square feet of wall to wall sports memorabilia. There are loads of great stuff in all price ranges for collectors of all ages. There are thousands of individual cards, as well as hobby boxes, card packs, and even figurines.

The store is owned by Michael Morong, who taught at Bonny Eagle Middle School for 39 years and is still a fixture at many BEHS athletic events. He works with Will Hendrix, who is the store's director of sales. Will, a recent graduate, was a three-sport athlete at Bonny Eagle High School.

Mr. Morong opened the store May, 2021, and he says business has been going extremely well.

"Better than expected," he says. "We've really expanded things and the best part is we just get to see so many people come in."

Besides sports cards, the store also sells a whole host of other products. These include signed hockey pucks,

game-used vintage baseball bats, and figurines of athletes such as Michael Jordan and Nolan Ryan.

The store has also started to hold monthly trade nights where collectors can come to show off their best cards from their collections. It's a great opportunity to interact with fellow collectors and learn some insight about certain collectors' items.

What I think is the best part about the store is their prices. While they have certain collector's items that are understandably expensive, some aren't so high in value. This makes them perfect for young and/or inexperienced collectors who are just trying to start.

There are sections where the cards are \$5 or \$10 per card but also sections where the cards are 50 cents to \$2 per card. Both these options are great for starting a collection and some of these cards can be very valuable. There is also an opportunity to earn some money, as the store is willing to purchase vintage (pre-1980s) cards. So start looking in the attic or talking to your grandparents. Mr. Morong says that vintage cards from the 1950s-1960s are popular as well as newer cards, such as Donruss Optic and PRIZM.

What sets them apart from other stores, he says is, "We're the biggest, which helps. We're the biggest in Maine so we have the largest selection. We have over 1,000 cards on display in the showcases and we have close to 1,000



A sampling of some of the rarest baseball cards at Maine Sports Cards Plus.
Maine Sports Card Plus photo

boxes and sets."

Just recently, Mr. Morong said the store sold a Tom Brady rookie card for \$4,000 and his biggest collection bought was a pre-1980s baseball collection for \$17,000, which I thought was crazy.

According to its Facebook page, the store is holding an event Nov. 18 from

noon to 6 p.m. during which an expert from James Spence Authentication will be evaluating autographs to certify if they are genuine. The store will take walk-ins that day, but the best way to secure a spot is to be put on their list, which can be done by emailing: mainesportscardsplus@gmail.com.

Another night to remember at annual Homecoming events

At right, Parker Gammon, a 2017 BEHS graduate, was inducted into the school's athletic hall of fame during Homecoming weekend.

Parker won a number of awards during his four years playing football at BEHS. In his senior year, Parker helped lead BEHS to its sixth state championship. The Scots defeated Portland 34-14.

At the conclusion of that season, Parker earned the Gerry Raymond Award as the Southern Maine Athletic Association's Lineman of the Year.



At left, the Homecoming Court, left to right, are: Zoe Gaudet, Cade Dixon, Brody Ernst, Jack Ross, Nicholas Freeman, Amelia McAvoy, Kaitlyn Bartash, and Elora Larrive

Updates fail to eliminate gaps between stalls

By Kaitlyn Bartash

Volleyball players and students taking gym classes were thrilled to see the great updates made to the high school gym over the summer.

However, one place that people often try not to think about also saw large renovations over the summer—the high school bathrooms.

Due to both old age and the vandalism caused by the 'devious lick' TikTok trend that occurred last year, our school bathrooms needed an upgrade. That is why Mr. Adam Thibodeau, the MSAD 6 Facilities Manager, decided it was time to update them.

"It wasn't a full-on renovation and I would love to tear them all apart and totally redo them when the budget arises to do so," Thibodeau stated.

Instead of completely redoing the bathrooms, the focus for Mr. Thibodeau was "on making them usable, safe,

and attractive with keeping a future in mind."

Toilets, urinals, faucets, and soap dispensers were all replaced. Contractors fixed many bathroom tiles and installed entirely new countertops in the new wing bathrooms.

