



BROWN & GOLD

Haverhill High School

December 2023



Conneely's Corner

Grab a cup of hot chocolate and some food for the soul at the **Christmas Coffee House** on Wednesday, December 6 from 7-9 in the library, hosted by the Student Council.

Happy Hanukkah! The Jewish holiday begins on the evening of Thursday, December 7 and concludes on the evening of Friday, December 15.

Hillies have yet another **half day December 13.**

The **Winter Solstice** is Thursday, December 21, which marks the shortest day of the year.

The **FAFSA** portal opens this month for the 2024-2025 school year. In years past, it has open on October 1.

Winter break starts with a half day on Friday, December 22. Hillies return to school on Monday, January 2.

Bravo to the **Varsity Cheerleading** team for winning the Division I Regional Championship.

For anyone who needs **community service** hours:

National Honor Society is hosting a gift-wrapping service December 16 in the cafe from 12-4.

Haverhill Public Schools is hosting "Stuff-the-Bus" on Saturday, December 9 at Westgate Plaza from 9-3. Contact Mr. Kucker in room 202 by December 8.

Schoolwide **iReady** and **CommonLit** mid-year assessments will take place the week of December 11-15.

AP Literature and **AP Language**: Mock Exams will be held Saturday, January 20 at HHS from 8-12.

Winter Sports will start up with Boys Swim on December 5 for more updates visit the athletics home page or the Twitter page @haverhillathletics.

Weighing the impact of Early College

Student Council to seek review of Early College, impact on high school students, teachers, culture

By Ava Votto

HAVERHILL--What is going on inside the four walls of Northern Essex for Haverhill High students taking the Early College program? And how is that impacting what is happening back at HHS? These are the essential questions some student leaders are seeking to answer.

The Student Council is pushing to have a review of the Early College program to re-evaluate its objectives and the classes themselves.

They plan to present their proposal to the School Committee at an upcoming meeting.

In the Early College program, juniors and seniors at Haverhill High have the opportunity to take classes at Northern Essex Community College. Students in the program have modified schedules where they attend the high school in the morning and the community college in the afternoon.

Concerns expressed

among Student Council revolved around whether the classes should be weighed equally for class rank and determining the valedictorian; the overall impact of the program on school culture, with so many of the more invested students out of the building by the afternoon; and the impact on scheduling, since it would make a potential move to a rotating schedule harder to realize.

While initially focused on how AP and Early College classes are

weighed, for both credit and class rank, the focus has shifted to being more holistic. Emmerson Cerasuolo, a member of the Student Council, said the Early College program has been a "topic of discussion for the last few years."

"We specifically decided to start now as the Early College has increased the number of students that can be in the program, which takes away from students at the high school," she said. Emmerson said the goal

of the review of the Early College program is to see if the program can be more transparent since the program is primarily run through Northern Essex Community College, leaving some HHS faculty and students unaware of what is happening in the program, while having to deal with the impact it has on the high school.

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Haverhill's Own Hellions



Senior Angelo Rojas and Hillie alum Will Robinson (both in camo) and Wretched Inferno

Interviewed by Sean Wynn

HAVERHILL--A quick stroll downtown reveals that the art scene is very much alive in Haverhill. Massive murals cover brick walls, brightly colored shoes and twisted metal sculptures stand as monuments on street corners and in parks, and in neighboring Bradford, works line the Rail Trail, displaying the creativity of local craftsmen and -women. The local River Bards also put on monthly literary readings and the Drama Club performs several productions a year. But what happened to all the musicians?

Local music seems to have gone silent. We used to be able to hear it reverberating out the Chit Chat before its doors closed or, back in the day, catch a show at the Sad Cafe. But with the vanishing of venues has come the muting of the music. Some bands in Haverhill have seen success, such as Liz Bills and the Change, whose lead singer was a contestant on American Idol in 2013. And, of course, famous musician and director Rob Zombie once roamed the very halls of Haverhill High. Despite these claims

to fame, there are few opportunities in Haverhill for aspiring musicians, beyond music schools such as Belmagine Studios on Washington St., and there are very few permanent music venues in Haverhill, making it difficult for local musicians to perform and show off their work.

But from this fittingly rugged environment, local death metal band Wretched Inferno has sprung into success. Performing in shows from Cambridge to Litchfield, Milwaukee to San Antonio, these macabre metalheads have ex-

ploded onto the death metal scene since their inception in 2018.

I first stumbled across Wretched Inferno in 2021 after I saw a promotion on Will Robinson's Instagram, and being interested in discovering new music, I decided to check them out. I had listened to classic metal like Iron Maiden and Black Sabbath, and 'Nu Metal' like Slipknot and System of a Down, but this was like nothing I'd heard before:

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Showing mettle with medals

Kailyn Aquino and Molly Jordan take home state titles for Hillie Swim & Dive

By Meg Gardner

HAVERHILL--While it's no secret that Haverhill High School's swim and dive team has exceptional talent, this year raised the bar another meter. With winning a total of six meets this season, the girls were nothing short of spectacular.

To finish off their perfect ten of a season, the swim and dive team brought back two state championship titles from swimmer Molly Jordan, Class of 2026, and diver Kailyn Aquino, Class of 2025. This is the first time Haverhill High has brought home a state championship title since 2019.

