

COMMUNITY

Zwart, Antognetti lead Oyster River Class of 2018 top 10

DURHAM — Eleanor Zwart has been named valedictorian and Benjamin Antognetti salutatorian for the Oyster River High School Class of 2018.

Eleanor Zwart is the daughter of Anne and Townsend Zwart of Durham. She was the recipient of the Smith College book award, is a member of the National Honor Society, and will be recognized as a New Hampshire Scholar with a STEM emphasis. She is also a student senator.

Eleanor has pursued her athletic endeavors with the same energy, enthusiasm, and skill as her academics. She has been a member of our soccer, swimming, and spring track teams for all four years of high school. In 2016, she was named the Seacoast Media Group's Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Additionally, she was selected to be a member of the Student Athlete Leadership Team.

Having gained admission to Tufts University, University of Oregon, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Eleanor has chosen to attend Dartmouth College, where she has identified a tentative major in nutritional science.

Benjamin Antognetti is from Lee and son of Michele Antognetti and Laurie Grant. Ben is a member of our National Honor Society and has served as the treasurer for the past two years. He is a member of our French club and is co-president this year. Ben has worked as the lead



University of Pittsburgh.
Georgiana "Gigi" Reece is the daughter of Julie and Richard Reece of Lee. As an accomplished academic, she received the Mount Holyoke book award, is a member of the National Honor Society, and will be recognized as a New Hampshire Scholar with a STEM emphasis.

Gigi has a deep love of learning. She is particularly interested in government, politics, and international relations. This is reflected in her helping to create our Model UN club, being an active member of Debate Club, Granite State Challenge team, Girls State, and being the Vice President of her class throughout high school. Additionally, she has studied Chinese in Shanghai.

In addition to her academic goals, Gigi has sought athletic pursuits. She has been a member of the cross country and spring track team throughout high school.

Having been admitted Early Decision to the College of William and Mary, Gigi will attend, with a tentative selection of majors in international relations, history, or government.

Danielle Slavin is the daughter of Maura and Michael Slavin of Durham. Danielle is a National Merit Scholarship Finalist and will be recognized as a New Hampshire State Scholar with a STEM and Art emphasis. She attended the Advanced Studies Program at St.

coordinator of the Young Athletes Program for most of his high school career. He was the recipient of the Yale Book Award his junior year and has recently been awarded the Whelen Engineering Scholarship and UNH's Presidential Scholarship. Ben will graduate as a New Hampshire Scholar with a STEM emphasis. Ben's future goals include studying Engineering/Physics. He was accepted to the University of Maryland, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, University of Connecticut and University of Massachusetts (Amherst). Ben will be attending the University of New Hampshire in the fall.

Rounding out the Oyster River High School top ten students for the Class of 2018, in alphabetical order, are:

Shivika Aggarwal is from Durham and daughter of Manisha and Sharad Aggarwal. Shivika is a member of both our National Honor Society, where she serves as president, and a member of the Spanish Honor Society. Shivika is the class treasurer for the class of 2018 and has served in this role for four years. She is a member of our Math team, Spanish club and a violist in our school orchestra and has played in the All-State Music Festival and UNH Fall Festival for the past four years. She has earned her way onto our highest honors honor roll throughout her high school career. She was the recipient of the Clarkson Leadership Award and will graduate as a New Hampshire Scholar with both a STEM and Arts emphasis. Shivika plans to study biomedical engineering at the college level and has explored this path through her volunteer work at Frisbee Memorial Hospital and a summer program studying sickle cell anemia at Boston University in

Oyster River High School's top 10 students for the Class of 2018 are, from left, top, Eleanor Zwart, Benjamin Antognetti, Shivika Aggarwal, Emily Allyson; middle, Kayla Frazier, Katherine Hoppler, Megan Hutar, Georgiana Igiigi Reece; bottom, Danielle Slavin and Jacob Zercher. [COURTESY PHOTOS]

2015. Shivika was accepted to the University of Vermont, University of Connecticut, Clarkson, RenPI and Case Western. She will be attending Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH in the fall.

Emily Allyson is from Durham and daughter of Russ and Jeannie Allyson. Emily is a member of National Honor Society and Spanish Honor Society. Emily will graduate as a New Hampshire Scholar with both a STEM and Arts emphasis. Emily was the recipient of the Saint Michael's Book Award her junior year. She is an active member of our student senate, model UN, math team and debate club. Participating in cross country and our track program has also filled Emily's days as a student. She is a recipient of the NHIAA Scholar Athlete award. During Emily's time in high school she has been a committed volunteer/intern at Child Voice. This work led her to a trip to Uganda this past summer. Through her experience she sees herself studying international relations. She was accepted to American University, Boston University, University of Vermont, Fordham, Roger Williams and will attend George Washington University in the fall.

Kayla Frazier is from Lee and daughter of Steven and Marilyn Frazier. Kayla is a member of the Spanish honor society. She has been in highest honors throughout her high school career and will graduate a New Hampshire Scholar with a STEM emphasis. Kayla has been an active member of our girls' volleyball team all four

years and played for Great Bay in her off season. She was a recipient of a Defensive MVP award for her skill. Kayla has played the piano for most of her life and enjoys spending time with this activity. During her junior year, she was the recipient of the Elmira Key award. Through her volunteer work in the emergency room at Frisbee Memorial Hospital, Kayla is confident in her path/goal of becoming a nurse specializing in either pediatrics or women's health. She was accepted to University of Vermont, University of Pittsburgh, Johnstown, Simmons, University of New Hampshire, Sacred Heart, Regis and Colby-Sawyer. She will be attending Colby-Sawyer in the fall as part of their nursing program.

Katherine Hoppler is the daughter of Robert Hoppler and Melissa Gerry and hails from Durham. She has contributed to the ORHS community in several ways, including the National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, Math Team, Spanish Club, National History Day (finalist), and Varsity volleyball squad.

