

THE LYNN EDUCATOR

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Summer 2011

ENGLISH GRADUATES OVERCAME OBSTACLES TO EARN THEIR DIPLOMA

BY KEVIN DOYLE

Lynn English guidance counselor Karen Twomey got right to the point when discussing visually-impaired graduates Peter McCarthy, Avana Morris and Brianna DeJoy, all of whom picked up their diplomas on June 10.

“These are the kids we should be holding up as role models. Coming into a big school like this (approximately 1800 students) was a challenge for them, but there was no whining, no complaining — they’re just nice kids who went about their business. They’re all self-motivated, determined and very self-reliant. It’s like they don’t have any disability,” Twomey said.

In fact, all three have a clear vision for the future and expressed pride in graduating from English.

“I’m proud of myself because I was able to achieve the goals that English set for me,” said Morris, whose impairment required class notes to be first transcribed by an aide and then converted to Braille.

“I had a great support team around me. My vision teacher, Pam Liu, worked with me

See **VISION** Page 10



Avana Morris, Brianna DeJoy and Peter McCarthy overcame obstacles to graduate from Lynn English.

Lynn Woods teacher's first book inspired by a freckle

BY JESSICA BENSON

It all started with a funny moment between a mother and her then-3-year-old son.

Kathy Parker was sitting on the porch with her son, Jake, when he pointed out a freckle on his arm. Turned out, it was just a fleck of dirt. Then, he mistook an ant for a freckle.

And so the idea for the children's book, “Fred Freckle,” was born.

“Inspiration lies in the small things in life,” Parker said. “Like a freckle.”

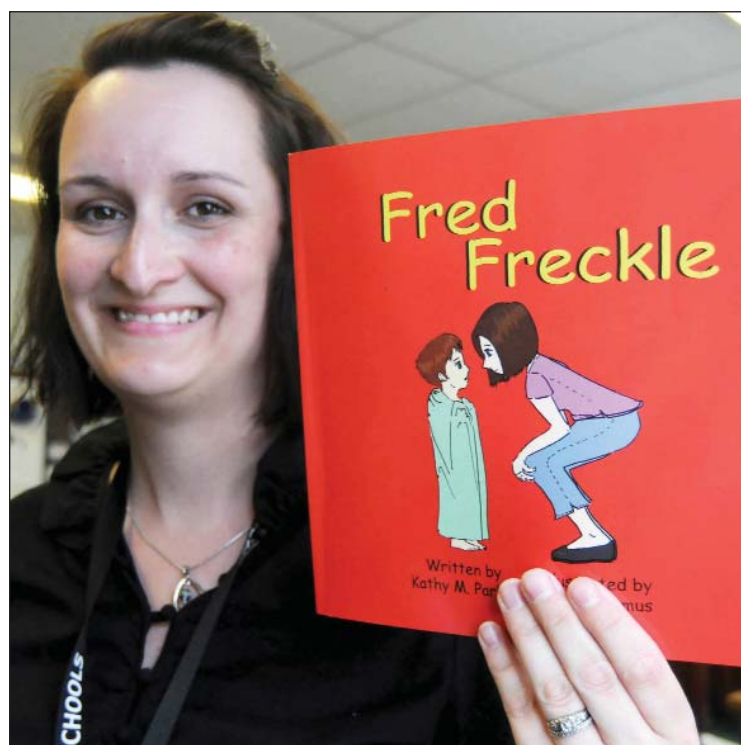
Parker, a graduate of Lynn English High School and a special education teacher at

Lynn Woods School, worked hard to get her first book published. She had written it two years ago, but found that publishers shun books from unknown authors without agents.

“I got a lot of ‘thanks, but no thanks,’” she said. “I pushed myself forward and made myself do it.”

Finally, she found a publisher interested in the book, Mirror Publishing in Wisconsin, but a disagreement over the proposed illustrations – too “computer-generated” in Parker’s opinion – brought

See **FRECKLE** Page 11



Lynn Woods teacher and author Kathy Parker hold up her first book.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

U.S. Attorney for Massachusetts Carmen Ortiz had a positive message for Marshall students. Pages 6-7.

LYNN EDUCATOR

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Closing the book on successful school year



**JUDITH FLANAGAN
KENNEDY**

As we usher in summer vacation, I want to take the opportunity to applaud the dedication exhibited this past school year by teachers, students and administrators throughout the city. Every time I go into a school building, I am reminded of their hard work in the pursuit of excellence.

This edition of *The Lynn Educator* includes stories about some of our very

best students, including recent graduates who have excelled in and out of the classroom. They are to be commended, along with everyone who helped them along the way, especially their parents, teachers and coaches.

Our students benefit from a number of meaningful partnerships, such as the ones with the U.S. Attorney's Office and St. Jean's Credit Union, detailed in this

edition. They also benefit from the efforts of our teachers who go the extra mile to make subjects like engineering and environmental science fun. Our students' success is a direct reflection of their commitment, and I thank them.

Best wishes for a restful, safe and enjoyable summer.

Judith Flanagan Kennedy is mayor of Lynn.

Spectacular staff supports super students



**DR. CATHERINE C.
LATHAM**

It is a pleasure to present the final issue of *The Lynn Educator* for the 2010-11 school year. As our students and faculty eagerly anticipate summer vacation, the articles presented focus on a sample of the many successes of both students and teachers, and myriad opportunities for students in Lynn Public Schools.

Teacher/author Kathy Parker and teacher/marathoner Phyllis Fogarty are two excellent examples of the many Lynn teachers whose energetic drive spills over from the classroom and beyond.

Spectacular student successes are

highlighted by the accomplishments of our Posse scholars and our vision-impaired students at English High School, the SkillsUSA competitors and Herter Scholarship winner from Lynn Tech, and the amazing valedictorian and outstanding softball player at Classical High School.

Also highlighted are an elementary financial literacy program, an elementary engineering class in bridge building, programs on making positive life choices and instilling core values, and our award-winning water conservation project.

