

The Elephant In The Room

Milton High's Student Newspaper

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Golden Gloves Demonstrates the Golden Rule



The blue corner delivers a mean left jab to the red corner.

Photo by AIDAN SADLER

By AIDAN SADLER

Amateur Boxer Michael McIntosh threw a quick left hook at Yancy Quinonez, who kept his stance closed and his defense strong. McIntosh threw punch after punch, hitting his opponent fiercely and without pause. But as Quinonez quickly realized, all of McIntosh's offense left him open; Narrowly avoiding a punch, Quinonez ducked left and threw a powerful right hook that left McIntosh staggering out of the match.

The Golden Gloves is one of the largest amateur boxing competitions in America. The competition started in 1940s Chicago as a way to not only raise money for charity but also to promote boxing as a sport amongst American youth.

It didn't take long for the competition to establish branches all across the United States, and eventually, one branch found itself a home in Lowell Memorial Auditorium.

Thanks to the event runner, Bob Russo, I was granted the privilege of sitting ringside next to the coaches and other journalists reporting on the action-packed event.

The first fight of the Golden Glove preliminaries only lasted forty-five seconds, yet it was an omen of what was to come. Nine fights were left, all made up of 18 amateur boxers looking to rise the ranks and become professional fighters, all while raising money for charity.

Famous boxers such as Sugar Ray Leonard, Marvin Hagler, Mickey Ward, and Rocky Marciano all got their start at this very New England tournament. The Golden Gloves is an integral part of New England's largely underappreciated boxing tradition.

When I walked into Lowell Memorial Auditorium, the twenty-eight-hundred-seat auditorium was packed with spectators all eager to see who would climb the ranks. Fighters

from all over New England would be competing.

Coaches were sitting ringside yelling "Duck!" "Block!" or "Jab!" at their respective boxers. Photographers were rapidly taking photo after photo, chasing the famous 'punch shot' that headlines every boxing story. Some photographers even stuck their cameras into the ring in an attempt to get the best shot.

Through all the noise, the boxers were still maintaining their focus, which is crucial for a sport that requires a reaction time of two to ten milliseconds.

The boxers were equipped with standard gloves, headgear, and jerseys, all color-coordinated to the corner they were fighting in (red or blue). Every fight was made up of three rounds. If there is no knockout, a panel of judges decides who fought the best. If there is a split vote, the fight goes on for another round.

The event wasn't just about the skill and spectacle, it demonstrated something about boxing that is often misunderstood. Most people perceive boxing as a violent and barbaric sport. However, the sportsmanship and respect demonstrated by the boxers outpaced any other live sport I'd seen before.

If you're looking for a fun night full of excitement and spectacle, I could not recommend the New England Golden Gloves enough. For twenty-two dollars and a relatively short drive, I promise that the Golden Gloves will not disappoint.

Madame Fantastique

By ANNA ALVAROVA

Born in Egypt, fluent in Arabic, and possessing a PhD, this great all-star came to Milton High by accident. The mysterious and surprising Amal Radwan is much more than anyone could have anticipated, and weirdly enough, she became Milton High's very own French teacher all thanks to a lucky coincidence.

Though she now teaches here in the United States, Radwan was born in Alexandria, Egypt. She learned how to speak Arabic, but because her mother was a teacher at a French-speaking school, French has always been a part of her life.

As a kid, Radwan had dreams of becoming an artist and dancer. She laughed as she said, "To be honest, I've always wanted to be a ballet dancer."

While those dreams may have dissipated into memories, she's always remained a creative person, and that creativity helped shape her career.

After earning her Master's in Chemical Engineering in Alexandria, Egypt, she moved to the U.S. to further pursue her academic career as a PhD student at Northeastern University in Boston. She achieved many great things during her scientific career, including the invention of a unique aerogel that helped with making the desert a more suitable place for life.