Over the course of her high school career, Katherine has amassed a stellar academic transcript - having done so while taking some of our most challenging academic offerings. She is a member of a select group of students being honored as New Hampshire Scholars with an emphasis on STEM. Ms. Hoppler is her class recipient of the College of the Holy Cross book award, acknowledging exceptional academic achievement within a rigorous college preparatory program, coupled with sincere concern

for others and a responsible attitude in all endeavors.

Having been accepted to Boston University, Northeastern University, and George Washington University, Katherine has elected to stay in Durham to attend the University of New Hampshire in the fall to pursue her collegiate education.

Megan Hutar, of Durham, is the daughter of Jaroslav Hutar and Therese Willkomm. During her tenure at Oyster River High School, Megan has served as a vital member of several clubs and organizations. Ms. Hutar has participated in the National Honor Society, Debate Club, Quiz Bowl, French Club, and Oyster River Equestrian Team. Academically, Megan has been lauded for her efforts by way of receiving the Harvard Book Award and Society for Women Engineers Highest Honors distinction. Additionally, she is the recipient of a bronze medal in Le Grand Concours National French Exam. She is also recognized as a New Hampshire Scholar with a STEM emphasis, having taken a rigorous college-preparatory level of course work with an emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Ambitiously seeking an ultimate career as a clinical pharmacist, Megan applied and gained acceptance to Northeastern University; the Universities of Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Pittsburg; and the Albany and Massachusetts Colleges of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. In the fall, Megan has elected to begin her post-secondary journey at the

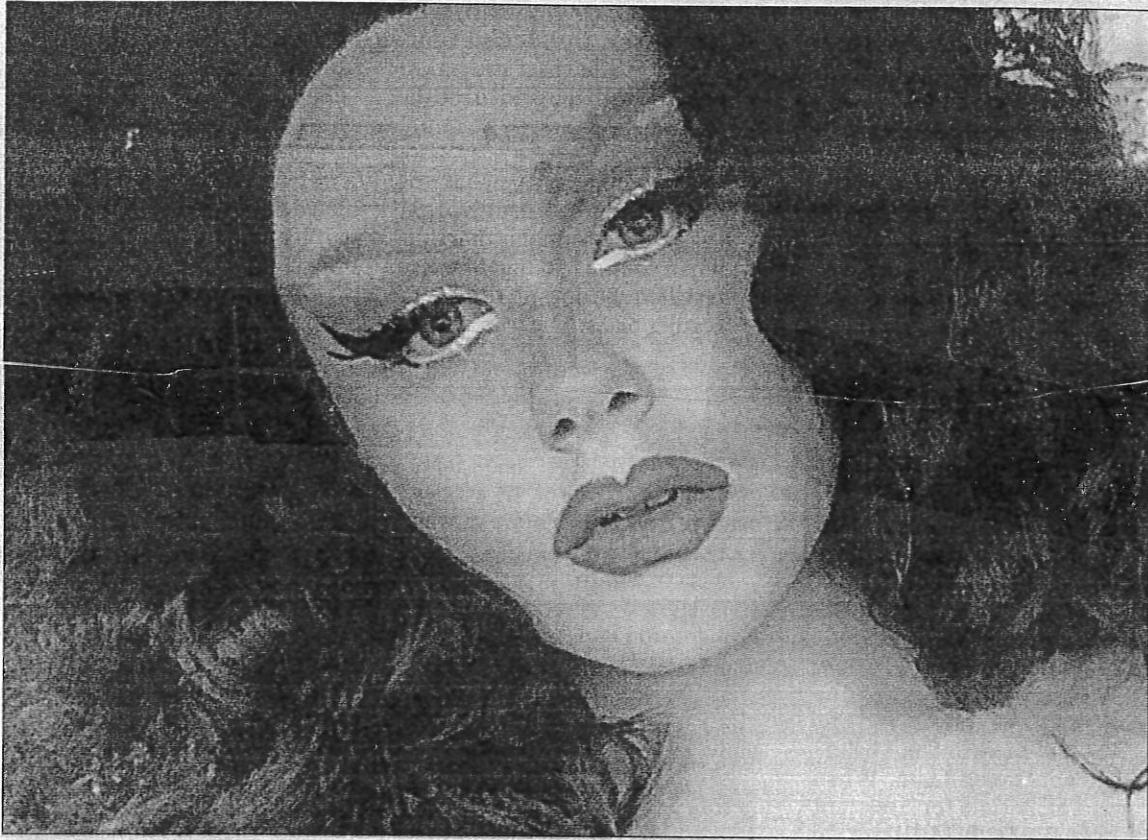
Paul's School, as well as received the Society of Women Engineers High Honors recognition. Danielle is an active member of the Saint Thomas Moore Church youth ministry, a member of the National Honor Society, has participated in indoor and outdoor track, and is an All-State cross-country member. Having been accepted to Assumption College, Iona College, Fordham University, Manhattan College, and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Danielle will attend Massachusetts Institute of Technology to pursue a career in a STEM related field.

Jacob Zercher is the son of Laura and Chuck Zercher of Durham. He is a member of our Granite State Challenge team, received the Bausch + Lomb honorary science award, and the Saint Michael's College book award. He will also be recognized as a New Hampshire Scholar with both a STEM and Arts emphasis and is a National Merit Finalist. His interest and prowess in the STEM field has been evident throughout high school.

In addition to his academic accolades, Jacob has athletic accomplishments as well. He is a member of our varsity soccer, winter track, and spring track team. As part of track he was a member of the school record setting 4x200 meter relay.

Gaining admission to the University of Notre Dame, Carnegie Mellon University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, University of Rochester, University of Idaho, and University of Central Florida, Jacob has chosen to attend the University of New Hampshire where he intends to major in Mathematics and Physics, with a desire to teach those subjects in his future.

