

THE LYNN EDUCATOR

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Four score

Lynn's Anderson shines in NCAA spotlight



By PAUL HALLORAN

The distance between Lynn and San Antonio, site of this year's NCAA Final Four, is only 2,059 miles, but it took a Lynner 57 years to get there.

Antonio Anderson, who learned to play basketball at the Warren Street playground, came into his own at Lynn Tech and became a national prospect while playing in prep school and AAU, became the first Lynn product to play in the Final Four since Lou Tsioropoulos (Lynn English '49) helped Kentucky win

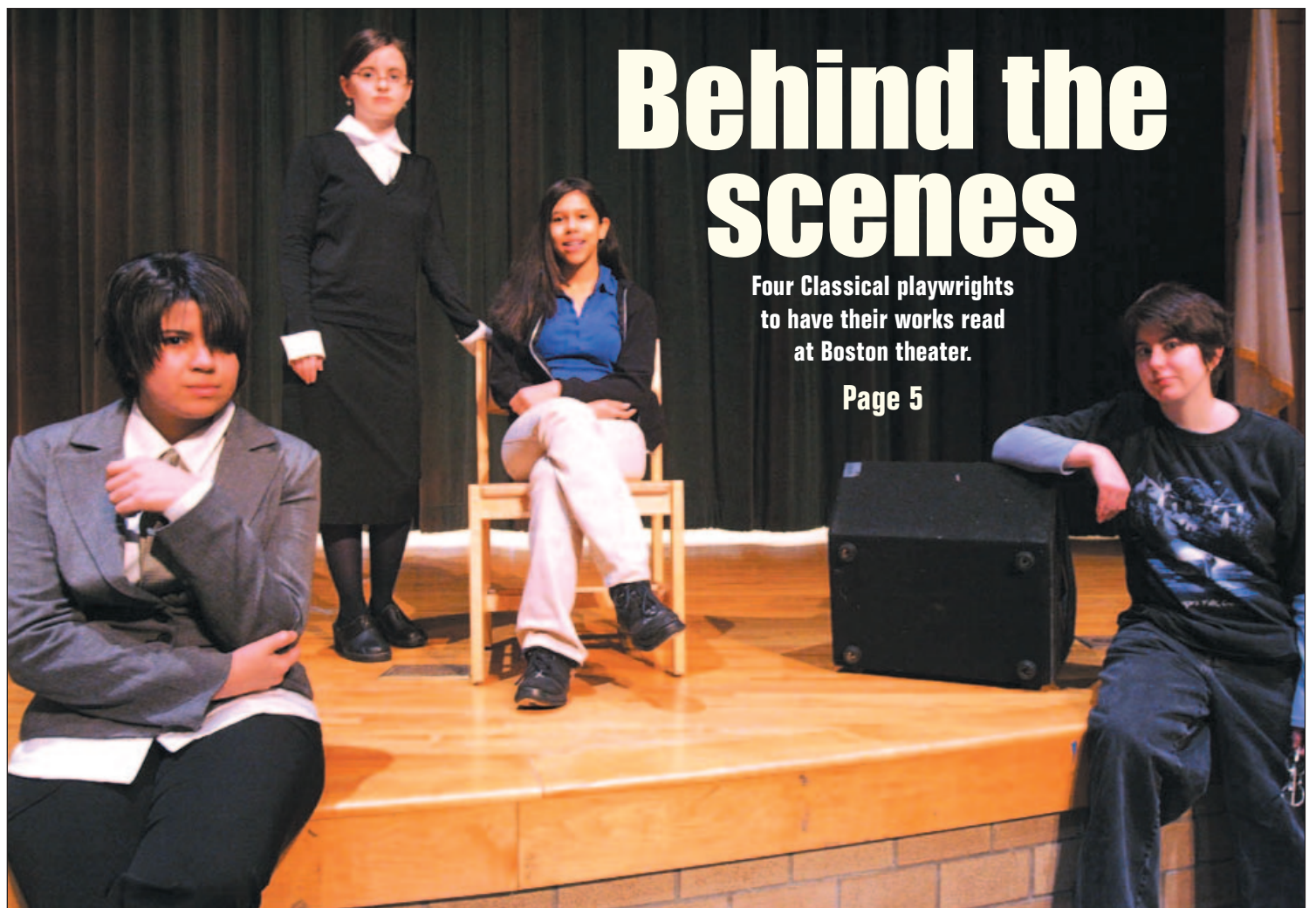
Antonio Anderson

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Behind the scenes

Four Classical playwrights to have their works read at Boston theater.

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Students from left, Samantha Fret, Shannon Coombs, Cassandra Murkison, and Sarah Gillis.

PHOTO: REBA SALDANHA

TRACY'S HERO

Teacher serving in Iraq not forgotten by students

By SUSAN BYRNE

When Bill Logue signed up for the Massachusetts National Guard 16 years ago, he was just 19 years old. Logue wanted to serve his country and get an education so he could become a teacher.

Joining the Lynn Public Schools nine years ago, Logue is now a fifth-grade

teacher at the Tracy Elementary School. However, he is not teaching there this year. Instead, he is a food service specialist, running the mess hall for his unit in Baghdad, Iraq. In total, he has been activated three times, once for Logan Airport security, another time for duty in Uzbekistan and Afghanistan, and now to serve in Iraq.

Dianne Logue, an elementary school teacher at Ford, said her husband is fortunate to have the support of the school system. "The Tracy School sent a lot of boxes filled with hundreds of donated items to Bill at Christmas," she said. "Teachers and kids at my own school have written letters. It's hard to

See HERO Page 10



Tracy teacher Bill Logue, left, hangs Christmas ornaments made by students and a Red Sox pennant with help from a fellow soldier.

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Top fifth-graders interact with sports, community leaders

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Autistic children make great strides at Shoemaker

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Marine biology teacher keeps things interesting

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THE LYNN EDUCATOR

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Edward J. Clancy Jr.

No shortage of good news in our schools

When it comes to the Lynn Public Schools, the good news outweighs the bad by a significant margin. With that in mind, it is incumbent upon us to effectively communicate that good news to all stakeholders – students, parents, teachers, administrators, and all Lynn residents.

Superintendent Nick Kostan and his

leadership team, as well as all teachers throughout the city, are focused on exactly what the name of this publication says: educating the youth of the City of Lynn. As you will note by reading it, they are doing a commendable job in educating the whole student.

I have often maintained that you could step into any classroom in the city, look

and listen to what is transpiring, and come away feeling confident that there is no shortage of good news in our public schools. The Educator is an effective means of sharing it.

Edward J. “Chip” Clancy Jr. is mayor of Lynn.

Taking note of our students’ accomplishments



Nicholas P. Kostan

The challenges faced by students in an urban school district are often different, and sometimes more imposing than their suburban counterparts. That notwithstanding, it is important that we never lower expectations for our students’ performance, in and out of the classroom.

I continue to be impressed with what Lynn students are accomplishing in the areas of academics, athletics and other extracurricular endeavors. This edition of the Lynn Educator highlights some of those success stories.

You will meet a Classical senior who received the prestigious Posse Scholarship, which opens the door to some of the nation’s top colleges for students in urban, public high schools. She will attend

Bucknell University in Pennsylvania as part of a “Posse” of youth leaders whom the foundation has selected.

The level of achievement of our students in the fine arts is amazing. You will read about students whose artwork is on display in Boston, three members of the All-State Chorus, and a jazz octet that is one of the best in the state.