However, the main thing that students noticed at Bonny Eagle High School were the new partitions between stalls. While the stalls were initially redone for accessibility reasons, students couldn't stop talking about how the formerly wide gaps in the stalls had been made smaller.

"They're less gappy, but still have pretty big gaps," sophomore Bridgette Libby noted.

The gaps between the bathroom stalls have been a popular concern among many students. They complain that students can easily see people outside of the stalls when they are inside, creating

many awkward encounters.

French exchange student Heloise Blanc had a bit of a culture shock when she encountered this for the first time.

"The gaps are so huge here," she marveled. "In France you have more privacy—like doors that close well and have no gaps. Here... it's a little uncomfortable."

When asked about the gaps between the stalls, Mr. Thibodeau could not help but roll his eyes a little.

"The gaps were huge just due to abuse over time, and there are gaps still...Technically, by the time you hit middle school and high school you have reached a level of maturity in which you shouldn't be looking in the bathroom when somebody else is using it. Unfortunately, the level of maturity hasn't really risen to the top here," he joked. "That's why we have some of the [single person] bathrooms here so you don't need to worry about it."

Courtesy photos

Keep up
with
school news
on our
website!

www.
behsnews.com

Elvis comes back to life in Luhrmann's latest

By Abigail Cormier

This past summer, one of the most timeless and iconic musicians of all time made a comeback. Director Baz Luhrmann's *Elvis* was an overnight success and some say the biopic has Oscar possibilities.

In the film, Elvis is played by Austin Butler, and although he has played a plethora of characters in his career, he has become best known for his scarily accurate portrayal of the late singer. His voice, mannerisms, and even his looks are the exact image of Elvis in his youth. His portrayal of Elvis has been dubbed the best yet of all the Elvis movies that have come before.

The movie is told from the point of view of Elvis' lifelong manager Colonel

Tom Parker, played by Tom Hanks. He starts off by trying to explain his standpoint on the controversies that follow Elvis to his death. He walks the audience through Elvis' rise to fame, which he at one moment describes by saying, "In that moment, Elvis the man was sacrificed, and Elvis the God was born."

The story is extremely accurate to the actual life of Elvis. The 1950's come alive when you are watching this film.

Throughout the film there are moments that touch on the racial issues in America and how they affect those around Elvis and even the singer himself, who grew up in an extremely poor black community. A few scenes depict this, as well as his time with fellow musical legend, B.B. King.

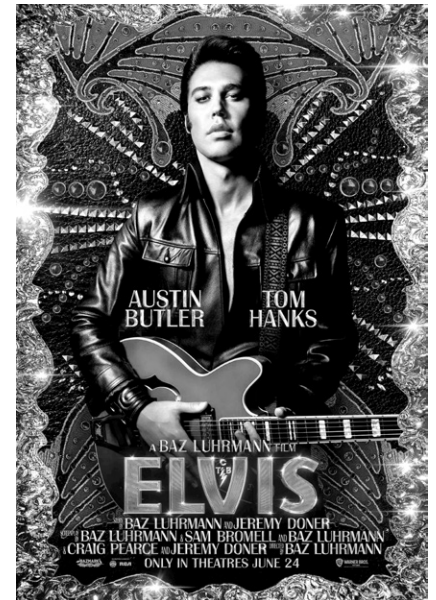
The film was a box office hit when it was released last June, staying in theaters for two months in some places.

The movie has made a gross profit of about \$151 million in the U.S. alone, following its release, and more than \$280 million globally.

The reviews are also some of the highest for any recent movie release in the past decade with a tomato-meter rating of 77% and an audience rating of 94%.

Overall the movie is accurate, funny, and popular. It is great to watch with friends, family, or even on your own. The movie is currently available to HBO Max subscribers. It can be rented on other streaming services such as Amazon Prime and Apple + for a fee.

It is definitely worth a watch.



Austin Butler brings Elvis to life on the big screen. IMDb.com photo

You'll be scared but enlightened after watching *Nope*

By Amelia McAvoy

Since *Get Out*, his directorial debut, Jordan Peele has been heralded as one of the best and most unique horror directors/writers of the 21st century. This summer, he wowed critics and audiences alike once more with his third movie, *Nope*, which can be streamed on Amazon Prime or Vudu.