From drag queen to prom queen



Liam Mills, also known as his drag queen persona, Raya Sunshine, takes a selfie while traveling to the Oyster River prom on Saturday where Raya was crowned prom queen, winning by a ballot vote of fellow students. [LIAM MILLS/COURTESY]

Dream comes true for Liam 'Raya Sunshine' Mills

By Deb Cram

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HAMPTON — Proms are meant to be special, but for one Oyster River High School senior Friday night's affair proved to be the experience of a lifetime.

In April we spoke to Liam Mills about the upcoming prom planned at Ashworth by the Sea. The night would be different for Liam than for most of the students attending.

Liam Mills came out when he was 12. His mom, Tracy, knew he was gay when he was 3. Now, many years later and near the end of his high school years, the local sometimes drag queen planned to go to the Oyster River High School prom in drag with the hope of having an experience he's always dreamed of — that his drag queen persona, "Raya Sunshine," would be named queen of the prom. On

prom-goers cast their ballots for "Raya Sunshine," as Liam is known on stage.

Liam, 18, said when we talked in April that he planned to ask his classmates to vote for him for either prom king or queen, and it didn't matter to him which way he might win the crown. "It would honestly be like the best thing that could happen," he said at the time. "Like, I'm going to be happy either way because I know, like, I am the queen, like in general. Be who you want to be. That's a very simple thing but it's very true."

On Monday, we caught up with Liam and his mom.

"I think that the students at Oyster River High School made a bold statement on Saturday night," said Tracy. "She is incredibly brave to do what she did. It could've gone in a completely opposite direction and



Liam Mills, also known as Raya Sunshine, was crowned Oyster River prom queen Saturday night. Raya is shown here with best friend Lexy Steele, who also attended the

QUEEN

From Page A1

she was prepared for that, but nonetheless she went there as herself ... as himself!"

"She owned it, from the second she became Raya," continued Tracy. "I am proud of the fact that Liam is so confident with himself that he could do this and do it so beautifully. I'm proud of Raya because she wants nothing less than to be like any other — accepted and loved for who she is. The ORHS students made her feel that on Saturday. With each of their votes, they ultimately said, be who you want to be, and that is amazing."

Liam then took us through the

night's events.

"As soon as I walked in, every one of the teachers that was chaperoning was so excited to see me, even the ones I hadn't met before, and it made me so happy that I was so important to them. I was worried that some of the people going wouldn't be so kind, but after a couple minutes in the room my worry completely vanished," Liam said.

"I was approached throughout the entire night and everyone was so kind, and gave compliments of my dress and hair and makeup. Whenever I talked to someone they were always smiling and I felt so happy that I could be that ray of sunshine, pun intended, to people," Liam continued.

Later that night they started to announce the prince, princess, king, and queen, Liam

said. "After they announced the runner-ups for king, I was really excited to hear who had won. It turns out, an openly gay boy won prom king. I was just happy that there was some LGBT representation this year at all, so I already felt like a winner."

"Then they announced the runner-ups for queen, and one by one I got more and more nervous," continued Liam. When it was finally time for Assistant Principal Mark Milliken to announce the prom queen, Liam said he felt "it just had to be someone else. My school is supportive and all, but me, prom queen? Granted it's not Miss America, but as a gay boy in a dress, it would mean the world."

"Right before Mr. Milliken announced who had won, he looked over at me and there was

a jolt of electricity," said Liam, and then the name of the winner seemed to fill the room. It was "Raya Sunshine."

Everyone at the prom started cheering and screaming and hollering, said Liam, who added, "I couldn't believe it."

As the deejay played the song "Dancing Queen," everyone sang along.

"The king and I had a moment before I had to step outside (it was insanely hot in there!) and I mentioned how lovely this message was," continued Liam. "Simply, the image of an openly gay boy and a drag queen winning prom king and queen is a lovely sight, but it's not about the title at all. It's about the message that our communities are moving forward."

"Ten years ago this would have

never happened. Twenty years ago, they wouldn't have even let me go to the prom dressed the way I was," Liam said. "But we are truly making strides for love and acceptance. I have always felt accepted at my school, work, and the places I like to go, but now I feel truly loved by my community."

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Main office: 11 Main Street, Dover, NH 03820
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Established June 18, 1873

Published daily and Sundays except New Year's Day.

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Foster's Daily Democrat is published daily except New Years

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By Nick Frazier

Oyster River's Oxford preps for Wake stint

Brennen Oxford's coaches knew right away that they had a special talent on their hands.

USA Mavericks coach Dave Hoyt realized it when Oxford began playing for his club teams as a 13-year-old. Hoyt would routinely play Oxford with the older guys due to his incredible instincts on the mound.

"He sees the field, he sees the play, he understands hitters and their approach," Hoyt said. "He gets all of that, and he showed glimpses of it at a very early age."

Oyster River High School coach Craig Walfield became aware of it when Oxford joined the Durham, N.H., school's program three years ago. Walfield had good depth on his team at the time, so he made sure to ease Oxford into the games.

Hoyt and Walfield were some of the first people to recognize Oxford's talent. Almost everyone else took note of it last season, when the 6-foot-2, 180-pound southpaw threw four consecutive no-hitters for the Bobcats. Oxford threw 30 $\frac{1}{3}$ hitless innings, fanning 46 in that span.

► Brennen Oxford threw four straight no-hitters last season for Oyster River High School. He's committed to Wake Forest.

■ Southpaw will take all-around skill set to ACC after finishing Granite State scholastic career

"He was definitely in a zone. You could tell he was in a special place," Walfield said regarding the streak. "Really nobody wanted to mess with that."

Once Oxford pitched back-to-back no-hitters, the stands began to fill up with students, faculty, scouts and national media members. But the lefty had no problem staying focused on the hill.

"I smile and have fun at school, and when baseball comes around I flip it and get more serious," Oxford said. "It helped when more people started showing up because it put an emphasis on how important it was for me to flip the switch and become more focused."