We all understand that behind every

program, every success, and every outstanding opportunity given to our students are dedicated, caring professionals. Without their knowledge, determination and guidance, Lynn Public Schools would not be the superb urban district that it is.

I wish everyone a safe and happy summer and look forward to the start of another great year full of opportunities and successes.

Dr. Catherine C. Latham is superintendent of schools.

LINCOLN-THOMSON STUDENTS MEAN BUSINESS

BY KEVIN DOYLE

Chances are, after participating in a year-long financial literacy program conducted by St. Jean's Credit Union, the fourth- and fifth-graders at the Lincoln-Thomson Elementary School have a better grasp on how to achieve financial stability than a fair number of adults.

Approximately 80 students took part in the weekly pilot program that concluded in late May and is the first of its kind in Massachusetts, part of the CU 4 Reality financial literacy initiative under the umbrella of America's Credit Union Museum and the Massachusetts Credit Union League. Lincoln-Thomson was selected because St. Jean's has a long-standing reading program in place with the school.

"We felt we needed to do something more with the fourth- and fifth-graders. Financial education is a huge topic within the credit union industry and we felt we could do something to help the students in that area. It's important to get them started at a young age," said Debra Lee Surface, marketing director at St. Jean's.

The fourth-grade class of Tracy Zimirowski and the fifth-grade classes of Kelly Breen and Laura Pitman participated. Instructors from St. Jean's Credit Union included Surface, Assistant Lynn Branch Manager Meaghan MacDonald, VP of Consumer Lending Karen Interbartolo, Salem Branch Manager Amy Delaney, Senior Lending Officer Chris Nardone and Robin Lermond.

Fourth-graders met from 1-2 p.m. every Tuesday throughout

the school year and the fifth-graders met at the same time on Wednesday.

During the first 10 weeks, students were taught the basics of financial literacy — how to write checks, balance a checking account, how the economy works, how to run a business and the need to be responsible by saving enough money to pay

Other students worked at a credit union established in each classroom as the paymaster, tellers and bill collectors. Business owners were responsible for paying bills on Monday of each week — \$7 for rent and \$14 for utilities. If the bills weren't paid, the classroom bill collectors came calling.

The program concluded with an auction at the end of May.

Students/business owners were able to use their savings to bid on more than 90 donated items, including Red Sox tickets, a television, a Nintendo gaming system and an iPod.

"We weren't using real money but we had some kids who saved well over \$1,000. We also had great support from our business partners in the community, which made the auction a success. Some of these kids really got it," Surface said.

Since this was a pilot program, Surface said the findings will now be reviewed by the Credit Union League and changes made based on the recommendations of the St. Jean's employees and Lincoln-Thomson teachers.

"This is something we absolutely want to move forward with," she said. "We'd love to expand to other schools. Our goal is to provide financial education to as many students as possible."

"The Financial Literacy Pilot with St. Jean's, was a phenomenal success," said Lincoln-Thomson Principal Helen Mihos. "The fourth and fifth grades became microcosms of economic activity. The program familiarized our students with personal money management skills through interactive study and play. It was a win-win proposition for our school and we are looking forward to sustaining the program for years to come."



Approximately 80 students from Lincoln-Thomson Elementary School participated in the financial literacy program, conducted by St. Jean's Credit Union.

bills. Students then wrote and submitted a business plan before Christmas vacation for review and approval by teachers and credit union officials.

"They wrote their own plans for a business to open in the classroom after they came back from Christmas break. Every student had to either own a business or work at a business. They had to bring in actual goods or services for sale. We even had one student who brought in a guitar and played music for money," Surface said.

Classical valedictorian excelled in, out of classroom

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

A first-class scholar, athlete and leader, Lynn Classical High School valedictorian Gabriella Galeazzi knows no limits when it comes to achieving her goals.

Galeazzi graduated with a 4.61 weighted grade point average, claiming the top rank in a class of 252. Not shying away from a challenging course load, she enrolled in nine Advanced Placement (AP) classes during her junior and senior years.

A four-year member of girls varsity soccer team, Galeazzi served as captain for two years. She also played junior varsity softball, as well as freshman and junior varsity basketball, and was a member of the school's Powderpuff football team. In addition to her athletic commitments, she was a member of the Student Council, Student Government, History Club, Key Club and National Honor Society.

As a member of the Northeast Regional Student Advisory Council, Galeazzi attended monthly meetings to discuss issues affecting students. In April, she worked alongside Superintendent of Schools Dr. Catherine Latham during Lynn's annual Student Government Day. As one of 10 students selected to represent Classical, she attended both the 13th and 14th annual Walter Murray Youth Leadership Institute conferences, held in Salem. Earlier this year, she was also one of 10 female students selected by the science department to attend the Women in Science Institute, held at the New England Aquarium.

Regularly, Galeazzi also volunteered at My Brother's Table and the Abbott House and gave guided tours during Classical's open houses.

"In my 13 years of coaching and teaching, I have rarely encountered a student who epitomizes the term student-athlete to the degree in which Gabriella Galeazzi has done," said Marcy Durgin Cronin, who coached Galeazzi in soccer during the 2007-09 seasons. "She is a gifted athlete who always manages to prioritize her challenging academic menu with an extremely competitive athletic schedule, and still finds time to volunteer on a regular basis and work a part-time job."

"The key to balancing everything was focusing on school work as much as I could during the week, but factoring in time for friends and extracurricular activities," said Galeazzi. "The more involved you are, the more bonds you make with your classmates and teachers, and the more you enjoy your high school experience."

Galeazzi will attend Providence College in the fall and major in biology. She hopes to pursue a career in nursing. She was also accepted to Boston College, Stonehill College, Saint Anselm College and Quinnipiac University. In 2010, she was presented with the Harvard Book Award for academic achievement and was recently named an Agganis Foundation's scholarship recipients.

FIRST CLASS



Gabriella Galeazzi found time to balance school, sports, volunteering and a job.

English graduates earn prestigious scholarship

By RICH FAHEY

Two Lynn English High 2011 graduates have joined a posse whose members are all chasing the same thing: a college degree.