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MHS Hosts MMEA Music Festival for First Time

By MELINA ZULLAS

Music filled the halls of Milton High on Friday, January 5, and Saturday, January 6, when over 400 students participated in the Massachusetts Music Educator Association Eastern Senior District Festival (MMEA), a two-day commitment that allowed students from all over Eastern Massachusetts to rehearse and perform several pieces with one another.

Although this was the first time that MHS hosted the festival, this is not the first time this school year that hundreds of musicians flocked to our school to show off their skills. With help from the MHS parents that make up The Friends of Art and Music Education (FAME), the music department also hosted the auditions for the festival last November.

Of course, both occasions included a lot of behind-the-scenes work to accommodate well the chorus, concert band, jazz band, and orchestra

students from the 30 cities and towns that make up Massachusetts's Eastern District.

The preparations for the festival began on Thursday when students with classes in the music department and members of the Tri-M Music Honor Society helped to make room for the singers and instrumentalists in the auditorium, the library, and the music hallway.

The next day, for music students who weren't a part of the festival, the regular class was replaced by directing the participating students (and their chaperons) into their respective spaces, moving equipment, and then watching them rehearse in the auditorium.

Julia Hanna, the chorus director, said that Rebecca Damiani, the band

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The MMEA Eastern Senior District orchestra practicing in the MHS Library.

Photo courtesy of NATE BROWN

Global Leaders Summit on How to Pretend to Solve Issues While Actually Doing Nothing

By ADAM CHEAIRS

Hosted at the Four Seasons Hotel, the gathering's emphasis lay in the illusion of addressing pressing global issues, all while subtly sidestepping any actual action. The curriculum included advanced workshops in verbal gymnastics, how to offer vague assurances (new this year), and expert-level sidestepping, helping attendees master the fine art of looking productive while actually doing nothing.

One of many lecturers, Governor Gridlock shared strategies for empty rhetoric and crafting seemingly robust action plans that, upon closer scrutiny, reveal their hollowness. He described dodging questions from the press as an “Olympic-level sport” for him. The entire spectacle unfolded like a carefully choreographed ballet, twirling around the glaring issue—a recent housing policy score-

One business leader, speaking on condition of anonymity, shared their excitement about prioritizing talk over walk in the “COP-OUT” room (not to be confused with the similarly showy COP28, a large-scale assembly bringing together world leaders for climate negotiations¹) saying, “This is exactly what we needed! Now, when people ask about our climate goals, we can dazzle them with esoteric jibber-jabber from our ivory tower, leaving them too confused to question our non-existent results.”

Met with a chilling and indifferent promise of “continued dialogue” when addressing the genocidal violence in Gaza, spectators couldn’t help but wonder if they were part of a summit on global issues or unwittingly cast in a badly scripted soap opera. Unprecedented democratic backsliding was dismissed as a mere “ebb and flow of political tides,” with one leader suggesting that sometimes democracy needed a break, just like

As the seminars concluded, leaders huddled together, exchanging high-fives and dab-ups over their hot-off-the-press certificates. “Finally,” sung one executive from a fast retailing company, “we can assure our stakeholders that we’re ‘actively working’ on the issues, and they’ll be none the wiser.” Another executive chimed in, “It’s like telling someone you’re on a diet while hiding a doughnut behind your back!”

Critics, however, were quick to point out that while the seminar provided leaders with excellent theatrical training, it did little to address the actual problems facing the world.

Organizers quickly shared plans for next year's summit, titled "Solving the World in One Summit", where they promised to be more clear in responding to "actual problems" (air quotes theirs). The event is poised to unfold against the backdrop of a world more disorganized than a high school teen's bedroom – a global game of AI Monopoly and a

mishmash of crises in Gaza, Yemen, Tigray, Sudan, and Haiti as if the universe decided to play Twister with geopolitical issues.