Walfield says the most impressive thing about Oxford is that ability to go from a fun-loving 18-year-old kid to "an absolute monster."

"He walks across those lines, and he flips the switch," Walfield said. "When it's time to get serious, he gets serious and he goes after it."

Now entering his senior season, the 2017 Gatorade New Hampshire Baseball Player of the Year is ready to prove that he's more than a phenomenal pitcher. Besides finishing last season 5-1 with a 0.16 ERA, Oxford batted .487 and stole 14 bases, leading Oyster River to an 11-5 record.

"(Brennen's) got all the tools," said Walfield, who tends to play Oxford at first base when he's not pitching to protect his arm. "There's not a position on the baseball field that the young man can't play. He can do just about anything he wanted to do."

It was his skills in the outfield that earned him an offer from a Division 1 collegiate program. Hoyt, who once played for the St. Louis Cardinals and Minnesota Twins organizations, reached out to the Wake Forest staff two years ago to rave about the then-sophomore. Oxford toured multiple schools in the Northeast, but he committed soon after visiting the Demon Deacons' campus.

"Wake Forest was the right fit for him because he would have been lost anywhere else," Hoyt said. "They promised his family that they were going to take care of him off the field, and he asked all of the right questions."

A prospect as athletically gifted as Oxford might thrive as an outfielder at the collegiate level. The question now is whether he is most valuable in the field or on the mound. The good news is that Oxford loves the game and is willing to play whatever position gets him game time.

"I definitely want to keep the pitching door open, just in case that's (how) I can get onto the field and stay there," Oxford said, "I chose Wake Forest because when I went there on my visit, they were totally open to me playing both."

Oxford said his main goal is to make it to the majors. He might get that chance someday, as some MLB scouts already have taken notice of him and have



reached out to Hoyt about the possibility of Oxford skipping college for the pros.

"If it's worth it financially, then I would definitely consider it," Oxford said. "The end goal is to play professional baseball and make it to the major leagues."

"Sometimes the best education is the University of Major League Baseball," added Hoyt, who is no stranger to these difficult situations. "It has to be right for you and the family. He'll make that decision, but it's got to be right."

Needless to say, a lot is going to change for Oxford after his high school senior season. It's anyone's guess as to what position he'll predominantly play, or whether he'll be at Wake Forest or with a minor league team.

The one thing we know for sure is that Oxford will continue to excel, thanks to a unique blend of natural instincts and athleticism.

"Baseball seems to like him because of his length, and he's going to get stronger, but his instincts are his best assets," Hoyt said. "Those are the type of guys that are going to do great things at a very high level, and maybe even take it one step further and play in the big leagues."

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Courtesy Oxford Family

Tuesday, May 22, 2018

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1:1 Initiative Puts Laptops in Hands of Every Oyster River Middle School Student Starting in September



Left to right: Oyster River's Sara O'Brien, Sunpreet Sadana, Nicholas Bellows, Nikola Viens, Janet Martel and Joshua Olstad recently presented on the merits of a 1:1 laptop initiative to the Oyster River School Board, which approved the assignment of a laptop for every Middle School student starting in the fall. (Courtesy Photo)

DURHAM -- It's with great excitement that Oyster River Middle School Principal Jay Richard and Technology Instructor Nikola Viens share news that the ORCSD School Board recently gave approval and support for all Oyster River Middle School students to each be provided a laptop in the upcoming 2018-2019 school year.

Under a technology initiative beginning this fall, all students will have access to their own school issued laptop. The philosophy behind the initiative is known as the One-to-One (or 1:1) educational technology model and differs from the district's current model in which students are using a shared cart model for every team of four classrooms.

A group of ORMS teachers presented, on behalf of the middle school technology committee, a proposal for the technology initiative to the school board during the May 2 meeting. The presentation included a brief overview of the One-to-One initiative as well as examples of neighboring districts who have already implemented or are moving toward implementing a similar model in their schools. Each presenting teacher explained ways that a One-to-One technology initiative would satisfy a current need for more devices in the classroom due to an increased demand each year.

"Education and the potential it can reach did not exist as it does now thanks to a lot of the technology advances that have occurred in our society and definitely within public schools. If there is one thing our district does well, and any district can always do better, it's push kids to their potential," said ORMS fifth grade teacher Sunpreet Sadana. "The 1:1 initiative eliminates a lot of roadblocks to learning and allows educators and kids to enhance their learning and instruction and push kids to that potential."

Equal access to technology has been emphasized during many recent board meeting discussions, along with ensuring that all students had the same access to instruction despite their individual needs and abilities. The best way to do that is to ensure that every student is using the same type of technology device in the classroom. Having a single type of device available to all students at ORMS ensures continuity across classrooms and grades at the same time it gives teachers the tools and flexibility they need to offer each student the highest level of instruction.

Fifth grade teacher Sara O'Brien explained how increased technology would affect her classroom when presenting to the board:

"All classrooms will look differently with increased technology," she said. "When I imagine my classroom with more technology it would not mean more students are behind a screen five days a week, all day. It would mean integrating computers into portions of my lessons instead of having to use them the whole block that I have them. It would mean I would have time to teach my students about how to use a computer, not just ask them to complete assignments."

The laptop initiative also aligns with the new competency-based approach the Middle School has adopted this school year.