Alexander Funez and Jonathan DeJesus have been awarded four-year, full-tuition scholarships to prestigious private schools by the Posse Foundation.

Founded in 1989, the foundation identifies public high school students with extraordinary academic and leadership potential who may be overlooked by the traditional college-selection process. Posse extends to these students the opportunity to pursue personal and academic excellence by placing them in a supportive, multicultural team — a posse — of 10 students. Posse has sites in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Washington, D.C. and Miami.

Funez, who would like to study mechanical engineering, has been accepted to Union College in Schenectady, N.Y., a small liberal arts college with 2,200 students.

DeJesus will attend Hamilton College in Clinton, N.Y., which *U.S. News and World Report* ranked the 18th-best liberal arts college in the nation in 2011.

The participating colleges in each region award 10 Posse scholarships every year. The 10 scholarship winners are mentored by upperclassmen who are also Posse Scholarship recipients.

As part of the process, each candidate selected three of the affiliated Posse schools in his region he or she would like to attend. Funez was fortunate enough to be accepted at Union, his first choice.

“I was very much on pins and needles during the entire process,” said Funez.

Leadership is an important consideration in the awarding of the scholarships, and Funez’ work with the football, track and cross country teams as well as serving in student government were major factors, he believes.

Getting the decision from the Posse committee in early December had many benefits. It saved Funez and his family hundreds of dollars in college application fees and took a huge weight off his shoulders, allowing him to concentrate on his studies for the rest of his senior year.

He paid tribute to his family’s support. “My parents motivated me to work very hard,” he said.

Funez has already been to Union for a three-day visit, where he had a chance to meet other Posse scholars, including upperclassmen who were available to answer questions. He hopes to volunteer in the community and perhaps join a fraternity while at Union.

DeJesus said it would have been unimaginable for him to attend Hamilton — where tuition and board are \$52,000 a year — if he hadn’t won the scholarship.

“Based on my grades and my résumé, I knew I had a chance, but it was so competitive,” said DeJesus, whose extracurricular activities at Lynn English included National Honor Society, National Technical Honor Society, Math Team, Computer Club, Latin Club, Asian-American Club, and the soccer and tennis teams.

He also tutored other students and is an active member of his church.



English seniors Alexander Funez, left, and Jonathan DeJesus received Posse Foundation scholarships.

He had to agonize a little longer than Funez, because Hamilton was the last of the Posse schools to release its decisions.

“I was very happy for him but nervous about what it meant for me,” said DeJesus. “I knew there were a lot of students from Lynn applying and they all had strong résumés.”

DeJesus will take biology and pre-med courses at Hamilton with an eye towards getting admitted to medical school after graduation.

The English students found out about the Posse scholarships from the school’s guidance office and the Latin Club. The Posse scholars

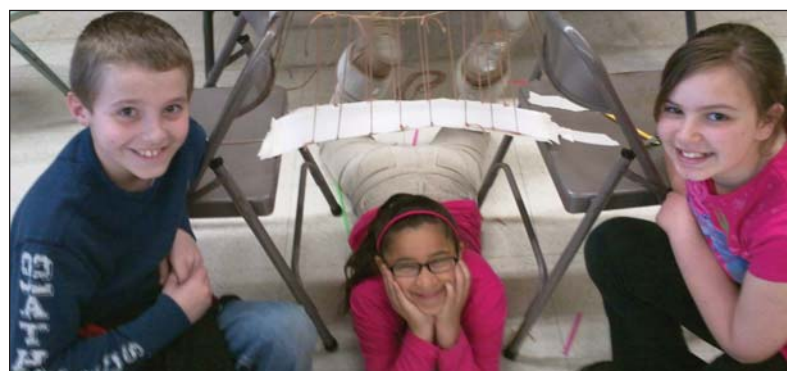
have been receiving training since January and both have attended orientation sessions for Posse scholars.

Both students say they want to validate the confidence the Posse Scholarship committee has shown in them.

“My biggest goal is to make the Posse Foundation proud for having selected me,” said Funez.

DeJesus said he wanted to thank his parents, friends, teachers and all those who supported him throughout the process.

“I can’t wait until I meet my Posse,” he said.



From left, Justin Traversy-Whitten, Natalie de la Cruz and Amanda Isbel show off their bridge.



Justin Mayne works hard to make sure his structure is stable.

Aborn engineers expand horizons

By JESSICA BENSON

Teacher Richard Held is putting the fun back into learning for students at the Aborn School.

Each week, a group of fifth-graders get together after school to undertake a new engineering challenge. Whether it is to design a wind-powered car, or a suspension bridge, the students enjoy the projects, Held said.

“They look forward to coming every week,” he said. “It just brings a little bit of fun back to school.”

As much fun as the program is, it started along a more serious vein: to improve MCAS scores. While Aborn’s science scores are already impressive — as Held notes, “we’re very passionate about science” — there was room for improvement in the smaller area of engineering.

However, Held found that it’s not easy to include complicated projects into his regular lessons. “It’s hard to work engineering into the school day,” he said.

If he couldn’t fit a weekly engineering project into his classroom time, Held decided he would do it after school. It started this year as a 6-week program, but hopefully next year will run for longer.

Among the projects: designing and building a structure that won’t topple over, taking a balloon and a piece of string and figuring out how to move it from one point to another, and creating a “puffmobile” that will move with a breath of air.

In the process of tackling these projects, students learn problem-solving skills.

“It really teaches kids how to think,” Held said. “And they learn that it’s OK to make mistakes.”

It’s too soon to tell if the program will also improve test scores. But most of Held’s students have already participated in the program; of the school’s 37 fifth-graders, 25 showed up every week.

“We had a big turnout,” Held said. “We really had a lot of success with it.”

One of the most enthusiastic students is Victoria Adams.

“It helped me because I want to be an engineer,” she said about the program. “It was fun to learn it.”

But even if his students don’t become engineers, Held hopes they take something away with them as they head off to middle school and beyond.

“We do it more to plant seeds for the future,” he said.