¹ As last year's host country, the UAE handpicked Dr. Sultan al-Jaber to lead the discussion. It's noteworthy that he serves as the CEO of ADNOC, Abu Dhabi's state-owned oil company. Scientists stress that preventing a temperature rise beyond 1.5 degrees Celsius demands significant cuts in CO2 emissions, primarily from burning oil and gas. Even still, documents obtained by BBC expose the UAE's intention to exploit its role as COP28 host for oil and gas deals, with briefings indicating discussions with 15 nations. The documents detail plans to discuss fossil fuel agreements, such as Adnoc's interest in LNG opportunities in Mozambique, Canada, and Australia, and lobbying for support in a bid for Latin America's largest oil and gas processing company. What a curious situation!

By **SADIE RUTH**

When we think back on past decades, much of how we define those time periods is based on fashion. The 80s are defined by flashy shoulder pads, bright colors, power suits, and leg warmers. The 90s are defined by sleek slip dresses, flannel, baby tees, and bucket hats. The 2000s are defined by velour tracksuits, low-rise jeans, skinny scarves, and cargo pants.

However, as we push farther into the twenty-first century, it becomes harder and harder to define what our trends are. Can you call sweatpants a fashion trend? What about leggings? Can you even call them fashion?

Much of fashion trends are determined by the styles of the younger generations. Today, Gen Z is one of the most prevalent offenders in the degradation of modern fashion.

Milton High's student body is proof. On any given day, it's a guarantee that walking through the halls, the majority of students will be wearing sweatpants, hoodies, leggings, or pajamas.

An anonymous survey of MHS students revealed that 48.3% wear these sorts of comfortable clothes for all five days of the school week, on average. An additional 21.7% wear comfortable clothes four days a week, on average.

The comfortable clothing movement has now become somewhat of a revolution. The athleisure and activewear that was previously solely a gym staple is now common-

place among teens, reflected by the booming popularity of brands like Lululemon, who made 8.8 billion dollars in the past year, according to MacroTrends.

The reasoning behind this revolution is unclear. On a global scale, it could likely be attributed to the COVID 19 pandemic, in which people began to opt for pajamas on their Zoom calls, over the suits, pencil skirts, and office attire they were accustomed to.

According to Forbes, athleisure orders rose 84% from the start of the pandemic. Nonetheless, the pandemic is over and comfortable clothes are nowhere near disappearing, at least for high school students.

The student survey reported that 53.3% of MHS students wear athleisure and comfortable clothes because they're too tired in the morning to wear anything else. Sophomore Macy Burns said, "In all honesty, it's just too much effort to put together an outfit with a nice top and jeans. It's so much less work to pull on a pair of sweatpants or a hoodie."

To older generations, “too much effort” seems to be the mantra of Gen Z. We’re always looking to put in minimal effort, we’re too lazy, and we don’t work hard enough.

Instead, I'd argue that we're not lazy, just burnt out. According to The Atlantic, "American teenagers now [average] about twice as much time spent on homework each day as

their predecessors did in the 1990s.” Similarly, the Child Mind Institute reports that “teens need over nine hours a night to be healthy. But over a third of teens get only five to six hours a night.”

Sleep-deprived and buried in work, teens understandably tend to reach for comfort over fashion.

“People are less focused on their appearance and more focused on trying to survive day to day,” in the words of junior Jasmine Bethea.

On top of all that, this comfortable revolution has caused our standards for what is presentable to drop drastically. As someone who wears jeans or a pair of non-ath-leisure pants to

school almost daily, I'm constantly flooded with comments along the lines of "Wow, you dress so nice!"

It baffles me how jeans, which used to be worn if it was casual Friday at work, have become “fancy.” Is it really true that my simple shirt and jeans have become the height of everyday fashion?

Not only have our standards for presentability dropped, but we've pushed truly presentable clothes so far from the norm that they can seem unusual or socially unacceptable. There have been many times that I've worn a skirt or a nicer top to school and all day, I've felt self-conscious, overdressed, and a little too visible.

“Wearing nice clothes feels too out of the ordinary like all eyes are on you,” junior Maggie Carr

shared. "It feels more socially acceptable to wear comfortable clothes; it's just a lot easier to blend in."