Jordan took home first place for the 100-yard backstroke with a time of 59.68 seconds.

Aquino dove right into being a state champion in the one-meter dive with a final score of 422.05.

Both of the girls were overjoyed with their wins. "The win felt amazing," Aquino stated, adding, "I got second by one point last year, so I really wanted to win this year."

"I couldn't stop smiling. I was happy that entire weekend," Jordan exclaimed.

While the girls got to experience the highs of winning, there was a lot that went into achieving

that win. The week leading up to the State Championship was "go" time for the team.

"I was swimming less yards and focusing more on time," Jordan said.

This is a process often referred to as "tapering down," during which an athlete will focus more on their speed and less on their distance.

"I just kept going over and over my dives until they looked good, and I practiced twice a day," Aquino shared.

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Hillie state champions Kailyn Aquino (left) and Molly Jordan (right)

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Brown & Gold

The mission of the Brown & Gold is to provide the Haverhill High School community with accurate, socially significant, and thoughtful news. As an organization of dedicated, conscientious, and curious journalists, we honor and revere our responsibility to ensure that our readers are equipped with all of the necessary information to make the mature and deliberate decisions that are the foundation of rich and ethical lives.

Hillie athletics had a very successful fall season, including several conference championships and a Thanksgiving victory for the football team.

CHEER
Haverhill Cheer won the 2023 MSA Division 1 Regional Championship.

CROSS COUNTRY
The Girls Cross Country team claimed the 2023 MVC regular season title, while Coach Michael Maguire earned MVC Coach of the Year honors.

Lauren Downer and Keith Korir were named to the MVC All-Conference Second Team.

FIELD HOCKEY
The Girls Field Hockey team finished the year with a 4-4 record.
Brenna Corcoran and

Mikayla Tzortzis were named to the MVC Field Hockey All-Conference Teams.

FOOTBALL
The Haverhill Football team ended the year by winning the annual Thanksgiving game against Lowell, 20-14. Football ended their season with a 3-8 record in the first season for Head Coach Robert Pike.

Devin Careiro was named the MVC All-Conference First Team. James Farrell and Ariel Desir were named to the All-Conference Second Team, while Gabe Grzybowski, Brian Tejada and Stavy Baptiste were All-Conference Third Team.

GOLF
Sophomore Tommy Murphy won the MVC Golf Individual Title, winning

Fall Sports Recap

the title on the first playoff hole.

Tommy Murphy, Jack Baker, and Pat McGowan were named to the MVC All-Conference Team.

GIRLS SOCCER
Haverhill Girls Soccer won the 2023 MVC Division 3 Regular Season Championship. They went to the state tournament.

After a first-round win over Wachusett in penalty kicks, they were eliminated by the no. 4 seed Wellesley. Four girls got All-Conference honors: Hannah Allen, Malory Amirian, Eve Barton and Makaylla Cederman.

BOYS SOCCER

Haverhill Boys Soccer won the 2023 MVC Division III Regular Season Championship.

Four boys were named to the MVC All-Conference teams: Lucas Harvey, Stephen Every, Joel Ishimwe and Jonathan Matombo.

GIRLS SWIM & DIVE

The Girls Swim & Dive team featured several state champions. Kailyn Aquino won the state championship in the one-meter dive, and Molly Jordan is the state champion in the 100-yard backstroke.

At the MVC Girls Swim Championship meet, Molly Jordan took first in the 500-yard free-

style; Makenzie Hills-grove won the MVC championship in the 100-yard backstroke; and the team of Isabella Tanguay, Sophia DeFrank, Makenzie Hills-grove and Kailyn Aquino won the 200-yard medley relay.

Molly Jordan, Sophia Caruso, Makenzie Hills-grove, Isabella Tanguay and Kailyn Aquino were named to the All-Conference First Team, while Emily Miller, Sophia DeFrank and Emily Lenihan were named to the All-Conference Second Team.

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

Girls Volleyball clinched their third straight MVC Championship after a 3-1 win over Andover. They finished the season 17-1 and were ranked No. 2 in the state.

They took down

Brockton with a score of 3-0 to advance to the round of 16 in the state tournament and then defeated Boston Latin 3-0 to advance to the quarterfinals. In the quarterfinals, their season came to an end, as they fell to Franklin, 3-2.

They did not make it to the championship round, but they had a great season with Emmerson Cerasuolo being named MVC Volleyball Player of the Year, while Coach Vin Pettis received the MVC Coach of the Year.

Five Hillies were named to the MVC Volleyball All-Conference Teams: Emmerson Cerasuolo, Gabby Burdier, Sydney Riley, Taylor Lewis and Samantha Dion.