Our students are also excelling in the humanities, with playwrights having their works performed on Boston stages and an award-winning speechwriter at Lynn English.

In this edition, you will also be exposed to a program in which we take great pride – C.O.A.C.H. (Creating Opportunities for Autistic Children). Under the leadership of

Dr. Cheryl Meninno, director of special education, and Shoemaker School Principal Linda Mann, this program has been significantly enhanced over the last few years, thanks to a wonderful partnership with the May Center and the efforts of the dedicated teachers and paraprofessionals who work with these special students.

The budget forecasts for next year are ominous and we are sure to face some tough times. It is especially important in that situation to not lose sight of the fact that student achievement must always be our focus.

Nicholas P. Kostan is superintendent of schools.

Crisis plan in place

Lynn Public Schools perfect emergency-response procedures

BY AMANDA WEBER

When it comes to crisis management, Lynn Public Schools has a plan.

“A comprehensive and sustainable crisis management district-wide plan,” explained Lynn Police Officer Robert Ferrari, the school security and emergency planning liaison, when asked about the most recent school emergency-response initiatives taking place in Lynn Public Schools.

“In the past, every school had some idea of emergency procedures, but the district didn’t have a blueprint,” he said. “Now we do.”

In 2006, the Lynn school district received \$195,000 from the U.S. Department of Education as part of the Emergency Response and Crisis Management Discretionary Grant Program. Designated for training school personnel and students in emergency-response procedures; communicating emergency plans and procedures with parents; and coordinating with local law enforcement and public safety agencies within the community, the grant provides school systems the funds to improve and strengthen their school emergency-response and crisis-management plans – and Lynn is doing just that.

Selected as one of only 74 school districts nationwide to receive the funding, Lynn Public Schools is taking the implementation of new safety procedures very seriously.

“The whole state of school security changed with Columbine. This day and age you can never be too safe,” said Superintendent of Schools Nicholas Kostan. “We need to make sure that we are doing everything we can to ensure the health and safety of all students by providing a secure and comfortable environment where our children can maximize their potential to learn.”

Last spring, in a collaborative effort between Lynn school officials and the police department, Ferrari called together a crisis-management team made up of 22 members from various professions within the school system, including School Committee members, principals, nurses and transportation workers. Ferrari provided two training sessions with the group, consisting of table-top exercises using hypothetical emergency

situations such as violent gang incidents, dangerous intruder scenarios, and bomb threats.

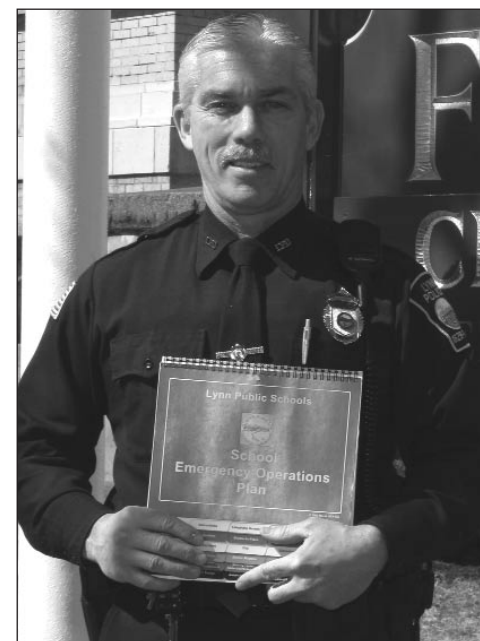
“We need to be in tune with societal issues,” said Ferrari. “The world has changed and we have seen instances throughout this country – really horrifying stuff – and we needed to ask ourselves: ‘Are we prepared for that?’”

Following the implementation of the crisis management team, every principal in the city took and became certified in FEMA’s National Incident Management System (NIMS). Developed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in 2004, NIMS combines effective emergency-response practices into a comprehensive framework for crisis management, and teaches responders to work together more efficiently to manage emergencies.

Ferrari is in the process of holding workshops for all teachers and school staff members to make sure they have comprehensive crisis training before the year is over. As part of the training, each school has developed its own emergency response team consisting of teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, secretaries and custodians. Each team is responsible for ensuring that the emergency procedures are followed.

School lockdown drills have also begun in partnership with the Lynn Police and Fire departments, and will continue this spring.

Shoemaker School Principal Linda Mann



Lynn school security and emergency planning liaison Officer Robert Ferrari holds on to the LPS emergency operations plan.

understands the importance of having a comprehensive collective plan within the system. “The world is getting scarier all the time and we need to be ready. The goal is to be able to have procedures in place that will protect the pupils and staff from danger,” she said.

Ferrari’s goal, which is shared by the school department, is for every school to continue practicing all safety procedures, including fire drills, lockdown drills, and evacuation procedures so that the entire system is truly prepared in the event of an emergency.

“

We need to make sure that we are doing everything we can to ensure the health and safety of all students by providing a secure and comfortable environment where our children can maximize their potential to learn.

Nicholas P. Kostan
Superintendent of Schools

Fifth-graders reach the Summit

Students have opportunity to interact with notables

By SUSAN BYRNE

Kathy Ryan may be new to Project Summit, but having taught in Lynn for 34 years and grown up in the city, she is bringing tremendous experience as director and teacher of the program. In fact, she has returned to the same classroom in the Harrington Elementary School which served as her library when she was a student there.

Started in 1977, Project Summit includes gifted and talented fifth-grade students from throughout the city's 19 elementary schools. In the spring, fourth-graders are interviewed, tested and recommended to the program. Ryan re-interviews in the fall and selects the Project Summit participants. Students come one day a week to her classroom. Each daily class consists of about 18 students.

The enhanced curriculum and achievements of Project Summit are impressive. Already each child in the program has published his own hardcover book. In addition, the students have created "Fun Pages" that have been published in the Boston Globe. The students conducted interviews, then wrote stories and illustrated pictures for other kids to read in the newspaper.

Sports anchor Mike Lynch of WCVB-TV, Red Sox legend Johnny Pesky, Bill Ryan from the commissioner's office at Major League Baseball and Mike Hourigan, a financial planner, all were involved. Rob Harris, a veteran, a firefighter and father of twins enrolled in the program, and Joe Rowe and Jimmy Daley, both

veterans and members of the Lynn Police Department, were also interviewed.

