Personality Tests
Do personality tests determine what type of person you truly are? Read for a breakdown of some tests taken by yours truly.
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Wrap up school with a yummy cherry cobbler!
ONLINE SOURCE

Graduation Recipe
Kick off the summer with this new Spectrum recipe for cherry cobbler—perfect for the summer sun and cherry season!
Off-Topic - Page 10

Congratulations to Sasha Scott for achieving this significant milestone! Sasha has completed her journey with dedication and perseverance. Well done, Sasha! - *Papa*

The Spectrum

✦ e cineribus et ad astra ✦

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Dunkin' Coupon
We've partnered with the local Dunkin' again to provide you another coupon!
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Sweden's Accession to NATO
Sweden has recently joined NATO. How has this affected relations with the U.S. and the war in Ukraine?

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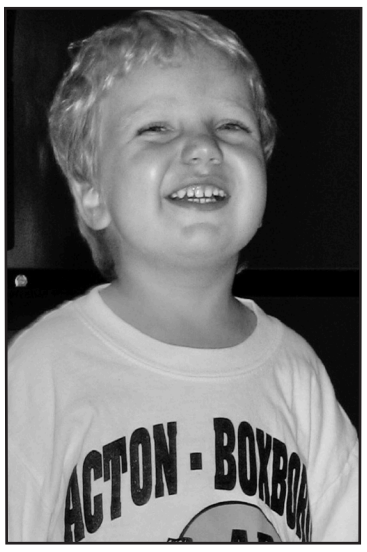

Congratulations, Seth!
AB --> Wisco
Love, Mom, Dad and Ben

Proscenium Circus 2024 Recap
What has the school's premier theatre club been doing this year? Read on to find out!

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Digital Footprints
To be safe online in the modern day, we must understand the importance of a positive digital footprint. Read this to learn how!

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Is Greek Life Good or Bad?
Everyone's heard the stigma surrounding college fraternities and sororities. Here's why you should consider Greek Life.

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Meant to be.
ONLINE SOURCE

Top Post-Graduation Vacation Destinations!

By Mahima Ramesh '26
Mainspread Editor

As the year is finally coming to an end, we all are eagerly anticipating the next adventure that awaits us, as well as a fun end to a difficult year. The hours of stressing over homework, the piles of supplemental essays, and the stress of committing to college is finally over. Graduating from high school is an important milestone in our lives, and what would be a better way to celebrate than relaxing with a redeeming vacation? Most of us are waiting for a break, especially with friends. Whether you're looking for sunsets and beaches, busy city streets, or a calming spa day, there's a perfect destination waiting for you! Here are some exciting vacation destinations to consider for your post-graduation trip!

1. Punta Cana, DR

Firstly, Punta Cana at the eastern coast of the Dominican Republic is known for its beautiful white-sand beaches, crystal-clear waters, and luxurious all-inclusive resorts. If you are looking for a picturesque location to update your instagram feed, you should visit Bavaro Beach, one of the most popular shorelines in Punta Cana with its swaying palm trees and blue waters. Additionally, Punta Canta includes places to play water sports with friends, dining options, as well as many other things to do to relieve the stress of a tiring year. For example, Bavaro Beach is one of the region's most beautiful and popular stretches of coastline. Moreover, for a taste of adventure, you can head to Saona Island where you can snorkel among colorful coral reefs and swim in natural limestone pools. If you wish to see exotic species, such as the bottlenose and spinner dolphins, the endangered hawksbill sea turtles, or colorful coralline fish, this is the place to go! The Saona Island has also been a place for many island-themed movie sets. Both the *Pirates of the Caribbean* and *The Blue Lagoon* movies had been filmed here! Punta Cana is the perfect destination for celebrating with friends, whether you're chatting by the pool, dancing the night away at a beach party, or taking beautiful pictures with the sunsets.

2. Barcelona, Spain

Next, Barcelona, at the northeastern coast of Spain, is a vibrant and busy city that mixes history, culture, and modernity. If you wish to learn more about Spanish culture or simply visit beautiful art, you should visit the enchanting streets of the Gothic Quarter, where medieval architecture and bustling plazas await around every corner. The Gothic Quarter contains narrow streets and squares that reflect Barcelona's medieval past, containing many palaces and Gothic churches. Furthermore, no visit to Barcelona is complete without visiting the architectural masterpieces of Antoni Gaudí, a famous Spanish architect and artist. You may also opt to visit the iconic Sagrada Familia and Park Güell, both containing a mix of art, culture, and relaxation with friends, some of which you might have heard from Spanish class! After a day of exploration, you can unwind with friends at one of Barcelona's many rooftop restaurants, where you can enjoy panoramic views of the city skyline, as well as the delicious cuisine, such as the patatas bravas and a churro for dessert. Barcelona is the perfect destination for both a city-like feel, as well as relaxation with the beautiful architecture. Exploring the culture of Barcelona and its architectural wonder is like experiencing whiplash from our colonial and modern style houses back here in Acton, Massachusetts. If you aren't going to Barcelona this year, it should be on your bucket list for the next one!

3. Miami, Florida:

Lastly, with its year-round sunshine, beaches, and vibrant nights, Florida is an optimal place to visit if you wish to stay within our country. In Miami, visit the beautiful ambiance of South Beach, where you can walk along Ocean Drive with friends, shop at high-end boutiques, and dine at celebrity-chef restaurants, almost as if you were visiting Beverly Hills! For a time in nature, head north to Panama City Beach, where you can see plentiful opportunities for swimming, sunbathing, water sports, and, of course, taking many pictures. So whether you're partying with friends at Miami's resorts or taking a break on the shores of Panama City Beach, Florida offers the perfect combination of excitement and relaxation.

As you prepare for your post-graduation vacation, consider these exciting destinations that offer something for every traveler, whether you're seeking adventure, relaxation, or cultural immersion. Of course, the length and expense of vacation isn't as significant as your family and friends you are spending that time with! Take time to enjoy the summer with your family and friends before you move on to the next chapter of your life. We always have our Cape Cod beaches, New Hampshire hikes, or even just a fun city day in Boston to celebrate close to home. Regardless, pack your bags, gather your friends, and set off on your well-deserved, relaxing break. Safe travels!

Intro

Letter From the EICs

By Isabella Hill and Shree Jayakrishna '25
Co-Editors-in-Chief

Hey friends,

It's Shree and Isabella here! While we will all miss our outstanding EICs, Kéra and Anusha (Késha), as they leave their Spectrum days behind, we hope to continue their legacy and begin this new chapter.

With high school drawing to a close for many readers, what better way to say goodbye to our beloved seniors than to present this year's Graduation edition? This year has had its ups and downs, with academic stress alongside concerns within the district (yes, we mean the controversial budget cuts), and continuing international conflicts that weigh heavily on our hearts and minds, but at the end of the day, our challenges—both internal and external—have made us stronger, and we have all the more to celebrate for making it through the year.

Whether you're eager to dive into Greek Life or are getting ready to adventure abroad to experience life beyond Massachusetts, now is the time to delve into some of the amazing articles this issue offers. We hope they get you in the mood to celebrate the end of an era as you think about possible road trips (make sure to choose your type of transport carefully), exploration, and much-needed relaxation.

If globetrotting isn't for you, be sure to try new things in the safety of your home or local community. Check out music, art, or anything that seems to interest you. To spark your curiosity, why not join us in the library alcove at 3 p.m. on Thursdays? Enjoy snacks, connect with our talented Chief Staff, and maybe even discover the new hobby you've been looking for.

Have a great summer, and we'll see you soon!

Warm regards,
Shree and Isabella

The Spectrum

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Alternative Rock History

By Tori Bell '26
Spectrum Staff

Music is an ever-flowing rush of emotions, harnessing the sonic beauty of our world while igniting societal shifts and political movements. Numerous genres, especially punk in the '70s and '80s, rebel against the mainstream norms of pop music. However, 80s and 90s alternative rock is my real obsession. It encompasses many subgenres, such as shoegaze—a dreamlike form of alt rock named for guitarists who constantly look down at their pedals while playing—noise rock, grunge, and many more. Among my favorite bands are Sonic Youth, Slowdive, Garbage, and Letters to Cleo.

The alternative rock scene boomed in the '80s and '90s, with many bands deeply interconnected through shared members and collaborations. For instance, Garbage, a pop and rock fusion band known for their experimentation within a pop structure, gained fame with their 1995 single "Only Happy When It Rains." The producer and drummer for Garbage, Butch Vig, produced for many prominent alternative 90s bands, including Nirvana's album *Nevermind*. Another example is the noise rock band Sonic Youth, whose influence extended to many other bands and had connections with Kurt Cobain of Nirvana. Kim Gordon, Sonic Youth's bassist, also produced Hole's album *Pretty on the Inside*. These instances illustrate the deep interconnections between various bands. While Nirvana is widely recognized today, Garbage and Sonic Youth are less known among younger audiences, despite their significant impact on the alternative music scene.

The sounds, atmosphere, and lyrics of alternative rock are what make it most appealing to me. I particularly enjoy lyrics that allow listeners to interpret them while still making some sense. For dream-like songs, I highly recommend "Souvlaki Space Station" by Slowdive. The seamless blend of music and vocals creates an immersive experience, evoking feelings of being lost in a relationship or situation. The poetic lyrics have given me chills on multiple occasions, making it a truly captivating listen. Many genres of alternative rock embrace experimentation, even if the sounds may not be pleasing to everyone (personally, I find the sounds pretty cool). Sonic Youth is known for this, like placing a screwdriver or a drumstick between the neck and guitar strings to achieve a certain sound. They have also experimented with various tunings, which can be found on their official website's database. This database contains guitar and bass tabs for all of their songs. Many strings were broken as a result of fiddling with tunings, but breaking things is an essential part of experimentation. An example of intriguing sounds is the bell-like sound at the end of their song "(She's In A) Bad Mood," crafted during their no-wave phase in the band's early days. Moreover, in the subgenre shoegaze, pedals are utilized to achieve the distinctive abstract, dreamlike effect.

80s and 90s alternative rock has shaped music today because of its distinct culture and sound. Many alternative musicians of that era rebelled against societal norms, a trend that persists today. They pushed boundaries by experimenting with sound, instrumentation, and lyrics, leaving an indelible mark on modern music. From evocative guitar riffs to abstract, detached songwriting, these unique sounds have seamlessly woven themselves into contemporary musical landscapes. While every genre possesses its own beauty when given the chance to be appreciated, 80s and 90s alternative rock holds a special place in my heart because it allows me to get lost in the worlds that the musicians have built or create worlds for myself. The listening experience varies for everyone, and that is the beauty of alternative rock, and ultimately, all forms of music.

Stepping Foot into a Digital World

By Harika Goteti '24
Mainspread Editor

Throughout our daily lives, the internet is our optimal place to connect, learn, and meet new people. But, despite its benefits with connectivity, the internet can also bring dangers ranging from cybersecurity threats, virus downloads, and online harassment. It is crucial to be aware of these dangers to ensure the safety of everyone around us. To do so, we must understand the importance of a positive digital footprint.