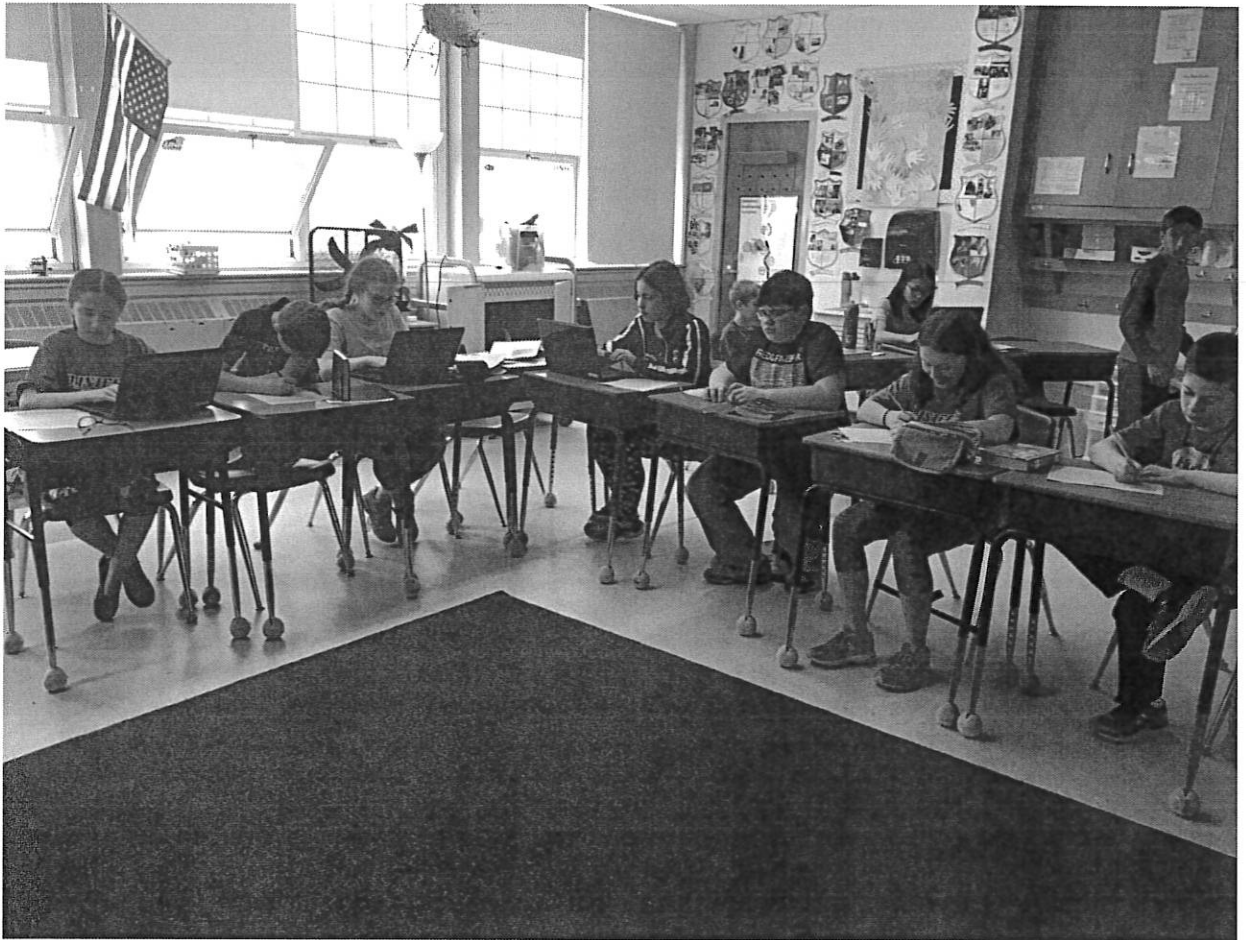
"Competency-based education stresses the mastery of the skills needed for the 21st century and the philosophy embraces the idea that content is ever evolving and changing," said seventh grade teacher Janet Martel. "At Oyster River, the teachers use new and emerging technologies to teach these skills."

Information technology staff, ORMS administrators and members of the District Technology Committee will work diligently over the next four months to work out the details of this roll out.

Principal Richard expressed his enthusiasm about the initiative and the positive impact it will have on our teachers and students.

"We have seen published, empirical evidence that 1:1 laptop initiatives improve student performance and increase test scores," Principal Richard said. "Putting a laptop in the hands of every student at Oyster River Middle School creates a level playing field and further reduces learning gaps for our students, resulting in improved student growth and development from the onset. I am very excited to implement this program, and I want to express my gratitude to our school board and technology staff for bringing the 1:1 initiative to fruition."

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Studies show that 1:1 laptop initiatives reduce learning gaps, improve student development and result in higher performances on standardized tests. Above, Oyster River fifth graders use technology in a classroom recently. (Courtesy Photo)

A message from the Oyster River Cooperative School District

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Wendy DiFruscio

From: jessica@jgpr.net on behalf of Jessica Sacco <jessica@jgpr.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 17, 2018 11:21 AM
To: Wendy DiFruscio
Subject: Oyster River Middle School Advisory Committee Finalizing Facility Study

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, May 17, 2018

Media Contact: John Guilfoil
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Oyster River Middle School Advisory Committee Finalizing Facility Study

DURHAM -- Superintendent James Morse reports that members of an advisory committee are finalizing a study of Oyster River Middle School to determine the future of the 83-year-old building.

The middle school, which opened in 1935, is in need of repairs and renovations. In September 2017, Superintendent Morse formed the advisory committee to research

and create a short list of options that could be presented to the School Board for review by the end of the 2017-18 school year.

The committee is made up of elected town leaders from Durham, Lee and Madbury, an architect, an engineer, a land developer, community members from all three towns and administrative support staff.

"Committee members have been working tirelessly to determine the best options for the middle school building, which has served the district well for many years," Superintendent Morse said. "This must be done methodically so that we can find the right solution for our students and community."

Over the last seven months, the committee has reviewed 13 options and is in the process of narrowing down next steps for the district.