Athleisure seems to mirror the increase in the “don’t try too hard” mentality. For example, consider the rise of the messy bun. While the trendy hairstyles of past decades have been bombshell blowouts, beehive updos, and slick mohawks, the messy bun now reigns supreme. The entire concept of this hairstyle is backed by the idea of minimal effort and an “I woke up like this” look.

Trendiness is no longer based on how long you took to get ready or how elaborate and expensive your outfit is, it's how chill you seem. Sweats, pajamas, and leggings are just what you need to get the job done. Regardless of whether the pandemic, workload, sleep deprivation, or "chill" trends are to blame, one concept seems to explain the entirety of fashion's deterioration: perhaps, our society has just become too complicated for fashion to be complicated too.



Graphic by ISABELLA MURPHY

SPORTS

Otto Landrum and the Lafayette Leopards Vs the BU Terriers

By ELIJAH ETHEART

On Saturday, January 6, my dad and I drove 20 minutes to watch the Boston University Terriers’ basketball game against the Lafayette Leopards to watch TikTok phenom, Otto Landrum.

Landrum has been blowing up all over social media with his “Hi mom” basketball edit. Ever since his rise to popularity, many criticize his game, saying things like “he only averages nine points.” Some refute this saying, “he’s D1 and you’re not.” With all this craze and controversy, I decided to go out and watch the viral player ball.

As I headed into the stadium with my small press pass sticker in hand, the band was blasting their drums, horns, and winds. Even with few people there, I could instantly feel the atmosphere change.

Soon starters were called up, and eventually 6’ 9” forward Otto Landrum stepped up. He was instantly cheered and even hit a little dance before running onto the court. With tip-off in only a few seconds,

Landrum stepped up to Justin Vander Baan, a 7’ 0” junior from Lafayette.

The ball tipped off and the Terriers swiftly moved down the glistening BU court, trying to prove their dominance. Four minutes into the game, they were up 8-3, causing the Lafayette Leopards to quickly call a timeout.

The Terriers were cutting, screening, and moving around the court, with Landrum and Nico Nobili, a 6’ 10” sophomore, playing an important role in their team’s offense and defense. Otto held 7’ 0” Justin Vander Baan to only one point.

At the next timeout, the Terriers were up nine points, almost doubling the lead from the last timeout.

As halftime was approaching, the Leopards started to get their rhythm, rushing into the double dig-its and being down by only five points at 26-21. The hype and energy level from the Leopards was more intense than the Terriers, giving them more and more momentum.

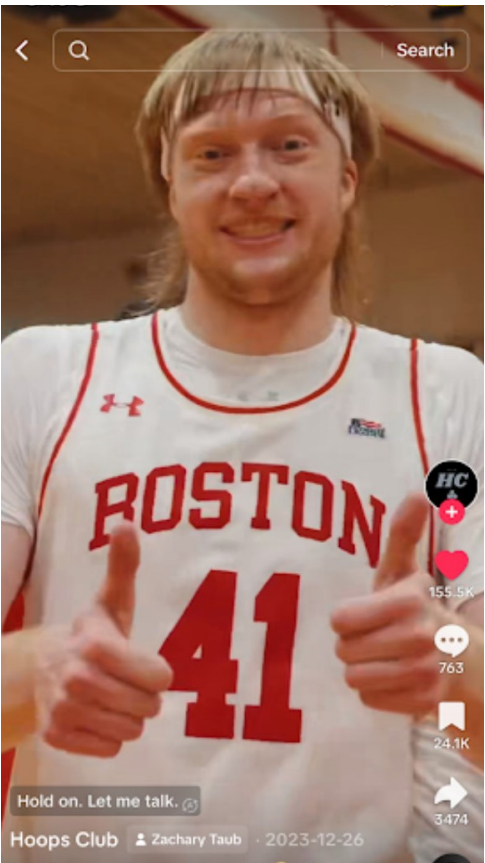
As the second half came, the Terriers started to lose their stride.