--Raymond Bartimus

STATE CHAMPS:

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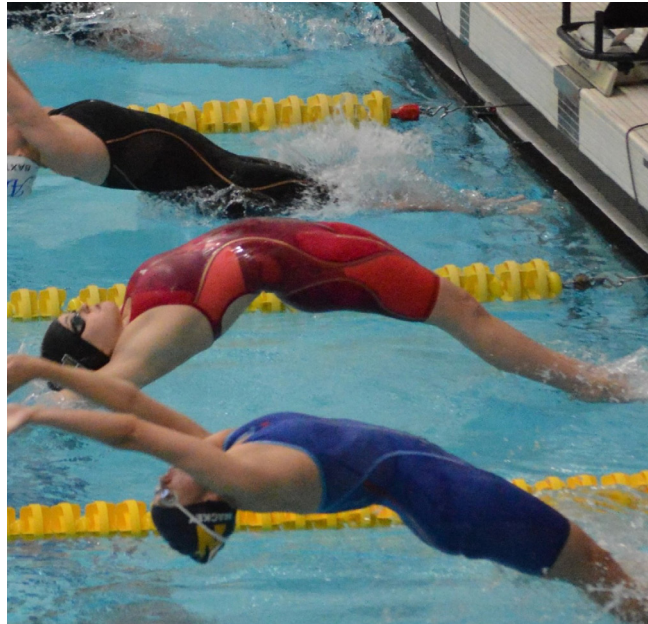


Photo courtesy of Marilyn Caradonna

This hard work and dedication reflected quite clearly on States' day. But it wasn't just their own selves that carried them to victory. Both girls expressed a lot of gratitude for their captains and coaches.

"My coaches and captains believed that I could win, which gave me so much confidence,"

Aquino said.

"My captain, Kenzie Hills-grove, was actually in the race with me and provided me with good competition," Jordan reveals. "My other captain, Emily Miller, shared a lot of kind words with me before my race as well."

The future's looking bright for our state champions. Both girls will



Photo courtesy of Marilyn Caradonna

be returning to the team next season with big plans.

"[The win] is going to allow me to focus more on my dives and less about my placement," Aquino shared in regards to next season.

As for Jordan, she plans to continue to improve her times to come back for another State Championship Title.

Looking forward

to their futures, both girls intend to move on to college swim and dive. However, due to their young ages, the specifics of that aren't apparent to the girls quite yet.

In the end, the win felt great for the girls but what felt even better was being a part of something they both hold dearly to their hearts.

"To me, dive is a

HAVERHILL EDUCATION FOUNDATION

ATTENTION TEACHERS

The Mini-Grant application for school year 2023/2024 is NOW OPEN!

HEF's funding priorities are to support Project-Based Learning in all disciplines, for example:

- Development of youth leadership skills
- Visual arts • Performing arts
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)
- Health, wellness, and social-emotional learning

For more information or to apply please visit

www.haverhilleducationfoundation.org/mini-grants

OPINION: Pump the brakes on the B's and C's 'Legacy' regular seasons have too often brought playoff despair

By Thomas Bergeron

HAVERHILL-With the retirements of Patrice Bergeron and David Krejci and the departures of Taylor Hall, Tyler Bertuzzi, Nick Foligno, Dmitry Orlov, Garnet Hathaway and Connor Clifton many Bruins fans were skeptical of what the team was going to look like this season, but said skepticism was short lived.

What some thought was going to be a bridge year has turned out to be, at least thus far, the beginning of what could be another stunner. At the time of publication the Bruins' record stood at 14-4-3 and both goalies are looking like Venz candidates yet again. The team has been grinding out comeback wins against great teams, scoring goals at a record-setting pace, and playing league-best defense. Although fans would appear to have every rational reason to talk about Cup contention, there may be an even more rational reason to pump the brakes a little. But I'll let you relish in the success for a minute and move on to the other team that calls the Garden home.

No matter what night of the week you show up at the T.D. Garden this year you're almost guaranteed a proverbial lightshow, especially with the all-star team that is the Boston Celtics. Acquiring Jrue Holiday and Kristaps Porzingis in the same off-season felt like a dream (team) come true, and has led to the Celts being arguably the most exciting team in sports at the moment, pulling off such feats as scoring 155 points in a night and beating another NBA team (granted it was the Pacers) by 51 points. I know, I know, 'this

is the year; it took Kobe 7 years; it's Tatum's time' etc., but, once again: Let's Pump. The Brakes.

With the regular season success of the B's and C's the Greenteamers and Bruins Bozos are talking legacy already; what I'll just call the Greatest-Team-Ever Virus (GTEV). Unfortunately, regular season success has ultimately meant nothing towards playoff success for either team from the "City of Champions."

As most people know by now, it is not beyond the Bruins' capabilities to go virtually undefeated and still find a way to choke in the first round--and that's only in our most recent memories. Collapse seems to just hover and wait in the far reaches of the Bruins' horizon, circling like a carrion bird, and not just last year. Remember the "Bubble Year" in 2020? The Bruins, again, had the NHL's best record in the shortened season and lost to the Tampa Bay Lightning in the second round after getting dominated. I mean winning the first game of the series and then losing four STRAIGHT? That is a choke job if I've ever seen one.

Another example is the 2019 Stanley Cup Final against the Blues. What seemed to be a cakewalk for the Bruins turned out to be a tragedy. Having home ice advantage and not taking advantage of it? Only winning one game on home ice that series is unacceptable. It doesn't help when your goalie can't stop a beach ball and one of your best players--Brad Marchand--makes a stupid line change costing the team a goal. Must I go on? Of course!