- Renovate the building for the fourth time. The current middle school was last renovated in 1996 and also underwent renovations in 1954 and 1979. The question before the committee is whether it makes educational and financial sense to renovate the building again.
- Build new on the current site. The current building has a roof area equivalent to three football fields. If a new building were to be built, it is feasible to do so with a far smaller footprint -- as little as one football field.
- Build new on a new site. The current site is 11.5 acres. If the district were to choose a new site there is potential for a much larger lot that provides more space for fields and less traffic congestion. A new site also comes with costly site development costs, which could be offset by the sale of the current middle school.
- Add a new middle school wing to the existing high school. The current middle school would be closed and the property sold.
- Build a grades six through eight middle school and send grade five back to the elementary schools. This option would require construction at all three schools.
- Build a seventh and eighth grade middle school and renovate elementary schools to accommodate kindergarten through sixth grade. This option would require construction at all three schools.

- Add grades five to eight to each elementary school resulting in Mast Way and Moharimet kindergarten through eighth grade schools. This option would require construction at both elementary schools.
- Tear down portions of the existing school and replace it with new construction. This option would require temporarily relocating middle school students while construction is ongoing.
- Build a middle school for grades sixth through eight on a new location and expand elementary schools to grades kindergarten through fifth. This option would require construction at all three schools.
- Change the elementary schools so one is grades kindergarten through fourth and the other is grades five through eighth. This option would require construction at both elementary schools.
- Build a new facility for grades kindergarten through eighth grade on a different site and sell the current OR middle school, Mast Way and Moharimet schools. This option would result in a school of nearly 1,400 students.
- Build a new Oyster River High School and move the existing middle school into the current high school.
- Explore building a new regional high school and move the existing middle school into the existing high school. This option would require school systems willing to work together.

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A message from the Oyster River Cooperative School District

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Oyster River Elementary School Students Participate in Science Fridays



UNH student and member of the Lunacats William Lauzon performs an egg drop using a structure designed by fourth grade students. (Courtesy Photo Oyster River)

DURHAM -- Throughout March and April, Mast Way and Moharimet elementary schools teamed up with the University of New Hampshire to bring a variety of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) projects to fourth grade students.

Under the guidance of the UNH Lunabotics Team (Lunacats), which works to promote students' interest in space exploration and in robotics through outreach activities, Oyster River created Science Fridays.

Every Friday, from March 9 to April 13, students gathered at Mast Way from 3:15-5:30 p.m. to use STEM techniques to build a boat, bridge, catapult, robots and magnets, and complete the egg drop challenge.

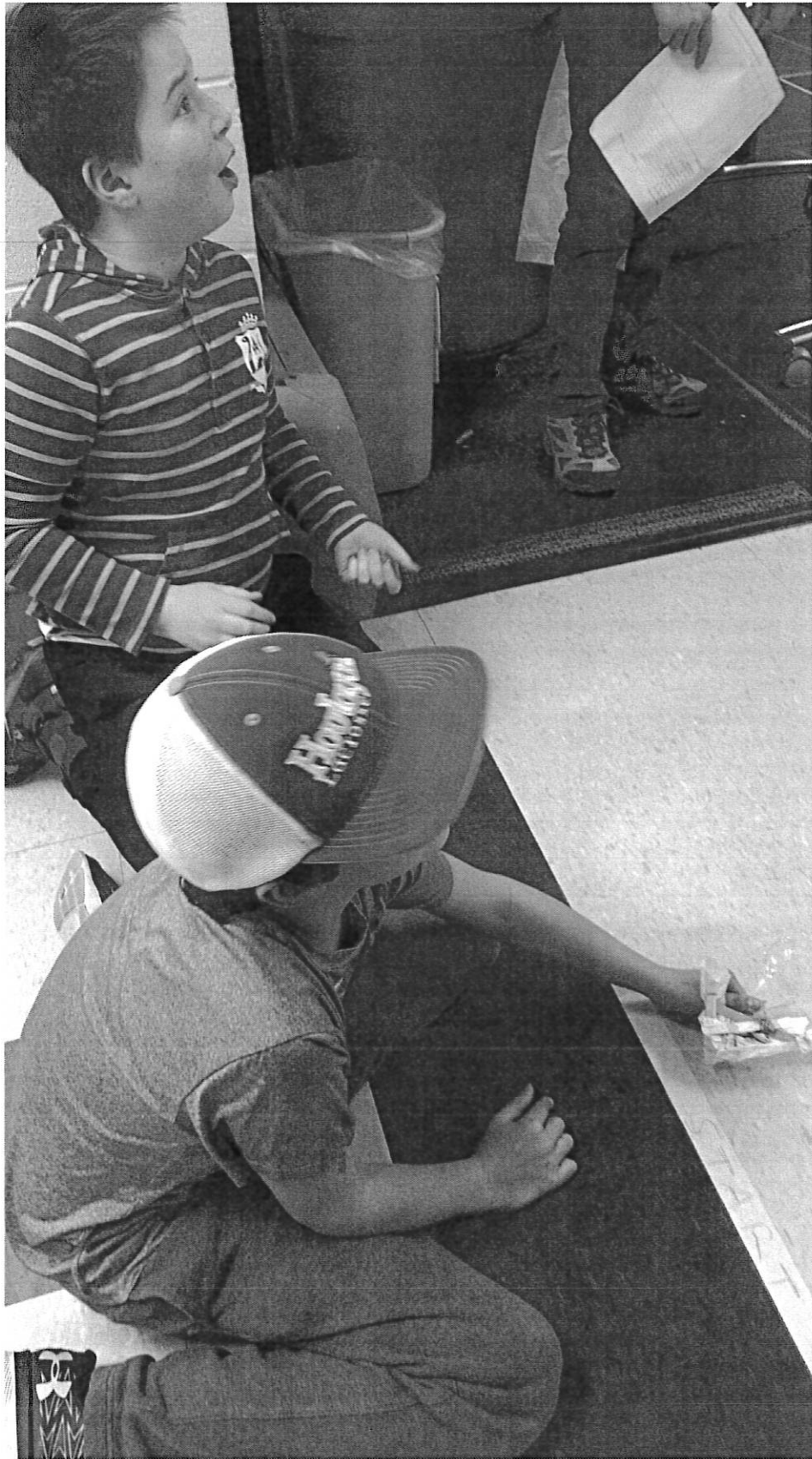
"I loved the egg drop activity because I got to see designs and how they worked," said fourth grade student Gwen Rasmussen. "It was nice to see each group's design and how it reacted differently to the fall."