From left, teacher Jennifer Ciampi, students Victor Vazquez, Sila Galdamez and Anaeli Lopez, Tech Director Diane Paradis, students Gilberto Morales and Betsy Sanchez, teacher Richard Wall and student Brenda Seng.

JOB WELL DONE

Lynn Tech students display their skills on a national level

BY RICH FAHEY

Lynn Technical Institute students tested themselves against the best Career and Technical Education (CTE) students in the state in the annual SkillsUSA competition, and acquitted themselves well.

Twelve Lynn Tech students competed in the regional competition at Keefe Tech in Framingham and six qualified for the State Leadership and Skills Conference in April in Marlboro. Advisors Jennifer Ciampi, an early childhood education teacher, and Richard Wall, a teacher in the electrical program who is also the school's OSHA trainer, said the chapter has recently tripled in size and now numbers about 30 students.

SkillsUSA is a student-run organization that develops leadership and employability skills, with membership limited to students enrolled in CTE programs, and students, teachers and industry representatives working together to

ensure America has a skilled work force.

The SkillsUSA programs also help to establish industry standards for job skill training in the lab and classroom, and promote community service.

The program is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and has been cited as "a successful model of employer-driven youth development training program" by the U.S. Department of Labor. Students compete at a local level, nationally and even internationally.

Wall said the future of the club is bright; all six students who were a part of the state conference team are underclassmen and will return next year.

Competition among students is very keen, especially on the state level.

"Some of the schools we compete against are regional schools drawing students from between 15-20 communities instead of one," Wall said. "The kids were blown away by the state competition. It was a real eye-opener and they were extremely happy they attended."

He said students were pleasantly surprised

when Lynn Tech Director Diane Paradis showed up at the closing ceremonies.

Lynn chapter president Sila Galdamez, a junior in the automotive collision repair program, competed in job interviewing, in which students demonstrate their readiness for going out into the world and seeking a job. Junior Gilberto Morales, an electrical studies student, and Anaeli Lopez, a junior graphic communications student, performed in job demonstration, in which students demonstrate mastery of certain aspects of their studies.

Victor Vazquez, a junior majoring in automotive technology, competed in related technical math. Students take a written test and answer mathematical problems commonly found in skilled trades, professional and technical occupations.

Betsy Sanchez and Brenda Seng, both sophomores in radio and TV broadcasting, were involved as state voting delegates, hoping to determine policies and procedures

for the student-run organization.

"They're both great," said Wall. "They're my two most energetic students."

Wall said the program has many benefits, including being a positive element on a college application and also giving a leg up to students in the job market.

"We had an employer who was a graduate of the SkillsUSA program and when he was interviewing students for possible hiring, he wanted to know which ones had been in the program," Wall said. "They were hired right out of school just because they were involved."

Students also meet industry representatives in their field, learn about job interviewing techniques and the ins and outs of networking.

Wall, a Tech alumnus, said club members are already raising money for next year and he is proud of how his students represented the city and the school. "All the students proudly represented their career field and Tech with exceptional professionalism."



Victor Vazquez

STUDENT PROFILE

Herter Scholarship winner dreams big

BY RICH FAHEY

When the climb is tough, the view from the top of the mountain is that much sweeter.

Victor Vazquez and his family came to Lynn from Puerto Rico when he was seven years old. He struggled at times academically and his family also struggled to gain its footing financially.

In May, the junior at Lynn Vocational and Technical Institute learned that he was one of just 25 high school students in the state and the only Lynn Public Schools student to be awarded the Christian A. Herter Memorial Scholarship, a four-year scholarship that will cover half the cost of his college education or up to \$15,000 a year.

Herter, who died in 1966, was a diplomat, governor of

Massachusetts, secretary of state, and a congressman.

The scholarship is given by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to high school sophomores and juniors who have excelled academically and overcome obstacles to become high-achieving students. On June 1, Vazquez and the other scholars were honored at a State House ceremony.

"I'm doing better in school. I never really did as good as I am now," said Vazquez, who has a 3.7 grade point average and majors in automotive technology.

Vazquez is the captain of the swimming team, is also on the track team, is a member of the National Honor Society, SkillsUSA and Project Yes programs, and also mentors freshmen students.

Johanna Smith, Vazquez' guidance counselor, said he is self-motivated and his success is due to natural talent and a strong work ethic. "He's more of a strong, silent type of leader who is thoughtful about what he says," she said.

Vazquez is dreaming big. He would like to attend MIT and study mechanical engineering, then attend graduate school, and finally go on and work designing better, more efficient cars or planes.

Vazquez is following in the footsteps of fellow Tech student and Hertler Scholarship winner Shawnee Haynes, who now attends UMass Amherst.

Carmen Ortiz, U.S. attorney for Massachusetts, speaks with Barbara Brooks at a reception prior to the event.



Assistant U.S. Attorney Peter Levitt holds the microphone while Felicity Chavez asks a question.



MARSHALL LAW

U.S. attorney urges students to make positive life choices

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Equipping students with the tools and motivation to take charge of their own lives, Massachusetts U.S. Attorney Carmen Ortiz visited Marshall Middle School on June 10 to unveil a new program and resource guide for Lynn teens – “Your Future, Your Decision.”

Joined by Assistant U.S. Attorney Peter Levitt and members of the Essex District Attorney’s Office and the Lynn Police Department, Ortiz spoke to the entire seventh-grade class at Marshall about making positive life choices.

“I look out at your young faces and it’s a reminder of where I was at your age, growing up in New York City,” said Ortiz. “This is where it all starts. Don’t be afraid to ask for help or support, and always surround yourself with people who believe in you and want to encourage you.”

Ortiz, who is the first woman and Hispanic to hold the position as the state’s top federal prosecutor, spoke about overcoming obstacles and stereotypes. Growing up as the oldest of five children, she was raised by non-English speaking parents. Her father worked in the garment industry and as a cab driver and her mother sold Avon products to supplement the family income. Despite her humble beginnings, Ortiz went on to earn a full scholarship to George Washington University Law School and work for both the Middlesex District Attorney’s Office and the U.S. Attorney’s Office. A nominee of President Obama, she was confirmed as U.S. Attorney in November of 2009 by the U.S. Senate, by unanimous consent.

