

# NRPS VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS NEWSLETTER

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Macy Kurchian, Michael Delvecchio, Nathan Burt and Torin Nickerson performed live throughout the entire performance of Rock of Ages.

The Performing and Visual Art Departments for the North Reading School District are proud to announce their quarterly newsletter. We are excited to use this bulletin to share with our North Reading community the accomplishments of our students and teachers in the arts. We will keep our readers informed about important dates throughout the school year in our departments, and celebrate the creativity of our students who reveal and share their spirit with us on a daily basis.



Volunteers at the 2nd annual STEAM Night standing in front of Angelina Casciano's digital art exhibit



Seventh grader Daniela Voisenet holds the Blondie poster she painted for the NRMS Musical *Rock of Ages*



Little School Chorus performing for the Governor to celebrate becoming a National Blue Ribbon School

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## ANGIE'S ART

Junior, Angie Casciano showcased her stunning digital art at this year's STEAM Night. Her art is mostly done digitally. She draws on an iPad (6th gen) and uses an Apple Pencil (1st gen) to utilize a variety of programs; Procreate, IbisPaint (illustrations), and Flipaclip (animation).



She gets waves of inspiration and motivation at different times. Visions she has for a new piece usually come to her while she's in class when she's supposed to be taking notes. If one were to go through her school notebooks, you'd find multiple, random doodles all over them. Thankfully, her teachers don't seem to mind. After Angie gets a rough sketch, and still likes the concept, she redraws it digitally, creating the lining, adding basic colors, shadows, highlights, and neatening the overall composition. Lastly, overlays are added to help all the colors work together and make the piece have unity.



Junior Angie Casciano participated in the second annual STEAM Night back in October.

Angie has aimed to improve her artwork dating back to 7th grade. She was enrolled in a Russian math program and absolutely hated it. There was an older girl who sat next to her who was very nice and helped her with learning the math. She also drew really well and was always doodling on her notes. This observation kicked Angie's art into high-gear and she strived to draw better. As classes continued, Angie's peer critiqued her doodles by writing little notes on her math packets.



Since then, Angie has doodled all the time. She has started joining groups online called fandoms which are groups of people that have similar interests in comics, TV shows and games. She started creating her own characters and started making some art friends online. These communities have been a big part of her artistic identity since her freshman year of high school.

Through recent years, she has exposed herself to a wide variety of artist communities that have infused her understanding of art with a diversity of views, cultures, methods and artistic styles.





## Who is Ben Owens?

Mr. Owens is a "local" who grew up in Reading, went to college at the University of Delaware, and then received his Masters Degree from Boston University in Trombone Performance. Before he started teaching in North Reading, Mr. Owens spent time performing on the Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, and with the show, "Blast!" He has taught bands and music programs in Reading, North Andover, and Wilmington as well as two Drum and Bugle Corps called the Spartans and the Cadets. When Mr. Owens isn't busy teaching, plays trombone with local ensembles from pit orchestras for musicals, to brass bands, wind ensembles, orchestras, and jazz bands.

The band program encapsulates one part of our flourishing performing arts scene here in North Reading. Mr. Owens works with students from grades 6-12 in three different types of ensembles, concert band, jazz band, and marching band. All three of these ensembles are classes at the high school level. At the middle school, students are able to participate in concert band as a class, and jazz band as an extra curricular ensemble. Each ensemble performs different genres of music, but Mr. Owens' goal is for all of it to be enjoyable. Whether students play wind, percussion ins, or string instruments, Mr. Owens will never tell someone who is interested in band that they cannot participate. He welcomes everyone and anyone to join the band family.



*Mr. Ben Owens is in his second year as a Music and Performing Arts Teacher at North Reading Middle and High School. His energy has made a big, early impact in our town.*

Q. You teach two levels of Band...what do you like about teaching at the two different levels Middle and High School?

A: I really enjoy being able to see the musical and personal growth from middle school to high school. Seeing where students start with their instrument and where they eventually end up is super cool. It's also really fun to see what type of person they can grow to be from 6th grade-12th grade.

Q. How do you integrate Technology into the Band program?

A: I try to let students listen as often as possible to the music that they are performing. Also using videos and youtube to help with music theory and just to keep the atmosphere light and fun sometimes. We haven't done this a lot yet, but I want to get into more of recording the rehearsals and using that technology to listen back to. The last thing we use in the 7th and 8th grade is a program called Smartmusic. It is an online practice tool where I can assign homework to record music on the site. It can be songs from band class, scales, exercises or even sight reading.



MICCA 2019 (Wakefield)

# The Annual District Art Show



All of us in the NRPS Visual Arts Department are frustrated and saddened by COVID-19's life-changing consequences. The Annual District Art Show is essentially canceled. Many art pieces that would be in the show have yet to be photographed and / or created. Despite this big bout of adversity, we will be featuring some of this year's strongest works in a Virtual Art Exhibit to be released in May.

## Visual Art at Home

We aim to keep students engaged in art making during our collective time away from the school campuses. As expected, teachers are coming up with creative solutions to these unprecedented times.

Here are some ways to stay engaged and keep your creativity flowing:

- Take a Virtual Gallery Tour
- Join a Sketchbook Challenge
- Try an Art Prompt Generator
- Watch Art Making Videos on YouTube
- Organize, Photograph and Catalog your Art
- Write an Artist Statement

- *Connect with your art teachers for specific, age appropriate resources. Chances are, your teachers have emailed you already!*



# All-Town Band & Chorus Concerts 2020

Although this year we will not be able to perform as one group sharing our love for music, let us not forget the joy we have shared in the past, and hold on to the hope that we will be creating beautiful music together soon.