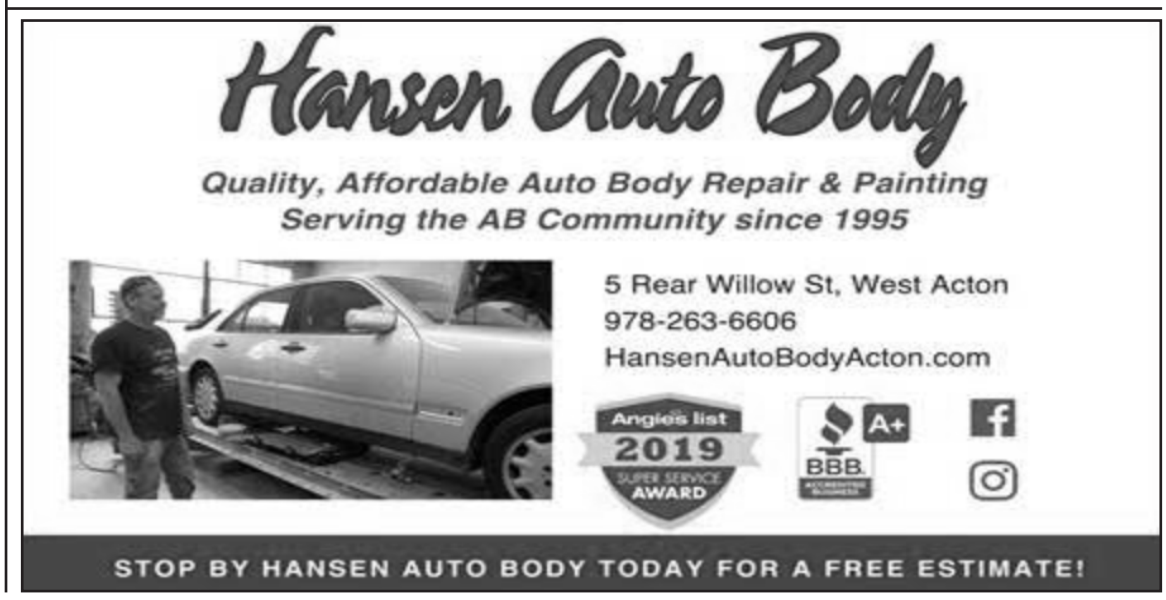
Many students stress about their GPA, the rigor of their high school courses, as well as their extracurriculars when applying to college; however, despite all these accomplishments, having a positive digital footprint is equally as important. 59% of admissions officers agree that the ideas students post online hold great influences on college decisions. As teenagers, we are constantly engrossed in our online social media, so we must double check our internet safety.

Moreover, constant dangers that are often not discussed are the cybersecurity threats commonly faced, such as malware, phishing scams, and identity theft. These threats pose significant risks to personal and financial security. For this reason, it is important to have a strong and secure password for social media accounts to avoid any risks. Try to prevent using a password that includes your name or birthday, as this information is readily available and can be easily accessed by hackers. For a strong password, you should use both lowercase and uppercase letters, as well as punctuation and special characters, to make sure your password is as strong as possible. Last but not least, make sure your password is greater than 6 characters, as longer passwords are harder to guess.

Furthermore, emails from suspicious accounts can pose issues. When there are links in these emails it is crucial to be cautious. Downloading attachments or sharing personal information online can easily install viruses if they are from unknown users. In order to help lower the risk of being victimized by scams and malicious activities, make sure you know the user or are aware that the email is from a secure account before clicking on documents or links.

Lastly, we all must teach kids the importance of a digital footprint while they are young, as the proliferation of social media has led to issues such as cyberbullying, online harassment, and exposure to inappropriate content. For example, in 2009, a site called Omegle was launched and active for 15 years to come. This site was alive longer than my younger brother! Before it deactivated, the service randomly paired users in one-on-one chat sessions where they could talk anonymously. Omegle's goal was to make sure users above age 13 used the site, but this plan miserably failed leading to several dangers that young children were exposed to. Because of this, it's essential to encourage critical thinking amongst kids — "is this site really safe, if so, what makes it safe?" — if young kids reflect on this prior to each click, they will be less prone to risks online and much safer in the future.

All in all, there's no doubt that the internet can be a dark and scary place, with potentially dangerous pathways. However, these aforementioned tips can help promote digital literacy initiatives and advocating for internet safety awareness campaigns. Everyone can be their own personal superhero by educating themselves and making the safest choices online.



News



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New Local Bus Route

Isabella Hill '25
Editor-in Chief

On Thursday, May 16, the Town of Boxborough, in collaboration with the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART), launched "Boxborough Connects," a new public transportation service. The bus/van service operates Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., with plans to expand to weekends once staffing levels permit. Information about specific routes, stops, and times are provided on the Boxborough Connects schedule, available at tinyurl.com/y5px2xa2. This service costs $1 per ride (cash only) and can be paid when boarding the vehicle or bought at the Boxborough Town Hall with cash or card. The route includes stops at the Acton Boxborough United Way, Danny's Place, Roche Brothers Plaza, Blanchard Elementary, Middlesex Bank Plaza in Boxborough, Sargent Memorial Library, the Park at Beaverbrook, the South Acton Commuter Rail Station, the Town Hall, and several other sites. In the summer of 2023, the town was approached by the Montachusetts Regional Transit Authority (MART) to establish a new local rideshare service. A stakeholder group was formed to work with the MART team and devise the best service for Boxborough. This team was comprised of the Assistant Town Administrator, Blanchard Elementary Principal, Community Services Coordinator, Council on Aging Coordinator, Police Chief, and Town Planner. The team also collaborated with homeowners and neighborhood associations in Boxborough to make the route accessible for people without methods of transportation. Bringing back transportation in Boxborough has been a long-awaited project, and residents are excited to take advantage of this new resource: whether they are commuting long distances or hoping to travel down the street! Town Planner Alexander Wade explained that "the route will reduce carbon emissions and single-vehicle traffic, especially given the uptick in commuters through the town, while also providing access, convenience, and support to local businesses and residents." With global warming comes an increased concern and awareness surrounding emissions, and towns like Acton and Boxborough are making strides towards becoming more environment-friendly. Especially with more families moving to the area and businesses launching in already condensed areas, there is a need to reduce foot traffic and emissions. Additionally, Wade emphasized the inclusivity of the new route, noting that the vehicles are accessible for people of all ages and mobilities. He said, "This MART service not only addresses environmental concerns, but also supports local nonprofits and organizations such as the Acton Community Pantry and Danny's Place." The route includes stops to ensure residents in densely populated neighborhoods have reliable transportation options. Especially for elderly people, who may not be able to drive or access transportation, the bus route will be beneficial. With the introduction of this bus route, Boxborough aims to create a more sustainable and connected community, while fostering support for local businesses. The Town is looking for more bus drivers. With more drivers, the route can grow and become more accessible. Those interested as well as those who want to provide feedback to drivers are encouraged to contact the Town Planner at tinyurl.com/y5px2xa2.

Proscenium Circus 2024 Recap

By Luke Droese '24
Spectrum Staff

As the school year comes to a close, Acton-Boxborough's theater department, Proscenium Circus (PC), reflects on a year filled with memorable performances and bids farewell to its graduating seniors, who have contributed immensely to the success of PC. This year's productions, including the winter play, *A Doll's House*, and the spring play, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, showcase the talent and dedication of the students. Let's recap the highlights of this theatrical year and celebrate the achievements of our remarkable cast and crew. To start, *A Doll's House* was a festival play, hosted by the Massachusetts Educational Theater Guild (METG), where the cast and crew traveled to schools in the area and a panel of judges decided which shows would advance to the next round. Written by Henrik Ibsen and first performed in 1879, the play focuses on Nora Helmer, played by Claire Huebner '24, a seemingly happy wife and mother who lives a conventional life in 19th-century Norway. In a turn of events, Nora begins questioning her reality and embarks on a journey of self-discovery. Festival plays like *A Doll's House* present a new type of challenge because the cast needs to "be able to take the set and props to other schools, perform it in under forty minutes, and make sure everyone feels confident," as Ms. Maguire, head of PC and director of *A Doll's House*, explained. The play scored well in the preliminary round with Eve Dallimore '25 and Lena Lapson '24 winning Excellence in Costume Design, Meredith Jablonowski '24 winning Excellence in Scenic Design, and Claire Huebner, Aiden Burgess '24, and Thomas Mayer '24 winning Excellence in Acting. "Winning an award at METG is an amazing feeling. Being recognized after all of your hard work by industry professionals is such an honor, and getting to walk up there with the support of your whole team cheering for you is such a special moment," Claire Huebner shared. *A Doll's House* sadly did not move on during the semi-finals but they did receive a few more awards with Eve and Lena winning Excellence in Costume Design once more, Sarah McOsker '24, Meredith Jablonowski '24, Evelyn Burke '26, and Masey Sowers '26 winning the Stage Manager's Award, and Elodie Bolle '24 winning Excellence in Acting. After A Doll's House, Maria Paunescu '24 and Bella Shee '24 took the reins from Ms. Maguire to direct the wonderful Spring Play, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, which premiered on the 26th and 27th of April. The play chronicled various periods in Sherlock and Watson's lives, with multiple actors portraying the same character. When asked about challenges during production, Bella said, "This has been a really big learning experience for all of my actors and me. The only other thing I have more or less completely directed on my own was a scene during my sophomore year; now, with this play, I have over 20 actors, an extensive team of technical designers, and two full [independent stories] of about 35 minutes each." Maria added, "We were lucky to have very well-known and established characters to work with...conceptually, we wanted each of our Sherlocks and Watsons to have slightly different variations of the characters. In each adventure, with each new pairing, we wanted to highlight a different aspect of these characters' personality. For example, Sherlock isn't always so cut-off and isolated from the reality of human interactions; he's not always so narrow-minded and only focused on his work that he forgets to show empathy... but when are the times or cases in which he would fall into this super narrow focus that blinds him? These are the kinds of different questions we posed to our various actors in order to get a really nuanced and fleshed-out character in the end when you string all the pieces together." Ms. Maguire commented that she is "very proud of Bella and Maria." The skill of the entire program, cast and crew alike, was apparent in the hard work and dedication that went into this production. This was a significant undertaking, and it was exciting to watch the cast and crew collaborate with the two senior directors to produce a great play! PC's last performance of the school year, *Icarus, Incorporated,* premiered Thursday, May 30, 2024 at 3:30 p.m. in the auditorium. This play was written, acted, and produced by the students. As always, it displayed the growth of Proscenium Circus as a whole, as well as the prowess of every student that contributed to the play. If you are saddened by not being able to involve yourself in PC this year, just know that the fall will come around with plenty of spots needing to be filled up. If you're looking for a new afterschool activity, PC may be the perfect fit for you; there's always room for you to join the family. Unfortunately, this is my last article for *The Spectrum*. Even though I started in the spring of my junior year, I am so proud of how far I have come as a writer. Big thanks to *The Spectrum* staff for pushing me to expand my ideas. To my dear readers: Thank you; I hope my articles have intrigued you and were enjoyable to read.