“I am where I am today because of the choices I made along the way,” she said. “Sometimes you’ll make the wrong choice, but don’t let that keep you down and don’t let other people’s expectations keep you down. Some people told me not to go to law school – that it was too much work. I didn’t listen. You have to take risks. You have nothing to lose by trying.”

“This is the time to take charge of your own life and become an active participant,” said Levitt, echoing Ortiz’ statements.

Through his work in the U.S. Attorney’s Office, he has seen first-hand what can happen to youth when they go down destructive pathways.

“I kept hearing the same stories of kids who got involved with gangs and criminal activity when they were 12 or 13 years old,” said Leavitt. “They didn’t really feel like they had a lot of other choices in life, but I’m here today to tell you that you do have choices. There are a lot of people out there who want to help you.”

In front of the captive Marshall audience, Leavitt went on to interview 26-year-old Jameel Bell, a former gang member who turned his life around.

Under the influence of his parents, who spent most of his childhood in jail, Bell began selling drugs at age 9 and joined a gang at age 12. He was later expelled from six high schools, for lack of attendance, and was arrested and incarcerated at age 19.

“There are no phone calls or letters or visits from the friends you thought you had,” he said. “It’s lonely. You have

a lot of time to think. I started looking around at my cellmates thinking, ‘I’m not like them. I don’t need someone telling me when I need to eat or shower. I’m more intelligent than that. I can do more with my life.’ The experience really changed me.”

When he was released from prison a year later, Bell sought out Jack Kelter of the Lynn Police Department, who directed him to training and employment in the information technology field. Bell is now working as a network administrator and taking classes through the University of Phoenix’s online college degree program. He will earn his degree in March of next year.

As Bell looks ahead towards a promising future, he is not making excuses for his mistakes in the past.

“I was old enough to know that selling drugs was wrong, and I was old enough to ask for help,” he said. “Don’t be afraid to ask. Even if you make a bad decision, it doesn’t end there. You can always turn your life around.”

Following a Q&A with the speakers, Marshall students were presented with a 32-page resource guide outlining different arts, academic, athletic and volunteer programs they can get involved in after school. The guide is intended to help keep them engaged in enriching activities, and off the streets. Community agencies such as Girls Inc., Raw Art, Lynn YMCA and the Food Project were on hand to present students more information.

Staff members from the Essex District Attorney’s Office also made a presentation to the students about bullying prevention.



Audrey Jimenez of the Greater Lynn YMCA presented students with resources on positive activities and outlets.



Laura Menucci of RAW Arts gives information packets to Marshall students Ayanna Marte and Amylee Lawn.



Takira Fisher, left, and Glenda Perez learn more about arts, academic, athletic and volunteer groups they can join.



Jameel Bell speaks to students about how he turned his life around.

Good to the core: Ingalls students learn important personal values



Judy Nao, left, and Keishanelie Santiago, illustrate the value of cooperation by helping each other in the school garden.

BY JESSICA BENSON

When teachers at the Ingalls Schools wanted to find a positive way to address discipline issues, they came up with the idea of dealing with the problem at the core — literally.

By instilling core values such as respect and courtesy in their students, teachers are hoping students will respond by staying out of trouble.

“One of the reasons is we wanted to improve behavior,” said Donna Conlon, a teacher at the school. “We wanted to make students responsible for their own behavior.”

And now, after the third year of the program, the numbers are showing the program has been a success. Fewer disciplinary actions are now being handed out to students, Conlon said.

The Core Values Program focuses on safety, respect, peaceful problem solving,

cooperation, courtesy and effort. A different one becomes the focus each month.

At the beginning of the month, teachers and students make up a new “contract” with each other, revolving around that month’s core value. After that, the teacher can just point to the contract as a reminder to the students that they need to remember what the value means to them.

“You can do it without saying much,” Conlon noted.

Once the contract is in place, teachers use literature to prompt discussions about that month’s value. Every morning, to start the school day, everyone recites the poem “My Promise,” as a pledge to do their best that day.

The program also uses incentives to encourage better behavior from students. Treats like a sundae party are given to those with perfect attendance and homework.

Brickett students’ water-conservation efforts earn national award

BY JESSICA BENSON

If you happened to look up while driving on Broad Street toward the Lynnway recently, you might have wondered about the billboard asking you to use a rain barrel to conserve water.

You might be surprised to discover that the billboard was the result of a year-long project undertaken by a group of fourth-graders at the Brickett School. The effort, to learn about rain-collection systems and educate the public about the use of them, even won them top accolades from Disney’s annual Planet Challenge.

“It turned out really well,” said Donna Whalen, the teacher behind the project.

Whalen and her fourth-graders came up with the idea of studying rain barrels back in the fall. Since then, they have educated countless people about the importance of conserving water. They even installed one of the rain-collection systems in the school’s own garden.

“The kids are really proud of seeing that rain barrel out there,” Whalen said.

It started when Whalen, surfing the Internet for ideas on how to supplement her science curriculum, stumbled on information about the Disney Planet Challenge. The challenge “teaches kids about science and conservation while empowering them to make a positive impact on their communities and planet,” according to the Disney website.

Before settling on a topic for the challenge, an article in the local newspaper about low water levels sparked a discussion among Whalen’s students. Someone mentioned rain barrels — which collect rain water to be used for watering lawns and gardens — and the project was born.

Whalen noted that it was important for the children to come up with the idea on their own, so they would

remain interested in the project for the entire school year.

“It has to be a class decision, so they have ownership,” she said. “They were really excited about it.”

A big part of the challenge involved having students educate others about their chosen topic. From a Sunday afternoon survey of people at Dunkin Donuts, the students learned that few people in the area even know about rain barrels. Even fewer people use them.