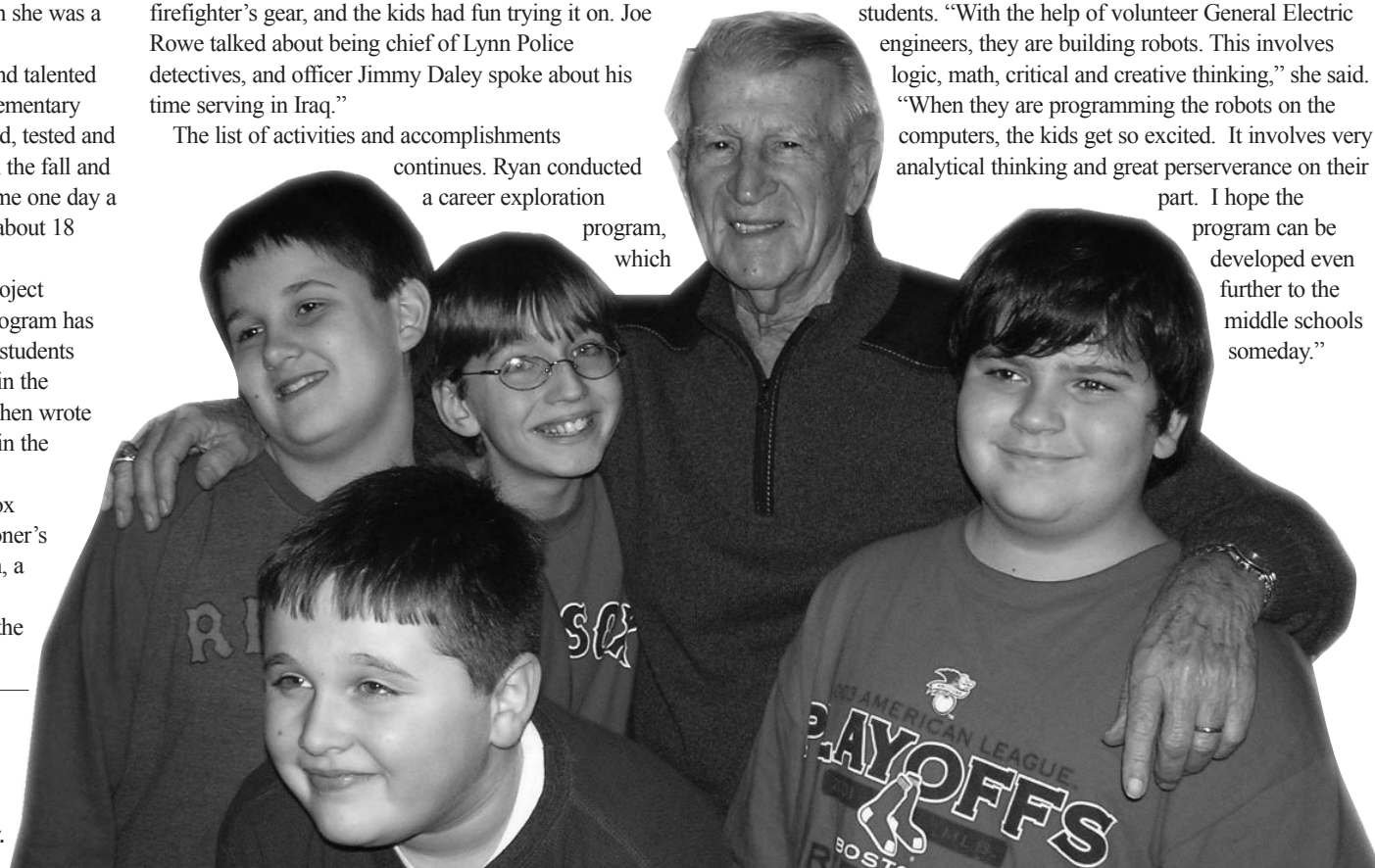
"When Mike Lynch came to be interviewed, he also spoke to all of the fourth- and fifth-grade students at Harrington," Ryan said. "Johnny Pesky graciously invited us to his house. I took several students and they got autographs and photos. Billy Ryan is my son, and he spoke about his career path to Major League Baseball in New York. Mike Hourigan talked about kids and money, including inflation, checkbooks, and budget ... things the kids had no idea about. Rob Harris brought all his firefighter's gear, and the kids had fun trying it on. Joe Rowe talked about being chief of Lynn Police detectives, and officer Jimmy Daley spoke about his time serving in Iraq."

The list of activities and accomplishments continues. Ryan conducted a career exploration program, which

included seeing the Lynn law office of Bradley Moore Primason Cuffe & Weber, as well as the *Daily Item* and LynnArts. Visits to the Peabody Essex Museum and a trip to Lowell's historic mill site will be conducted this spring.

There also is an Artist in Residence program, which will culminate with an exhibit called 'Masters in the Making' at LynnArts through April 18. Ryan was impressed. "Some of these students who have never painted before came out with masterpieces. They were spectacular," she said.

Ryan sees the program making a real impact with the students. "With the help of volunteer General Electric engineers, they are building robots. This involves logic, math, critical and creative thinking," she said. "When they are programming the robots on the computers, the kids get so excited. It involves very analytical thinking and great perseverance on their part. I hope the program can be developed even further to the middle schools someday."



Zachary Burl of Lincoln-Thomson, front, and, second row from left, Drew Daniels of Lincoln-Thomson, James Coyle of Sisson and Jimmy Ippolito of Lincoln-Thomson, enjoy their time with Red Sox legend Johnny Pesky.

Ridley provides Technical assistance at alma mater

By PAUL HALLORAN

When Superintendent of Schools Nick Kostan needed a stabilizing influence to assume the directorship at Lynn Tech, he only had to look a few miles away to find someone eminently qualified for the job.

Jim Ridley, a lifelong Lynn veteran teacher, administrator and coach, happily answered the superintendent's call to take over at his alma mater.

"I never aspired to be a high school principal," said Ridley, who spent nine years at Breed Middle School, including the last four as principal. "I was ready to finish my career at Breed. But when I was first asked about Tech, the chance to go back to the school I graduated from? Absolutely, I said yes."

Ridley started in Lynn Public Schools as a Callahan School first-grader in 1958. He went on to Breed Junior High and graduated from Lynn Trade (the precursor to Tech) in 1970. He served as a part-time Title I teacher while attending Salem State College. After graduating in 1976, he got a fulltime job teaching at the Connery School.

Ridley, who got his master's from Cambridge College in 1998, made the transition to administration in 1999 when he became vice principal at Breed. Five years later, he was named principal at the West Lynn middle school.

"When I went to Breed in 1999 I was an outsider; I knew a handful of people there," he said. "Nine years later, I left a lot of



Tech director Jim Ridley visits with senior Sounalith Vongsavanh, an electrical shop major.

friends there."

For those who know, or have even crossed paths with Ridley, that is not surprising. He is one of those individuals who is universally liked and respected. He is somewhat soft-spoken — though the hundreds of players he has coached in football and basketball may offer an opposing view — but impressively effective. And, in his case, it is always about the kids first.

"The kids are great," he said. "If you expect good things from them and have high standards, they will reach the bar."

Ridley had the unenviable task of taking over a new position during the school year; his first day at Tech was Feb. 25. Though he spent more than 20 years as a football and basketball coach at Tech (1982-2004), he didn't have an appreciation for the magnitude of the operation.

"I didn't really understand the enormity of having three buildings (main building, annex and field house) and having kids crossing the street in traffic all day. That's its own challenge," he said, adding that eliminating students' movement between buildings is a priority.

"The biggest adjustment has been getting to know the staff," he said. "I need face time with people. I don't sit in my office. I'm big on visiting classrooms and being highly visible." That can be a challenge when you consider Tech has 11 shops and 40 classrooms in the main building and seven shops and 30 classrooms in the annex across the street.

The biggest challenge Ridley, his staff and students face is no different from any other public high school: MCAS.

"With the MCAS, the stakes are higher," he said. "Without a high school diploma, you can't do anything. We want students who are good with their minds as well as their hands. They have to pass the MCAS. They still need that high school diploma to get anywhere."

Ridley and his wife, Anne, an ER nurse at Union Hospital, have five children: Keith (30), Matt (28), James (27), Helen (25) and Lillie (22).

Fine Arts



Noteworthy

Lynn students to perform in All-State Chorus

BY RICH FAHEY

For the chorus programs in the Lynn Public Schools, the last few years have been a series of high notes.

Again this year, the Lynn schools were well represented when the Massachusetts All-State Chorus convened at the end of March in Boston and performed at Symphony Hall on March 29 as part of the annual Massachusetts Music Educators Conference.