"The last day of Science Friday gave me a new way of thinking about devices and how to use motors," said fourth-grade student Isaac Williams. "I have gotten new ideas for games to design in the future. The program is a fun way to do science. It inspires kids to be inventors!"

Science Fridays were overseen by Mast Way and Moharimet Technology Integrators Susan Leifer and Sarah Curtin.

"Our goal with this program was to further expose students to fun and practical applications of science, develop their curiosities and potentially pique their interests for a lifetime of learning in STEM fields," Curtin said. "We want to thank the Lunacats for their help and guidance throughout this process."

###



Left to right: Fourth grade students Felix Scarlet and Nathan Fitch test a catapult they built during a Science Friday. (Courtesy Photo Oyster River)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, May 4, 2018

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Oyster River School District Implements New Athletic Initiatives

DURHAM -- Oyster River School District Director of Athletics Andy Lathrop is pleased to announce that the athletic department has begun to implement new initiatives through the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association Life of an Athlete Program.

The first initiative is instituting a Student Athlete Leadership Team made up of athletic leaders from various teams and grades. This committee is meant to affect change in their school's athletic program by empowering students to take ownership of their athletic experience.

Since the group formed in the fall, the committee has been instrumental in bringing school spirit to sports games by selling "Super Fan" t-shirts and modeling appropriate fan behavior and sportsmanship at games.

The second initiative, also driven by the Life of an Athlete program, is creating a restorative practice for athletic rules and expectations that is meant to shift the focus when a rule is broken and improve school culture by empowering those involved in an incident.

Often times, when there is a disciplinary situation, the focus is on punishment. When restorative justice is integrated into a school's policy, the focus shifts from punishment to working with the offender to repair the harm created by the violation.

"The primary goal of the restorative justice practice is not to replace the school's policy, but to supplement it," Lathrop said. "This doesn't mean that there are no consequences

for violations or unlimited chances, but rather to have the violator take an active role in repairing any damage that may have been caused."

Consequences are tiered by the number of violations the student athlete has committed over the course of their athletic career. Depending on the level of the violation, this could involve game suspensions, or a meeting with coaches, administrators and peers to verbalize how the athlete's action affected others. This situation gives all involved parties the chance to be heard.

"We have already had a tremendous amount of support and participation by student athletes with these initiatives," Lathrop said. "Our department is eager to make them a lasting part of the athletic culture here at Oyster River."

Lathrop hopes to have these initiatives outlined in the Student/Parent Athletic Handbook this summer to make them a permanent part of the school district's athletic policies.

For more information on the Life of an Athlete Program or restorative justice, visit the NHIAA website by [clicking here](#).

###

A message from the Oyster River Cooperative School District

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Oyster River Cooperative
School District

SAU No. 5

Superintendent James Morse

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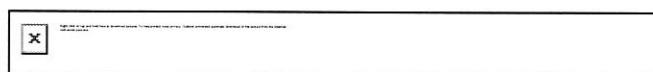
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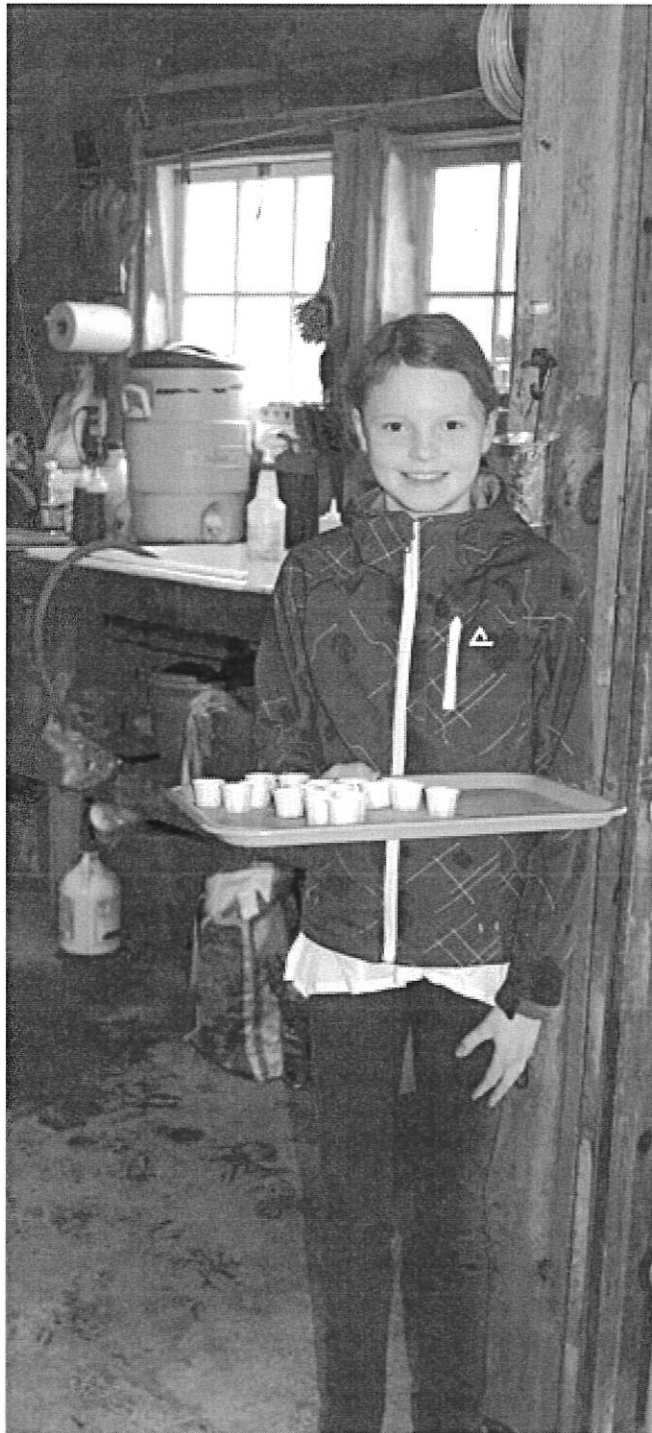
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Moharimet Elementary School Hosts Pancake Breakfast with Homemade Maple Syrup