So they designed a billboard, showing hands around the earth, with a rain barrel in the middle, and the slogan “Give our earth a hand, use a rain barrel.” The Clear Channel Outdoor advertising company donated the space for the billboard, displayed on busy Broad Street where thousands of people could see it every day.

Students also wrote a play about water conservation, utilizing their creative writing skills. On the science end of the curriculum — Whalen followed curriculum standards throughout the project — the students got to spend time learning about the health of fish through the Saugus River Watershed Council. Everything they did and learned was then collected and documented.

The Saugus River Watershed Council ended up inviting the students to a dinner at the Hilltop, where they were given the organization’s annual Stewardship Award, thanking them for their work. Another award was given to the group by the state.

Disney was also impressed, naming the Brickett students winners of the Planet Challenge from the state of Massachusetts. Brickett finished in the top 20 of 261 challenge projects nationwide.

But the rewards the students will bring with them into the future are even better than the accolades they received this year, Whalen noted.

“They really start seeing that they can be involved,” she said. “I hope to instill in them that we really do have to care for our earth.”



Tiffany Coogan, Nachary Gomez and DeAndre Day-Flamer with a rain barrel.



Read all about it

Harrington School hosted a Community Reading Day on May 20, bringing together public officials, business leaders, local authors and other community members to read to the students, including Hunter Dow and Aye Woghiren, far left. Some of this year's readers included U.S. Rep. John F. Tierney, Lynn Police Chief Kevin Coppinger, Lynn Fire Chief Dennis Carmody (above, center) and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Catherine Latham. Many students and teachers also dressed up as their favorite literary characters, including, above right, Patty Mendonca, left, and Kathy Ruth both as Harry Potter; and at left, Carole Shutzer and Bob Dzierzak as the Lion and the Tin Man from the "Wizard of Oz."

MARATHON WOMAN

Drewicz teacher achieves goal by conquering Boston

BY RICH FAHEY

Phyllis Fogarty, a grade 2 teacher at the Drewicz School, has been running for 17 years, but it was at a race where she was only a spectator that inspired her to hit new heights.

Three years ago, Fogarty, 46, attended the Boston Marathon, and was impressed by the effort and determination shown by everyday people to run the 26 miles, 385 yards from Hopkinton to Boston.

Fogarty first dipped her toes in a half-marathon in 2009, and she fared well enough to start training for marathons.

In her first try, she finished in 4:14.59 in the May 2010 Buffalo Marathon — she's a native of the city — then in a few months quickly knocked more than 23 minutes off her time as she finished in 3:51.23 in the October 2010 Smuttynose Rockfest Marathon in Hampton Beach, N.H., the race that qualified her for Boston.

Fogarty took advantage of a pacer in the Hampton Beach race so she could resist the temptation to go out too early.

She finished her first Boston Marathon on April 18, 2011, in 3:55.13, in the process earning herself a ticket into next year's race.

Fogarty said while the course is as tough as advertised, it isn't the famous hills themselves but the point at which they come — about 17 miles into the race — when a marathoner's legs are starting to turn into jelly.

Fogarty usually runs with headphones but for the Boston race, she took them off so she could hear all the encouraging comments from the estimated 500,000 spectators along the route.

"The spectators were amazing," she said. "They really



Drewicz teacher Phyllis Fogarty ran the 115th Boston Marathon in a time of 3:55.13.

helped me."

Fogarty was looking for her family — husband Brian, daughter Meghan, 11, and son Dylon, 8 — when she hit Kenmore Square, but she couldn't find them in all the madness.

Fogarty, who lives in Georgetown, runs about 40 miles a week when training for a marathon and about 25-30 otherwise. She has also joined the Salisbury-based Winner's Circle Running Club, a group that offers group training runs and coaching.

Fogarty earned her undergraduate degree at Ithaca College and a master's degree in education from Rivier College in Nashua, N.H. She has spent 18 years in Lynn Public Schools, the last 10 as a second-grade teacher.

Fogarty is part of the new running boom that is being fueled more by women than by men. Women made up 42 percent of the finishers in the 2010 BAA Marathon, the highest percentage ever.

"I think as a whole, the women runners I meet are very supportive of each other," she said.

Even though Fogarty already has her qualifying time for next year's BAA race, she must also navigate a rolling application process, which gives faster runners priority, and new qualifying standards that are going into effect; the qualifying time for the 2013 race in her division will be four hours. The BAA has set aside 20,000 spots for qualified runners.

Fogarty also hopes to run another major marathon somewhere else in the country.

"It could be Philadelphia, it could be Chicago," she said.

Recent English graduates have a great vision for their future

VISION: From Page 1

every day. I had an aide in the classroom and all my teachers were on board with getting me my materials on time. If I wound up in the wrong class, my guidance counselor was there to make sure I got in the right one,” Morris said.

McCarthy, who felt independent enough to forgo the assistance of a classroom aide during his junior and senior years, called graduating “a great accomplishment.”

“It was harder for me to see the board and to process what was being taught, so things came a little slowly. I feel like now that I did this I can say ‘Hey, anyone with impaired vision can do this’,” he said.

McCarthy said his mother, Sandra Warner, was his biggest advocate and worked with school officials to make sure that implements necessary to enhancing his learning experience, such as a laptop and an ocular magnifier, were made available.

“I had a hard time and really struggled at times, so it felt really good to graduate. Getting some different equipment my junior year really made it easier for me to see the board and to get my notes,” said DeJoy.

Each is bound for college in the fall — McCarthy and DeJoy will remain close to home and attend North Shore Community College while Morris is headed to Hesser College in Manchester, NH.

“It’s a small school, far enough away to be on my own but still close enough to home,” said Morris, who



Avana Morris, Brianna DeJoy and Peter McCarthy are proud graduates of Lynn English.

has a long-term plan in place. “After Hesser, I want to pursue a master’s degree and would like to come back to Lynn and become a teacher for visually impaired students.”

Morris is working at the Perkins School for the Blind this summer as a classroom aide during the day and teaching life skills to residents in the evening.