Three Lynn students — two from Classical High and one from English — were invited to join the chorus. Deborah Pierre and Dimitrios Pelekoudas represented Classical while English's Jason Diamond was also selected. They were three of the survivors after a series of auditions for the honor, which goes to about 200 students statewide.

About 1,500 students competed in the auditions for the Northeast Massachusetts Senior District Music Festival that was held at Lowell High School in January, with about 75 selected for the Northeast Chorus. Pierre, Pelekoudas and Diamond were selected to audition for the All-State Chorus.

Classical High chorus director Michael Smith said this marks



From left, Dimitrios Pelekoudas and Deborah Pierre of Classical, and Jason Diamond of English.

the fifth straight year at least one Classical student has made the All-State Chorus. Pierre, a senior and a soprano, also plays the violin and the piano, while Pelekoudas, a senior and a bass, plays the saxophone. Diamond, a sophomore, is a tenor.

Pelekoudas, who sang at Symphony Hall for the second time, is also a member of the district's jazz band. He hopes to attend Clark University to study psychology and music.

"You don't understand what an amazing feeling it is until you're on that stage and you feel the acoustics," he said. "It's a place made for excellence and it makes you feel special."

When he's not singing or playing his sax, Pelekoudas is a goalie for the Classical High lacrosse team. He hopes to eventually follow in the footsteps of his father, the Rev. Nikolas Pelekoudas of St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Lynn.

Pierre will also take her musical talent to the collegiate level, attending the Berklee College of Music in Boston. In addition to the chorus, she is also a member of the district's string band and a recipient of the Handel & Haydn Society music scholarship.

Classical and English both boast active choral programs. Smith said between 150-175 students participate in choral activities.

English High chorus teacher Lianne Goodwin said there about 100 students taking chorus. She added this is the first year in the English music program for Diamond, a transfer student in his first year at the school.

"He definitely put in a lot of time on his own working on his audition piece," said Goodwin. "This is quite an honor. Jason was beyond excited to sing in Symphony Hall."

And One has one goal: No. 1



Members of the Lynn Public Schools Jazz Octet include, from left, Andrew Scanlon, Tyler Stonkus, Anthony Marte (standing with trombone), Ashley Turner and Kelsey Ylonen.

BY RICH FAHEY

Common sense would tell you that a musical group that meets just once a week can't compete with other musical groups with many more resources and much more rehearsal time. Or can it?

Joseph Picano, director of fine arts in the Lynn Public Schools, says don't bet against his kids.

The LPS Jazz Octet — called And One — will compete at the Massachusetts chapter of the International Association of Jazz Educators (IAJE) Festival on April 16 at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. The Lynn Jazz Octet participated in the IAJE competition for the first time in May of 2006 and came home with a silver medal.

"These kids are very dedicated students with all different kinds of interests," said Picano, the leader of the LPS jazz ensemble.

The band is a cross-section of students from across the city who meet on Mondays at Lynn English. The full concert band practices from 3:30-5:30, followed by the "Big Band" jazz band then the jazz ensemble at about 6:30 p.m.

They will have to be good in Worcester, competing with as many as 200 small ensembles (10 pieces and under) from all over the Northeast.

The Lynn ensemble consists of three English High seniors: Hunter Richard, who plays the tenor and baritone saxophones; Kelsey Ylonen, who also plays the tenor sax; and Anthony Marte, trombone; Classical seniors Andrew Scanlon, alto saxophone, and Benjamin Wheeler, drums; English junior Ashley Turner, trumpet; Classical junior Jeremy Dorson, bass guitar; English sophomore Tyler Stonkus, sax; and Classical sophomore Cara Garrity, piano. Richard

and Scanlon are veterans of the silver medal-winning octet in 2006.

Picano said Garrity, who plays the flute and concert piano, has been an inspiration, recovering from two serious surgeries to be a major part of the program. "She's an exceptional individual who'll have a career in music," said Picano.

There are strict rules for those participating in the jazz ensemble.

"They have to show up ready to go or I go home," said Picano, who noted that many of the kids have been in school since 7:30 in the morning and by the 6:30 p.m. rehearsal time are "on fumes."

There are no unexcused absences allowed — one means the student is cut from the group. Students also have to maintain a certain grade point average.

While Picano has been recovering from recent surgery, colleague Gil Lapointe has been filling in at rehearsals.

Where art thou? Classical

Students' masterpieces on display in Boston

By RICH FAHEY

Art is alive and well at Classical High School, where two students were recently honored with special displays of their work.

The art of Classical junior Susana Paz is being displayed at the Boston Public Library. Paz is one of 30 students in the state recognized as part of the Facing History and Ourselves exhibit called "Choosing to Participate." The art will be on display at the BPL's Copley Square main branch until May 20.

Classical senior artist Maria Renken was awarded a Silver Key Art Award by the Boston Globe, with her art exhibited at the State Transportation Building in Boston.

Classical art teacher Paul Hayward said Paz is "an extraordinary talent" who came to the U.S. without speaking a word of English three years ago. A friendship — and halting conversations in Spanish and English — soon began and the two now are able to chat regularly.

Hayward said it would be fitting if a show such as "Oprah" or "Good Morning America" featured Paz as a protégé, since there have been other talented young artists who showed their art and subsequently sold their works for prices as high as \$10,000.

"That's almost a Picasso," said Hayward. "A wise Classical teacher has already bought one of Susana's pastel drawings and I'm happy to be next on the list."

He advises people to "invest now and invest early in a talent, in an artist, and in supporting art education."

Renken is a high-powered senior, taking two Advanced Placement courses this year after taking

three last year. As a sophomore, she took the AP German Language exam, as German is spoken in her home. Even though German is not taught at Classical, Renken got a 5, the highest possible score. Her award-winning art is displayed in the front foyer of Classical High.

In the Globe contest, students in grades 7-12 enrolled in public, private, and parochial schools in Massachusetts submitted examples of painting, photography, sculpture, mixed media, printmaking, and sculpture.

Judges selected winners for the Gold Key, Silver Key, and Honorable Mention awards from 3,487 individual entries submitted by students from 376 participating schools.

The winning pieces were on display at the State Transportation Building through Feb. 22. The exhibit displayed the 342 Gold Key pieces and the 573 Silver Key pieces.

Both Renken and Paz also volunteer with Lynn-based RAWarts. The "Choosing to Participate" exhibit that Paz' art is in is part of a multifaceted educational and civic initiative that challenges viewers to think deeply about what democracy means — and what it asks of each of us. It is an initiative of the non-profit group Facing History and Ourselves.

Fine Arts



Maria Renken, left, and Susana Paz display their artwork.



Student playwrights' works hit the big stage

By RICH FAHEY

There's no bigger honor for a playwright than to have his or her work performed by professional actors in a theater. If you're a high school playwright just starting out, the honor is off the charts.

Four Lynn Classical students had such an

honor on April 14 at the Virginia Wimberly Theatre at the Calderwood Pavilion in Boston, when their one-act plays were read by professional actors as part of the Huntington Theatre's Young Voices program.

The four Classical participants in the program are seniors Shannon Coombs,

Samantha Fret and Sarah Gillis, and junior Cassandra Murkison.

The students were matched up with young professional playwrights who are fellows in the Huntington's program for emerging playwrights. The students have stayed in close contact with their mentors, according to Classical High English teacher Jerry Burke, who is overseeing the project.

"The students love it," he said. "They have grown close as friends through this experience and seem to have gained a good measure of confidence, not only with their writing, but also within themselves."