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News

Teacher Interview, Edition Three: Ms. Sears

By Eddy Zhao '25
Chief Layout and Off-Topic Editor

Greetings, readers of The Spectrum! We're back with our Teacher Interview column, and today we have a special article for you. I recently had the opportunity to interview Ms. Sears, a math teacher who has been teaching geometry, precalculus, and calculus at AB for over 20 years. She's had a profound impact on the math department here at AB, and at here, at *The Spectrum*, we wanted to know what she is like outside of the classroom. Read on to find out!

1. Why did you choose to become a teacher? What inspired you to follow the path of being an educator?

My path was very much a "winding road." I started out as an engineer for nuclear power plants. When my company was bought out and they moved the headquarters, I took a job as a technical writer, during which I started tutoring students in math and SAT math. Later, I was able to go back to the engineering firm, and from there, I joined the district as a Special Ed assistant. Tutoring was what really inspired me to share the gift of mathematics with the students I was working with. I rediscovered my passion for mathematics, and it was really nice to be able to share that spark of interest with others in the subject.

2. Why did you choose AB?

I was living in Acton at the time. There happened to be an opening for a math teacher the year after I was a Special Ed assistant. I was a long-term sub for a teacher who was on maternity leave. The year after, I was hired as a full-time math teacher.

3. How did you become interested in math?

From the time I was very, very young, I was particularly strongly interested in math. At the time, there was less of a belief in the success of women in STEM fields. I wanted to challenge this. When I entered junior high, I was placed in the wrong math class, and my mom went to the school to make sure I got changed to the accelerated class.

4. How has the math curriculum changed over the time you have been here?

It's tricky to say because the structure of the school day has also changed. We used to be in an eight period day, meeting every day for 47 minutes. Over the years, I've also been teaching different courses. I used to teach geometry, and now I teach precalculus and calculus. I've seen some of the challenges that some of the math teachers are facing with the new math leveling situation, and that's helping me to get ready for when my courses are starting to change. Adapting to what our students need, the progression is still the same: from algebra 1 to geometry, algebra 2, precalculus, then calculus. We're currently preparing to convert Honors Precalc to a Precalc AP course.

5. What's your favorite memory being a teacher at AB?

There are way too many to pick from! Each day brings rewarding experiences: from students eagerly sharing news of college acceptances to discussing life events. Chaperoning prom and attending graduations are highlights, but one memory especially stands out. At a track meet where many of my students competed, I brought along my dog. Everyone was saying hello, and it was a nice community time for us to spend outside of the classroom. The weather was beautiful, the kids were having fun competing, I got to see them compete, and one of them took my dog for a run, which was fun for both of them.

6. Any advice for high school students, in-subject or generally?

I feel like my advice is going to sound very parental, but make good decisions and don't take yourself too seriously right now. Find the light and love in your day. There's a lesson and blessing in every experience.

7. Favorite food?

It's hard to choose, but I would never say no to pizza and salad. I put my salad on top of my pizza and eat it that way. It's my favorite topping, and my favorite places to get pizza from are New York Pie in Waltham, Giacomo's Pizza in Wayland, and Theo's in Natick because of all the different styles of pizza each restaurant serves.

8. Favorite movie?

Favorite movie depends on my mood and time of year, but I tend to rewatch movies. I'm a sucker for rom-coms, and I like the *Da Vinci Code* series of movies.

9. Favorite books?

For books, there's an old, old author named David Eddings, and he wrote a series of books that I tend to like to reread, titled *The Belgariad*.

10. TV shows?

I tend to watch a lot of Food Network since I really love to cook. I'm particularly drawn to the competition shows where chefs showcase their creativity—I often gather inspiration from them, which makes it challenging for me to pick a favorite food because I enjoy trying so many different things. For instance, this past weekend, I made a seafood casserole for my mom, and it turned out wonderfully. Additionally, I love making pasta from scratch.

And that's Ms. Sears! I hope you enjoyed this edition of Teacher Interview. If you'd like to interview your teacher, you can always stop by the library alcove on Thursdays after school!

See you next time,
Eddy



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AB Alum Interview: Senator Eldridge

By Nate Kim '27
Publicity & Finance Manager

Many at our school fail to realize that amongst the bustling hallways walk students who will one day be listed as Wikipedia's "Notable Alumni from Acton-Boxborough Regional High School." Senator Eldridge, who now serves Middlesex and Worcester counties as a State Senator, was once just like the rest of us, attending classes and traversing the ABRHS corridors. Born on August 11th, 1973, he grew up in South Acton and graduated from ABRHS in 1991. As we near the end of the school year, and for many, the end of their high school journey, thoughts of the future can be overwhelming. Senator Eldridge generously shared his time to offer guidance by answering questions, helping us transition onto the next phase of our lives.

1. As a student of AB, Can you share some of your favorite memories from your time at Acton-Boxborough Regional High School?

Diverse activities and connections shaped my career. Founding Acton-Boxborough Community Outreach sparked my passion for community service. Playing basketball and soccer, especially reaching the Eastern Conference Championship, where we played at the Garden, were standout moments. Getting involved in politics through my coach's campaign was thrilling. Other highlights include contributing to the yearbook and assisting foreign students. These experiences fostered my appreciation for diversity and community engagement, guiding my work as a legislator.

2. Is there a particular story or moment from your years at AB that inspired you and continues to motivate you today?

I would say it was my history teacher who inspired me to be in government and politics to make a difference. I still vividly remember her enthusiasm when discussing modern U.S. history. She was a big influence. Another influential teacher was Mr. Smith, who taught about the Civil War and the complex history of the U.S. Their willingness to discuss the good and bad aspects of our history is something I value today, especially in understanding the impact of past policies on our society.

3. Talking about your achievements, what are some of your most notable achievements during your time as a senator?

As Senate Chair of the Criminal Justice Reform Caucus, I led impactful reforms in 2018, opposing mass incarceration and the war on drugs. As head of the Clean Energy Caucus, I advocated for environmental justice and solar policy, aiming for fossil fuel-free energy in communities like Acton. As a former state representative, I defended marriage equality and supported anti-poverty programs, affordable housing, and improved living conditions for low-income individuals. Prioritizing environmental conservation, I spearhead initiatives like plastic bag bans, protecting open spaces, and ensuring access to clean water.

4. As a senator, do you have a particular mindset or approach, and if so, what is it?

As a senator, I align with progressive Democratic ideology, acknowledging systemic injustices in our society. While some in Massachusetts thrive, many struggle with rent, education costs, and staying in the state. I advocate for an active government that enhances people's standard of living, quality of life, and protections for personal freedom and choice.

5. What are the goals you wish to accomplish in the near future as a senator?

My goals include passing a debt-free college bill to make public universities, including UMass, state universities, and community colleges, free for all families. I aim to address flaws in our criminal justice system and combat institutional racism, focusing on the mistreatment of poor people and people of color. I also advocate for stronger laws to combat climate change, including investments in solar energy, energy efficiency, and climate resilience to prepare for increasing floods and heatwaves in Massachusetts.

6. Steve Jobs once said that the dots you made in the past may connect and shape who you are as a person. Did you have such dots created during AB, and if you did, what are they?

My involvement in diverse activities at AB taught me valuable lessons, shaping me as a progressive Democrat who values equality and seeks consensus. These experiences inform my approach as a legislator. Growing up with a focus on helping the less fortunate, including friends from diverse backgrounds, deeply influences my work for the entire district.

7. Looking back as a high school graduate, is there anything you wish you had known or done differently?

I don't have too many regrets, but looking back, I wish I had done more in student government to address issues like anti-Semitism and racism. As the class secretary, I feel there were missed opportunities to tackle those challenges.

8. Can you share any challenges you faced after graduating and how you overcame them?

One challenge I faced after graduating was the lack of guidance on pursuing a career in public service. Despite my commitment to this path, there wasn't much support in high school or college. However, I was fortunate to eventually make my way into running for office and serving the public. It was a struggle to achieve those goals without proper guidance.

9. Lastly, what advice would you offer to graduating seniors as they prepare for their next chapter?

Whether you're starting work or heading to college, take the time to explore various perspectives and opportunities. Don't feel pressured to have everything figured out immediately. Balance your studies with extracurricular activities and interactions with peers. Embrace college life and immerse yourself fully in the experience. Remember, my own college experiences played a significant role in shaping my journey towards running for office.

In conclusion, our discussion with Senator Eldridge has shed light on crucial insights about aiding others in need, while proactively planning for the future. We invite readers to explore further and carry forward the spirit of his journey, remaining curious and open to learning. May we continue to draw inspiration from the stories of those who have walked this path before us. Again, a special thank you to Senator Eldridge for carefully answering my questions for us to learn from.

Bittersweet Beginnings

By Matthew Liu '27
Chief Copy Editor

As they jump up from the uncomfortable folding chairs on Leary Field with a crowd onlooking the proceedings, students throw their caps in the air, friends sprint towards each other, and the audience cheers. Year after year, graduates celebrate the end of high school and embrace the future. Nevertheless, post-graduation continues to be a period of uncertainty as students look beyond the walls of high school ready to explore the world that awaits them.

After four hard years in high school, naturally, students feel a sense of achievement. After countless assignments and tests, high school is finally over. Graduation is the perfect time to reflect on the aspects of one's high school career: friendships, challenges, and hard work. Reflecting on academic growth and personal development is imperative, as high school accomplishments fuel both confidence and motivation. Every senior should feel accomplished and proud of how far they've come from the beginning of freshman year.

Although graduates must be buzzing with excitement, the sudden push into adulthood can seem daunting; it is easy to long for the good old times spent with friends and family in the high school you once called home. Understandably, many are scared of change and don't want to let go of the nostalgia of childhood. Graduation marks the end of an era, essentially the end of one's youth, which can bring bittersweet emotions to the surface, causing graduates to long to be a child again. Friendships that were made in high school will not last forever, especially when people grow beyond our small towns of Acton and Boxborough. Permanently moving out of one's childhood home is a challenging experience, and being away from family for such extended periods of time can be difficult. Instead of living a carefree life as a child, college accompanies many responsibilities that can often seem daunting and scary, but in reality are not. It takes preparation and practice, and these eighteen years of experience have fostered growth and learning that has sufficiently prepared you. These feelings make graduating very bittersweet. If you are feeling nostalgic, don't feel guilty, it's natural. Some ways to cope are calling an old friend, talking it through, and trying to channel your inner optimist. Whether it's going to college, enlisting in the military, or finding a job, there are always more positive experiences to be discovered. Looking forward to the next chapter of one's life, there will be specks of memories and obstacles that you once never thought you could overcome.

Finally, of course, graduation can be scary. There's the summer after graduation, which can be very multifaceted. Some people use it to plan out their futures and what they want to accomplish, while others may feel a sense of dread and hopelessness. Most will probably end up doing a bit of both. Try to use this period for the better and plan for the future, as worrying will only diminish the joy of what's to come. If you need help, try to discuss it with someone close to you, but the best way to not worry is to keep yourself busy and engaged. It's understandable that the fear of the unknown comes with a certain amount of fear. In High School Musical 3, we see Troy and Gabriella worried about how the future will impact them; however, to cope with this issue, they use theater as a form of expression, helping them to express their hopes and fears about the future. Everyone will have their moment to shine, so if it seems like some people have it all figured out, this feeling will come to you as well, when the time is right. Graduates may feel anxiety as they face big decisions that could change the trajectory of their life. Some also feel pressure to find a job or worry about the next steps in life. The best way to cope with stress after graduation is to focus on being your best self, find a new hobby, and, most importantly, stop comparing yourself to others.