**Pictures from  
All-Town  
Band & Chorus  
2019**

## Performing Arts At Home

Here are some ways to stay engaged and keep your creativity flowing:

- Record yourself (your family) singing/dancing/playing an instrument. Share it with your music teacher.
- Visit the youtube channels like Visual Musical Minds- ukulele, recorder, & body percussion pieces
  - Smartmusic.com & sightreadingfactory.com to work on your singing and playing skills
- Check out Essential Elements Classroom and Chrome Music Lab to listen, and create music
  - Kennedy Center Video Library- free videos of musicals, music, & dance performances)
  - Broadway HD: stream your favorite Broadway shows (free trial)
- Visit bbbpress.com to find monologues & drama games for young actors wanting to practice their craft

*Most importantly, connect with your performing arts teacher for specific, age appropriate resources.*



# NOTEorious News

## North Reading High School's competitive co-ed Acappella group

Every year students audition in the late spring for this small, hardworking group. Currently the group consists of sixteen members. Performers who are accepted are given 3-5 pieces of music to study and practice over the summer so they're prepared for an intense boot camp in August. During the year NOTEorious learns upwards of 24+ songs, and have numerous sets.

Throughout the year, you will find the group performing at the Reading Co-op Bank, singing choral grams, and Busking at the town's Apple and Tree Lighting Festivals. During the months of January to March, NOTEorious kicks it into high gear for their competition season showing off their skill at NE Voices, and the International Championship of HS A'cappella. This year the group placed in the top 3 at NE Voices receiving awards for best Arrangement (Rachel Schladenhauffen), best Solo (Sam Giunta and Katie Leach), as well as best Percussionist (Austin Stamegna). NOTEorious placed second at the ICHSA Quarterfinals receiving an award for best Choreography, and was slated to move on to Semifinals for the Northeast Region at Mechanics Hall in Worcester on March 22. However, due COVID19 the Semifinals have been cancelled. That is not going to hold them down. Keep your eye on their Twitter feed for recording that they are putting together. With any luck NOTEorious will finish off the school year hosting their annual a'cappella festival featuring groups from all over the North Shore.







Tech crew members creating one of three decorative panels for the Dupree Room.

Hornet Productions, the Middle School Drama organization, presented *Rock of Ages* on January 31st and February 1st to a full house in the Performing Arts Center. The musical was filled with 80's rock anthems that had the audience up and dancing by the end.

The scene is set on L.A.'s famous Sunset Strip in 1987 and tells the story of Drew, a city boy from South Detroit, and Sherrie, a small-town girl, who have both traveled to L.A. to chase their dreams of making it big and falling in love. This classic love story is set against the troubles at the Dupree Room, a "legendary temple of rock 'n' roll", under threat by developers of being torn down and replaced with a strip mall.

This year close to 100 students participating in the show. Some were lighting up the stage acting and singing, some showed off their rock n roll skills jamming in the live band, while others worked behind the scenes designing and creating the set, or were the backstage crew who moving the set on and off stage. All students worked hard to create an exciting and memorable musical.







## What is Masquers?

What is Masquers? - Masquers is North Reading High School's drama club. Each year they perform a musical in December and a winter one act show that they take to competition at the end of February and March. Why does Sam Giunta, Masquer's Vice President, love Masquers: "Masquers and theater in general is an art form that I would argue is the most inclusive. It's a place where not only people of different backgrounds and personalities can find their place but it also combines all aspects of the visual and performing arts with English, History, Math and Science into one massive art form".

**Haunted Playground:** This year Masquers took over North Reading's Haunted Playground event where they reached thousands of people from the community with a fun Halloween Carnival at the Batchelder Field with games, rides, and food. This was Masquers way of thanking the community for their continued support of their programs and the arts and it's an event that they want to continue for years to come.

**Musical:** This year they performed Music Man over two weekends reaching more than two thousand people between both weekends. This was a large scale performance. The Masquers musicals have often been equated to Professional Broadway shows by leaders in the Massachusetts Educational Theater Guild who judged the musical for competition.

**One Act Dramafest Competition:** This year they are performing an adaptation of Moliere's play The Imaginary Invalid. It is a French Farce from the 17th century that they performed first at the Preliminary round of Dramafest on February 29th where they placed in the top three and are moving onto the semifinal round for the state competition. There are over 200 schools that compete and already 70 were knocked out in the first round. If fortunate, Masquers will take their play to states where 14 schools perform and are the top in the state for that year. Semifinals were hosted at North Reading High School on March 14th.

### **Awards for Dramafest:**

Bridget Grew- Stage Managers Award

Sam Giunta - Best Actor Award

Gianna Nalivou - Best Actress Award

Elli DeCleene and Meg Regan - Costumes Award

Rachel Schladenhauffen - Dramaturgy Award

Alison Rabideau - Makeup and Hair Award

Imaginary Invalid - Preliminary Round Winners





# The new Arts Frameworks are here!

On February 12, 2019 the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approved the release of the draft 2019 Arts Curriculum Framework for public comment. It has been almost 20 years since the state's arts standards were last revised in 1999, and the new draft makes several important changes. Specifically it:

- Recognizes media arts as a discipline alongside dance, music, theatre, and visual arts
- Utilizes a new organizational structure that is consistent across disciplines, supporting integration
- Integrates content from the 1999 framework's Connections strand into the discipline-specific standards
- Includes standards for artistic practice aligned to the National Core Arts Standards
- Provides more detailed learning expectations, with two-year instead of four-year grade spans
- Provides more detailed learning expectations, with two-year instead of four-year grade spans
- Adds guiding principles focused on engaging students and ensuring exposure to wider range of cultures and styles.





# NRHS & NRMS Winter Concerts





# E.E Little, J.T. Hood & L.D. Batchelder Winter Concerts