The film follows OJ and Emerald (Daniel Kaluuya and Keke Palmer, respectively), a sister and brother duo running their deceased father's horse ranch who come to realize a UFO is inhabiting the desert with them.

Along with the camera installer helping them get footage of the UFO, Angel (Brandon Perea), and the former child star running a theme park next door, Jupe (Steven Yeun), they find themselves caught in the path of a hungry extraterrestrial.

As in Peele's other films, *Nope* is not only a horror movie, but also a clever social commentary. Through the character's search to become famous by capturing the UFO on camera, along with a horrifying side plot surrounding Jupe's experience as a child actor with a particularly violent monkey, Peele criticizes humanity's obsession with fame and their exploitation of nature.

Just as *Get Out* and *Us* did before



Being caught in the path of a hungry extraterrestrial provides the drama in Jordan Peele's latest horror film. IMDb.com photo

it, *Nope* derives its strength as a film from its commentary. Not only does the film use its theme to create a completely unique take on the alien genre, but it also uses even the most mundane scenes to develop its message, starting from the very beginning when OJ's directions on taming a horse are ignored.

Peele does an excellent job exploiting one of humanity's greatest fears: themselves. Audiences end up leaving the theater both scared and enlightened.

Another one of *Nope*'s biggest strengths is its talented cast. Daniel Kaluuya put Peele's creations on the map with his leading role in *Get Out*, and once again he does a great job breathing life into an

already well fleshed out character.

Steven Yeun has captured audiences for years already with his work in *The Walking Dead* and, although fairly new to the scene, Brandon Perea does a great job as comedic relief. However, it is Keke Palmer that steals the show. She brings out the quirky, outgoing attitude of her character while also being able to reel in the humor to deliver in the dramatic scenes. The passion and intensity she brings to every moment of her performance is truly a stand out in the film.

However, while *Nope* is an enjoyable film, and as a lover of the horror genre, I would personally pay Jordan Peele to keep making movies, something was

missing with this one. I am not opposed to sci-fi and was quite excited for Peele to take on aliens, but I felt this film veered away from the horror genre. It lacked the same sense of dread from Peele's other films and very few scenes were truly scary. The sequences with Gordy, the monkey, stood out as terrifying to me, but the main plot with the UFO felt more reminiscent of a blockbuster action sci-fi than a horror movie.

Additionally, I felt there were issues with the pacing. The film has a runtime of 2 hours and 15 minutes, but it feels longer. A lot of the exposition of the film—with the siblings attempting to photograph the UFO—definitely dragged and felt unnecessary. Peele's witty comedy was entertaining throughout these parts, but it left the viewer wondering when something was going to happen.

Despite its flaws, *Nope* is still a solid film. It may not be what audiences were expecting from Peele, but it is still incredibly well done, and critics agree, with it earning an 82% critic rating on Rotten Tomatoes.

I would give this movie three and a half stars, as the plot wasn't as enjoyable as I had hoped. But, I would still recommend it, and I can't wait to see what Jordan Peele does next.

A coming of age memoir with literary value

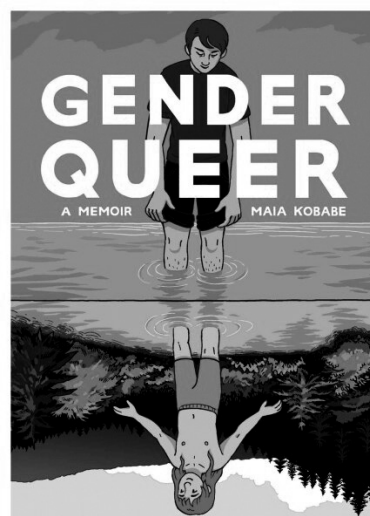
By Amelia McAvoy

Recently a certain title in the school library has been shrouded in controversy. (See story on page 1). However, no one has commented on whether it is an enjoyable read or not. Rather than adding another voice to the debate, I want to step back and evaluate the content of the story on whether or not it's well-written, not on whether or not it's appropriate.