Overall, graduation is often filled with tumultuous emotions that are accompanied by anxiety about the future. There's the feeling of pride in graduating and finally completing high school, yet there's also lingering uncertainty as this chapter of graduates lives finally comes to a close. No matter what you are feeling in this culminating moment, remember that the future is most importantly, an opportunity. Right now is the perfect time to grow, so you should embrace it rather than shy away from it. Find peace in yourself and believe that you can do it, because I know you can. Even if it all feels hopeless, just know that it will all work out in the end. As an attorney, Michael Josephson, once said, "Take pride in how far you've come. Have faith in how far you can go. But don't forget to enjoy the journey."



Finally... graduation!
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Meant to Be

Senior Speech
By Braelyn Valente-Phillips '24

Acton-Boxborough is full of remarkable students. Students that surpass the everyday expectations of what a person should be or what they could accomplish. I think because we are so surrounded by this excellence we forget to acknowledge our own. We have a tendency to act as though we are nothing special. I happen to know that every single person in this crowd has accomplished something incredible. Weathering AB is something incredible. From sleepless study sessions, to never ending after school practices, to confusing classes each day has been a bit of a battle. But in the end, has anything worth while come easily? Have any of our "incredible accomplishments" come to be because we sat back and let life happen rather than taking charge and working for it? I don't know anyone who would call these last four years "easy." Covid, impeachment, Roe v Wade being overturned, the insurrection, war and just general high school toils have tried to divide us, but today, all that gets put aside. For this singular moment we are one class united.

We started high school when the world was on its head, and now, as it is possibly beginning to right itself, our lives are going to be flipped upside down again. Your stereotypical senior speech talks about the crowded hallways and how overwhelming freshman year was. In our case, freshman year was overwhelming for a completely different reason. The hallways were empty, there was tape and arrows on the floor and less than half the school present. On my first day of school I was looking for my biology class, it was last period and I was running late. As I turned the corner, I realized I had walked right by my classroom. I slowed and—in a very un-Braelyn turn of events—decided to go against the arrows and just sneak into class. With my luck, a teacher rounded the corner right as I twisted around. He asked me to follow the path laid out, so I did. Suffice to say, I was late to class. This is all a very unsubtle way of saying that life has not been straightforward for us, even with all of those arrows trying to guide us. We've struggled a lot these past few years, but we made it here. We are now exactly where we are meant to be. As much as I hated that phrase through this whole college process it turned out to be true. Through all the rejections and acceptances, this was the thing my parents repeated over and over again. You will end up where you are meant to be. And here we are. Whether you are attending college, taking a gap year, going straight into the workforce, or still not sure, right here right now is exactly where you need to be.

We didn't get here on our own. We're not all about to enter the world completely alone. Teachers, administration, friends, family all stand behind us. I would like to take a moment to acknowledge our teachers specifically. The teachers who stayed up late to write our recommendation letters, the ones who took extra time to explain difficult concepts or edit our papers, the ones who were there just for a conversation on good or bad days, the teachers who showed that they care and that we matter. Junior year was not particularly easy for me. One of the main reasons I got through it was because of my English teacher, Ms. Berg. I don't think she knew exactly what I was going through, but she always made time for me to talk to her or share my writing with her. She pushed me to be the best version of myself. At the end of the year she wrote cards to each individual student with a quote in it. I have this card hanging above my desk where I can see it while I work. It's a quote from my favorite book, *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*, and it says "Through that telescope, the world way closer and larger than I'd ever imagined. And it was all so beautiful and overwhelming and I-I don't know—it made me aware that there was something inside me that mattered." For Ms. Berg, all the other teachers, and everyone else who has made an impact on student's lives: Thank you for everything you've done, you have no idea the difference you've made. I plan on keeping my card with me wherever I go so I can remember where I've come from and who's helped me get there.

I've lived in the same town my whole life. Grown up surrounded by the same walls, learned with the same people. I've known one of my best friends since my first day stepping on the bus and another since that same day walking into our kindergarten classroom. I've been dancing at the same studio for 16 years, had the same teachers that whole time. My entire life has been centralized here, in this town. I'm absolutely terrified for what comes next, I refuse to pretend I'm not, and I know I'm not the only one. I'm nervous to leave my friends and family behind, the studio I call home, the memories I've made. That's the only real thing we can hold on to though, right? Our memories. When everything is said and done, when we've graduated college, started our careers, started families, even retired, we will have this moment in our memories. Don't let this go, once you end up where you're meant to be, remember right now, the people sitting next to you, the weight of your cap, the tassel slightly obscuring your vision. We will never be this united as a group of people again, enjoy it. Thank you.

Spiderman

Senior Speech
By Tanvi Sistu '24

I did a writing workshop about two years back and it had a prompt that read: What would Spider-man's commencement speech sound like?

I suppose it starts with some thanks for important people in his life, a sappy story about Uncle Ben, and the classic "Anyone Can Be Spiderman" circa Stan Lee—all things considered, pretty solid. So, I figured that I could draw inspiration from that prompt when thinking about what to write for today. Just as a disclaimer, this isn't a traditional commencement speech, and I'm not Spiderman, but I could probably suss out a few connections here and there.

While I may not shoot webs from my wrists, I can write a mean essay, courtesy of my English and Social Studies teachers. I don't have a cool suit adorned with spiderwebs, but I have had the chance to wear some sick lab goggles (thank you Chemistry) while pouring something into another thing (it was last year, but I forgot). And, I might not be a typical superhero, but I know some things about what it takes to save the world.

Obviously, I wasn't blessed by a radioactive spider, so my strength is average and my speed sub-par, and I don't even want to talk about my horrendous reflexes—but Spiderman and I agree on the principle that everyone is capable of being a hero; all you have to do is try. When we say try, we don't mean tracking down and defeating villains who intend to wreak global havoc. We mean starting small: help a fellow student. Let someone who's having a bad day know that they're appreciated. Take the steps to make your voice heard.

In the case of Spiderman, he tried and failed many times. He couldn't save his friend, Gwen Stacy, nor was he able to save his Uncle Ben. But - he never stopped doing what he was doing; he never stopped being Spiderman. He kept saving his neighborhood and doing his best to honor his uncle's memory because it was the right thing to do. He made more friends and matured as Peter Parker outside of the superhero persona. He never let his setbacks define the future which he could pave for himself. That's what makes him a hero.

Personally, I never really thought that I could be a hero. Failure is terrifying. Losing something is even scarier. And the probability of those things happening as I step out of high school is overwhelmingly high. So, why bother being a hero? I could stay where I am, content, not saving the world or anything, and I would never fail or lose anything.

When I say it out loud, it sounds even worse. Holding myself back from experiencing the future is the greatest disservice I can do to myself—and the greatest one you can do to yourself.

Spiderman and I are big believers in the human capacity to overcome challenges and succeed, and I have no doubt that all of the students in front of me have the potential to do that and change the world, All it requires is dipping our toes into the vast future, the unknown future that I never precisely visualized. To summarize it in a few words: You Can Do It.

It won't be easy, nor will it be simple. It'll be dizzying, blinding, beautiful, bittersweet, and everything in between. The future comes at you at a relentless, industrial pace. What's most important is not your ability to slow down the inevitable. It's your attitude in the face of a world that feels like it's spinning too fast.

Before you get too overwhelmed, and believe me, it will happen, may I suggest the following :

1. Take a deep breath
2. Look in the mirror
3. Remember how far you've come

I mean, we could do it now. I don't have a mirror but look among yourselves. All I can say is wow. I hope you feel the same.

I wish that I could tell you that I am absolutely confident in what the future holds and what I will do, but I'm not. I'm apprehensive. I'm nervous. I'm unsure. But as I continue to wade through those emotions, I see hope. I see gratitude, happiness, tranquility- I see a future that looks a lot less scary than it did when I was in ninth grade.

Moreover, I am comforted by the fact that I have you all to fall back on. I can't thank the people around me enough for the welcoming, diverse, and brilliant community that I have been able to surround myself with.

So, in that unpredictable future that doesn't seem so scary anymore, I want you to truly remember Spider-man's words: I believe there's a hero in all of us. To find it, all you have to do is try. Remember: start small and keep going. Class of 2024, I am immeasurably proud of us. Congratulations and thank you for a wonderful four years!

Op-Ed



Cementing a new reality...
ONLINE SOURCE

Construction Corruption: Kelley's Corner

By Daniel Jiang '25
Spectrum Staff

I was almost hit by a car once. It was just past the Gulf station along Main Street and I was crossing the intersection between Main and Community Lane — the access road to Starbucks and the shopping plaza. Traffic snarled along Main street as I stumbled next to it, on a semi-unpaved sidewalk surface. A lady driving a gray Ford Escape tried to pull onto the busy road and, seeing as she was stationary, I ambled my way in front of her vehicle, crossing the intersection. Then she suddenly stomped on the gas and—despite my 5'11" stature looming in front of her hood—nearly knocked me down as I jumped out of the way. Her bumper gently struck my hip as I scurried to safety.

This little story is a reminder for one of the reasons why Kelley's Corner is being rebuilt—to reduce or completely avoid pedestrian accidents. Kelley's Corner is always buzzing with students, and there's no doubt that it is one of the more active parts of Acton. Since 2018, Acton has identified that this area has been a troublesome place ever since the late 1990s. It's situated near two entrance and exit ramps of nearby Route 2, Route 27, and Route 111. The infrastructure project states that the goals and intentions, aside from complying with Massachusetts Department of Transportation standards, is to "reflect community values, such as safety, accessibility, and formulate 'complete streets,' as well as to support economic sustainability and reduce traffic congestion in the area."

I nearly puked when I read that line. Really? In my opinion, this project is nothing more than just a visual improvement. Before I continue, I would like to make clear that these are my opinions, and that I do not have a degree in urban landscaping or planning. These are, to put it bluntly, visual observations as an Acton citizen. And who knows? Maybe when this project is finished in 2025, the town's promises will come true and this article will be 100% false. I wouldn't know.

Where is Road Hierarchy?

A case study conducted by the Urban Land Institute of Boston in 2014 detailed that "80% of traffic passes through the Kelley's Corner area." If we classify Main Street and Mass. Ave hierarchically (based on traffic volume and purpose)—then they should be arterial or limited-access, terms where roads are slotted just under the classification of highway. "Limited access" simply means little to no driveway entrances or areas where vehicles might need to drop speed drastically to exit the road or pick up speed when entering. It's basically what Route 2 is after the exit, heading in the direction of Concord towards Boston. Yet, instead of that, our town planners decided long ago that it was fine to build homes and businesses along this road, turning it into a 'stroad'; a terrible means of planning which combines a street (which contains neighborhoods) and a road (which shuttles traffic). Stroads practically destroy two classifications of roads in one! 'Stroads' aren't roads because of the driveways and businesses situated beside them. They result in high traffic that clogs up the freerunning road as cars enter and exit and don't offer high speed travel as any highway or arterial should provide for those driving past the area. 'Stroads' cannot be streets either, because there are high volumes of traffic that utilize the road to pass through the area. In general, this just means more cars piling up, taking up space, and leaving those who have a destination in mind stuck in useless mounds of cars. Which leads me to my next point of criticism:

Bike Lanes

This project fails to encompass cyclist safety. I take this moment to applaud those who cycle: You have nerves of steel. There are hardly any bicycle lanes from what I've observed throughout this town, and the few that exist are merely "bicycle gutters;" you're basically hovering on what is the shoulder of a road with cars speeding past you. It takes guts to face the possibility of being demolished by some inattentive driver. Tell me, would you feel safe if you had to sit in front of a line of traffic in order to make a left-hand turn? Considering that, quite literally anything could happen, you'd be the first to get the blunt of it, maybe even from a truck. I should know—I was almost hit by a car. The Acton Plaza, Littleton Common, and Maynard Crossing are all vast commercial sprawls with more than one business situated within. All require trucks.