How about the more recent second round series against the Islanders in 2021. The Bruins seemed to be the dominant team in the series but that also seemed to not be the case. The Bruins would ultimately be in a good spot in the series and then lose three straight games to choke the series. It doesn't help your case when you keep starting an injured Tuukka Rask against a good offensive Islanders team! Management and the coaching staff doing stupid stuff seems to be the case for most of the Bruins choke jobs.

But the Bruins aren't alone. Maybe it has something to do with the Garden, considering neither team seems to be able to win at home when it matters.

The Celtics are also not very good at translating their regular season success into the playoffs. Last year the Celtics achieved a 57-25 record and were the #2 seed in the Eastern Conference. A lot of people predicted the Celtics to roll over the conference and win the NBA title. It was looking like those predictions could come to fruition while the Celtics managed to get to the Eastern Conference Finals for the second year in a row. That is where it all collapsed, the Heat quickly took a 3-0 series lead over the Celtics. Granted, the Celtics stormed back in the series and managed to force a game 7 at home, but how do you lose three consecutive games in the conference finals? Who does that? The CELTICS! Let's also not forget the year before when we blew a VERY takeable series against Golden State. Maybe it doesn't go as far as a choke job, but it certainly was for our star players, who still don't know how to take over a playoff series, and until I see it, I'm coasting through these seasons, enjoying the breeze, but certainly not letting myself start searching Expedia for plane tickets in June.

OPINION: Patriots fumble post-Brady rebuild

The Patriots putrid offense is Pat-ently offensive

By Raymond Bartimus

HAVERHILL-Achtung, Pats fans! It may be a long road back to respectability.

In Week 10 of the 2023 NFL season, the Patriots went all the way to Germany to bring nothing but humiliation to themselves. In the 4th quarter they had not one but two opportunities to win against the Colts. But, in one instance, Mac Jones completely underthrew a pass to an open receiver in the end zone. Then Bailey Zappe, his backup, who came in after Jones was benched, did a fake spike and threw to a sea of Colts defenders, with nary a Patriot in sight, and got intercepted.

The frequently played clip of owner Robert Kraft's slumped shoulders as he stood in a luxury box in his awkwardly big puffy coat spoke for all Patriots fans: it's hopeless.

The Patriots are having a horrible year so far, with a 2-9 record after Week 11. So, what is the problem? Is it Mac Jones? Is it the offensive line? Is it the wide receivers? Is it Coach Bill Belichick? Well, noticing what all these have in common, it's clear: the offense doesn't have the tools.

The Patriots have played good games this year, but they have also really sank to new depths in ways that I never thought they could. They signed Juju Smith-Schuster in the off season, just for him to do nothing this season. I knew it was a bad idea from the start, knowing Smith-Schuster has not proved at all that he can be the top go-to wide receiver. Kendrick Bourne was doing far better before we lost him to injury. It was so bad that Smith-Schuster did not get his first touchdown until Week 8 of the season.

Do I think that Mac Jones is the problem? A little bit, yes, as he is very inconsistent, but no quarterback could perform behind

the Patriots' current offensive line and with nobody to throw to. At the same time though, I can't defend him after Week 10 in Germany and his career with the Patriots is now on life support, if it isn't already practically over.

However, I cannot call him the complete issue with this Patriots offense. There have been so many tipped balls, dropped balls, and tipped balls that have led to picks. When I think about Mac Jones, you have to go back to his rookie year when the Patriots made the playoffs. Yes, they got crushed by the Bills in the Wild Card Round. But I am talking about the regular season in general. Mac Jones in his rookie year threw for 3,801 yards with 22 passing touchdowns and 13 interceptions. Is that amazing? No, but is it good for someone who was in their rookie season? Absolutely.

Everyone wants Zappe to come in and be our first-string quarterback, but he isn't any better than Jones. Zappe has also been cut twice already, so clearly the coaching staff is not confident in him.

Onto the offensive line, this line has its issues, especially with health, with the Dolphins game in Week 8 being the first game they had a fully healthy offensive line this year. People complain about Mac Jones being sacked so much, but what do you expect when they can't protect him? There needs to be some real investment in beefing up the offensive line in the coming off season, no matter who the quarterback is next year. Jones has been sacked 16 times this year already. Mac Jones can barely throw the ball without a defensive lineman hitting him. The Patriots are inept in the passing game because there is no offensive line, along with

the receivers just not being good enough.

Coach Bill Belichick is an interesting one. I don't think it's necessarily all his fault. He definitely does play a big part though. He won a lot of Super Bowls, but I don't think that he is right to have in New England anymore. He is old, and I hate to say it, but he is washed up. Prior to the Germany game, the rumor was that Belichick would get fired if the Patriots didn't win. I think it would benefit this team to have a young coach and a new environment. Even though the play calling is the responsibility of Bill O'Brien, the offensive coordinator, Belichick was responsible for the roster construction that led to the glaring issues on offense.

Overall I think most of our problems come down to the receivers and offensive line. They both are inadequate. I think that Jones is a problem that they can figure out at some point, but he is not at all the main issue for this offense. Our receivers cannot catch at all. Hunter Henry and Mike Gesicki are both decent tight ends, but they obviously can't pass to them every play. The Patriots would've been better off signing Deandre Hopkins and Odell Beckham Jr in the off season. They really could've had two decent receivers. Surely they are at the end of their careers but they would have benefited our offense.