Burke said Naheem Garcia, an education and community associate for the Huntington, has been a tremendous asset in the partnership between the theater and the school. "Not only did he initiate contact with us in this effort, but he has generously given his time and support to these junior playwrights and the faculty at

Classical," said Burke.

The junior playwrights have worked with their mentors on a one-to-one basis and stayed in close contact through personal meetings and e-mail.

Ilana Brownstein, literary manager for the Huntington, said Somerville's John Shea, Ken Urban and Kirsten Greenidge, whose play "Gibson Girl" is currently being performed by the Company One Theatre at the Calderwood Pavilion, are three of the professional playwrights who have mentored the Classical students.

"The students have really let their imaginations go in writing their pieces," said Brownstein, adding that the professional mentors have been helpful in guiding the students on how to tell a story on the stage, and the mechanics of writing for the stage.

Brownstein praised the Classical students for their work ethic and positive attitudes.



Student playwrights, from left, Shannon Coombs, Samantha Fret, Sarah Gillis, and Cassandra Murkison

Marsh fellow

Classical marine biology teacher takes students into the field

By SUSAN BYRNE

A marine biology class has existed at Lynn Classical for almost 10 years. However, with the addition two years ago of teacher David Winchester, who incorporates trips to the nearby salt marsh into his curriculum, the program is flourishing.

Winchester brings an impressive resumé from the New England Aquarium, where he worked for 10 years creating exhibits to educate the public. Instead of teaching Aquarium visitors about underwater science, he now conducts five marine biology classes, mostly comprised of seniors.

The salt marsh at Marshview Park on the Lynn/Saugus line, at the mouth of the Saugus River Watershed, is located within walking distance from Classical. “With an ecosystem so close, my goal is to ramp up the marine biology department, but it is all still developing,” said Winchester. “Having an ecosystem that they’ve studied in a book become real, and not just abstract is great.”

When weather permits in the fall and spring, students journey along an old, raised rail line leading to the salt marsh. It is here where fresh water from the Saugus River meets salt water from the Atlantic Ocean.

“You don’t feel like you’re in the city,”

Winchester said. “It’s quiet, breezy, with grasses and birds such as osprey, plovers and shore birds. Once we even saved a snake that we found on the road and returned it to the marsh. The kids have probably driven by it a thousand times, and now they know

about it, and care about it.”

Before a walk to the salt marsh begins, Winchester holds a chalk talk in the classroom using his SMART Board to show aerial photos of the site and to review what needs to be accomplished on the trip. It

could mean gathering data, testing water quality, surveying the marsh, observing tides, measuring weather or sampling fish species. “Our goal is discovery,” Winchester said.

The students keep a tally of all the species they encounter. Sometimes they bring shrimp, crabs or other organisms back to the classroom for closer study. Winchester is pleased with the students’ progress. “They have a greater appreciation for who lives in the salt marsh besides a bunch of grass. I can see them caring more and more every time they visit and learn something new about our salt marsh,” he said.

Marshview Park has benefited from the students’ visits. This small grassy area adjacent to the salt marsh is often littered with trash. The students take pride in keeping the area clean by bringing trash bags along on their walks to the salt marsh.

Winchester hopes to involve other teachers and students with the salt marsh. Since wetlands are protected areas, Winchester would also like to contact government agencies and make more people aware of what they are doing at the salt marsh.

With Winchester’s vision, the marine biology program is thriving, just like the salt marsh ecosystem next door.



Lynn Classical marine biology teacher David Winchester works with Sanayra Pimentel, left, and Sophuone Thach.

Posse leads Classical senior on path to Bucknell

By CAITLIN BOWLER

So much surrounding the college selection process can be stressful: choosing possible schools, applying to them, and waiting for letters of admission all carry particular anxieties. The final piece, figuring out how to finance the four years of an education that has become a near necessity, may be the most difficult of all for those on the cusp of adulthood.

No part of this process has been any less stressful for Lynn Classical senior Doneeca Thurston — except, now, for the financing piece. After a lengthy evaluation process that included multiple rounds of group and individual interviews, the Posse Foundation awarded Thurston a full scholarship to Bucknell University, in Lewisburg, Penn.

Thurston was one of 11 students offered full scholarships to colleges and universities that have partnered with the Posse Foundation. According to its mission statement, the Posse Foundation “identifies, recruits, and trains incredible youth leaders from urban public high schools and sends these groups as ‘Posses’ to top colleges and universities in this country.” More than simply a financial award, the scholarship includes leadership training for students in the “Posse” in

order to prepare them to successfully adapt to college life, meet rigorous academic challenges, and, most importantly, facilitate cross-cultural interaction and dialogue on their campuses.

Staff at Lynn’s RAW Art Works nominated Thurston last fall, along with two other students at the organization, recognizing both her intelligence and strong leadership contributions since

“

I'm just really excited to see what I can bring to Bucknell and what Bucknell can give me.

Doneeca Thurston

becoming involved with the RAW in the fall of 2006.

After the nomination, Thurston traveled to Suffolk Law School for the first round of interviews, during which the 200 nominees from across the region participated in group

activities while Posse Foundation staff observed and took notes. In the second round Thurston participated in a group interview. The third round consisted of a one-on-one interview during which the Posse staff “got to know me better as a person,” Thurston said. Finally, she and the 24 finalists met with representatives from the six

schools partnering with the Posse Foundation this year.

“When I found out I had been selected, I was speechless,” said Thurston. “A huge weight has been lifted off my shoulders, but it still doesn’t feel like its real. I’m visiting the campus in April, so when I meet the other members of the Bucknell Class of 2012, I think it will finally hit me. I’m just really excited to see what I can bring to Bucknell and what Bucknell can give to me.”

Thurston started going to RAW as a junior at Lynn Classical. As a junior she took the Real to Reel film course and also participated in the group “Women 2 Be.” Her final project for the film school was a personal documentary that addressed standardized tests, the absence of multi-racial based questions from the tests, and the implications of that gap for test takers. The film was shown along with other classmates’ films at the Peabody Essex Museum.

She has remained involved with the organization this year as a co-leader for a group of middle school students called Studio Time 11.

Thurston is a member of both the National Honor Society and the Key Club, a service group that works with My Brother’s Table and Bridgewell, a service provider for people with mental illness.



Doneeca Thurston was awarded a full scholarship to Bucknell from the Posse Foundation.

Double talk

Marte follows in sister's footsteps as speech winner

By CAITLIN BOWLER

As she prepares for the final round of the Lions Club Speech Competition, Lynn English sophomore Angelica Marte is carrying on a family tradition of eloquent and persuasive public speaking. Her older sister, Anbelkys Marte, now a freshman at Salem State College, advanced beyond the school level three times, making it to the regional level in 2005 and to the state finals in 2006 and 2007.

What is it about these Marte women?

"Like her sister, she's very sincere," said speech coach and English teacher Colbe Mazzarella. "When you listen to either of them speak you sense they really mean what they say. Also, like Anbelkys, Angelica is very disciplined about preparing for these competitions."

The competition season begins in June, when the Lions Club announces the coming year's topic. This year it was "How Can My Generation Contribute to the World We Will Inherit?" Students prepare one-minute speeches for the schoolwide competition, and the three finalists, which include two speakers and one backup speaker, then expand their speeches to five minutes for the citywide and regional competitions. For the final round, winners of the five regional competitions expand their speeches to 10 minutes.

Students write their speeches and prepare for the competitions after school and on weekends, said Mazzarella.