I fully understand that there is a space constraint. In its current state, Main Street and Mass. Ave exist as two-laned roads. No business is willing to shift their parking lots backwards to accommodate more space. But couldn't there have been at least some effort to provide some sort of protected bike lane? For instance, that center, tree-filled median going down the length of Main Street that's illustrated on the blueprint: why couldn't that be shifted to the sides of the road and effectively create a miniature barrier, separating pedestrians and cyclists from auto traffic? There's more than enough room to build semi or fully-protected bike infrastructure across our town; that entire corridor on Route 111 from the middle school to West Acton is a great example. I do not think Kelley's Corner will encompass or embrace the full definition of a "complete street." At most, it'll provide something for pedestrians. All that traffic calming is bound to slow down cars to an even slower crawl, and at least that way, if someone does get hit, it won't be severe. Unless it's an SUV. That's a conversation for another article.

Personal Recommendations

I'll end my observations here with my own recommendations. The first one is that there has to be some serious reworking of roads in this town. Businesses line this supposed 'street', and students flock here nearly every day. My recommendation involves a lot of money and time, which I understand cannot happen, even in the next decade or so. My other suggestions involve reducing the amount of local traffic forced on these two roads. If this town wants to promote cycling as an alternative method of transportation, they have to commit to building proper cycling infrastructure! Simply recoloring or repaving a shoulder green does not solve that problem. Cyclists should feel safe when on their bicycles and should not be exposed to the woes of traffic. They shouldn't be hit at all. And this isn't an impossible feat: look to our European neighbors. The Netherlands is the cycling capital of the world, and even in the most rural of rural, separated cycling infrastructure still exists. There are train stations there, in the middle of nowhere, that have better cycling infrastructure than the stuff you'd find in North America. And don't limit your cycling infrastructure to just hotspots of this town: extend it so that it's possible to cycle to all of the popular points within our town borders. One should be able to cycle from his or her home, to school, then to a cafe, then to the library, then back home without fear of getting hit by a car. Lastly, the entirety of planning has to shift. Where is public transit? Why are we still building suburban sprawl that counters good urban and transit planning? I believe students here are being severely restricted in terms of their freedom of mobility. I'm a junior and as my peers have started to get their own cars, I often overhear them saying that they can't access certain places without a car.

As I conclude this article, I just want to say that, while my criticisms sound overly negative throughout, I still am happy to see that town residents have identified the problem with Kelley's Corner, and that we've taken action to finally do something about it, especially in launching a transportation route through the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART), which will provide access to people without cars to get from point A to point B. It is a good starting point, and as the route expands and citizens become more aware of larger problems, hopefully, we'll be able to enjoy the new infrastructure within the next couple of years.

On Sweden and NATO

By Andrew Moon '27
Spectrum Staff

On March 7th, 2024, Sweden joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. This stemmed from tensions due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. A key reason for Russia's invasion was to thwart NATO expansion; however, it has led to the accession of Sweden, a leading neutral country. Sweden's accession to NATO is a step towards enhancing the stability of the US and Sweden. It is time for Sweden to stand with its NATO allies in defense of freedom, democracy, and security.

Less than a year after the end of WWII, countries in Eastern Europe underwent communist transformations. This posed a threat to the US and Western European nations. Against the backdrop of the ongoing Berlin Blockade, NATO was founded on April 4, 1949, with the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty. After the Cold War, the organization experienced rapid expansion. NATO welcomed nations that were once part of the Warsaw Pact, NATO's counterpart in the Soviet Union, such as Poland, Warsaw, as well as the Baltic States. This, as a result, allowed many European countries to collaborate militarily. However, Russia perceived NATO membership of Eastern European countries as a significant threat. When Ukraine, which shares a border with Russia, indicated interest in joining NATO, Russia decided to invade them.

Sweden historically held sway as a dominant power in the Baltic Sea. In the Seventeenth century, the Swedish Empire ruled over territories that encompass present-day Finland, the Baltic States, as well as Nya Sverige (New Sweden), which is present-day Delaware, Maryland, and New Jersey. However, the Swedish Empire fell when the empire lost the Great Northern War against the Russians in the early eighteenth century. Later, during the Napoleonic Wars in the early nineteenth century, Sweden found itself at war with Russia once again, eventually losing Finland. After the Napoleonic wars, Sweden adopted a neutral diplomatic stance, refraining from engaging in conflicts with any country, including Russia. Since then, Sweden has maintained neutrality over the last two centuries, allowing them to avoid two World Wars. Notably, during the Winter War in 1939, even when Finland requested for military aid, Sweden still remained neutral.

The neutral policy has benefited Sweden in many ways. For instance, after WWII, while many European countries were focused on post-war reconstruction, Sweden, thanks to its neutrality, was able to develop its unique welfare system. Exemplified by the 'Folkhemmet' (People's Home), This unique welfare system has become a model for modern Nordic countries. Furthermore, Sweden utilizes neutrality to engage in diplomacy. One notable example is Olof Palme, Sweden's most beloved prime minister. He criticized apartheid in South Africa and mediated the Iran-Iraq War. Sweden has consistently raised its voice in the international community, advocating for peace and justice.

Sweden's neutrality is closely related to its military capabilities. As mentioned, Sweden has historically been a dominant force in Northern Europe, to the extent that even the Nazi Regime refrained from attacking Sweden during World War II. In the aftermath of the war, Sweden possessed the world's second-largest air force. Swedish neutrality differs from Finland's policy of neutrality, known as "Paasikivi–Kekkonen doctrine," which faced Soviet interference and is sometimes called "Finlandization" in a negative sense. Sweden's policy of armed neutrality has remained unchanged into the twenty-first century. However, as Russia began to openly threaten its neighboring countries, Sweden's stance began to waver.

Historically, exemplified by the invasion of Georgia in 2008, the annexation of Crimea, and the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, Russia has threatened its neighbors. Significantly, all three conflicts mentioned above occurred during Olympic periods. The tradition of Olympic truce, which originated in ancient Greece in the eighth century BC, signifies a commitment to peace through sports during the Games, yet Russia invaded Georgia and Ukraine during the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the 2014 Sochi Olympics, and the 2022 Beijing Olympics. By leveraging its control over 30% of Europe's natural gas usage, Russia also jeopardizes the energy security of European Union countries. In fact, Russia halted gas exports to Europe in 2021, causing gas prices to increase fivefold. Russia's threats are not irrelevant to Sweden either. During the Soviet era, there were instances of Soviet submarines being deployed in Swedish waters, posing a threat to Sweden. Today, similar provocations continue as Russian fighter jets have been regularly flying near Gotland, a Swedish island adjacent to Russia's Kaliningrad, also known as Königsberg. These actions persistently undermine Sweden's security. In such an environment, maintaining neutrality no longer guarantees security. Instead, active engagement and collaboration with like-minded allies become imperative.

NATO has played a crucial role in maintaining peace in Europe and deterring aggression since its inception. By joining NATO, Sweden gains numerous benefits, including enhanced collective security, access to military cooperation and intelligence sharing, and increased deterrence against potential threats. Additionally, NATO membership strengthens Sweden's ties with other member states, promoting stability and security in the region. Indeed, the fact that Sweden's neighboring countries – Denmark, Norway, and Finland – are all NATO member states further contributes to regional stability, allowing for closer coordination and cooperation among these countries in matters of defense and security.

Critics of Sweden's NATO accession often cite concerns about escalating tensions with Russia and potential repercussions for bilateral relations. What is being overlooked here is that NATO is committed to peace and does not seek war or deterioration of relations with non-member states. Under the motto of peace, cooperation among the unified 32 member countries can pave the way for further progress in the relationship between Sweden and Russia through continuous efforts. Moreover, Sweden's accession to NATO is not aimed at antagonizing any particular country but rather at safeguarding its own security and sovereignty. It is also a proactive step, which deters aggression, promotes stability, and upholds the principles of democracy.

Op-Ed



Pedal your power to success! Congratulations Seniors!
PEDAL POWER, BIKE & SKI

Is Greek Life A Cult or Culture?

By Tina Li '27
Bits and Reporting Team Editor

I'm sure everyone has heard stories about fraternities and sororities: the wild parties, fun philanthropic events, and the friends you make. Of course, joining Greek Life, which refers to sororities and fraternities on campus, is just one way to acclimate yourself to college life. Some say joining a frat or sorority is necessary for the full college experience, and yet despite the popularity of fraternities and sororities, the stigma and bad press surrounding Greek Life can make the decision a hard one. However, there are always two sides to a coin. Greek Life can be toxic and involve hazing, but it can also provide you with a greater sense of community, networking opportunities, and social skills...maybe...outweighing the cons. You should join a sorority or fraternity despite those fears holding you back.

[This paragraph will discuss sensitive topics such as sexual assault and body image.] To start, fraternities and sororities can be extremely toxic. In some schools, Greek Life promotes things like rape culture, hazing, and violence. These college students have their own house where they can throw parties whenever they want and start to get power-hungry, knowing that they are the ones hosting the 'legendary Greek parties' that fraternities are rumored to have. Not only that, but rape culture is perpetuated through the numerous amounts of parties held, with sexual assault cases being fairly common in some fraternities and sororities. In 2022, Kara Emsley found that fraternity men were three times more likely to sexually assault someone compared to non-affiliated students. Additionally, sorority women were found to be 74% more likely to be taken advantage of than other students. In an atmosphere with dozens of drunk college students, emotions are bound to run wild, starting physical or verbal spats, and adding unnecessary drama to the mix of Greek Life. Furthermore, hazing is a huge problem. Despite anti-hazing laws, most fraternities and sororities use hazing as the initiation process. Fraternities use drinking games, public humiliation, and dry processes to haze their pledges. For example, a dry process could be waking up all the pledges at 6 AM to line up in the woods with blindfolds on, making them recite all the past brothers of the frat. It's meant to pressure and intimidate the pledges. Physical tasks, like doing push-ups or running laps, are also common hazing techniques. Fraternity hazing can cause lifelong damage, trauma, and even death, considering how serious the overconsumption of alcohol is. In 2013, a case was reported about Michael Deng, who was killed in a hazing accident. In a hazing ritual named 'the glass ceiling,' Deng was made to wear a blindfold and a thirty-pound backpack to walk through a line of brothers, who were pushing and shoving him. The physical aggression became more severe as he moved through the line and was kicked in the head at one point. Despite his slurred speech, the brothers urged him to keep going. Eventually, Deng fell unconscious after one last violent attack and was only taken to the nearest hospital forty-five minutes away an hour later. If Deng had received medical attention earlier, he would have survived. That's why hazing is so dangerous. Irresponsible leadership from college students can cause situations where students are unaware that the activities they are participating in are harmful and disregard the severity of life-threatening situations. Moving onto sororities, a more common toxic hazing routine would be body shaming, forcing pledges to only wear approved outfits, and judging the sisters based on appearance. Specifically, pledges are made to sit on a moving laundry machine and are marked where their 'fat' moves. They are then made to lose that 'excess weight' in a given amount of time. This type of hazing is extremely superficial and is proven to develop into body dysmorphia, low self-esteem, or other serious issues, like eating disorders or mental health issues.