But that is in the past. Overall this organization needs to figure themselves out. And likely, there are no quick fixes. Patriots fans might be more used to reloading than rebuilding, but they better brace themselves. It will likely be a construction zone for a while.



Teacher Tales: Dishing on family with Ms. Diskin

'It's beautiful. Health, love, family, respect. These are the most important things.'

Interviewed by Sara Tucker

This is the first installment of the 2023-2024 school year of a series dedicated to getting to know the illustrious educators of HHS beyond the classroom.

Sara Tucker: So you're going to be the first interview in a reboot series we did last year called "Teacher Tales" and to start out I wanted to explain how these interviews go. I'm going to give you a word or phrase and you're going to tell me the first thing that comes to your mind. And since we are approaching the holidays, I decided to do the word "Family."

Antonietta Diskin: A story about family? Well, you know, in my life family is the most important thing. I recently became a Nonna to a beautiful grandson, and because my son now lives in Miami, last weekend we were able to have an early Thanksgiving. He's got a job and he moved in with a really sweet young lady, who we are all crazy about and they both came home. For 48 hours!

Tucker: On a plane? Or did they drive?

Diskin: No, on a plane! They came home Friday night at midnight and they left Sunday night at midnight.

Tucker: That must have been amazing!

Diskin: It truly was! We celebrated my mom's and daughter's birthdays because they celebrate their birthday on November 19. And that was their birthday gift!

Tucker: Everyone coming home?

Diskin: Everyone coming home, yes!"

Tucker: How has becoming a grandmother changed your life?

Diskin: Oh my gosh! You know, my mom always said the love that you feel for your grandchildren is different and deeper than the



love you feel for your own children, and now I completely understand! I want to hold him and feed him, every minute of the day. My daughter sends me a picture every morning and says good morning to me! See? (showing a picture of her grandson.)

Tucker: Aw, he is the cutest! I remember last year you were all excited in class because you had just found out! I'm getting that weird feeling that time moves so quickly.

Diskin: Oh yeah, I mean I look at my children and I can't believe that they are all grown up and you can't even fathom it! You can't even wrap your brain around it!

Tucker: I feel like that when I start thinking about how I'll be in college next year. Time moves all too quickly.

Diskin & Tucker: (simultaneously) It waits for absolutely no one. (laughter)

Tucker: It doesn't hit me until I think of my parents getting older or my sisters only being a couple years away from high school!

Diskin: The whole cycle is absolutely beautiful, obviously having a mom who

is turning 93 years old, and the funny thing about it is we are all 30 years apart!

Tucker: Really? Like exactly?

Diskin: My daughter is 60 years younger than my mom, she's turning 33! I just turned 63 in June! Isn't that insane?

Tucker: It's like a comforting coincidence.

Diskin: It's an incredible coincidence. My family is extremely close. I have a sister and a brother, and I'm the oldest. My mom was at my house, and since she was there, she was the matriarch of the family. Everyone came over, and thank goodness I made 20 meatballs, two trays of chicken parm. I boiled three pounds of pasta. You know, the front of the house was a revolving door. People are coming! Nieces, nephews, my siblings coming in and out.

Tucker: I love that food ties so many families together because that is how it is with my family in Ireland. The door is never locked, you walk in, eat something, talk and then you leave. I wish that was more common here.

Diskin: I know! I know!

It is very different. I think that here, unfortunately, we all have lots of work and responsibilities. In Europe, life is a little bit...

Diskin: Slower!

Diskin: Exactly! So much more relaxed, and I think here to being there, it feels almost like a portal to a new dimension.

Tucker: I love traveling to visit family, it feels like a breath of fresh air. Being here to being there, it feels almost like a portal to a new dimension.

Diskin: Absolutely! I really think that the European lifestyle, I really think they got it down. We Americans have something to learn from them because they prioritize family, coming together, food, enjoying life and slowing down for a second. They go outside to watch the sunrise and enjoy it fully. They stop and smell the, you know the cliché, stop and smell the roses. Because, like we mentioned earlier, time moves too fast, and there are great opportunities to spend time with loved ones. Unfortunately, nobody lives forever.

Tucker: They all have routines, but they're happy in those simple day-to-day ac-

tivities. I feel that here we are all almost robotic, in a way.

Diskin: It is very robotic, and they're not the most... What's the word I'm looking for? They don't live luxurious lives, but they are undeniably happy. Sometimes, I feel that with my own family members that live in Italy, they don't know where the next meal is coming from, but somehow there is always a meal on the table. Whether that be potatoes and some meat or pasta, you're going to eat! And everyone is always happy. When someone you love takes the time to make you a meal, it's the greatest thing. And then getting to share that meal, it's truly a blessing.

Tucker: Having family overseas has really opened my eyes to how privileged my life is over here. It gives you a good look on just how lucky you truly are.

Diskin: Absolutely. This is what I always tell my students when we travel, appreciate what you have at home and don't take it for granted because life can be cruel, and it can be ripped out of your hands in an instant.

Tucker: The things that people, including myself,

complain about when traveling were eye opening. We are in a beautiful city, complaining. Specifically in Ireland and in my travels, they don't complain about much. They all live for a sunny day.