"I encourage them to practice first by themselves in front of a mirror and then in front of their families. Once I've seen them present and they have had a chance to incorporate the feedback, I have them present in front of students in one of my English classes," Mazzarella said. "As it gets closer to the final competition, we'll videotape Angelica delivering her speech, so she can watch it and improve even more. For someone who wants to be a lawyer, as Angelica does, these are great skills to develop," she said.

Anbelkys has continued to develop her speaking skills at the college level and was voted "best speaker" by fellow students in a public speaking class this last fall at Salem State.

Angelica hopes to win the title for both the school and her family.

"I hope this is the year, too," said Mazzarella.

An English teacher and trained lawyer, Mazzarella, has been coaching the team since 2003. A Lynn English competitor has made it to the final round, at which winners of the regional competitions compete for the state title, the last three years. (Lynn Classical has also had two finalists.) Mazzarella developed her own public speaking skills through moot trial competitions in law school. In 1997 her team was a semifinalist at the Gibbons National Moot Court Competition.



Lynn English teacher and speech coach Colbe Mazzarella with the award-winning Marte sisters, Anbelkys and Angelica.



Callahan School fifth-graders who will be participating in the Gordon Outdoor Recreation Program are joined by back row, from left, teachers Deborah DeMala and Gina Diamontopoulos, Principal Edward Turmenne and teacher Mary Lenihan.

Callahan students find learning environment at Gordon

By CAITLIN BOWLER

Fifth-grade students at the Callahan Elementary School will have the opportunity to spend two days in June climbing, crawling, swinging, and jumping — all in the name of group problem solving — at the Gordon Outdoor Recreation Project, hosted by Gordon College in Wenham.

The outdoor education program uses ropes-course elements as props to get students to focus on teamwork, problem solving, strategy development, and strategy implementation. The ropes course includes both low elements, which are two to three feet of the ground, and high elements, which are 10 to 15 feet. Gordon College staff will supervise the students as they work together to solve group problems, such as getting the entire team from one side of a ditch to another using only certain materials, or getting all members of the team over a wall.

"The program is all about skill building, team building, and confidence building," said Deborah DeMala, a teacher at Callahan. "The program gives our students a chance to use problem-solving skills they have worked on all year and apply them to actual events. They develop self-reliance and more experience solving complex problems."

The course also builds in plenty of time for students to actively reflect, both through a group discussion led by Gordon staff and individually, through journal entries. After each exercise students will consider which strategies and methods worked, which did not, and how group dynamics influenced the outcome.



Fifth-grader Sabrina Yim demonstrates a "trust fall" with, from left, teacher Deb DeMala and students Elexiah Torres, Rebecca Conway, Ivy Martin and Michael Royce.

Callahan teachers will be encouraging students to use techniques they have studied and role-played as part of the district wide Second Step Program, to deal productively with frustration. These techniques include mindful breathing, counting backwards, and problem-solving steps.

In addition to completing the ropes course curriculum, students will be exposed to a college environment. They will be eating dinner in the cafeteria and spending one night in the college dorms. Gordon staff will lead games at night and build a campfire on the shore of a nearby lake for evening entertainment.

"As teachers we see this as an opportunity for our graduating fifth-graders to prepare for middle school," said DeMala. "This program seemed to be a good fit because many of our students are already familiar with Gordon College through participation in an after-school homework program organized by Curwin Circle," said DeMala, referring to Lynn Housing Authority & Neighborhood Development housing.

Organizing the fifth grade's participation in the program has required a joint effort by the administration, teachers, and parents.

"Principal (Ed) Turmenne has been fabulous about supporting this program. He came out with us to tour the facility and meet with program staff to make sure it was what we were looking for," said DeMala. "Parents are also excited for their kids to participate."

Anyone interested in sponsoring a student's participation can contact Deb DeMala at (781) 477-7404.

Four score: Lynn's Anderson shines in NCAA spotlight

ANDERSON: from Page 1

the 1951 NCAA title.

It will take some time for Anderson and the Memphis Tigers to overcome the bitter disappointment of squandering a 9-point lead with 2:12 left and ultimately losing to Kansas, 75-68 in overtime, in the championship game April 7. But for those closest to Anderson, that will be a mere footnote to the tremendous amount of pride they felt watching him perform on the biggest of stages.

"It's been the thrill of a lifetime" watching Anderson in the NCAA tournament, said former Tech Principal Bart Conlon, who worked closely with Tech Coach Marvin Avery to guide Anderson on the path to college.

"Who would have ever thought this would happen to a kid like Antonio coming out of Lynn?" Avery said.

Anderson admitted he thought about it, just like every other little kid who ever dribbled a ball at the local playground or YMCA.

"Every kid who plays basketball dreams of getting to the Final Four," he said. "You see the Final Four on TV when you're a kid and you hope you can be there one day."

There was a time when Anderson was more concerned with simply getting a scholarship offer from a national program. That didn't happen while he was at Tech — despite his leading the Tigers to two state finals and a state championship his junior year (2002). It was clear he needed to go the prep school route.

Anderson chose Maine Central Institute and Avery got him hooked up with the N.E. Playaz, an elite AAU program out of Springfield. After a year at MCI and two summers on the national AAU circuit, colleges took note.

Two of the eyes Anderson caught belong to Memphis Coach John Calipari, who watched him play at several AAU events. Calipari called Avery in August 2004 and asked about Anderson, who planned to return to MCI for a post-graduate year, after repeating his senior year there.

Calipari indicated that Memphis had a scholarship for Anderson, but recommended he spend his PG year at Laurinburg Prep in North Carolina, playing alongside fellow Memphis recruits Robert Dozier, Kareem Cooper and Shawne Williams. That team went 40-0 in 2004-05 and Anderson was ready for bigtime college basketball. He has made the most of the opportunity.

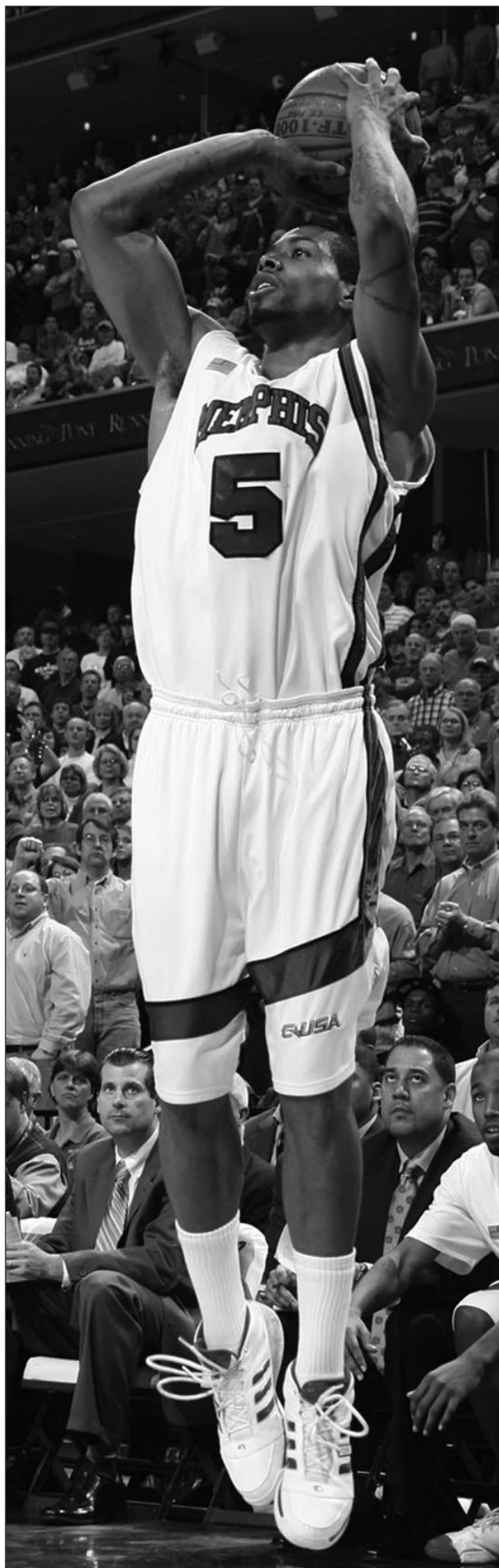
Playing on a Memphis team with at least five legitimate NBA prospects, including likely lottery pick Derrick Rose, whenever he comes out, Anderson has established himself as the guy who holds everything — and everyone — together.