McCarthy has secured a paid internship through the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind this summer. Upon completion of his associate’s degree at North Shore he hopes to study computer sciences at Becker College.

DeJoy will study elementary education at North Shore and hopes to attend Westfield State University with the ultimate goal of teaching first- and second-. She seems to have the personality suited for that age level. She especially enjoyed a class that had her work as a courier in the school’s guidance department.

“Brianna has a great personality. She was very helpful to us, always the first one up to grab a pass and run an errand for us,” said Twomey.

Twomey noted that all three graduates received mobility training that helped them master the challenges of making their way around a school the size of English and out in the community. DeJoy and McCarthy both expressed confidence in their skills.

“I’m much more mature and I definitely feel I’m ready to live independently at Westfield,” DeJoy said.

Classical star met and exceeded expectations

BYRNE: From page 12

once (which is allowed under NCAA rules) and she was very impressive. She has a lot of natural ability.”

Byrne said she chose Saint Anselm because of its solid academic reputation, the quality of the softball program, the package she received and the opportunity to stay close to home, so her parents, Henry and Denise, can see her play. She has not decided on a major, but is leaning toward something in the sciences, perhaps biology or genetics.

In addition to her achievements on the diamond at Classical, Byrne also enjoyed a standout basketball career, making the varsity as a freshman and starting and earning league all-star status three years. She averaged 12 points and seven rebounds per game in that span.

“Hannah was very good at knowing what the defense was trying to do to us, what we were trying to do against them and executing on the floor,” Classical Coach Tom Sawyer said. “She has natural ability and a smooth jump shot. You combine the mental aspect with the physical ability and you have a very good high school basketball player.”



HANNAH BYRNE

Warren knows that while on the surface it might seem like an enviable position to be in to have to replace only one senior, when that senior is named Hannah Byrne the task becomes exponentially more difficult.

“When you lose Hannah you lose one of your best baserunners, one of your best fielders, one of your best hitters and one of your best run producers,” Warren said. “You lose a lot when she leaves your program.”

Yet you are thankful that everyone who told you how great she was going to be was right on target.

Lynn School Directory

Elementary schools			Middle schools	High schools/ Alternative
Aborn Anne Graul, Principal 409 Eastern Ave., Lynn, MA 01902 781-477-7320	Drewicz Bernadette Stamm, Principal 34 Hood St., Lynn, MA 01905 781-477-7350	Lynn Woods Ellen Fritz, Principal 31 Trevett Ave, Lynn, MA 01904 781-477-7433	Breed Fred Dupuis, Principal 90 O’Callaghan Way, Lynn, MA 01905 781-477-7330	Lynn Classical Gene Constantino, Principal 235 O’Callaghan Way, Lynn, MA 01905 781-477-7404
Brickett Eileen Cole, Principal 123 Lewis St., Lynn, MA 01902 781-477-7333	Robert L. Ford Dr. Claire Crane, Principal 49 Hollingsworth St., Lynn, MA 01902 781-477-7375	Sewell-Anderson Patricia A. Mallett, Principal 25 Ontario St., Lynn, MA 01905 781-477-7444	Thurgood Marshall Dr. Richard Cowdell, Principal 19 Porter St. Lynn, MA 01902 781-477-7360	Lynn English Thomas Strangie, Principal 50 Goodridge Street, Lynn, MA 01902 781-477-7366
Julia F. Callahan Edward Turmenne, Principal 200 O’Callaghan Way, Lynn, MA 01905 781-477-7340	E. J. Harrington Debra Ruggiero, Principal 21 Dexter St., Lynn, MA 01902 781-477-7380	Capt. William G. Shoemaker Patricia Riley, Principal 26 Regina Road, Lynn, MA 01904 781-477-7450	Pickering Robert Murphy, Principal 70 Conomo Ave, Lynn, MA 01904 781-477-7440	Lynn Technical Institute Diane Paradis, Director 80 Neptune Blvd, Lynn, MA 01902 781-477-7420
Cobbet Dr. Brian Fay, Principal 40 Franklin St., Lynn, MA 01902 781-477-7341	Hood Gayle Dufour, Principal 24 Oakwood Ave., Lynn, MA 01902 781-477-7390	Edward A. Sisson Jane Franklin, Principal 58 Conomo Ave., Lynn, MA 01904 781-477-7455		Fecteau-Leary Junior-Senior High Maura Scully, Principal 33 North Common St. Lynn, MA 01902 781-268-3000
William P. Connery Dr. Mary Dill, Principal 50 Elm St., Lynn, MA 01905 781-477-7344	Ingalls Kimberlee Powers, Principal 1 Collins Street Terr., Lynn, MA 01902 781-477-7400	Tracy Patty Griffin, Principal 35 Walnut St., Lynn, MA 01905 781-477-7466		LEEP Evening Program Karen Twomey, Director 50 Goodridge St., Lynn, MA 01902 781-477-7361
	Lincoln-Thomson Helen Psallidas Mihos, Principal 115 Gardiner St., Lynn, MA 01905 781-477-7460	Washington Nancy Takis-Conway, Director Janice Sheehan, Director 58 Blossom St., Lynn, MA 01902 781-477-7401		

Around Lynn Schools



Students and staff at the Brickett Elementary School celebrated the school's 100th birthday this year.

Cobbet

On Saturday, April 30, a group of about 30 teachers, administrators, parents and students volunteered their time to help transform the Cobbet Elementary School blacktop area into a more colorful and attractive playground area. Volunteers painted a large U.S. map and hopscotch for the students to enjoy during their recess time. The community service project was coordinated by Rachel Sherwin and Renee Hodgson, two Salem State University students who have spent the year working as interns for the adjustment counselor and social worker at the Cobbet School. The goal of the project was not only to make physical improvements to the school recess area, but also to help increase parent involvement and visibility within the community.

Connery

The Connery School hosted two Saturdays of MCAS prep for math. Beth Linehan, math teacher for grades 3-5, led this program. She gathered data that showed school-wide strengths and weaknesses and then determined what types of skills to focus on. A list of basic facts, time, measurement, graphing, probability and fractions were some of the areas they focused on.