Diskin: We were in Ireland for three weeks over the summer of 2022 and did you know it did not rain until the last day that we were there. To me, that was a message from someone's ancestors saying that we are sad to see you go. Of course, you know, my husband has gotten in touch with his roots there and he did a lot of research on ancestry to find out where his grandfather was baptized. The church in Galway was where we renewed our 35th wedding vows.

Tucker: Saying goodbye to a place that means that much is always a tricky thing.

Diskin: In Italy, it's funny because we laugh about this, we are saying goodbye to everyone and we start saying goodbye an hour before. Everyone's chit chatting by the door and talking about silly things. Things that we didn't talk about in the kitchen or the dining room and yet still we linger, not saying goodbye. Even so, we are gonna be together again. And they're crying by the door like they're never going to see you again, and it breaks your heart. In a way, especially if you're leaving elderly people, you don't really know because life happens.

Tucker: In a way, it's so comforting knowing that there is someone that makes saying goodbye that hard.

Diskin: It's beautiful. Health, love, family, respect. These are the most important things. However much money you have, whatever car you drive, what kind of house you have, how many bedrooms it has, it truly isn't important. At the end of the day, family is the most important thing.

More than just a voice

Holly Arsenault, HHS morning announcer, goes beyond the mic

By Makenzie Hillsgrove

HAVERHILL—"Good Morning, Hillie Nation!" Sound familiar?

Of course it does, it is the melodious greeting Hillies hear every morning at 8:10 a.m. But who exactly is the person behind the invigorating voice?

Meet Holly Arsenault—an avid bird watcher, traveler, and most notably, the voice of Haverhill High School.

Many wonder how exactly one comes to be the voice of a large urban high school, but they will have to keep wondering. As Arsenault herself confessed, even she isn't exactly sure how she landed at the morning microphone.

"It honestly just fell into my lap. I got it by default," Arsenault said.

Despite the role not exactly being voluntary, Arsenault has taken the role by the reins and her voice has become as normalized as an alarm clock, or better yet, the sunrise.

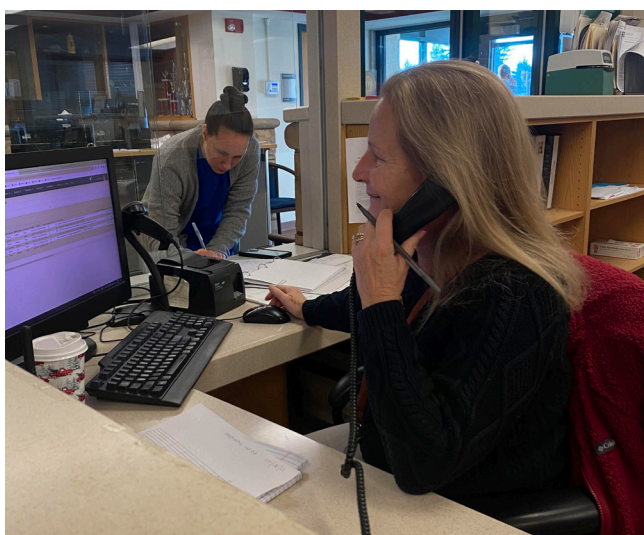
But doing the announcements did not always come easy to her. The first time doing them she was actually very nervous, but, as with many things in her life, she quickly adapted to her new duty.

"I think maybe the first time I was nervous, but after that it was a breeze. I mean, you don't see anyone while doing them," Arsenault said.

One of the major challenges was learning to slow down, as she put quite simply, "You have to slow down and try not to talk too fast."

When asked how she felt about her voice being the star of Haverhill High's very own intercom stage, she laughed. Arsenault may be the voice of our own main office's circus, but she certainly doesn't do it alone.

In all reality, the announcements are an important and daily task that require several steps, including adding last minute requests from teachers, re-



membering to include previously scheduled announcements, and putting together a correct document each and every morning among all the other things that need to be done to start the day.

Considering the immense amount of effort it takes to keep our office running, it's safe to say Arsenault certainly has her hands full. However, she made it clear that the effort to keep the school on its feet, and on schedule certainly takes a village.

"I don't do [the announcements] by myself. Melissa Tarcy helps, along with other office clerks," Arsenault said.

She reiterates the positive work environment that caused her to stay in Haverhill for a little over half a decade, mentioning her co-workers and of course, the kids.

"You interact with the public, the kids, administration, and faculty. It stays busy because everything comes through the main office. But I like it here, I love the kids," she says.

Growing up, Mrs. Arsenault lived in Woburn, Massachusetts. She later attended Middlesex Community College, majoring in laboratory technology, and finally finishing out her schooling at Salem State, where she majored

in biology with a minor in chemistry.

Using these degrees, she worked as a microbiologist and in an endocrinology/fertility lab, and enjoyed the time she spent working there. Arsenault herself said, "I loved it there. One of my favorite jobs, before I had any kids".

Arsenault described herself as a "career person," having worked in several fields, both medical and social, and enjoyed the variety. Although Arsenault's background was strictly based on STEM disciplines, her passion for working with children overrode her educational degrees.