Former Moharimet student Ella Higginson, now in sixth grade, passes out samples of Moharimet maple syrup. (Courtesy Photo Oyster River)

Moharimet Elementary School Hosts Pancake Breakfast with Homemade Maple Syrup



DURHAM -- Oyster River students, faculty and community members received a special treat last month as Moharimet Elementary School marked its 26th successful maple sugaring season with its annual pancake breakfast.

On Saturday, April 14, from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., school staff and volunteers cooked and served hundreds of pancakes, sweetened by Moharimet-made maple syrup.

For over 2 1/2 decades, students have been tapping maple trees and collecting sap. Teachers, parents and community volunteers then boil the sap in Moharimet's own sugar shack. Jim Davis, a former Moharimet parent, leads the sugaring work and has shown thousands of students how to boil syrup.

"Sugaring provides endless opportunities for our students to get outside, learn and explore," said Holly Burt, Moharimet's event organization and enrichment activity coordinator. "It is a really unique program that helps make Moharimet so special."

The pancake breakfast also featured local musicians (adult groups and the Oyster River Middle School jazz band) and dancers, who kept guests entertained as they dined. Student artwork related to maple sugaring was on display and Davis provided tours and explanations of the sugar shack and the evaporator to those interested. There was even an oxen demonstration, where Tyler Allen, a resident from Lee who works at San Wall Farm, illustrated how the animals pull sap collection buckets on sleds.

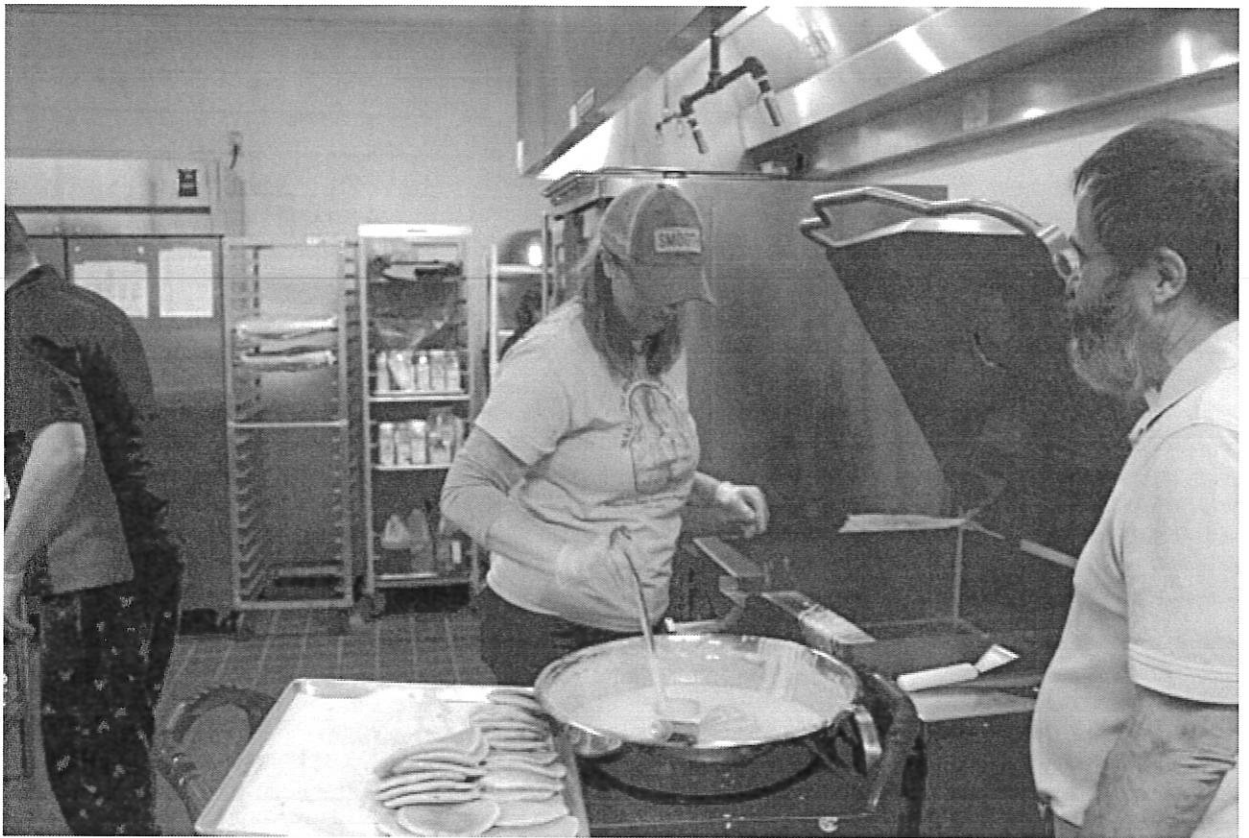
Principal David Goldsmith would like to thank the Oyster River Sustainability Committee and the University of New Hampshire for their support and assistance with the breakfast.

###



Moharimet physical education teacher Jessica Whalen and parent volunteer Stan Tomlinson make pancakes. (Courtesy Photo Oyster River)





Moharimet physical education teacher Jessica Whalen and parent volunteer Stan Tomlinson make pancakes. (Courtesy Photo Oyster River)



Volunteer Tim Burt prepares to load more firewood into the evaporator, which is part of the cooking process to turn sap into maple syrup. (Courtesy Photo Oyster River)

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