However, on the flip side of the coin, sororities' and fraternities' pros outweigh the cons. First of all, 'hazing' can be good! There are stories of sisters coming together to host a get-together with just the sorority to do fun challenges like baking a cake together or learning interesting facts about each other. There are more innocent 'hazing' routines that instead of causing direct harm to the pledges, actually benefit them by creating a tight-knit community. Furthermore, everything comes down to which fraternity/sorority you decide to join during Rush Week. Some fraternities and sororities focus more on areas such as business, religion, philanthropy, and culture. These organizations don't party as often as the stereotypical Greek Life posts on social media depict them to be, and even allow you to learn more about your identity and help out others in need. You have the choice to decide which organization you want to join and what type of people you want to be around. Additionally, Greek Life is a great way to adjust to college life, especially as a freshman. You automatically become part of a family and community that will stick by you even after graduation. Networking is also a huge pro to joining a fraternity or sorority. Since you meet so many different people from different backgrounds, you associate yourself with a diverse group of people. Making connections with your peers can also help you in the future if you need advice, recommendations, or a simple favor after you graduate!

With that being said, despite the cons of fraternities and sororities, there are better pros to joining Greek Life depending on what type you choose to initiate. Many organizations are different, and not all will have cases of toxic environments and sexual assaults. Choose wisely what community you want to be a part of and who you want to surround yourself with, especially since these people will be by your side for a long time. Joining can create long-lasting memories and friendships that can last you a lifetime, creating an enriching college experience that many will argue is fundamental to having a good time in college.

Modern Art: Hit or Miss?

By Tori Bell '27
Spectrum Staff

The idea of modern art can be overwhelming at times. Art is a form of human expression that is open to many interpretations. However, there is also a fine line between a masterpiece and a mess. Modern art, especially abstract pieces, tend to be based on emotion, focusing less on technical precision. In that case, modern art would achieve what art is meant to do: express human emotion. Although some believe that modern art lacks effort, as they tend to focus less on technical mastery, and more on art as a form of expression. Therefore, the use of some techniques in modern art, although unorthodox at times, is intentional and communicates what the art wants it to.

For some people, modern art can be seen as lazy. For instance, ideas like a blank canvas don't seem to have meaning or effort. In people's minds, something like a simple canvas with one color is something that anyone could do. Furthermore, most abstract pieces that don't have much effort put into them diminishes the technical effort of art, training, and schooling that artists go through. When a piece has a lot of technique put into it, people tend to associate technique with someone who is skilled in their craft. Additionally, modern art can look less aesthetically pleasing than technical art. Abstractness can be harder to understand, and art usually cannot be understood without an artist's statement. Some believe that a good art piece can resonate with others without the need for an artist's statement. Even then, artists who make abstract art tend to have a grasp on technical skills before doing abstract art in order to know how to make a purposeful composition. Technical skills serve as a foundation for artists so they can know what elements to add and why to add them. Therefore, technical skills and modern art are not separate from each other; in fact, it's the opposite, meaning that modern art also requires skill and intentionality.

For others, modern art is seen as meaningful, and it shows a clear and beautiful purpose. Defenders of abstract art focus on the emotional impact and message rather than just technical skill. An artist's message brings depth and insight into art, a means of human expression. The abstract elements make people think about their own interpretations, and this form of art can promote diversity of thought. Furthermore, creating any art piece, including abstract art, takes effort to plan out; each aspect of a piece is intentional. The use of artistic elements, like color, perspective, and foreshortening, are purposeful, and although a piece could look amateurish at first, looking at the intricate details can make the viewer realize the artist's message. In others, this type of art can bring out emotions, that vary for every person. If art's purpose is to make someone feel something, that means that modern art has done its job. Art is subjective, and what is ugly to one person can be beautiful to another and vice versa.

People have different ways of seeing modern art. For some, it is a branch of humanity since it shows our vulnerabilities and experiences through multiple interpretations that are different for everyone. For others, modern art is seen as technically lazy and something that anybody can accomplish. But ultimately, people have different preferences for different art styles; for example, people can go to separate parts of a museum and view pieces that they like. Personally, I'm in favor of modern art, as long as it's original enough, not just a white canvas. But even then, originality can be difficult to measure since art is so subjective. The accomplishments of old artists and technical artists should not be diminished, since their skills and innovation led to inspiration for other artists. Most importantly, I feel that art is mostly about the expressions and emotions that go into it; although skill and message are important, art is a reflection of the human experience. Therefore, I believe that one shouldn't make quick judgments about an art piece until they know the full story. The same sentiment can be carried to many of life's aspects, like getting to know someone beyond a first impression. Opening your mind is one of the most valuable skills one could learn to have.

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Op-Ed

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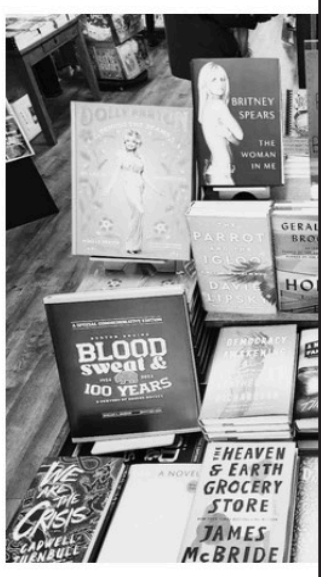

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Transit in the Cape

By Daniel Jiang '25
Spectrum Staff

Cape Cod. What's not to love? Home to sandy beaches, mouth-watering seafood, and quaint small towns, there's no other place in the state that could fit the definition of paradise—three hundred forty square miles of pure stress-free relaxation, any working citizen's dream. It's no wonder why this peninsula accumulates well over a million tourists per summer.

Chances are, you've experienced first-hand the wincing pain that is traffic. It never fails to leave the Cape, and it only grows worse as the summer months begin, especially in traveling to and from the Cape.

The peninsula itself is only connected by two bridges that cross the Cape Cod Canal: the Sagamore Canal Bridge and the Bourne Bridge. These two bridges carry the two major highways right into the heart of the peninsula—those being Route 6 and Route 27, respectively. Between late May and early September, expect to see upwards of 140,000 vehicles on any given day to cross both bridges and traffic congestion so bad that you'd be wondering if you were stuck somewhere in mainland China during Lunar New Year.

For those who hope to escape the traffic-induced hell, there are three realistic alternatives:

1. Take the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's (MBTA) sub-par CapeFLYER service. This is a so-called "special train" that operates between Memorial Day and Labor Day, running only six times a week on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. There are only two trains on each of those days (that's 12 trains a week, if you're counting), and they run at an average speed of 40 miles per hour. Expect to spend roughly two and a half hours and $40 ($20 one-way) for this journey. For comparison, as of 2022, CapeFLYER saw only 12,800 riders: a stark contrast to the millions of cars passing through the two bridges.

2. A slightly less bogus option: fork over nearly $70 for a 90-minute ferry ride from Boston's Pier 1 to Provincetown. This is much better than what the MBTA offers: same mobile convenience from the city and more than ten boat trips per week that start in early May to mid-October.

3. You could take a plane, but a $500 one-way ticket to fly on a tiny Cessna for thirty minutes isn't worth it. The third option is taking a coach bus, but that just means you're suffering the same fate as cars, only you're on a bus.

Yet none of these methods are subjectively convenient. Car ownership itself is already a four-figure bank account drain, which wastes 51 hours a year (an hour a week) from a person's life, according to 2022 data. And why even bother with the MBTA's CapeFLYER? That's still five hours a day wasted on commuting between Boston and Hyannis, and when you're dropped off in Hyannis, ou're basically within a car sewer: a place unfriendly to non-drivers. The same goes for the Provincetown ferry: all you have is a bus connection. That's about it. Plus, at the expense of more flexible travel times, prices become nearly $80 on "peak travel days" for one direction. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, you heard that right! The audacity to charge for "public transportation" up to $160 for both directions! The most ideal method would be rail, but clearly that's not exactly the most reliable at the moment.

It has been shown, in numerous studies across the globe, that people just feel so much better when they don't live in a car-dominated location. Studies have also proven that local business and a location's overall economy improves drastically when businesses and services are located closer to residential neighborhoods (easily walkable and accessible).

The Cape doesn't have to be full of congestion. Your paradise can begin before you enter the Cape. One of the options is regional rail: just build more trains, for crying out loud! As much as I adore the MBTA, the CapeFLYER is an insult to rail service. It's been eleven years since service began for good, so how does CapeFLYER support a more "car-free experience" or "strengthen our economy"? Car-centricity dominates the location, and thus when you take the train—two and a half hours of your life, by the way—into Barnstable County, you are still within a car-infested sewer! The economy? How much money could you possibly make by running a train service for only three months out of the year?

For this service to even be considered as a remarkable alternative, CapeFLYER, the current train system, needs to be transformed into a regional rail system—similar, if not exactly the same, as the regional rail initiative proposed by TransitMatters, where you should be able to get to Hyannis from Boston in only an hour. Trains should run on a flexible schedule—at a minimum of every hour in the summer/peak tourism months, seven days a week, twelve hours a day.

The trains themselves should be electric multiple units (EMUs) and need to accommodate suitcases, surfboards, bicycles, and restricted mobility passengers, and accessible level boarding.

CapeFLYER shouldn't be restricted to just Hyannis, however. Studies have already been conducted on regional rail throughout the entirety of the peninsula, which is very much needed. Just because a location isn't densely populated, doesn't mean that rail service won't work. Cape Cod has the added benefit of tourism, as well as beaches, prime locations for a rapid, convenient rail service.

The best scenario would be a world where people shouldn't have to touch a car at all to arrive at the Cape. This means that existing commuter rail service on other lines—such as the Old Colony, the Providence, and other routes stemming from North and South Station—should also be modified to regional service stature, with schedules providing trains at a constant rate that is accessible to many.

All trams and buses serving the Cape should be able to accommodate typical beachgoer and tourist items, such as surfboards, suitcases, and bicycles.