Before even working in the school district, Arsenault was an avid volunteer in her community. Volunteering as a Science Club leader, and later teaching Sign Language to kids at the Moody School. Although Arsenault is fairly new to Haverhill High, she is no stranger to the city itself, having worked for it for nearly 20 years.

When it comes to Arsenault's family, she has three daughters, all of whom are well out of high school. She also has a husband, whom she met while enjoying one of her deep seated passions, fishing!

Throughout the halls of Haverhill High, the teachers

EARLY COLLEGE:

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According to a PowerPoint prepared for the presentation to the School Committee, the Student Council is recommending forming a committee of several stakeholders, including representatives from the Early College program.

The committee's task would be to: review curriculum, grading policies, and assessments of Early College courses; share curriculum, grading policies and assessments from the high school with Early College personnel; research various universities' perceptions of the Early College program and policies regarding the transfer of credits; research outcomes for Early College graduates; examine the demographic makeup of the Early College cohort and the progression of the program in recent years; and assess and offer recommendations to address effects of the Early College program on school culture.

At Haverhill High school, there are 119 seniors and 131 juniors in the Early College program, for a total of 250 students currently in the program. Conversely, as a point of comparison, there are a total of 204 students combined taking Honors/AP English classes. The high school's total enrollment of juniors and seniors was 859 for the 2022-2023 school year.

Emmerson notes that making any changes faces several obstacles.

"It is difficult to make these changes, as many students do benefit from the program, so they do not wish to push for the changes that would hurt them," she said.

Associate Principal Victoria Lu said the program has grown quite rapidly in the last two to

three years but that growth was intentional. Ms. Lu noted how Haverhill High School received an expansion grant from DESE (The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education). As a result, DESE has prescribed how many students and which demographics should be in the program.

"We have been trying to work to meet those quotas," Lu said.

According to Ms. Lu, the Early College program is one of the strongest achievement and growth indicators for the high school, which she said is a very big positive.

However, Ms. Lu added that the program had deviated from its original purpose, which is to provide the opportunity for first-generation prospective college students to experience a college environment, while earning college credits.

"There was a period where it definitely strayed away from its original purpose in terms of who it was recruiting and how it was recruiting," she said. "In the last year and a half, we have really made some strong efforts to try and steer back to its original goal and purpose and really try to meet with more of those kids and encourage them to apply and try to do more active recruitment of those students."

Haverhill High hired a bilingual recruitment specialist last year who, Ms. Lu said, is "really trying to engage those students in these conversations and make the program more accessible to them."

Ms. Lu said she could understand why the program has become popular. "Why would anyone not want to be involved in

the program, especially if you are college bound and you see the potential financial gain," she said.

Jillian Shultz, a student at Haverhill High who takes just Early College classes, feels strongly that the weighing of AP and Early College classes should remain the same and is wary of any changes to the program.

"Early College classes can be just as hard," she said, noting she takes Early College classes because "I want the college credits to be guaranteed."

"AP credits aren't guaranteed unless you pass the test," Jillian added.

One of the things the proposed committee would look at is which colleges accept college credits earned through the Early College program.

Jillian said the workload for her Early College classes is a significant amount, while acknowledging AP classes might have a larger overall workload. Still, she feels the Student Council shouldn't be pushing for these changes since she feels the Early College classes are rigorous as well.

"Early College students are taking college-level classes that are just as hard as AP classes, and the AP kids just don't get to see it from their perspective," she said.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education's website, the purpose of the Early College program "is to create and maintain partnerships connecting our state's districts and high schools with our state's colleges in order to give thousands of Massachusetts students, especially first-generation college-goers, access to college completion and career success."

There are around 50 schools that have a partnership with official designations, and the cities around Haverhill that participate in it include Lawrence High School, Lowell High School and Whittier Tech.

59TH ANNUAL VFW SANTA PARADE



WRETCHED INFERNO:

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growling vocals and squealing riffs and too-tight snares played in dissonant harmony. It was so brutal, so guttural and harsh. I was totally enamored, in part because of the exotic sound, in part because these celebrities went to my school.

Current senior Angelo Rojas and alum Will Robinson were kind enough to give their input on their musical upbringing, the behind-the-scenes of the band, and their insight into the death metal community.

How has your environment and upbringing influenced your musical journey?

Rojas: I think the death metal scene in New England definitely takes a good part on my musical influence but I always try to go beyond what's being written.

Robinson: My upbringing impacted my musical journey a ton. My mom used to play guitar and got me into some metal, just basic bands like Metallica, Def Leppard, and Black Sabbath. And we also played Guitar Hero together when I was younger and I'd always pick the nastiest song titles or heaviest-sounding songs which led me to get into stuff like Slayer and Pantera. Once I became a fan of heavier music I wanted to play music, I was maybe 5 at the time and I couldn't play guitar because I couldn't press down on the frets, but my sister had a drumkit she had gotten for Christmas and I had started playing around on it, which led me to now and I couldn't be happier.

How did the band come to be formed/how did you join the band?

Rojas: I joined Wretched Inferno in August '22 when Will asked me to play with them, I met Will at school in sophomore year when he was a senior

Robinson: Wretched Inferno formed in 2018 at a place me and our bassist/vocalist Colin used to go to for lessons and the instructors just kinda threw a bunch of metalheads in one room.