"With all the good players we have, he plays more minutes than any of them," Calipari said of Anderson's team-leading 30 minutes per game. (He played 80 of a possible 85 in the Final Four.) "He does a little bit of everything. For us and our team, he's outstanding. He does everything he needs to do to help the team win and he is a great leader."

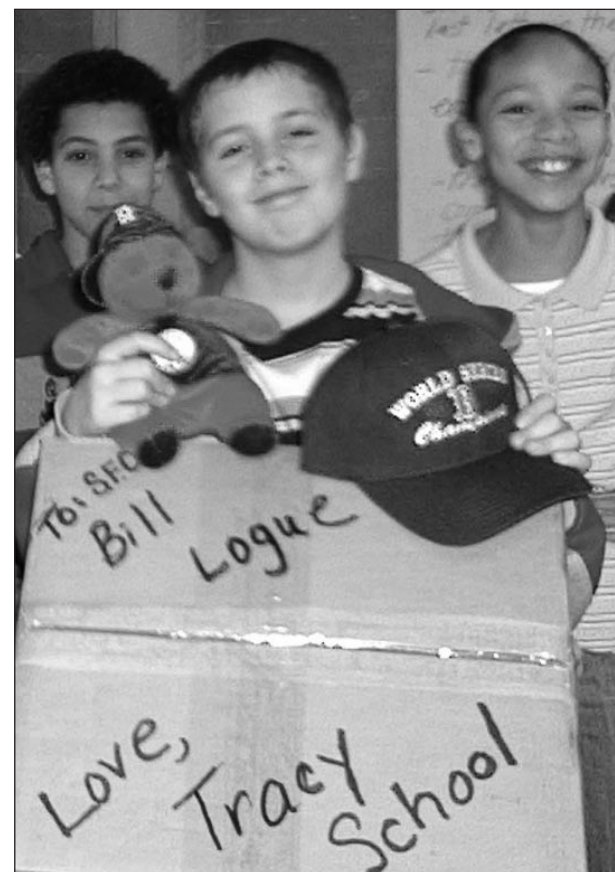
Asked to describe his role, Anderson summed it up: "If you need me to score, I'll score; if you need me to pass, I'll pass; if you need me to rebound, I'll rebound; if you need me to defend, I'll defend."

Dubbed "the quiet assassin" by CBS analyst Billy Packer during the championship game broadcast, Anderson led the Tigers to an NCAA record 38 wins (with only 2 losses). It may sound strange to characterize as a "leader" a guy who averaged only 9 points, 4 rebounds and 3 assists, but anyone paying even a little attention realizes that while the Tigers may have a fleet of Ferraris, Anderson is the driver, mechanic and detail man.

Without him, Memphis doesn't reach its destination and doesn't look nearly as good along the way.



Antonio Anderson is the quiet leader of the Memphis Tigers.



Tracy School students from left, Jaime Melendez, Ryan Lippert, and Alanhi Bones, prepare gifts, including some Red Sox souvenirs, to send to teacher Bill Logue, who is serving in Iraq.

Tracy's hero serving in Iraq

HERO: from Page 1

inspire kids to write in general, and this has really sparked them to write. The city has been unbelievable. Superintendent (Nick) Kostan has been very supportive. He personally sent a package at Christmas, and my husband was very touched by that gesture."

At the Tracy School, communicating with Logue is a high priority. According to Principal Dr. Mary Dill, "We have been corresponding and sending items and packages to him for months. We even sent digital cameras so he could take pictures. The kids loved seeing the pictures he sent back from Baghdad. Our students have pictures, CDs and letters from Bill, as well as other soldiers."

"The kids have gotten all sorts of responses," Dill added. "One woman in Bill's unit sent a bracelet back with a thank-you note. Bill has called the school several times and the kids were able to talk to him. The whole school is involved, and it really is two-way communication."

Again, Dianne Logue is overwhelmed by the level of support. "Mary Dill is a wonderful person," she said. "She had a big send-off ceremony for Bill, which the mayor attended. The support from the community and city of Lynn has been terrific. I wouldn't want to live anywhere else. We've been very happy."

With his wife, three children, students, teachers and friends anxiously awaiting his return, Logue expects to be back in Lynn for a two-week leave in April and finally end his deployment this summer. "He always remains positive," said Dianne, who speaks with and e-mails Bill at least twice a week. "He's very busy there, working 12-hour days, six days a week."

Dill is looking forward to having Bill back at the start of school next year. "Bill's patriotism and dedication, not only to his country, but also to his students, are impressive. The dedication of the students to Mr. Logue is great, as well."

History at Harrington

School hosts biographical performance of Ben Franklin

By MEAGHAN CASEY

Literary and historic figures are coming to life at Harrington Elementary School to celebrate the joy of reading.

On April 10, Harrington hosted a biographical performance of Ben Franklin, by the Chicago-based Historical Perspectives for Children. The one-man theatrical show included slides, colorful costumes, voiceovers and audience participation. Franklin's life was dramatically reenacted from childhood through adulthood, allowing children to see the process he went through to achieve his goals by opening his own printing business and establishing the country's first lending library.

The students had been learning about biographies and this performance, funded through a grant paid for by the North Shore Reading Council and the Harrington School PTO, was a way to make additional connections for the students with this genre.

"It was a way to connect with the students and bring a biography to life," said Harrington library media specialist Carole Shutzer. "We're trying to build excitement for reading and literacy."

The school is also hosting a community reading

day, Harrington Reads 2008! on May 30.

Throughout the morning, local and state elected officials, authors, educational leaders and business executives will read to students and discuss with them the stories and their messages. This year, new Mass. Department of Education Commissioner Dr. Mitchell Chester is scheduled to participate. Students and teachers will also have the opportunity to dress up as favorite literary characters.

"It's good for the kids to get a chance to listen to these community leaders and hear about the jobs they have and how they got to where they are today," said Shutzer. "Hopefully it inspires them to set their own high goals to achieve."

Throughout the year, Harrington also hosts a cooperative reading program with the Tower School from Marblehead, in which the eighth graders read to Harrington first graders every Friday afternoon.

"It's a wonderful collaboration," said Shutzer. "The schools are only five minutes apart, but this is a way of bridging the communities and building respect for diversity. Plus, it's very important for first graders to have older role models and a little extra attention."

AROUND LYNN SCHOOLS

Elementary schools

Harrington School

General Electric volunteers use their lunch hour weekly to present science lessons and experiments directly tied to the frameworks for Harrington's fifth-graders.

Hood School

At Hood School, Ms. Mahoney's class completed a three-week project based on Gail Gibbon's nonfiction book "From Seed to Plant." The book, included in the 'Trophies' grade 2 anthology, became a combined ELA and science project.