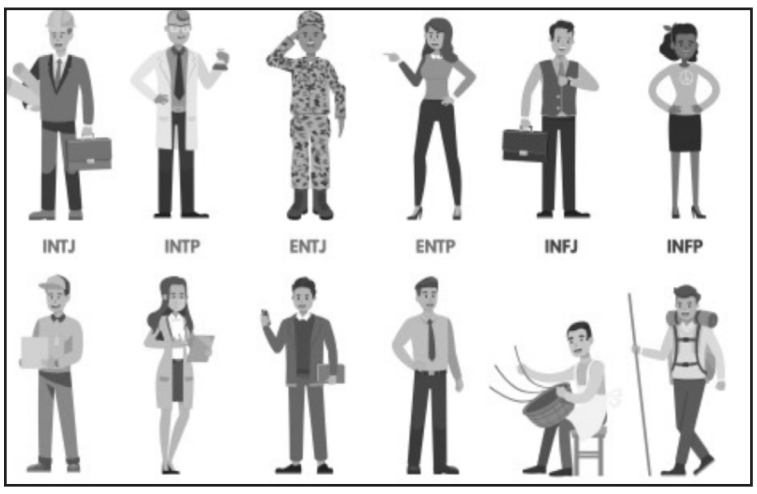
In short: Transit at Cape Cod—and the entirety of Barnstable County—will benefit everyone, including yourself. More accessibility and increased mobility equates to more tourism, and more tourism means a flourishing economy for the whole of the peninsula. More transit equates to you not having to waste countless hours every summer sitting in traffic or circling parking lots. More transit means that everyone can enjoy the benefits of the Cape without needing a personal automobile. Now, wouldn't that be paradise?

Off-Topic

Crossword Answers

Across
1. Friday
3. Gown
4. Cap
6. Yearbook
8. Nostalgia
9. Party
10. Confetti
13. Assassin
15. Speech
16. Milestone
17. Goodbye
18. Handshake

Down
2. Applause
5. Congratulations
7. Road
11. Tassel
12. Gown
14. Skip
15. Summer



Which one are you?
ONLINE SOURCE

Personality Test Tierlist

By Julia Xiao ‘24
Chief Copy Editor

What type of person are you, really? Whether to gain confidence or find like-minded (or dis-like-minded) people, understanding yourself is valuable. If you are unable to discover yourself through inward soul-searching, personality tests may be a fun way to do so.

But don’t worry; there’s no right or wrong answer no matter which test you choose. Most lack real predictive value. An effect called the Barnum Effect says that people generally believe in descriptors of their characteristics when the descriptions are generic (for example, zodiac placemats at Chinese restaurants). The idea is that people can convince themselves of their traits. All the more reason to take this list as simply advice for fun! Let’s begin!

MBTI (Myers Briggs): S Tier

Sorting the takers into one of sixteen possible personality types, the MBTI’s strength is its nuanced result for each individual. While there are different versions, almost all have between fifty to one hundred sixty-five questions of statements with a sliding scale between agree to disagree. Your result is four letters in total: E(xtrovert) or I(ntrovert); S(ensing) or I(ntuitive); T(hinker) or F(eeler); and J(udger) or P(erceiver). For example, ESTJ is one combination. Overall, the thoroughness of this test makes it a strong contender for the universal personality test™, and I especially like its usefulness when meeting new people.

Buzzfeed: B Tier

Well, Buzzfeed encompasses an unlimited stack of online quizzes ranging from this test tells you your mental age to which disneyland character are you? If you enter Buzzfeed quizzes with an open mind, you and your friends could spend hours enjoying quizzes together. Buzzfeed quizzes are quicker and more casual than MBTI quizzes, which means you can do more! Yay! The downside is that Buzzfeed quizzes can be repetitive since anyone can make them…plus there are all those pop-up ads on the website.

“How unlikeable are you?” quiz: C tier

Spanning thirty-five questions, this quiz is simply average in all aspects. The style is the same as the MBTI test, but there are two fewer options on the sliding scale from agree to disagree. If desired, someone could easily achieve a fake result with this test because the intentions of the question statements are obvious. Finally, there’s no winning with this one. You get a low percentage of unlikeability, and you come off as bragging and possibly faking the responses; meanwhile, if you achieve that (normally positive) high percentage, you are, well, unlikeable.

IQ tests: B Tier

Many people view intelligence as a part of personality. Isn’t general cognitive ability part of one’s inner self? However, IQ tests aren’t dependable on measuring intelligence as its creators are only other humans. I recommend thinking of an IQ test as some creative brain questions, not pressuring yourself on your performance. Still, with many different styles of multiple choice questions, they are much more interesting than just clicking agree or disagree, so they are a low B.

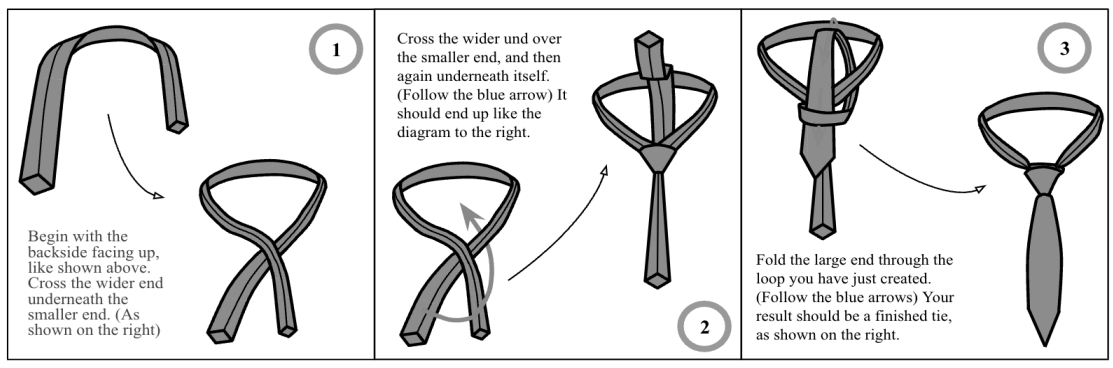
Physical magazine tests: A Tier

These require you to put the effort in as you must score yourself, usually by adding points to discover your result. The best part of these quizzes is finding them in the midst of an otherwise boring magazine. Additionally, they usually feature artwork and some sort of flowchart design that is satisfying to follow along with.

Maybe you don’t believe in personality tests and look down on the believers. However, I encourage you to give one a try! You can absolutely decide whether or not to accept the result, and it provides a look at yourself from a new angle. Well, you might be thinking, these are so childish, and I care about acing actual academic tests. You might be surprised to learn that personality tests can sometimes be used in job interviews…

How to Tie a Tie, Quick and Easy!

By Gyan Sreejith ‘27



Delicious Cherry Cobbler Recipe

By Tiffany Valkova ’25
Chief Copy Editor

When I picture a summer day, I think of tanning in the sun, sweet cherries, and refreshing ice cream. This recipe combines two out of three (and bonus points if you eat it outside)! Cobbler is a classic way of utilizing the fresh flavors of fruit in a delicious baked dessert reminiscent of a cross between a sugary cookie and crumbly biscuit. Even more, cherries are the perfect representation of summery sweetness, and I assure you that cherry cobbler and ice cream will become a summer staple after making this recipe.

Major allergens include lactose and wheat. This recipe yields about eight bowl-sized servings of cobbler, but depending on the ingredients, it can be easily adjusted. In total, it takes about 20 minutes of prep time, 35 minutes to bake, and 20 minutes to cool afterward. It is ideally served with seasonally fresh cherries, which makes it especially fitting for June and July. However, it can be made year-round with frozen cherries, as well—Just make sure to thaw before use! If you are not a fan of cherries, peach and berry cobbler are also classic combinations for summer!

Ingredients:

Cherry filling:

5-6 cups of cherries, *pitted* (5 for fresh or 6 for thawed)

2 ½ tablespoons of flour

¼ cup of granulated/white or brown sugar

1 tablespoon of lemon juice

1 teaspoon of vanilla extract

Cobbler topping:

½ cup of granulated/white or brown sugar

¾ cup of flour

1 teaspoon of baking powder

¼ teaspoon of salt

1 teaspoon of vanilla extract

¾ stick of butter, melted (if butter is salted, remove salt from recipe)

Instructions:

Prepare an 8x8 inch square pan (or something similar) with parchment paper.

Cherry filling:

Simply stir together all the designated ingredients in a medium bowl until fully combined. Transfer onto pan in an even layer.

Cobbler topping:

Combine the sugar, flour, baking powder, and salt in a medium bowl. Add the vanilla extract and melted butter together, and mix until fully combined. The mixture should resemble a crumb topping.

Assembly and baking:

Place the pieces of topping onto the prepared layer of cherry filling. Bake at 350°F for about 30-35 minutes or until the cherries are bubbling slightly around the edges of the pan and the topping is a golden brown color. Once done baking, set aside in the same pan for 20 minutes to cool on a wire rack. You can take it out of the pan after it cools to ensure it retains its shape. Section and serve with some ice cream (vanilla pairs best)!

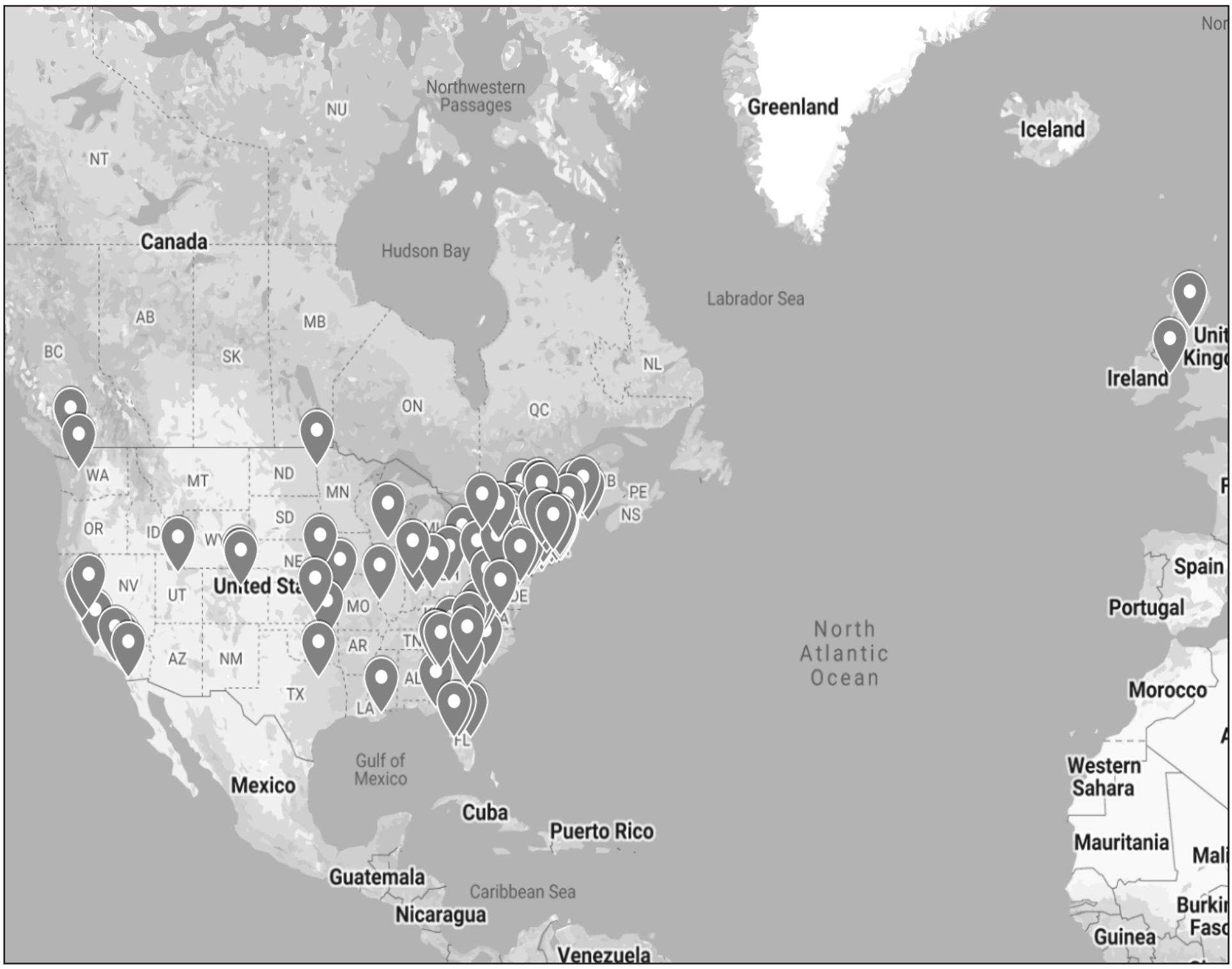
This is the perfect summer recipe, and it will only take about an hour to make this delicious dessert! The leftovers can be stored in an airtight container in the fridge for up to four days and easily warmed up in the microwave. I encourage you to experiment with different fruit flavors, find the combinations that you enjoy most, and add ice cream for a refreshing twist. Happy baking and have a refreshing summer!