Every fall for the past 3 years, Wretched Inferno has dropped new material. Can we expect this tradition to be kept alive this year too?

Rojas: We have a lot of

on his own and sends it to us to listen to and asks for our opinions on it. Recently though, we had been wanting to do more collaborative writing which has been going pretty well, the new stuff is a lot more technical and a lot more brutal.

What are the struggles about playing in a band that people don't think about?



new stuff coming up but we're definitely not rushing it, with all the changes in lineup, sound, attitudes and perspectives it's been a little harder to get back to writing and working on new stuff but expect something towards the end of this year or the beginning of the next one.

Robinson: I don't think we'll be dropping anything this year unfortunately because of the lineup changes, but we're hard at work writing new stuff and have been playing some new stuff live and the crowd seems to enjoy it. We do have something planned for early 2024 though...

What does the writing process look like for Wretched Inferno?

Rojas: It's all over the place (laughter), sometimes one of us will write a whole song and just use that, sometimes one of us will come up with a guitar riff and we'll go from there or sometimes we just come up with names for songs and be like "okay I'm gonna write this one" you know? I guess there isn't really any rule to follow.

Robinson: Normally our bassist/vocalist writes stuff

to make money I guess.

Tips for aspiring musicians trying to play live shows?

Rojas: Literally hit up a lot of people in bands on Instagram, introduce yourself, go to shows, get to know people in the scene and everyone will help you out.

Robinson: Go to shows, talk to people, make

ment and *Considered Dead* by Gorguts.

Robinson: These are just some classics that every death metal fan should know: Possessed-*Seven Churches*, Morbid Angel - *Altars of Madness*, Autopsy - *Severed Survival*, Bolt Thrower - *Mercenary*, Deicide - *Once Upon the Cross*, and Cannibal Corpse - *The Bleeding*.

Rojas: Not at all, I didn't even think I'd join a band when I started playing guitar. When we went on tour it was the sickest thing ever, we went everywhere and met so many people and stopped at so many cool spots that it's still mind blowing to me.

Robinson: It's definitely not something I would've expected at all and I'm so grateful to be able to have gotten these opportunities.

What was your favorite part of touring? Least favorite?

Rojas: My favorite part of touring is the freedom that we had. Imagine living on the road with your best friends, no parents, no rules, no obligations, doing what you love the most every night and getting paid to do that—it's sick. I loved the feeling of not having somewhere to come back, you know? I could do whatever I want one day and not worry about having to come back home to all my problems. And the only problems I can think of being on tour would be of course mechanical problems with your vehicle, food is a big one, hygiene, sleep and health. Touring is really really tiring and it'll burn you down if you can't handle not taking breaks and always doing something. Overall I'm really grateful for being in Wretched Inferno, it's a dream come true and I couldn't be luckier with my bandmates too, they're my best friends and my brothers.

Robinson: My favorite part about touring though was hanging out with all the bands, partying, and being able to share our music to new people. I don't really have a least favorite thing about touring. It's honestly been all incredible and I can't wait to do it again!

I'd like to give a huge thanks to both Angelo and Will for letting me interview them, and a shout out to the whole band for consistently putting out good music. You can listen to Wretched Inferno on Spotify, Apple Music, Bandcamp and YouTube, or you can attend their live shows advertised on their Instagram. If you or someone you know is an artist or musician and would like to be interviewed for the *Brown & Gold*, please contact

Angelo Rojas (top left); Will Robinson (top right); Wretched Inferno's latest studio album *Cacophony of Filth*.

Rojas: Definitely the lack of realization from people that we're actually a band and we do [stuff]. A lot of people think we're a joke but we actually want to go places.

Robinson: Money is definitely a big struggle, especially in this genre, but getting booked on shows and printing shirts definitely helps generate money. It also usually ends up funding the band even more. You have to spend money

friends, and make connections. There are so many ridiculously talented people in the New England metal scene.

Album recs for people trying to get into death metal?

Rojas: *None So Vile* by Cryptopsy, *Pierced From Within* by Suffocation, *Prophecies Foretold* by Dehumanized, *Butcher the Weak* and *Molesting the Decapitated* by Devour-

People tend to characterize metalheads as mean, brutish people. Do you find this stereotype to be true, or can you share an experience that shows otherwise?

Rojas: WRONG! Metalheads aren't like mean or anything, we're actually really friendly, even more friendly than people who listen to pop or whatever is popular right now. Everyone in the scene is super friendly and welcoming so yeah, it's just a stereotype.

Robinson: No, not true at all, people who are into metal are some of the chilliest people you'll ever meet, but like other subcultures, there's always the problem crowd who just make everyone else look bad. The last show we played with Tribal Gaze, Judiciary, 200 Stab Wounds, and Frozen Soul showed the complete opposite of the stereotype, those dudes were all so kind to us and have been so supportive.

Last spring Wretched Inferno went on tour in Texas. When you began playing music, did you ever think the band would become this successful?



Journalism starts with heart.

It's a privilege to be part of a community that looks out for one another and lifts each other up when needed. At Pentucket Bank, we're proud to support the Haverhill High School Brown & Gold newspaper. Thank you for showing us passion in action- and what students can accomplish when we all pitch in.