The Leopards broke the lead down bit by bit, slowly getting in their opponents heads. With trash talk coming from the stands, players calling their opponents “little,” and stare-downs after a three-pointer.

Justin Vander Baan locked in this half, blocking Otto Landrum and point guard Ethan Okusowa twice, dropping fifteen more points. The Leopards were up by five with one and one, meaning that even if you commit something that is not a shooting foul, the other team shoots free throws. Essentially, the final minutes became a free throw competition, and the Terriers just could not catch back up, losing. 51-59.

Going to the Terrier’s game was truly a great experience. We even got free pizza! But, as a basketball player myself, it was very cool to see D1 players go at it since most of these players will be going professional.

As for Landrum, he really can play. Most people expect a lot from him, but he doesn’t let that get to his head. He is a solid man and makes a great impact when he is on the court.



Otto Landrum Image courtesy of TikTok

The “Hi mom” phenom really can be great, since he’s only a sophomore and has plenty of time to improve his game.

Milton Static Tackles First Robotics Meet

By AIDAN LESCHUK

After hours of planning and calculations, testing and feeling, struggling to find the perfect plan of action, and the occasional paper airplane dropping off the balcony, ten members of the Milton Static, Milton High’s competitive robotics team, entered a brightly lit room filled with dozens of like-minded individuals ready to take home a victory. This was their first event of the year and took place in Andover.

While it may not appear so at first glance, robotics possess many qualities similar to traditional sports. The teamwork, coaches, referees, fans, and strategies don’t greatly differ from a soccer or basketball game.

These factors make the game exciting and intense, but the differences from “normal” sports are what makes it interesting.

Robotics teams like the Milton Static rarely get the opportunity to compete more than once or twice a year. On top of that, the rules change every year meaning the robot has to be built from scratch.

This year’s iteration of the First Technical Challenge is known as “Centerstage.” Robots navigate a playing field, picking up small pieces of plastic and gaining points depending on where and how they place them in a scoring zone. They score more points by completing tasks such as launching a paper airplane or hanging off a bar at certain points in time.

Each round is split between an autonomous and human-operated portion, and each team would participate in five qualifying rounds.



Captain David Mitchell lowers the robot onto the field while Driver Daniel Winterberg (left) and Captain Colin Truong (right) stand behind him. Photo courtesy of MR. MERKLE

To say that the Milton Static was underprepared going into the event is an understatement. One of the team’s core strategies of the paper airplane launcher had only started working the night before. The robot only had the capability to move one plastic piece at a time and had hardware that was less advanced than many of the other teams.

Soon after arriving and passing a robot inspection, the competition began. The format was a two against two, where each team would be randomly assigned a different alliance partner for each of its five rounds.

The Start

Milton’s robot lacked an automatic mode, so their round began shortly after the other robots. And when it started, it did not go as

planned.

A member of the team had accidentally pressed a button that swapped the controls automatically, so when the driver, Daniel Winterberg, tried to move the robot forward, the paper airplane shot toward the wrong side of the stage. Winterberg was able to recover it quickly, but the damage had already been done and Milton’s alliance lost 19-39.

With the controls fixed and the second round a few minutes later, the pressure was on. Captains Colin Truong and David Mitchell accompanied Winterberg in the driver’s corner for this match, and soon the round was underway.

Even with a minor issue of getting stuck under a bar, Milton squeaked by with a victory thanks to its alliance with one of the best

teams in the competition, Soli Deo Gloria from Foxborough. Milton’s alliance won 80-60.

The Middle

The following rounds were relatively uneventful. The paper airplane launcher was removed for technical issues, but the team won the third match 55-16.

At this point, the Static were especially confident. Their high scoring 2-1 record had put them at a 7th place overall position going into later rounds. However, this didn’t last long and miscommunications between team members led to a humbling 25-57 loss.

The End

Going into the final qualifying match of the day, the Static had mixed feelings. To get into the playoff rounds, they would have to be in the top four teams of the entire competition. They would have to win this last game and by a lot.