Kickoff your summer with a yummy cherry cobbler!
ONLINE SOURCE

Off-Topic

Senior Map



Our seniors are taking over the world!
ISABELLA HILL

Love Doc: Grad Edition

By Nate Kim '27, Matthew Liu '27
PubFin and Chief Copy Editor

Dear Lovelings,

Your new Love Docs here: Dr. Loo and Dr. Hugs… we are new and are just learning the ropes, so be sure to follow and DM us with questions at @ablovedoc on Instagram (not affiliated with ABRHS) – we might be posting advice that solves your problems!

We are glad to be taking over, and today we will be helping you navigate through the confusing world of high school (or college) relationships.

Pros: You can learn life lessons that you otherwise would not have learned, like how to properly stalk someone's social media without getting caught, or how to fake being interested in someone's hobbies.You learn how to love and care for others, because who needs self-love when you can drown in someone else's emotional baggage? Emotionally connect and rely on someone, because what's better than having someone else dictate your happiness?

Cons: You may not be as focused on schoolwork, but hey, who needs a degree when you have a heart full of regret and unfulfilled dreams? It can also lead to drifting away from close friends, but who needs friends when you have someone to text "wyd" to at 3 am? Sometimes, it can get time consuming, because spending hours arguing over what to watch on Netflix is obviously a valuable use of your time. Worst of all, breakups hurt and can have lasting effects, but on the bright side, you'll have plenty of time to write sad poetry or listen to Adele.

Now… for those who are feeling like they want to ride solo, here's some things to remember. You may feel left out, but remember, being alone builds character, or at least that's what we tell ourselves. But, being single means you are locked in - respect the grind, because the only person who can break your heart is yourself. Or, there are people who have no game, but who needs a significant other when you can have a significant amount of ice cream instead?

Your new Love Docs are signing off, we hope this helps and until next time!

Love,
Doctors Loo and Hugs

Senior Farewells

Dear Kéra,

Amidst the stress of being an EIC, your positivity was a guiding force to all of us at The Spectrum. Your perfectly neat handwriting on mock-ups and exceptional organizational skills truly carried us through the year. Whether it was during our search for an advisor or amidst a chaotic layout week, you stood by us not only as a leader but as a friend to each and every one of us. Fond memories of discussing our favorite books and hearing you and Anusha argue about Colleen Hoover will forever stay with us. As you embark on the challenges that college may bring, we have full confidence that your optimism and kindness will see you through any obstacle. We wish you nothing but the very best in your future endeavors and can't wait to see you do great things at the University of Maryland (UMD)!

Dear Anusha,

We're really going to miss your humor, especially your dry sarcasm, where we could never quite tell if you were being serious or not. You struck the perfect balance between fun and productivity, and even though you were constantly juggling a mountain of schoolwork and extracurriculars, you still managed to make time for and prioritize The Spectrum. Thank you for always being there to support us during late nights in layout week, keeping us on track with deadlines (sometimes with a necessary dose of tough love), and maintaining your impeccable organization throughout the entire process. You'll go down in Spectrum history as one of the most remarkable team members and friends. We wish you all the best at the University of Michigan (U-M).

Dear Jessie,

Honestly, where would we be without you? Admittedly, most of us on Chief Staff severely lacked even the most minimal layout skills, which definitely made your job ten times harder. Luckily, no matter the occasion, you were always there to swoop in and save the day. It would have been impossible to publish a single issue of The Spectrum without your help, and we are incredibly grateful that you were always ready to impart your layout wisdom whenever we needed it. Your music filling the Mac lab and your immensely helpful advice about high school will be sorely missed. We know you will make a huge impact at UMASS and are so excited for you to explore the next chapter of your life!

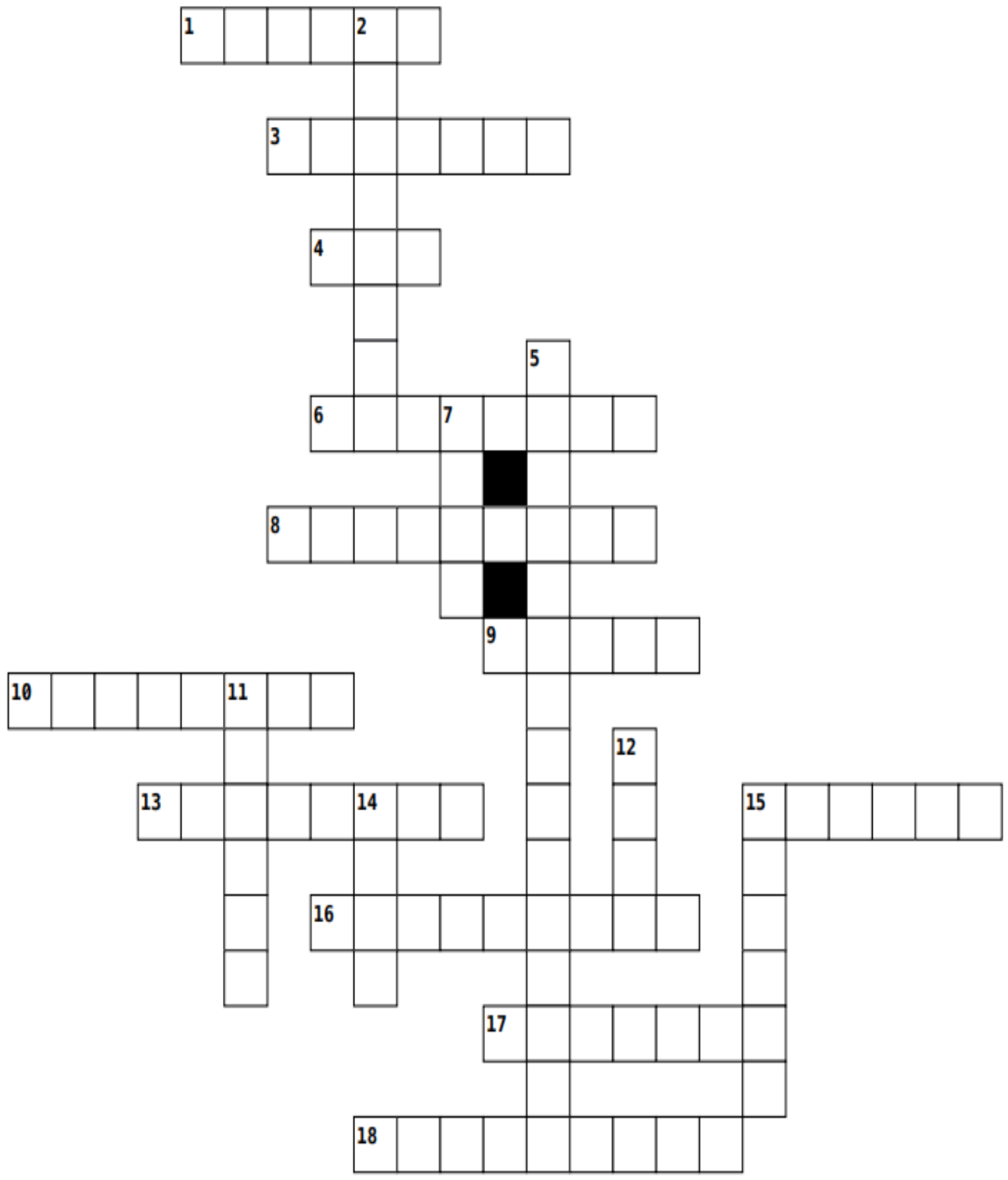
Dear Julia,

Thanks so much for being an essential piece of The Spectrum! We can't appreciate you enough for editing endless amounts of articles throughout your time here. Your passion for writing captivating articles is unmatched, whether it's interviewing food services or writing about personality tests. You're always coming into Thursday meetings and genuinely interested in talking to everyone there, not just your closest friends. You're so dedicated to everything you do: swim captain, Invest in Girls, teaching kids in addition to helping out on The Spectrum. You're an absolutely amazing person and one of the smartest minds around, and being able to attend Cornell reflects just that. Good luck in Ithaca, and please come back to visit!

Dear Sophia,

Your contributions to the Reporting Team and BITS have been nothing short of invaluable. We are immensely grateful for your dedication, often staying late after school to coordinate with writers, conduct research, and craft well-written stories. Your kindness has truly been infectious, radiating positivity to all our writers and editors alike. We aspire to carry on your legacy, and as you embark on this new chapter, know that your impact on our team will be felt long after you've moved on from The Spectrum. Wishing you all the best in UMASS and beyond!

Off-Topic



Across

1. The best day of the week; Graduation Day

3. Four years of your life for a piece of paper that opens doors

4. Not quite a French beret, but this gets tossed in the air at graduation.

6. Where you'll find your best and most awkward pictures (maybe even a baby picture!)

8. Part of a title for one of our articles—hint, it's about graduating seniors, so start flipping through the newspaper!

9. Celebrate good times, come on!

10. not funfetti but _____

13. No one is safe in this high-stakes game.

15. The microphone is on... pay attention to your classmates' ____

16. rhymes with limestone (throwback to freshman year earth science), and an achievement worth celebrating

17. The hardest (or sometimes easiest) word to say on the last day of school

18. The official seal of approval from the principal when you receive your diploma.

Down

2. A song by Lady Gaga and a much-awaited part of the end-of-ceremony celebration

5. You did it! Time to play your victory anthem!

7. ____ trip; The ultimate summer adventure, open your sunroof and blast some music!

11. You read left to right, but for this graduation tradition, you move a ____ from right to left.

12. Your graduation outfit or something cozy to wear at night

14. Remember, too many of these and you might end up starring in Senior Year: The Sequel.

15. Warm weather and cool breezes ahead—time to soak up the sun!