Harrington

Harrington had a newly formed Student Council this year that accomplished a number of community service projects. They held fundraisers for Japan, as well as their own school library. They also instituted the Chain of Kindness, in which a paper chain is hung across the gym ceiling with the names of students that have done something kind and are recognized for their efforts.

Lincoln-Thomson

Lincoln-Thomson's PTO invited WHDH-Channel 7 meteorologist Jeremy Reiner to talk to students in grades 3-5 about the science of weather (photo at right). He was able to reach the students in an interactive and enthusiastic way, helping them to learn about the atmosphere, storm types and the water cycle.

Lynn Woods

The third- and fourth-graders of Lynn Woods, under the supervision of the music teacher Ms. Carroll, performed at the Briarcliff Lodge for a Memorial Day celebration (photo bottom right). When they arrived, they learned that some of the Briar Cliff seniors had also prepared poems and songs. It was such a wonderful treat to have two generations come together and celebrate. The Lynn English High School ROTC drill team also joined the Lynn Woods students and completed one of their award-winning drills for the group. All eyes were on them as they performed with precision and accuracy. At the conclusion of the show, the seniors presented the students with flags and the students gave them patriot hearts that they created in art class. It was truly an uplifting experience and a perfect way to kick off the long Memorial Day weekend.

On June 9, North Shore Navigators players Dan Slania, Miles Landry and Crayton Bare visited Lynn Woods to talk about articles that have been written about them in The Daily Item. The students had been reading these profiles every week and connecting the profiles to a specific topic in school. These players love to help out the children in the community in which they will be playing in for the summer months of June and July.



Lynn Woods teacher's first children's book inspired by a freckle

FRECKLE: From Page 1

the discussions to a stand-still.

Then, last year, a friend suggested someone she knew who was studying illustration, a woman named Olivia Lummus. Parker liked her work and the two got together.

The book was published just before Christmas last year. It is not available in stores, but can be purchased online at www.amazon.com.

Amazon describes the book as appropriate for ages 3-9, with the description: "All I want is a freckle, and all I find is everything else! I just want one. Just one! There is bound to be a freckle on me somewhere. Now if I can only find it!"

At the end of the book, the main

character finally finds his freckle – on his behind. Parker emphasizes that her son Jake, now five years old and the book's inspiration, does not, in fact, have a freckle on his behind.

Students at Lynn Woods were among the first to read the book when it came out. Parker's students were especially excited; many are still talking about it, said Lynn Woods Principal Ellen Fritz.

"It has a lot of kid appeal. Its very age-appropriate. And has a nice balance of humor in there as well," she said. "You have to make one that the kids want to read."

Parker is now in her second year as a teacher at Lynn Woods; she previously taught at the Hood School. Fritz says she's been impressed with how Parker juggles

all of the things in her life – writing, two young children, a husband, and a teaching career.

"She does an incredible balancing act," Fritz said.

In addition to Jake, Parker has a 1-year-old son, Aaron. Her husband, Frank Parker, a local exterminator, has been supportive of her writing, though it is still difficult to find the time.

"I need that quiet time, which is very rare," she says.

Parker has several projects, including a novel for adults, as well as a play for children, in various stages of completion. She does plan to someday publish a second book.

As if that wasn't enough on her plate, Parker also waits tables at the Tides on weekends. She jokes that if

“You have to make one that the kids want to read”

she ever has any money to spare, she'll spend it on a housekeeper, not a literary agent.

Parker, however, is used to the balancing act. Even before becoming a busy wife and mother, she studied both writing and teaching while a student at Bridgewater State University, earning dual degrees.

Both passions were instilled in her while a student at English High, under the tutelage of teacher Maureen McWalters, who encouraged her writing, pushing her to win awards and accolades for her work, according to Parker.

Now, as a teacher herself, Parker is doing the same for her own students.

"My hope is that she's inspired some of the kids to become authors themselves," Fritz said.

SPORTS

The Lynn Educator



Byrne met and exceeded expectations at Classical

BY PAUL HALLORAN

It is not uncommon for a young athlete to be labeled as the next can't-miss kid, only to fall victim to unrealistic expectations and never live up to the advance billing.

Not Hannah Byrne.

Byrne entered Lynn Classical touted as the next great softball star, up there with the best players ever to come out of the talent-rich Greater Lynn Babe Ruth Softball program. Classical Coach Chris Warren had countless people tell him what a jewel of a player – and a person – he was getting.

“I really didn’t know much about her,” Warren said, “but everyone told me about her. I kept hearing nothing but good things about her.”

Four years later, Warren knows that not only did Byrne live up to the hype – she surpassed it.

“She’s one of the best ever to play at Lynn Classical,” said Warren, who has been in the program for 18 years, the last 11 as head coach.

The numbers bear out that assessment. Byrne finished her career with a .403 batting average, 111 hits, five home runs, 85 RBI and 91 runs scored. More importantly, the two-time captain helped lead the Rams to 67 wins in her career and three Northeastern Conference championships, including this year when she was the only senior on the team.

“That’s not an easy position to be in,” Warren said, “but she handled it well. She developed as a player and a person over the last four years.”

Byrne acknowledged it was not easy being the only senior, and that she felt more pressure this year than she did as a

freshman who came to the school shouldering the expectations and hopes of others.

“Coach talked to me countless times about it,” she said. “He told me the other girls look up to me and I had to be on my ‘A’ game every day.”

A National Honor Society student, Byrne brought her “A” game to the classroom as well, ranking 13th in a class of 252. As a senior, she took three Advanced Placement and three Honors courses. Her prowess as a student and an athlete earned her an outstanding financial package from Saint Anselm

“She developed as a player & a person over the last four years”

College, where she will play softball next year, much to the delight of Hawks Coach Greg Joseph.

“We’re thrilled to have her,” Joseph said. “Hannah is very, very good. She came up last fall and worked out with our team

See **BYRNE** Page 10

PROMISE FULFILLED