The team played well, scoring points consistently despite the allied partner’s robot accidentally knocking into everything around the field.

Walking out of the driving area, a win seemed feasible. However, Milton lost by just one point, a devastating final score of 32-33.

Placing 15th overall, Milton didn’t make the playoff rounds.

Many other sports teams might have been discouraged by a loss like this one. However, for Milton Static, all members were immediately thinking of ways to improve. In the words of Truong, “We’re aiming for the top. This time we will be prepared.”

Madame Fantastique

(continued from page 1)

In fact, many of her accomplishments were centered around the environment. She did her Master’s thesis on pollution, wrote a paper that was published in The Nature Magazine, and even helped clean Revere Beach of toxic algae. In many ways, we have her to thank for helping improve the world we live in.

In 2003, a friend of Radwan needed her help with teaching. Although her mother had been a role model teacher, Radwan had never put too much thought on the subject of becoming one herself. Nonetheless, Radwan stepped in as a substitute teacher.

Against all odds, she slowly began to realize just how much she loved it. Her newfound passion combined her talents in language, creativity, and helping others, and she now uses it to teach the students at Milton High School to be better than they were yesterday.

Life means choices. And just like Radwan, everyone can decide to be whoever they want to be, whenever they decide to do it. There is no limit to what anyone can do as long as they love what they’re doing, and



Madame Radwan Photo courtesy of MME RADWAN
Radwan proves this to be true every day.

Quoting Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, author of “Le Petit Prince,” Radwan said, “One sees clearly only with the heart. What is essential is invisible to the eye.”

Categories!

Instructions: Place the words into 4 groups of 4, each with a similar trait/theme.

Ex. Cat, Dog, Fish, Hamster → Common pets

Mariner	Legend	Escape	Green
Enter	Spruce	National	Look
Toss	Shift	Adams	Angel
Kennedy	Keep	Yankee	Control

Answers: — UP: Spruce, Look, Toss, Keep, Keyboard Commands: Enter, Escape, Shift, Control. Mims, singular: Angel, Yankee, Mariner, National. Famous Johns: Green, Legend, Adams, Kennedy

Game by GRIFFIN ANGUS

POP CULTURE CLUB

Meets every other Tuesday

In room 221

DEBATE CLUB

Tuesdays and Thursdays after school

Meets in rooms 229 / 224

Model UN

Every Monday and Wednesday after school
In Mr. Borde's room

Ads by ANNA ALVAROVA

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Sincerely,
The Elephant in the Room staff

MMEA Festival

(continued from page 1)

director, “really took the lead on making this happen and on organizing the schedule and having a really detailed outline so we all knew what needed to happen,” which was important because “bringing all those logistics to life was the hardest thing.”

Finally, Friday was over and it was the day of the big performance. Several students from Milton could be seen in the different ensembles. Emily Bohlin, Nate Brown, Atticus D'Alessandro, Ruby Dolgon, Lucy Hollingsworth-Hays, Julia Mangum, Fedor Myshkin, and Florian Zoll all participated.

Senior Lucy Lucy Hollingsworth-Hays, who has participated in many of these festivals before, said that her favorite part is being able to work on “harder,” “more diverse” songs “you never would have gotten to sing otherwise.”

In the end, the music educators were happy—and tired—after giving so many young musicians the chance to improve upon their harmonies, rhythms, intonation, style, and love of music.

For Hanna, “what stands out was how incredible the ensembles sounded. If you went around and walked around to the different ensembles, they were so im-

pressive [and] the conductors were all amazing to work with.”

Thankfully, the music continues; the Junior District Festival will be in March (not at MHS though), and after auditioning on February 3rd, several students from MHS hope to participate in the Senior and Junior SEMSBA Festivals in March and May. Meanwhile, Atticus D'Alessandro and Nate Brown will go on to perform at Symphony Hall in Boston for the MMEA All-State Festival on March 23.

And after that day director Sullivan was never seen again

Graphic by THOMAS HAYDEN