Gender Queer is a memoir following the journey of the author, Maia Kobabe, through childhood to adulthood as e (Kobabe uses the pronouns e/em/eir) grapples with eir gender and sexual identity. *Gender Queer* is a quick read, but it packs an entire life story within these pages.

Memoirs always hold a certain weight, knowing you are reading a real person's story, but that could especially be felt within this graphic-novel format because it shares a narrative that often goes unrecognized. Because this was a story I haven't seen widely portrayed in the media, I was quite captivated to

read about the author's experiences and emotions. Not only is Kobabe's memoir an enjoyable teen narrative, but it is also educational in that it speaks to what the lives of LGBTQ+ teens experience through simple language and pictures.



Amazon.com photos

Aside from being informative, *Gender Queer* is also just a fun read. While Kobabe's adolescence may have looked different from other teenagers, e also realistically captures everyday scenarios that all teens deal with. I particularly

enjoyed how all of the stories blended together, and how there was no real timeline. Kobabe went back and forth between telling high school stories and stories of eir youth. This storytelling method made it feel more authentic. The interconnectedness of all the little stories of Kobabe's life showed how life really ebbs and flows. It allows the reader to take a journey with the author and really feel like a part of eir story.

For me, *Gender Queer* was an engaging read; I read it all in one sitting. It wasn't that the writing was groundbreaking or that the illustrations were breathtaking, but that the story was intriguing. The teen years are such a pivotal time in life, with experiences that are unique in molding a person to whom they will be. I enjoyed reading about this important time in this author's life from a perspective with which I'm not familiar.

So, while I wouldn't consider this the next *Catcher in the Rye*, I feel you could learn just as much about growing up from it, which is why I love reading: for its ability to open your mind and extend your knowledge.

We Ask BE

Page 8

October 2022

What do you like most about BEHS?



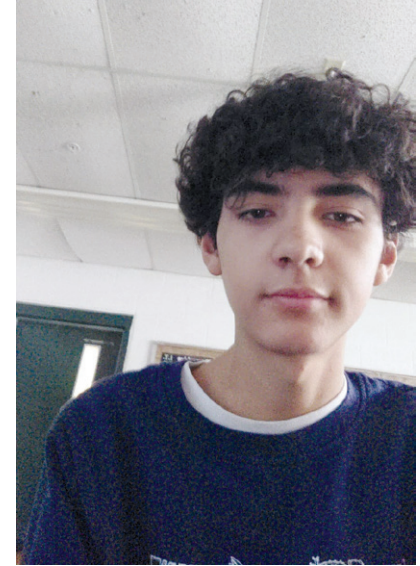
"Volleyball, the bond you create with your teammates in every game."

Irene Ruiz Buceta
Madrid, Spain



"Spirit week. People were very creative on Anything But a Backpack Day!"

Maja Pultke
Braunschweig, Germany



"The food/school lunch"

Mario Pineda Poveda
Madrid, Spain



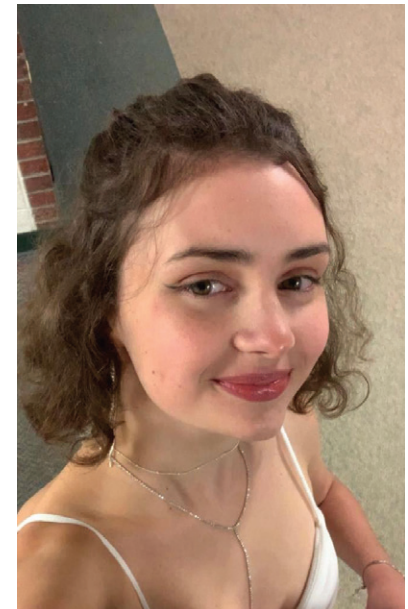
"The friends that I made here."

Ilaria Messa
Monza, Italy



"The pizza!"

Robin William
Bottenwil,
Switzerland



"The fact that school gets out early here."

Héloïse Blanc
Aix-en-Provence,
France



"The soccer team."

Gabriel Holanda
Fortaleza, Brazil

Photos and reporting
by Abigail Cormier