The children experimented with various ways to grow seedlings. The objectives, because of the large number of students whose first language is not English, emphasized questioning, predicting outcomes, summarizing, determining importance, sequencing, comparing and contrasting and describing causes and effects.

The children chose various seeds to plant and using magnifying glasses, they observed condensation and diagrammed how their seeds swelled, split open, and finally sprouted. Predictions on how long each seed would take to develop from seed to sprout to plant, and the reasons why, led to interesting questions and conclusions.

Shoemaker teacher a lifesaver



When Shoemaker School first-grade student Ryan Patterson started choking on food during snack time, teacher Linda Roach swung into action and successfully performed the Heimlich Maneuver, making for a happy ending to a scary episode.

The children examined roots with a videoscope, which allowed them to observe and discuss the numerous tiny hairs and their function in bringing water and nutrients to the plant. The students also diagrammed the parts of a plant, described each part's function and performed an art activity based on how seeds travel.

Lynn Woods

Lynn Woods has hosted a Scholastic Book Fair and Top Secret Science came and did experiments with each grade. In February, grades 3 and 4 visited the JFK Museum. On March 7-8, the entire school participated in the drama production of "Doo Wop Wed Widing Hood" — a musical spoof on Little Red Riding Hood.

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Middle schools

Breed

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Thurgood Marshall

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Pickering

Robert Murphy, Principal
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Lynn English High

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Lynn Voc Tech Institute

James Ridley, Director
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Welcoming Middle

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SPORTS

THE LYNN EDUCATOR



On track for Olympics

English assistant coach eyes berth in Beijing

By RICH FAHEY

In any other Olympic year in recent memory, she would have already scaled the heights of Olympus to become a member of the U.S. Olympic team. But the fates played a cruel trick on Jen Toomey at the 2004 Olympic Trials. She finished second in the 1,500 meter run in 4:06, which would have ordinarily meant a trip to Athens. The only problem is that the qualifying standard for the Olympic Games that year was lowered to 4:05, which meant only one U.S. runner qualified and it was not her.

This year the standard is 4:07. So Toomey, now 36, must finish in the top three at her third Olympic Trials and equal her 2004 time to punch her ticket to Beijing. Her husband of nine years, Mike Toomey, is also her best friend, partner, a coach and her boss when it comes time to coach the Lynn English High indoor and outdoor track teams.

Jen Toomey served as an assistant coach for her husband during the LEHS indoor season and is serving as a volunteer assistant this spring due to travel and training commitments. "I enjoy working with both the girls and boys teams," she said. "Mike makes it fun."

Toomey has been dogged by injuries in recent years, but she hopes all that is behind her as she gears up for a last hurrah.

"I did have a lot of injuries — feet, hips," she said. "You're running so hard and the work is so intense and extensive that you have to expect that will happen."

The Toomeys live in Salem and Jen credits her husband, a former state champion while he was at Lynn

English, for his support as she wound her way on the comeback trail.

"By far he has helped me more than anyone," said Jen. "He's helped me pursue running competitively and supported me financially. He's a student of the sport, a great resource, and he's always an optimist."

She competed in the 1,500 meters at the Reebok Indoor Games at the Reggie Lewis Center in Boston in January, her first competitive race in two years. She finished eighth in 4:17.55, but she was just two seconds behind the winner.

In 2004, Toomey made history by winning both the 800 and 1500 meters in the USATF Indoor Championships. She followed that with a fourth at the world indoors in the 800 and the second place in the 1,500 at the Olympic Trials.

She won the U.S. indoor championship and finished second at the outdoor nationals in the 1,500 in '05. Then she started breaking down, suffering stress fractures in both feet, a pulled groin muscle and a torn meniscus in her left knee after someone stepped on her foot and tripped her.

Now Toomey is back and feeling good.

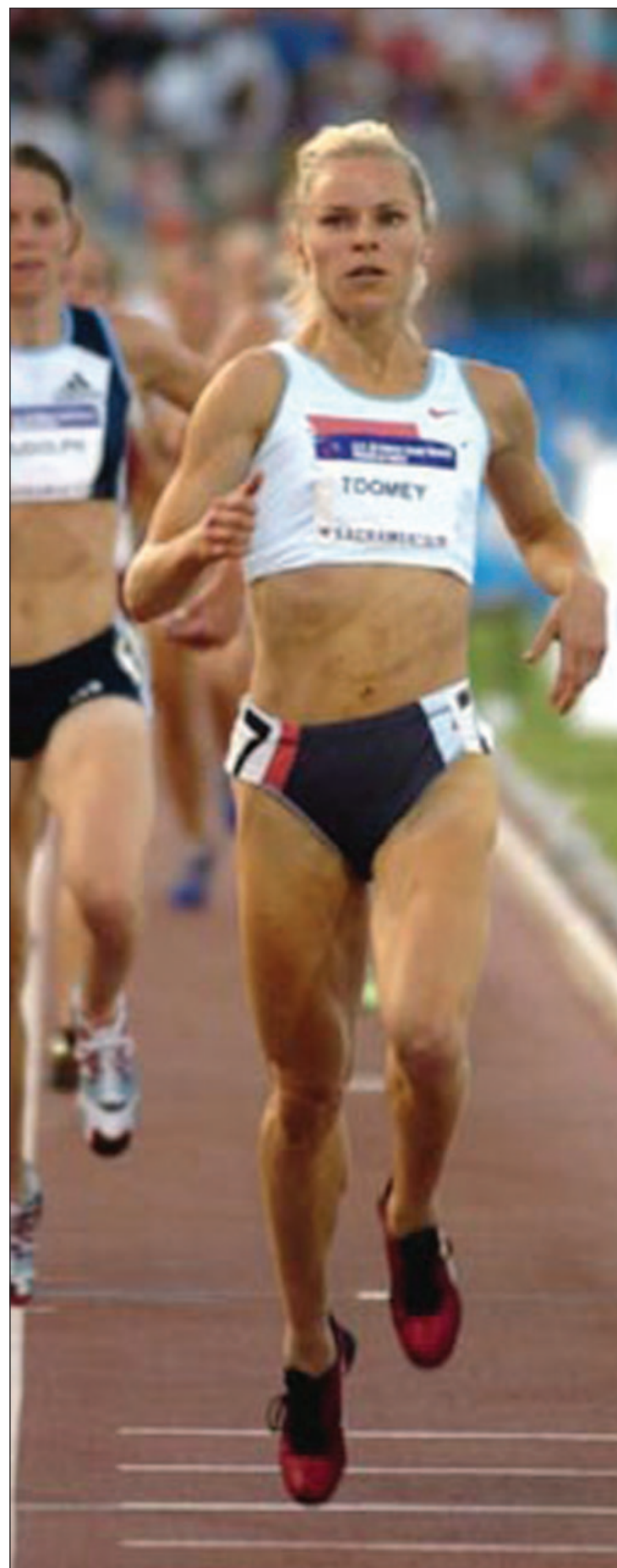
The Tufts graduate expects to start competing outdoors in May and will run between 4-6 races to prepare for the Olympic Trials, where she hopes to run both the 800 and 1,500.

Toomey has allowed herself to think about life after running. She has been working part-time at the Enterprise Institute at Salem State and said it is possible the job could evolve into a full-time career in marketing.

But, first things first with some unfinished Olympic business.



Jen Toomey



Lynn English assistant track coach Jen Toomey is hoping to qualify for the 2008 Summer Olympics.